

Transcript of “Shakespeare’s Virtues”

By Julia Reinhard Lupton

JULIA LUPTON: Thank you for the great introduction, Owen, and thank you to the Folger for bringing me back for this incredible honor. I’m really, really touched to be here. I also want to thank my family, who travelled a great distance to join me for tonight’s event. And Eric Hissom’s been great to work with, and he’s going to be illustrating the lecture with scenes from Shakespeare, which I hope will really add to and enhance our experience tonight.

We’re brought together, of course, by Shakespeare, so I’d like you to join me in wishing Shakespeare a happy birthday.

JULIA LUPTON AND AUDIENCE: Happy Birthday, Shakespeare! [APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER]

JULIA LUPTON: Well, that was even more than I expected. It’s great that today actually is the day which many people believe was the day on which he was born, and that the theater is open for us to be here. The birthday part is pretty clear. It’s not just bad cake and worse jokes and all of those damn Facebook notifications. It’s also an occasion to honor a legacy and to say “thank you” to the institutions that help keep that legacy alive. So that’s the birthday part, but what about the “happy” part of Happy Birthday? Is this kittens and puppies, or is this something richer and stranger?

Well, I like going back to the sources, to Aristotle. Aristotle defined happiness; the word he used was *eudaimonia*, and that can be translated as happiness, but it’s really broader. It’s the good life, it’s human flourishing. But it has an element of luck kind of burrowed in there, because *eu* means good, but *daimon* is the origin of our word “demon,” so there’s an element there of kind of good luck, and we’re going to be talking about good luck and moral luck as part of the framework for Shakespeare’s virtue-works today. There’s an element of happenstance in happiness, and we still have that in our word “happy.”

Virtue, according to Aristotle, was one of the ways in which people could achieve eudaimonia or happiness. For the ancients, we hear the word “virtue,” and often we just kind of shut down, because it sounds prescriptive, and too hard, and somebody else’s problem, and old-fashioned, but that’s not how virtue resonated, or I’m going to actually use Viola’s word, “reverberated,” in Shakespeare’s age. And for the ancients, for Aristotle and Plato and the Stoics, virtue really referred to the power or excellence of any person, plant, or thing to achieve the end that was appropriate to it. So virtue is certainly an attribute of human beings, but it also belonged to the natural world and also to the created world. Rosemary had virtues, salt had virtues, and we see this throughout Shakespeare, this very broad, vitalist, and environmental sense of what virtue could be.

For Aristotle, the essential rhythm of virtue was the movement from latency or dormancy or potential, he called it *dynamis*, and it’s the origin of our word “dynamic,” and actualization, which he called *energeia*, and it’s the origin of our word for “energy.” So virtue is really about actualizing what is potential. But not in a random way, always in relationship to a

goal, he called it a *telos*, and with an outcome in mind, an *ergon*, a product, a deed, a work. And he also felt that there is an important energetic element of intention or desire. He called this *orexis*—longing, passion, motivation. Nothing boring about that, right? Virtue is dynamic, energetic, goal oriented, and aspirational. It's also experimental, inclusive, creative, and world building.

So, why virtue, why Shakespeare, and why now? How did I come upon this as a topic for extended research work, but also for extended public and teaching work on Shakespeare? Certainly, I'm interested in it as a theme in the plays that I think has not gotten the kind of deep attention, the elastic and creative attention, that I'm trying to bring to it, and so I'm doing a lot of reading of the plays, reading them for virtue.

But what triggered this as a topic for me, among other things, was getting to work with actors, observe them in rehearsal as part of our college Shakespeare festival, and what really struck me in that work was how much trust, respect, patience, resilience, focus was required of actors to bring off the theatrical work. And that got me thinking about the teaching that I do. Does the teaching that I do in a literature classroom also develop courage, respect, patience, trust in my students? And how could we start making a vocabulary for that, to make that virtue-work more evident and link it to ancient and modern virtue traditions so that we have a vocabulary?

Now, is virtue social? We usually think about virtue as something that belongs to the individual person, that "I'm developing my capacities." But virtue has a very strong social dimension. So I'm using the term "virtue ecology" to talk about the way in which different situations encourage the development of potential in different audiences, among different persons, differently. And cultivating those settings, trying to make virtue ecologies as strong and supple and inclusive as possible, is one of my tasks not as a teacher, but (and this is often a bad word) as an administrator. (Not such a bad word.)

So, as an administrator, I see my job as creating the environments in which my colleagues and my students and my different publics for programming can flourish. Now, administrators don't talk much about virtue. We would sound kind of funny if we did that. But we do talk about something called "capacity building," which I think is just a modern expression for what Aristotle meant by virtue or *arête*. Capacity building means that you take the resources that you have, and you try to figure out how you can use them strategically to develop as much capacity as possible, and to develop that capacity in a way which is organic to the community with which you are working. So you're not imposing values, but rather cultivating what is already there, using what is available. And that can involve skills mapping, and also assets mapping, to determine what capacities and values you want to work with in a given circumstance. I won't talk all night like an administrator. [LAUGHTER]

So what's my approach to Shakespeare's virtues? Well, first of all, I'm certainly reading a lot of classical philosophy, and a lot of contemporary philosophy as well, and doing close readings of the plays in traditional classroom and community settings. But I also want to keep this work as real and relevant and responsive as possible to actual virtue-work in the world. And so I have been interviewing a range of non-scholars about Shakespeare and capacity building and we've been reading texts together, and I discuss the text with these co-reading partners in terms of their own expertise.

So, in order to understand virtue under duress, which I see as one of the themes of *Twelfth Night*, I interviewed several social workers and so you'll be hearing from them. In order to understand the artistic and creative part of virtue-work, I interviewed a transgender floral artist, Sam Nasstrom, and also an artist activist, Lisa Wolpe, and you'll also be hearing from them tonight. In this work, I'm not just looking for new meanings or interpretations of the plays. Instead, I'm looking for new tools and templates, tools and templates for learning and also for living.

And so, we're going to be doing that work together by reading *Twelfth Night* this evening. I'm going to start with Viola, who is the moral center of the play, but by way of an unlikely philosopher. You may have heard of him: Sir Toby Belch.

Now, Sir Toby is everyone's drunk uncle and he is on an extended staycation at Olivia's household. And not only is he drinking all of her IPA, but he is also leading on Sir Andrew Aguecheek. You'll remember him, he is the dissolute young nobleman who is hoping to marry Olivia and does not have a chance. So in Act 1, Scene 3, Sir Toby Belch takes Sir Andrew Aguecheek to task for not dancing his way through every scene of life, from going to church to taking a piss.

Eric is going to perform these lines for us. Eric Hissom. [APPLAUSE]

ERIC HISSOM: Oh, oh, please. [LAUGHTER]

TOBY:

Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em? Are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's picture? Why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig. I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace. What does thou mean? Is this a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, that it was formed under a star of a galliard.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.3.122–130]

[APPLAUSE]

JULIA LUPTON: Sir Toby Belch.

So I have discovered in Sir Toby Belch's drunken speech the secret to Shakespeare, or at least the secret to *Twelfth Night*. I believe that *Twelfth Night* is posing this question to us in a serious way and also beginning to answer it, and that question is, "Is it a world to hide virtues in?"

Right now, if we go back to Aristotle, virtue is the movement from potential to actualization, from dynamis to energeia. And so, what Toby is telling us, or telling Andrew, is to start actualizing some of that virtue, because "the world," a key word in this play, "the world"

depends on people exercising their virtues in a manner that will sustain and renew it. You might hear behind Sir Toby's exordium the biblical phrase from the Gospels, right? "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." [King James Version, Matthew 5:15–16]

So Shakespeare gives us, in the romantic plot, three characters who are all in different ways hiding their virtue, their candlesticks, under a bushel, right? Orsino is the lovesick count, and he is not being active in the world. He is not being a man of the polity. He is lounging at home and communicating with Olivia by text message. [LAUGHTER] So he is hiding his virtue. Olivia is in mourning. She has cloistered herself in her household because her father and her brother are both dead. Viola enters by shipwreck onto the shores of Illyria and her job is to kindle their candles. She is both a candle, because she must herself illumine her own virtues, and her candle is going to light theirs; she is a candlelighter. And yet, she also remains partially hidden through most of the drama, because she is dressed as Cesario, the boy page serving Orsino.

Martha Nussbaum, one of my favorite contemporary philosophers, says that for Aristotle there are three types of moral luck, which contribute to that virtue ecology, allowing some and constraining others from fully realizing their capacities: good birth, wealth, and power. And these actually remain pretty constant today, but we wouldn't necessarily talk about good birth, we would talk about a good school system, access to education, and to a stable family life, to certain kinds of privilege that become invisible and which allow some people to more easily access their capacities. Wealth and power are wealth and power.

Now, Orsino has all three: good birth, wealth, and power. Olivia has good birth and wealth, but no power. And Viola has good birth—we know that she has gotten a musical education, that she is of gentle ancestry—but she has neither wealth nor power. So what Shakespeare is sketching here is what I was calling before a "virtue ecology," right? He's showing us, through the idea of moral luck from Aristotle, the social and environmental factors that differently afford and constrain the capacities enjoyed by different persons on the scene.

A little more philosophy. This is Martha Nussbaum on Pindar. The Greek poet Pindar compared the virtuous person to a young vine, and here is her gloss on the Greek poet Pindar:

The excellence of the good person is like a young plant: something growing in the world, slender, fragile, in constant need of food from without. A vine tree must be of good stock if it is to grow well.... It needs fostering weather ... as well as the care of concerned and intelligent keepers.... And so do we. We need to be born with adequate capacities, to live in fostering circumstances, to stay clear of abrupt catastrophe, and to develop confirming associations with other human beings.

That last one Aristotle called friendship or *philia*. It was a much, much broader concept than it is for us today. Now, I think we can hear Viola, or we can read Viola, reverberating in this definition. Viola is of "good stock" and her noble birth has given her access to education, but she has been exposed to "abrupt catastrophe." She does have support from "the care of concerned and intelligent keepers," and we're going to be looking with some detail at the Captain in a few minutes, but she is largely, and rather overwhelmingly, alone.

Viola's name is a kind of glowing cipher of all of these issues. It implies vitality, but it also sounds like violation. It's a musical instrument, the viola, and it's also a flower, the violet. Pindar's vine is Shakespeare's violet. And, of course, the violets appear in Orsino's beautiful opening comparison of music, to quote:

ORSINO:
 the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.1.5–7]

And what Orsino is sketching here is another virtue ecology, here the virtues of plants, as a fragile landscape connected by debt and risk, giving and stealing, as well as pleasure and appreciation. And I think that those qualities of Viola are beautifully communicated by this production shot from an outdoor performance. [PHOTO]

Viola's virtue is tender, open, and swaying, yet it is also withholding and reserved, cautiously resistant to full disclosure. Viola touches others by what she says, but she also touches them by what she leaves unsaid, right? She is both dynamis and energeia, both potential and actualization.

I find all of this, not only in her name, but in her extraordinary "willow cabin" speech. You'll recall that this is the climax of her courtship of Olivia. She has come to Olivia's household dressed as the boy Cesario and courting Olivia for Orsino. But in the meantime, Viola herself has fallen in love with Orsino, and through this speech, Olivia is falling in love with Viola. So it's a wonderful speech, and thankfully we have a wonderful actor to share it with us.

ERIC HISSOM: Ah, yes, Viola is dressed like a boy. I don't think she's bald and white-bearded, but... [LAUGHTER] she might have a suit on.

VIOLA:
Make me a willow cabin at your gate
And call upon my soul within the house,
Write loyal cantons of contemnèd love
And sing them loud even in the dead of night,
Hallow your name to the reverberate hills
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out "Olivia!" ("Olivia! Olivia! Olivia!") O, you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth
But you should pity me.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.5.271–279]

[APPLAUSE]

JULIA LUPTON: So she talks about making the hills "reverberate" and Eric did a beautiful job with the echoing sound of "Olivia," which also, of course, sounds like Viola. But we can also hear Viola's virtuous being reverberating, right, as she moves between disclosure and reserve, opening and closing who she is. And in that pulse, that heartbeat of courage as *courage* [French pronunciation], she begins to snare the heart of Olivia as well.

I wanted to understand a couple of things about this passage. I wanted to understand the role of plant life, of that willow cabin, of that working of plants into a kind of a soft architecture that then becomes this living poetics of a half-disclosed love. I also wanted to understand the gender, sexuality, heartbeat of the passage a bit more as well. And so I interviewed a floral designer, Sam Nasstrom. Sam is a transgender person who worked as a personal trainer before discovering his passion working with flowers and plants, so he has a special relationship to virtue as capacity building. So we had an interview in which we read Shakespeare together and we also looked at some of Sam's floral artworks in the context of the willow cabin speech. [PHOTO]

And so here is a beautiful wedding arch, which Sam designed for an upscale Philadelphia do, and here's what he said about the structure. He said, "We are creating temporary love structures. I love this photo, because the microphone is sitting in the middle, as if the arch itself were about to speak." I love that, right? Because what Viola does is to make the willow cabin speak and that's what we have kind of communicated here by accident in this beautiful photograph. And Sam said, on the willow cabin, he says, "I really get how Viola has to engage in queer world building throughout the play and how exposed he is when he first arrives in Illyria. I've been there."

[PHOTO] And this is Sam with his husband, Shakespeare scholar Colby Gordon, who is here in the audience, beneath a kind of dissolved wedding arbor of free floating blooms, a deconstructed willow cabin. So, like Sam's arbors, Viola's willow cabin is also miked. It transforms sound into music, boughs into shade, and, above all, indifference into love. Weaving the supple branches of melancholy into an open structure, the willow cabin is both *chuppah* and *sukkah*, bushel and lamp, the fitting emblem of Viola's virtues. So in this play, in my play, in my *Twelfth Night*, "V" is for Viola. It is also for virtue, vitality, vulnerability, reverberate, and the double V, double-u, of world.

Now I'm going to turn to [LAUGHTER] job placement. We have a job placement problem in the humanities and I'm going to solve it tonight by reading Act 1, Scene 2, of *Twelfth Night* as an allegory of job placement. Seriously, I am. If anyone can do it, it's me.

So, as you may recall, Viola has been shipwrecked on the shores of Illyria. She is rescued by the Captain. She doesn't know if her twin brother, Sebastian, is dead or alive. And my twin sister, Ellen, is here in the audience. Twins are big in our family. Yet, by the end of the scene, she has a plan, she's going to go work as a boy page for Count Orsino. How does she get from despair and confusion to employment, my graduate students want to know? [LAUGHTER] So, to understand this, I read the scene with several groups of social workers, professional capacity builders, who I thought might give me some insight into the relationship between Viola and the Captain, and her ability to build resilience in *Twelfth Night* for herself and for others. So what did my reading partners help me see? What they helped me see is that Viola is a displaced person, who needs to find a placement.

So placement, along with virtue, has become a kind of key word for me in *Twelfth Night*. She is like any young person set adrift by family loss, abuse, or disaster, about to go into, say, foster care after being separated from her brother. We could also think of her as a refugee or an unaccompanied minor, a migrant to these unknown and potentially hostile shores, where her legal status is uncertain. Or we could think of her as a homeless, transgender teen. Think of how that opening scene of shipwreck takes the hermaphroditic symbol of the fraternal twins and catastrophically divides them, and Viola is a broken person, who has to figure out how to reincorporate the Sebastian into the Viola.

Or, if those are all hard sells, I submit this: What if she is an apprentice, a young person seeking service in a noble household, or perhaps in a theater, as Shakespeare might have done when he was seeking, perhaps, service in an unknown royal or noble household during his so-called "lost years"? Orphan, refugee, gender outlaw, or apprentice? The point is not to vote, and say one of these predicaments is more appropriate or fitting than another, but rather to begin to read the play for rhythms of distress and repair, of placement and displacement, across a range of situations and historical periods, to allow the play, in Viola's terms, to reverberate across situations in a kind of scansion of virtue.

The scene begins with her famous question, "What country, friends, is this?" In drama, but also in life, physical space is always also moral space. We want to know where we are geographically, but we also want ethical direction. We want to know what to do. So "What country, friends, is this?" means, "What norms and customs apply here? Do they relate to my own history and values? Is this a place of friends and friendship in that broader Aristotelian sense of *philia*?" That is, "Will I be able to cultivate the attachments I need to survive and flourish?" So if she is a young person in need of a placement, who is the Captain? Well, I'd like to suggest that the Captain is her caseworker.

He belongs to both ship and shore. He says, "I was bred and born / Not three hours' travel from this very place." She pays him a bit of money. He is not a guardian angel or a good Samaritan, but a capable working man. Together they consider the fate of Sebastian. She thinks he has died at sea, but then allows herself to hope. "Perchance he has not drowned.—What think you, sailors?"

And the Captain says, it was "perchance that you were saved," right, the happenstance in happiness, the demon in *eudaimonia*. So now we're going to listen for the virtue language in the Captain's description of Sebastian the twin, Sebastian's efforts to survive the sea. Eric.

ERIC HISSOM:

CAPTAIN:

True, madam. And to comfort you with chance,
Assure yourself, after our ship did split,
When you and those poor number saved with you
Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,
Most provident in peril, bind himself,
(Courage and hope both teaching him the practice)
To a strong mast that lived upon the sea,
Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,

I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1:2.9–18]

[APPLAUSE]

JULIA LUPTON: Thank you, Eric. So the Captain is sketching another virtue ecology and he is also describing virtue as capacity building. Sebastian is “provident in peril.” *Providere* means to look forward, to look around, to be able to scan the environment for potential help, where someone else might see only death and destruction.

Two virtues educate him, “teach him the practice” to scan the environment in this manner, and they are courage and hope, and they teach him to bind the floating mast, which someone else might see as sea trash, into a life preserver that will help him to get to shore. Notice that he does not fight the waves, taking “arms against the sea of troubles,” as Hamlet does, but rather “hold[s] acquaintance with the waves,” right? He treats them as friends in a conversation, perhaps as friends in an improvisational banter of the sort that we see later in the play, for example, between Viola and Feste. He is able to take the rhythms of the sea and coordinate his own breathing and expectations with the sea in order to survive.

Now, what helped me in articulating that reading was my conversation with social worker Aden Michael. When we read this passage together, she zeroed in on it, and she said that she commonly uses surfing metaphors when she is talking to clients in distress. “The water,” she tells her clients, “can either drown you or push you to shore.” So Sebastian, or I should say, Shakespeare, is using a very ancient metaphor. We can find this all the way back in Homer’s *Odyssey*, which continues to be current today as a way of talking about resilience and survival through capacity building.

Adoption specialist Sharon Roszia saw something else in this passage. What she called my attention to was the emphasis on the desire for the missing sibling. She said that, for adopted children who are seeking knowledge about their birth families, their first impulse is to find that lost brother or sister, because there is somewhat less resentment and fear around the sibling, than there is around the parent, and those siblings thus are more available as conduits of what Sebastian calls hope and courage.

Well, Viola is heartened, and what follows is a discussion of possible placements. Should Viola serve Olivia or Orsino? Learning that Olivia has also lost her brother, she is very attracted to the idea of seeking her patronage. She says:

VIOLA:

O, that I served that lady,
And might not be delivered to the world
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,
What my estate is.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.2.43–46]

So she's imagining here Olivia's veils becoming something like that bushel basket, under which she can hide her virtues, until she finds out whether her brother is alive or dead. It's the first articulation in the play of a virtue that Viola will later call patience, and patience is a kind of active latency. It's dynamis as comportment. It's a time of healing, of repair, and of expectancy.

The Captain informs her, however, that Olivia is not accepting placements right now. So, okay, she decides to serve Orsino instead, and she does what my social worker friends call a skills inventory:

VIOLA:
 for I can sing
And speak to him in many sorts of music
That will allow me very worth his service.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.2.60–62]

So an important part of capacity building is finding out what your capacities are, and what your resources might be, in developing those and making them into active strengths. Before she takes up this placement, however, she has to decide to trust the Captain, and these are kind of strange words, which I think are often cut from performance, because they don't seem to advance the story that much and there's something a little dark about them.

She says:

VIOLA:
There is a fair behavior in thee, captain,
And though that nature with a beauteous wall
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee
I will believe thou hast a mind that suits
With this thy fair and outward character.

[*Twelfth Night*, 1.2.50–54]

So I think we learn something important about Viola in these words. We learn that she is young, but not naive. She is somewhere between the "tiny little boy" and the disillusioned adult in Feste's final song of innocence and experience. The reference to "pollution" is troubling, but I think also revelatory. I think it points to some prior history of betrayal and abuse, perhaps the original sin that got these twins onto the boat to nowhere in the first place.

So, too, that word "eunuch," that we saw just a few seconds ago [*on a previous slide with more of the speech*], it gives a sexual wash to Viola's blank history, and again, pointing to fraternal twins as this ancient symbol of hermaphroditic union, and the violent birth of the shipwreck as creating a cleavage and difficulty in Viola's identity that needs to be reworked and healed in the play, I think the lines also impute some depth to the Captain as well. Aden Michael, herself a refugee from Eritrea, told me that the best social workers may be those

that had themselves undergone momentous life changes. What Aden taught me to infer is that this is not the Captain's first shipwreck, nor is it Shakespeare's.

So what I'm suggesting here is that the Captain is a kind of caseworker with his own water-logged baggage, that Viola is a talented and charismatic, but also damaged, young person, and that their dialogue is a kind of intake interview. "Who are you? What brought you here? And why are you so alone? Who in this virtue-poor community can best employ shelter or foster you? What are your skills and talents? What are your needs and disabilities? And finally, why should you trust me?"

This is an exercise in "placement" in the human resources and social services sense: job placement, placement in foster care, placement in a shelter or program. Placement requires orientation. It requires an inventory of skills. It requires partnership with a worldly guide and it ends, when it ends successfully, in a decision to take up residence or employment somewhere. In dramaturgy, placement involves blocking, right? It's that very inventive and basic working out of the spaces, the moral spaces and the physical spaces of a play, as a director works with actors to find their ways into a role and into a story. In this early scene, we're really listening to Viola and the Captain, but also to Shakespeare, blocking the play, roughing out its spaces of actions, its great households, its scenes of shelter and service. Placement implies displacement, but it emphasizes the creative efforts of mending and patching that animate virtue as capacity building.

I became attuned to the word "placement" in one of my interviews with the adoption group. I referred casually in my conversation to one of my interviewees as having "given her daughter up" for adoption. And the woman kind of stopped and she looked at me, and she said, "I'm sorry, but we don't say 'give up,' we say, 'place.'" And it was an aha moment for me, because in that simple word, "place," I suddenly got access to a whole dynamic, a whole virtue dynamic of loss and gain, of difficulty and advance, and it really changed my reading of the play and my understanding of some basic functions of placement. It really got me thinking about placement in these different frames here, from social services to dramaturgy to moral space.

Now, the work of the theater proceeds precisely by building the capacities of its many players. When actors do voice work, or fight choreography, or any kind of movement training, it is never simply technical. They're working with their whole beings and they're working with their whole beings in concert with other actors and with the physical space in a great dance of trust. So, in order to understand this better, I felt like I needed to interview an actor, because it seemed to me that each actor has found their way to theater from some kind of shipwreck in search of a placement where their capacities can unfold.

And so, I interviewed actor activist Lisa Wolpe. You might know her as the founder of the Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company. And she shared with me that at age 19, she was asked to play Viola. And that when she put on those boy's clothes, she discovered a huge extension of possibility, not only in what an actor could do, but in what a person could do. Needless to say, Viola was a gateway drug, because she moved on to play Hamlet and Iago and Shylock and a lot of other great roles, and she now works with all-female, gay, queer, and trans groups of actors all over the world, directing them in Shakespeare. This is an enterprise in capacity building.

Like the Christmas season announced in the play's title, *Twelfth Night* begins with nativity, a hidden birth, and it ends with epiphany, a scene of recognition and common fellowship.

The nativity at stake is not the Baby Jesus. It is Viola, born violently from a sea of troubles into a world she helps renew despite herself. And epiphany belongs to every character who is allowed to gather on stage in the final cascade of discoveries in Act 5. For me, the key word in Act 5 is the word "participate." We're going to hear that word "participate" in this beautiful passage, in which the twin Sebastian begins to reveal himself to his twin sister, Viola. Eric.

ERIC HISSOM:

SEBASTIAN:

A spirit I am indeed,
But am in that dimension grossly clad
Which from the womb I did participate.
Were you a woman, as the rest goes even,
I would my tears let fall upon thy cheek
And say "Thrice welcome, drownèd Viola."

[*Twelfth Night*, 5.1.248–253]

[APPLAUSE]

JULIA LUPTON: "Thrice welcome," indeed. So what's participation? Participation seems to begin in this passage with the unity of flesh and spirit and the human person. It also seems to point back to that mystery of the male and the female twins in a single birth and to the mystery of the conception of Viola/Sebastian. But participation also points outward to fellowship, to Sebastian's participating in a common humanity with other people. Theater, of course, is a participatory art. So is literary education and so is virtue.

The humanities need a *Twelfth Night*. They need a Feast of the Epiphany. We are actually very comfortable hiding our virtues beneath specialized language and the sense of professionalism. How do we remove the bushel basket? How do we make manifest the capacities that we build? How do we show that literary education makes students braver, more attentive, and more resilient? How do works of literature and philosophy orient their readers in the world? And how can we help students translate those capacities as they seek their own placements after graduation?

For an example of this virtue-work in action, I'd like to point, by way of conclusion, to *Arden / Everywhere*, which is a production of *As You Like It* that was directed by Jessica Bauman in New York City. And she worked with immigrant actors and non-actors and incorporated their stories into a modern retelling of *As You Like It* in a refugee camp. And I was very taken, inspired if you will, by this work and I wanted to bring it to UC Irvine and try to recreate some aspect of it in a site-specific way that would resonate with our own current projects and places.

So last fall we opened a food pantry at UC Irvine, because a large number of our students who are first generation, DACA, immigrant students are coming to school hungry and it is very hard for them to learn when they're hungry. So this student-run and student-serving food bank, which was also founded by a humanities alum, Andrea Gutierrez, is going to be the site for our work on *As You Like It*, where we're going to bring together themes of migration with themes of food insecurity and engage students, who are both workers and clients of the food pantry, in a Shakespearean project that will also educate the campus about the issues around hunger and shelter that our first generation and other students are suffering. And we'll link to other food-related humanities projects that we also have under way.

And I want to commend the Folger for doing their *Before Farm to Table* program, which is also bringing together many of these issues for Shakespeare studies. Programming like this, whether at the Folger or at UC Irvine, puts virtues into action, while offering philosophy and literature as tools for living.

As for Sir Toby's question, "Is it a world to hide virtues in?" No. Because the world, guys, that we cohabit, peeps, can only be healed by human action. But virtue sometimes means leaning back before leaning in, by letting events "mellow," as Viola puts it. Our kids would say, "chillax."

The humanities do build capacities through our student-centered teaching, through the wisdom of the texts entrusted to our care, and through welcoming other knowledge partners—social workers, floral artists, actor activists—into the texts that we love and the work that we do. In *Twelfth Night* and on every night, living is always assisted living and virtue is always patched. So is scholarship, and that's a good thing, too.

But I think we should give the last words to Shakespeare. Let this be our birthday gift to him, who has given us so much. Eric.

ERIC HISSOM (SINGING):

[INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC]

FOOL:

When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

And when I came to man's estate,
With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
Against knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas, to wive,
With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
With tosspots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.

[INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC]

A great while ago the world begun,
With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

[*Twelfth Night*, 5.1.412–431]

[APPLAUSE]