

Project Title: Directing Shakespeare in America - Book One: Preparing for Production

Investigator: Charles Ney

Department: Theatre & Dance

Project Summary: Although I received approximately half of the support that I asked for, I was able to stretch my financial resources to conduct research travel. I spent considerable time during the summer of 2008 at the Folger Library in Washington, DC where I examined relevant books from their archives. I wrote the initial and final chapter as well as outlined the entire book. Additionally I conducted interviews with six artistic directors of prominent Shakespeare theaters: Michael Kahn of The Shakespeare Theatre (DC), Oskar Eustis of The Public Theater's New York Shakespeare Festival, Des McAnuff of the Stratford Festival of Canada, Bonnie Monte of the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (2nd interview), Bill Rausch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (2nd interview), and Ralph Allen Cohen of the American Shakespeare Center. In addition I was able to interview several other noted directors of Shakespeare, including Lisa Peterson, Kate Buckley and Mark Lamos.

During this grant period, I was able to make considerable headway on my book, *Directing Shakespeare in America*. I wrote one article for *American Theatre* and presented two papers: one for the Mid America Theatre Conference and one for a Shakespeare conference at the University of Illinois.

To date all of the director interviews conducted for the book have been transcribed—a total of 15 interviews during the period of this grant. I also saw 12 additional productions of Shakespeare by directors involved in the study.

This grant has helped me make valuable progress towards completion of the larger multi-year investigation of America's directors of Shakespeare.

Publications: "The Monte Spin," Interview and article on Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey artistic director Bonnie Monte's work, *American Theatre*, April 2008

Presentations: "Extreme Shakespeare and the Director's Choice," Mid-America Theatre Conference, March 2008

"Directing Shakespeare in America: Early 21st Century Perspectives," University of Illinois Shakespeare Conference, March 2008

Student Number: 1