Macbeth: Act Three – Deconstruction

- Post-modern Theory formulated by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault (Fr Lingquists)

- Examining the relationship (in speech) between the “sign” (word ;-) ) and its “signification” (meaning)

- Mapped the “rupture” of language

- “Gap” between the thought and the utterance of a word (any moment of your thoughts – impossible to express that entire “moment”)

- They found the “gap” or “difference” to represent a myriad (a lot) of associations and meanings, infinite

- It’s impossible, therefore, to pinpoint ONE meaning… therefore, there is no TRUTH

ex. “Hello” – question? anyone home? I like what I see…, “dah,” answering the phone, answering the phone while tired, answering the phone being interrupted, greeting an old friend…

ex. “The reason I have to love thee/Doth much excuse the appertaining rage/To such a greeting” (3.1)… the exchange between Romeo and Tybalt directly after the marriage, and right before Romeo kills Tybalt underlies the inherent contradictions of love and hate in R & J.

-- In literature, we use these types of multiple associations to examine the “rupture” of meaning in language (play), how language/words “deconstruct” themselves

In Macbeth:

a) Kingship: associated with Duncan – nice, gracious, generous, appreciated, respected, admired, followed loyally; later, these associations are disrupted when Macbeth becomes; other representations of “kingship” associated with the English King; another version exists in history; present in his absence

b) Traitor: treason – associated with Macdonwald, Thane of Cawdor, “words” of loyalty and what is owed to a king; then – Macbeth becomes the traitor; already, Macduff is being “traitorous” by not going to Scone; references to the traitors who acted against King James (Gunpowder Plot)

c) Role of women: “meant” to be submissive, but, they’re subversive; Lady Macbeth & witches

\*\* words and ideas are “refashioned” throughout the play