



# The Sagittarius ORION-Shaw Pilot Project

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The Sagittarius ORION-Shaw Pilot Project at <http://shaw.yorku.ca> provides teaching librarians with a new online resource free of charge, if their universities or school boards are connected to Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION). In the first phase of the pilot study, two Shaw Festival 2009 season plays—*The Devil's Disciple* and *In Good King Charles's Golden Days*—were digitized. Researchers, students, and teachers are able to access annotated texts and resources for the plays directly from their offices and classrooms. Included are the production details, classroom resources, contextual documents, research materials, quizzes and activities, a concordance, search engine, and study guides tailored to the Ontario school curriculum. Reference materials—many of them out of print and others newly written for the website—make available the work of world-renowned Shaw scholars.

The Sagittarius ORION-Shaw Pilot Project is the result of a research partnership with York University, ORION, the International Shaw Society, the Shaw Festival, and the Shaw Estate in the UK. York University Library is responsible for digitizing the works.

The project provides a window to the next generation of library collections. Teaching librarians are provided with new freedom in unprecedented ways. First, the ultra high-speed ORION network, often running at gigabit speed and significantly faster than the speed of home Internet, enables a large number of image, text, and sound files to be transmitted instantaneously. Therefore, the website can feature digitized books, concordances of full texts, interactive quizzes and games, and videos made at the Shaw Festival, which would have overloaded any normal internet connection.

Next, the online resource challenges the notion of “out of print.” Many of the articles the Shaw scholars and publishers provide free of charge are out of print, but they are now available online and therefore no longer “out of print.”

Thirdly, the project makes use of the freedom brought by Canadian copyright law. Bernard Shaw is a British writer who was born on July 26, 1856 and died on November 2, 1950. According to UK copyright law (the 1988 Copyright, Designs and Patents Act), the duration of copyright for literary, dramatic, musical, or artistic works is 70 years from the end of the calendar year in which the last remaining author of the work dies. Hence, Shaw's works are in copyright until 2020. Canadian copyright law is governed by the Copyright Act, which reads: “The term for which copyright shall subsist shall, except as otherwise expressly provided by this Act, be the life of the author, the remainder of the calendar year in which the author dies, and a period of fifty years following the end of that calendar year.” Shaw's plays, therefore, went out of copyright in Canada in 2000. The restrictive nature of the ORION network ensures that the content will stay within Canada.

“This project introduces a whole new dimension for students, teachers and researchers, especially in access to and dissemination of research materials,” says Professor Kelly Thomson, former Associate Dean Research of Atkinson Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies, York University, and Chair of the Advisory Board of the Sagittarius Project.

“We are very excited about this new and innovative project,” said Professor Leonard Conolly of Trent University, Literary Advisor to the Estate of Bernard Shaw and Vice-President of the International Shaw Society. “This clearly has the potential of not only expanding appreciation and understanding of Shaw's work, but also of making it more accessible to new audiences through new technologies.”

For more information, visit <http://shaw.yorku.ca> or contact Tamara Stoll, Communications Officer, ORION, at (416) 507-9860 ext. 224 or by email at [tamara.stoll@orion.on.ca](mailto:tamara.stoll@orion.on.ca). ■

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