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# Editing Shakespeare Violence, Text and Commodity in The Taming of the Shrew

Kathryn E. Vomero

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*Editing Shakespeare*

**Violence, Text and Commodity  
in *The Taming of the Shrew***

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in English and Textual Studies with Honors

May 2007

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## Abstract

*Editing Shakespeare: Violence, Text, and Commodity in The Taming of the Shrew* is an edition of one of Shakespeare's earliest and most controversial comedies aimed at an undergraduate audience. Textually, *The Taming of the Shrew* is a complex and controversial play because two radically different versions of it have survived. My edition is written in the context of two other controversies, namely the function of scholarship in the humanities given Syracuse University's commitment to scholarship in action and the abiding problem of domestic abuse.

Though the printing industry is a driving force behind the production of new editions of Shakespearean texts, it is the social issue of domestic abuse that keeps *The Taming of the Shrew* at the forefront of classroom discussion. As we continue to debate the role of women in both early modern and contemporary domestic spheres, this text, a case study in domestic violence, provides an appropriate starting point and challenges our social response to literature that offers a representation of household abuse even within the frame of comedy.

Historicizing Shakespeare's play allows for a careful consideration of the texts and other cultural works that predate and accompany Shakespeare in the historical moment that saw the writing and production of this play. The most intense historical debate that underlies *The Taming of the Shrew* questions the relationship between Shakespeare's play and a rival text titled *The Taming of a Shrew*. This textual debate questions authorship and authenticity as well as the nature of performance in and of the play itself.

The critical debate centers itself in yet another controversy—the resolution of the play's taming narrative. The focus of this resolution is Kate's (in)famous final speech, and scholars have presented a variety of readings of these last lines. For decades, scholarship has asked, is Kate's verbal expression of wifely obedience a true sign of her submission, or does she assert her authority by using the very structures of oppression to her own advantage?

*The Taming of the Shrew* proves to be an elusive text. It demands focused and dedicated editorial labor and an historical yet modern frame of mind. The multitude of critical reflections, each with variant readings of the play's gender dynamics, demonstrates that the play has maintained its presence in scholarly consciousness despite its status as a nearly four-hundred-year-old text. My edition works toward a uniquely comprehensive synthesis of contextual and critical materials and seeks to serve undergraduate students as an accessible and valuable version of this perennial play.

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## *Acknowledgements*

I would like to thank Professor Dympna Callaghan—a scholar, a teacher, and a woman whom I admire. I am indebted to her for so many scholarly opportunities, especially the privilege of working on this edition of *The Taming of the Shrew* and the chance to teach my findings in her course on Shakespeare. She has been the most important force in my development as a person and a scholar during my years at Syracuse University.

Professor Charles Martin’s brilliant translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* has been influential in my growing knowledge of the Roman poet and his influence on the poets and playwrights of the early modern period. I truly appreciate his patience and understanding of the delays associated with the editorial process, and I look forward to reading his forthcoming Norton Critical Edition of *The Metamorphoses*.

I am thankful for Professor Chris Kyle’s guidance while working closely and critically within the pedagogy of the university classroom. The unique opportunity to participate in the preparation and presentation of classroom material for his course on Tudor and Stuart England will be absolutely essential in my future pursuits as a Ph.D. student and professor at the university level.

My family, friends, and loving boyfriend must be thanked for maintaining constant support of my endeavors with this elusive document I have referred to only as “The Thesis” while furiously typing away in my room buried among my ever-growing collection of library materials on *The Taming of the Shrew*. I would

like to especially thank my roommate for her understanding when these materials would occasionally flow out into our common living area.

I am also grateful for all those involved with the dedication of the Syracuse University's Center for the Public and Collaborative Humanities, especially Sam Gorovitz and Steve Wright of the Honors Program, for providing the special occasion to reflect on my experiences and goals as an aspiring scholar in the humanities. This renewed sense of purpose in my discipline has been instrumental in the final phases of this edition and thesis project. I will undoubtedly take the experience of the dedication of the Center with me as I move forward in my academic career.

# *Introduction*

## **Edition in Action**

In a recent message to the Syracuse University community, Chancellor Nancy Cantor said the following:

As a member of the Syracuse University community, I cannot help but think about the devastating effects of the scourge of domestic violence. My conscience and my scholarship compel me to take a stand against it in collaboration with the entire University community. While we may never root out all of the causes of violence, we must not deny its horrifying effects on people from all walks of life. We know that the issue is an especially important one for colleges and universities, as women ages 16-24 are the population most often victimized by gender-based violence.

In keeping with its proud tradition of positive, scholarly impact, Syracuse University maintains a powerful commitment to learning about, teaching and effectively practicing violence prevention. Students, faculty and staff have been engaged in violence prevention in the Syracuse City School District, groundbreaking research into family dynamics, and establishment of nimble, compassionate protocols for responding to relationship violence.

William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, among the most controversial in the canon, brings the issue of domestic violence that Chancellor Cantor asks us to consider to the forefront of literary discussion in the university classroom. This early Shakespearean comedy is a case study in domestic violence. It celebrates male dominance in marital and social hierarchies and encourages abusive behaviors toward women within a comical framework. The play empowers us to talk about these issues not exclusively in the context of early modern England, but as they have maintained a continuous presence in our social and academic consciousness.

Unwilling to allow his younger, more temperate daughter, Bianca, to marry any one of her multiple suitors until his famously shrewish daughter Katherine (later renamed Kate) is wed, Baptista Minola sets forth a challenge to anyone daring enough to take his sharp-tongued and disobedient daughter as his wife in exchange for a handsome dowry. Bold and confident, Petruchio outlines an elaborate plan to marry Kate and tame her. His tactics include a near jilting on their wedding day, deprivation of food and sleep, and the commanded destruction of household goods. The shining moment of Petruchio's plan occurs when Kate agrees to call the sun the moon at Petruchio's command. At the play's end, Kate delivers a speech of full compliance that demonstrates that her taming is complete. Her model behavior supersedes that of her previously obedient sister, and Petruchio emerges victorious as the husband with the perfectly tamed wife.

To achieve the continuity that keeps *The Taming of the Shrew* in our intellectual and social awareness, we enter into the scholarly question of relevance. As a capstone project, this thesis is the culmination of my undergraduate academic career such that it encapsulates my own scholarly conscience and provides an appropriate moment to reflect before proceeding with my studies and future professional career in the field of literature. Throughout my career as an undergraduate student of English and Textual Studies, I have felt compelled to find a way of packaging my scholarship as pragmatic, important, and *relevant*. I have been called upon to defend the humanities from a practical point of view on occasions such as the dedication of Syracuse University's Center for the Public and Collaborative Humanities. Such defense is important to the

discipline and has been part of a literary consciousness from Philip Sidney's "Apology for Poetry" onward. Yet, my individual research and pursuit of an intellectual project, this capstone to my undergraduate academic career, must first be situated in the irrelevant, which is not to be defined as the unimportant but rather, that which transcends the narrow category of relevance.

In many ways, our chancellor's call to action in this instance of domestic violence asks us to take scholarship out of its concern for itself and search for ways to make it relevant. However, I find myself frequently asking whether I am engaging in scholarship in action or *scholarship inaction*. In the spirit of Shakespeare and his masterful playing on words, I call attention to the pun here to demonstrate that scholarship in the humanities is both publicly engaged scholarship and scholarship for its own sake, which should not be confused with the perceived idle nature of scholarship in the humanities, as the word "inaction" may connote. As Professor Dymphna Callaghan's editorial assistant for the Norton Critical Edition of *The Taming of the Shrew*, I can attest to the fact that editorial labor is indeed scholarship in action. Producing a teaching edition for undergraduate students with the intention of making the play more accessible will ultimately facilitate continued discussion of the critical issues that are in tune with the current issue of domestic abuse taken up by the Syracuse University community. In order to teach these topics, professors and their students will need an authoritative and accessible version of the play.

To produce a text that would serve as this authoritative edition and place the issue of gender and domestic abuse at the forefront of classroom discussion,

we must first deal with concerns and obstacles that are exclusively relevant to the text, including modernizing language, adapting to current typeface and layout, and annotating words whose meaning is no longer clear. However, to create an edition that is both accessible and valuable for undergraduate students, we must then look at the continuity of the play's social issues, the most obvious being that of domestic abuse against women. While the publishing industry propels this need for new texts to run on the presses, and scholarly interest in textual concerns for their own sake should never be reduced to social issues, we must also consider the continuity of these issues as one of the driving forces behind early modern textual scholarship.

**Prolegomena for *The Taming of the Shrew: A Norton Critical Edition***

R.B. McKerrow published the *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare* in 1939. In his reflection on his own editorial procedures as General Editor of the subsequent edition of the same text in 1984, Stanley Wells quotes McKerrow: “he had not realized ‘how little systematic consideration seemed ever to have been given to editorial methods as applied to English writings in general and those of Shakespeare in particular’” (Wells 6). Nearly seventy years later, this is no longer the case as multiple books have been published regarding editorial theory and technique. Yet, as Ann Thompson notes in her user's guide to editions, *Which Shakespeare?*, “There seems to be no end to the editing of Shakespeare” (Thompson 1).

My prolegomena, or prefatory remarks, serve to introduce and interpret the thesis that follows based on my experience in assisting in the editing *The*

*Taming of the Shrew* for the Norton Critical Edition of this early Shakespearean comedy. This thesis attempts to show the edition and the quest for the authoritative text *in process*.

The Norton Critical Editions is a series of student editions of classical works. About the texts, W.W. Norton & Company states:

No other series of classic texts achieves the editorial standard of the Norton Critical Editions. Each volume combines the most authoritative text available with contextual and critical materials that bring the work to life for students. Careful editing, first-rate translation, thorough explanatory annotations, chronologies, and selected bibliographies make each text accessible to students while encouraging in-depth study. (NCE)

William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*: A Norton Critical Edition, edited by Dympna Callaghan will total 288 pages and will have an initial print run of 5,000 copies in December 2007. As it is a student edition, Norton has priced the paperback book at \$7.00. The edition will have four sections: The Text of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Sources and Contexts, Criticism, and Rewritings and Appropriations. The edition will conclude with a Selected Bibliography for reference and suggestions for further research.

This thesis mirrors the organization and presentation of the edition itself. It includes a color-coded version of text of the play, along with a discussion of the changes made and the history of such changes; explanations and excerpts of the sources and contexts; excerpts and engaged discussion of the critical essays chosen to accompany the text; and a brief account of the adaptations that have

arisen since the first publication of the play. The thesis concludes, as the edition will, with a selected bibliography. I have also included a series of appendices that shed light on the processes of working with other publishers to obtain permissions and rights to reprint intellectual property.

Though there are decades of editions, some as part of anthologies and others individually published, of this and all Shakespearean plays, we should, as careful and confident scholars, continue to challenge the notion of a complete and authoritative edition. Producing the “most authoritative text available,” is a difficult task because *The Taming of the Shrew* is nearly four centuries old. The age of the play brings with it differences in language, meaning, and typographical devices. Stanley Wells states that the task of the modern editor is “bringing his readers nearer to what Shakespeare wrote” (Wells). However, this in itself is yet another difficult task because we have no manuscript or “autographed copy” of Shakespeare’s work. What we do have is a printed edition compiled by Shakespeare’s contemporaries. This printed edition is known as the *First Folio Edition of 1623 of William Shakespeare’s Dramatic Works*.

The majority of the work done within the context of this thesis project is not readily visible. Countless hours were spent in the library and searching online databases such as JSTOR and ABELL Literature Online, compiling my own database and bibliography of essays, articles, and other critical material written about this play since its original publication. Additionally, I was responsible for comparing the text of multiple editions in scrupulous detail, checking the spelling and presentation of every word and often questioning the difference between a

period and a comma or the role of a stray mark on the page of the facsimile of the First Folio. The electronic version of the text of the play used in this project is a reproduction from the website “Internet Shakespeare Editions,” supported by The University of Victoria and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. However, like any transcription, especially a transcription from an early modern typeface and printing method quite different from our own, this electronic text had occasional errors in punctuation and spelling. Checking for these sorts of errors involved a repeated shift of the eyes in order to compare every character on the page with those on the screen. Careful comparison of this online edition and the Folio ensures a more accurate text for Norton and for its academic clientele because it provides the foundation for the edition. This corrected electronic version of the Folio is what I have been modernizing to produce the manuscript that will be sent to Norton to be published in December of this year.

## *Text: The Text of The Taming of the Shrew*

Before the advent of Early English Books Online, an online database of digitalized facsimiles of early modern texts, few undergraduate students maintained any kind of interaction with the *First Folio Edition of 1623 of William Shakespeare's Dramatic Works* due to virtual inaccessibility. Few copies of this original text still exist, and they are kept under strict control at the country's most prestigious libraries, such as the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C. and the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. With the wealth of modern printed editions in affordable paperback format, students keep their distance from this nearly four-hundred-year-old first edition because it is either intimidating or difficult to understand. To bridge this gap of time and language that has developed between the modern student and the First Folio of 1623 (an irremovable intermediary between William Shakespeare the writer and any reader because we have no version of Shakespeare's work written in his own hand), the editor must responsibly return to this Folio text to ensure accuracy and to ultimately produce a far more intimate experience for the reader by making changes not based solely on the changes already made in modern editions but from the text of the first printed edition.

The foundation of a solid relationship between the editor and the First Folio text, however, is a critical analysis and understanding of the problems associated with the Folio itself as an early modern printed document. The

frontispiece of the Folio reads: “Mr. William Shakespeares/ Comedies, Histories,  
&/Tragedies./ Published according to the True Originall Copies.”

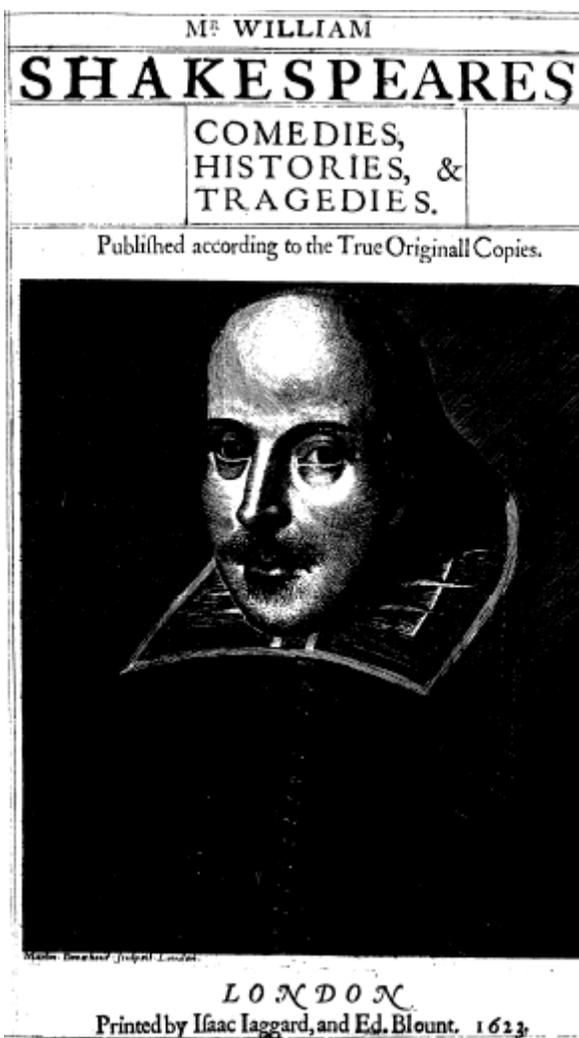


Figure 1. Frontispiece of The First Folio of 1623

This title alone indicates that the edition is once removed from the author himself and based on copies whose “true” and “originall” nature may be subject to question. David Kastan asks, “But what is in that book?” Answering his own question he adds,

Shakespeare is, of course, there somewhere, but certainly not whole and unadulterated; the texts themselves are based on scribal copies and

authorial manuscripts, annotated quartos and prompt books; they reflect both first thoughts and later theatrical additions. They reveal his active engagement in the collaborations of the theater company and his passive acceptance of the collaborations in the printing house. (Kastan 69)

Once the relationship between the editor and the First Folio text has been established with a fuller understanding of the problems associated with the Folio, it is then the responsibility of the editor to make editorial decisions about whether or not to make changes to the text and how to make such changes. The first of these changes is both orthographical and typographical and can be more specifically placed under the category we know as spelling. It is well understood that early modern spelling was not only different from the modern spelling we recognize as readers and writers of English today; it was also highly unstandardized, which led to inconsistencies in spelling within the same text and even within the very same set of lines in a single play. For example, in the lines that follow, the word that we read as “lordship” appears twice, separated by a mere five lines, and is spelled both “Lordship” and “Lordshippe.”

*Ser.* An't please your Honor, Players  
That offer service to your **Lordship**.

*Enter Players.*

*Lord.* Bid them come neere:

Now fellowes, you are welcome.

*Players.* We thanke your Honor.

*Lord.* Do you intend to stay with me to night?

*2. Player.* So please your **Lordshippe** to accept our  
dutie. (Ind.i.85-92)

Before making hasty changes to correct spelling deemed wrong or inconsistent by the modern reader, however, the editor must ask, what is the benefit of creating an

edition with modernized spelling?

This procedure, traditional in editions of Shakespeare, removes unnecessary barriers to understanding, making it possible for the reader to concentrate on the text itself, undistracted by obsolete and archaic accidentals of presentation. Thus, his reading experience is closer to that of Shakespeare's contemporaries, who also read the plays in what was, for them, a modern form. (Wells vi)

In short, modernizing spelling simulates the conditions under which Shakespeare's contemporaries heard and read his plays.

In comparing the Folio text with various modern editions and applying contemporary standard usage, I have discovered that the changes made in the modernizing process can be categorized in four ways: the orthographical problem of the letters u/v, i/j, and vv/w; a general category of spelling with various subdivisions; standards of capitalization; and metrical consideration and preservation.

The "u" and "v" are not distinguished phonetically in early modern English spelling. In general, the "u" character is used for both the *v* and *u* sound when it occurs in the middle of a word, such as "haue (have)," and the "v" character is normally used for either sound at the beginning of a word, such as "vpon (upon)." A similar phenomenon occurs between the characters "i" and "j" and between "vv" (a double "v") and the modern "w." Throughout the text, these typographical variants appear to be used interchangeably (Griffin 1).

The general category of spelling cited above is complex. One of the most common differences in spelling is created by the greater presence of the silent "e,"

typically at the end of words, in early modern spelling. The silent "e" occurs much more frequently in early modern English than it does now. Some editors believe that it does not affect the way that a modern reader reads the text, while others choose to modernize the words for consistency. Another instance of alternate spelling is the early modern use of the double "ee" in place of the modern combination "ie." We also see the common exchange of the "y" at the end of a word for the early modern "ie." Yet, outside the scope of these patterns I have observed in my research, there remain differences in spelling that are simply that—differences in spelling.

In many ways, the capitalization of words that occurs in the Folio appears to be quite random. The standard of capitalization in terms of its relation to what was considered a proper noun is seemingly inconsistent. It might make sense for words such as "Honor" and "Lordship" to be capitalized as terms or titles of direct address, but it is difficult to rationalize the same for capitalized words such as "Onion" and "Napkin" (0.ii.122-3). Burton Raffel suggests that capitalization reflects stressed and unstressed words, but this is not anywhere near consistently executed throughout the text. Each edition of the play that I consulted compensated for this inconsistency by eliminating extraneous or stylistic capitalization in order to visually harmonize with the modern standard of capitalization for nouns. However, extended discussion of Shakespeare's standards of capitalization and the changes it has undergone in previous editions appears to be virtually absent from scholarly work.

Another major orthographical concern is the maintenance of meter.

Shakespearean plays are written in blank verse, which is defined by lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter. In its most regular form, each line consists of five feet, or iambs, which have two syllables that alternate in an unstressed/stressed pattern. Thus, in order to maintain this meter, the Shakespearean editor adds an accent where it would not normally fall for our modern pronunciation. For example, in a line such as “Unto their lords by them accomplished,” marked accentuation is necessary to bring the reader closer to the sound of a Shakespearean production and nearer to the experience of his contemporary listeners and readers.

When the methods of scansion, the analysis of a line of poetry for foot and meter, are applied to this line by the modern reader, allowing “\_” to indicate an unstressed syllable and “/” to indicate a stressed one, the final syllable of “accomplished” consists of the letters “plished,” and the final foot loses its stressed component. In other words, the word ends on an unstressed syllable and does not conform to the unstressed/stressed pattern of the iamb.

\_ / \_ / \_ / \_ / \_  
 Unto their lords by them accomplished.

By adding an accent or stress mark on the “e” of “accomplished” to read “accomplishèd,” the group “ed” becomes its own stressed syllable, and Shakespearean iambic pentameter is restored. The scansion thus reads:

\_ / \_ / \_ / \_ / \_ /  
 Unto their lords by them accomplishèd.

There remain other cases in which the older spelling must be retained for similar metrical considerations. Some instances call for the harmless expansion of a contracted word such as “warm’d” to read “warmed” simply to aid a modern reader. Expanding a contracted word such as “flatt’ring” to read “flattering,” however, renders a formerly bi-syllabic word tri-syllabic, which may, in fact, destroy the metrical pattern whose execution has made Shakespeare the famous poet we continue to study.

Part of the larger category of prosody, or intonation, is punctuation. The issue of modernizing or editing the punctuation that appears in the Folio is a delicate one. Punctuation affects not only the way we hear but the way we read as well. The Shakespearean editor is in the precarious position to mediate this shift from the stage to the page—and from the early modern page to the modern one. It is important to note that printing was a rather new technology at the time of the Folio’s printing and often fell victim to carelessness or haste. In my own close reading of the Folio, I found instances of letters positioned upside down—the word “neuer” appears as “ueuer,” which seems to be a simple mistake in the placement of type. In his introduction to the edition of *Shrew* in The Annotated Shakespeare Series published by Yale University Press, Burton Raffel is careful to note that regardless of such casual errors and what may be the result of liberties taken by printers who compiled Shakespeare’s work in 1623, the Folio is probably the closest thing we will ever have to a surviving manuscript of Shakespeare’s work. Therefore, “twentieth century minds have no business, in such matters, overruling seventeenth century ones” (Raffel xv). The individuals

behind the printing press were his contemporaries, and they determined punctuation according to the way their ears heard the text. It is “inappropriate,” “undesirable,” and “risky,” according to Raffel, to be replacing early modern punctuation with our own (Raffel xv).

In the sample modernized text that follows, I track the orthographical changes by use of a color-coding method for the purposes of this thesis project. In the published edition, the text will appear in its modernized form in black and white. Spelling changes that arise from the early modern use of the letters “v,” “u,” “i” and “vv” in place of “u,” “v,” “j,” and “w” are colored **green**. Changes in capitalization are colored **violet**. Metrical considerations and preservations are **rose**, and changes that are the result of a completely a variant spelling are colored **red**. To aid the undergraduate reader, words that are contracted such as “warm’d” have been expanded to read “warmed,” as indicated earlier. These changes are colored **blue**. When there are two or more corrections to be made to the same word, the word appears corrected in one of the aforementioned colors according to one of the necessary changes. In parentheses next to the word is a number that indicates the quantity of changes made to that one word, and the color of the number corresponds to the secondary changes made. For example, a word that appears as “Beleeue” in the First Folio is changed to the modern version, “believe.” This involves three changes: (1) making the word lower-case, (2) the use of a ‘v’ instead of a ‘u,’ and (3) a change in spelling between the double ‘ee’ and the ‘ie’ of the modern spelling.

There are arguments to be made against this kind of modernization. The

hesitance to modernize rests within a general concern for preservation. However, more specifically, the resistance toward modernization proves beneficial in particular cases. Similar to the aforementioned concern for the preservation of meter in certain instances of contracted words, “a case can be made for departing from *OED*’s modern spelling when an old spelling helps the reader to see that a word is not what he might otherwise suppose” (Wells 15). Wells explains that the act of preserving an original spelling that is noticeably different from the modern spelling of the word draws attention to an obsolete meaning, which would of course be footnoted, and therefore, eliminates “unwanted modern associations” (Wells 15).

Concessions and exceptions aside, Wells offers a summary of an overall positive scholarly attitude toward the processes of modernization:

“Modernization of spelling, responsibly undertaken, may thus be seen not, as some would have it, as a work of popularization, even of vulgarization, but as a means of exploring Shakespeare’s text that can make a real contribution to scholarship” (Wells 34). Such close interaction with the original text not only produces a more approachable text for its modern readers through informed alteration; it also allows for a moment of reflection on the history of Shakespeare and the book. Editorial scholarship questions the very elusive nature of an authoritative text and the extent of the role we can assume in creating such an edition.

A second set of concerns regarding changes to be made to the text of *The Taming of the Shrew* is that of footnoting or annotating the text. In Act III, Scene

II, Petruchio returns to the stage wearing an utterly outrageous wedding ensemble:

*Bion.* Why *Petruchio* is comming, in a new hat and an old ierkin<sup>1</sup>, a paire of old breeches<sup>2</sup> thrice turn'd<sup>3</sup>; a paire of bootes that haue beene candle-cases<sup>4</sup>, one buckled, another lac'd: an olde rusty sword tane out of the Towne Armory<sup>5</sup>, with a broken hilt, and chapelesse<sup>6</sup>: with two broken points<sup>7</sup>: his horse hip'd<sup>8</sup> with an olde mothy saddle, and stirrops of no kindred<sup>9</sup>: besides posset<sup>10</sup> with the glanders<sup>11</sup>, and like<sup>12</sup> to mose in the chine,<sup>13</sup> troubled with the Lampasse<sup>14</sup>, infected with the fashions,<sup>15</sup> full of Windegalls,<sup>16</sup> sped with Spauins,<sup>17</sup> raied with the Yel-lowes,<sup>18</sup> past cure of the Fiues,<sup>19</sup> starke spoyl'd with the Staggers,<sup>20</sup> begnawne<sup>21</sup> with the Bots,<sup>22</sup> Waid in the backe, and shoulder-shotten,<sup>23</sup> neere leg'd before,<sup>24</sup> and with a halfe-chekt<sup>25</sup> Bitte, & a headstall<sup>26</sup> of sheepes leather,<sup>27</sup> which being restrain'd<sup>28</sup> to keepe him from stumbling, hath been often burst, and now repaired with knots:<sup>29</sup> one girth<sup>30</sup> sixe times peec'd,<sup>31</sup> and a womans Crupper<sup>32</sup> of velure,<sup>33</sup> which hath two letters for her<sup>34</sup> name, fairely set down in studs,<sup>35</sup> and heere and there peec'd with packthred.<sup>36</sup>

Surely, a student would be able to understand the meaning of the passage and each of its words in a purely contextual sense, drawing clues from the words that surround the terms made foreign by the passing of time, but without annotation and explanation, “neither the modern reader nor the modern listener is likely to be equipped for anything like full comprehension” (Raffel xii). Therefore, Raffel and other editors, such as David Bevington whose annotations appear in Frances Dolan’s Bedford edition of *Shrew*, have annotated the text as follows:

- 1 close-fitting jacket/short coat
- 2 trousers that reach just below the knee
- 3 altered
- 4 old, worn-out boots that had been relegated to use as storage boxes for candles
- 5 town armory = town/local/common arsenal
- 6 unsheathed
- 7 straps
- 8 lame in the hips
- 9 of no kindred = not resembling each other
- 10 affected
- 11 contagious equine disease
- 12 likely
- 13 mose in the chine = (?) suffer/ache in the spine/back
- 14 equine disease: swelling of the roof of the mouth
- 15 farcy: infectious equine disease

- 16 equine leg tumors
- 17 sped with spavins = sick/brought down/finished by cartilage inflammation in a horse's leg
- 18 rayed with the yellows = berayed/disfigured/defiled by equine/bovine jaundice
- 19 avives (aVIVES): equine glandular swelling
- 20 stark spoiled with the staggers = severely ravaged by an equine illness like "mad cow disease"
- 21 corroded
- 22 parasitical maggots/worms
- 23 shoulder-ruined ("shot")
- 24 front legs coming too close to one another (knock-kneed?)
- 25 half-loose
- 26 part of bridle/halter going around the horse's head
- 27 inferior (pigskin was favored by men of social standing)
- 28 tightened
- 29 knotted leather (cheap, poverty-stricken appearance)
- 30 leather band around horse's belly, securing saddle/pack on its back
- 31 patched, mended
- 32 strap running from back of saddle to the horse's tail and then around under the horse, to hold saddle from sliding forward; not generally used by men
- 33 velvet
- 34 the prior owner's
- 35 set down in studs = mounted/written out by metal nails
- 36 twine, heavy thread (Raffel xii)

Though this passage is rare in its saturated need for annotation, my own examination of the text has called attention to the need for a gloss for a phrase as simple as "to make love to." Devising his plan to win the affection of Bianca, Hortensio claims that he will assume the identity of a pedant,

That so I may by this device at least  
 Haue leaue and leisure to make loue to her (I.ii)

In the absence of a footnote that explains that this phrase means "to woo," the modern undergraduate reader might interpret this phrase as something far more sexual than it would have been regarded in its early modern context. As modern readers of Shakespeare, we cannot take any meaning for granted.

The Norton publication material addresses the editor's question of the density of annotation as follows:

How dense should annotation be? In a ukase to editors of *The Norton*

*Anthology of English Literature* years ago, M.H. Abrams said, ‘There is no doubt that almost all teachers want copious footnotes—and no wonder, or all class time would be expended in glossing the assigned texts. The guiding principle must be to explain in a brief note anything beyond the knowledge of a good high-school graduate, limited as we know this knowledge must be.’ As you know, we cannot assume that the average freshman or sophomore will respond to even the most common allusions. If you believe that ignorance of a point will result in fuzzy understanding or misunderstanding, you should probably footnote. Footnotes should be strictly explanatory in nature—neither interpretive nor laden with references to critics. (W.W. Norton “Style” 1)

Determining “the knowledge of a good high-school graduate,” a rather arbitrary category in itself, can be difficult after years of working within the context of Shakespeare’s play on a high scholarly level. In order to gain a better sense of what makes sense to clarify and annotate from an undergraduate point of view, Professor Callaghan asked me to read the Folio text slowly and carefully, while comparing two popular editions, the Signet and the Bedford. I added my own notes where I felt the text needed more clarification and indicated places in which one edition I had consulted was better than another in its decision to footnote a particular passage or in its phrasing of the same annotation. I often met difficulty in my attempts to put aside my previous experience with Shakespeare and this text specifically in order to achieve the objectivity necessary for this process. Rather than repeat annotations that have been included in many

previous editions, I have cited words and phrases that I believe need additional clarification. These footnote suggestions are in *italics* in the sample text that follows. In some instances, I have also indicated which edition appears to be especially superior in its gloss for a particular word or phrase.

The division of acts and scenes that we have become accustomed to as readers of early modern dramatic works is a modern editorial insertion. While the Folio does contain some act divisions, “the impression is created that the division was not Shakespeare’s” because earlier Quarto editions of the plays are not divided as such” (Varma 88). Though the modern division of acts is more detailed than that of the Folio and deemed equally, if not more, unauthentic, it is important keep with previous editorial practice, especially that of widely used scholarly editions, such as the *Arden Shakespeare* or the *Oxford Shakespeare*, for the sake of continuity. One of the essential aspects of scholarship in literature is discussion, and maintaining the same act and scene divisions is a practice that will ensure clear and accurate references in such conversations.

The problems associated with the First Folio are all concerns of editors, students, and readers of English Renaissance texts alike. We must be vigilant of such obstacles when dealing with the text, but disregarding or avoiding the Folio on account of such issues would be a disservice to all involved in the processes of developing a new edition of this play because for *The Taming of the Shrew*, nothing nearer to what Shakespeare wrote survives.



# THE Taming of the Shrew.

Actus primus. Scena Prima.

Enter Begger and Host, Christophers St.

**Begger.**  
Pleasee you outsid.  
**Host.** A pair of stockes you rogue.  
**Beg.** Y are a baggage, the *Sies* are no Rogues, Looke in the *Chronicles*, we came in with *Richard Comynour*, therfore *Pancas palabus*, let the world flate: *Selis*.  
**Host.** You will not pay for the glasses you have burst?  
**Beg.** No, not a denier: go by *S. Innomis*, goe to thy cold bed, and warme thee.  
**Host.** I know my remedie, I must go fetch the Headborough.

**Dog.** Third, or fourth, or fifth through, He will sweare him by Law, Hee not badge an inch boy: Let him come, and kindly.  
**Faltes afterpe.**  
**Winks hornes.** Enter a Lord from hunting, with his traine.  
**Lc.** Huntsonn I charge thee, sweare wel my hounds, *Brach Stronnes*, the poore Curie is in doubt, And couple *Clauder* with the deepe-mouth'd brach, Saw'st thou not how *Silar* made it good At the hedge corner, in the coullid fault, I would not looke the dogge for twentie pound.  
**Humf.** Why *Belonus* is as good as he my Lord, He cried vpon it at the meeest lode,  
And twice to day pick'd out the dullist sent,  
Trueth me, I take him for the better dogge.  
**Lord.** Thou art a Foole, if *Leche* were as fleet, I would esteeme him worth a dozen such:  
But sup them well, and looke vnto them all,  
To-morrow I intend to hunt againe.

**Humf.** I will my Lord.  
**Lord.** What's here? One dead, or drunke? See doth he breath?  
**Humf.** He breath's my Lord. Were he not warn'd with Ale, this were a bed bus cold to sleepe, so foundly.  
**Lord.** Oh monstrous beast, how like a fowle he lies.  
Grim death, how foule and loathsome is thine image:  
Sies, I will practise on this drunken man.  
What think you, if he were couney'd to bed,  
Wrap'd in sweet clothes: Rings put vpon his fingers:  
A most delicious banquet by his bed,  
And braue attendants neere him when he wakes?  
Would not the begger then forget his trade?  
**Humf.** Belenue me Lord, I think he cannot choofe.  
**Lord.** 'Tis he would becom strange vnto him when he waketh.  
**Lord.** Euen as a flax ring dreame, or worthles fance.

Then take him vp, and manage well the iest:  
Carrie him gently to my fairest Chamber,  
And hang it round with all my wnton pictures:  
Bline his foule head in warme distilled waters,  
And burne sweet Wood to make the Lodging sweet:  
Procure me Musicke readie when he wakes,  
To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound:  
And if the chance to speake, be readie straight  
(And with a lowe submissiue reuerence)  
Say, what is it your Honor vvil command:  
Let one attend him with a siluer Bason  
Full of Rose-water, and bestrew'd with Flow'ers,  
Another beate the Ewee: the third a *Diapers*,  
And say wilt please your Lordship shoole your hands.  
Some one be readie with a costly suite,  
And aske him what apparel he will weare:  
Another tell him of his hounds and Horse,  
And that his Ladie mournes at his disease,  
Perswade him that he hath bin Lunaticke,  
And when he sayes he is, say that he dreames,  
For he is nothing but a mightie Lord:  
This do, and do it kindly, gentle fits,  
It will be pastime passing excellent,  
If it be husbanded with modestie.

**Humf.** My Lord I warrant you we will play our part  
As he shall thinke by our true diligence  
He is no lesse then what we say he is.  
**Lord.** Take him vp gently, and to bed with him,  
And each one to his office when he wakes.  
**Sound trumpets.**  
Sirrah, go see what Trumpet 'tis that sounds,  
Belike some Noble Gentleman that meanes  
(Travelling some iourney) to repose him heere.

**Enter Servingmen.**  
How now? who is it?  
**Srv.** An't please your Honor, Players  
That offer service to your Lordship.  
**Enter Players.**  
**Lord.** Bid them come neerer:  
Now fellows, you are welcome.  
**Player.** We thanke your Honor.  
**Lord.** Do you intend to stay with me to night?  
**Player.** So please your Lordshippe to accept our dutie.  
**Lord.** With all my heart. This fellow Remember,  
Since once he plaide a Farmers eilds sonne,  
'Twas where you woo'd the Gentlewoman so well:  
I haue forgot your name: but sure that part

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Was aptly fitted, and naturally perform'd.  
**Sirrah.** I thinke 'twas *Ses* that your honor meant.  
**Lord.** 'Tis verie true, thou didst it excellent:  
Well you are come to me in happy time,  
The rather for I haue some sport in hand,  
Wherein your cunning can assist me much:  
There is a Lord will heare you play to night:  
But I am doubtful of your modestie,  
Least (ouer-eying of this odd behaviour,  
For yet his honor neuer heard a play)  
You break into some merrie passion,  
And so offend him: for I tell you first,  
If you should smile, he growes impatient.  
**Fal.** Feare not my Lord, we can contain our selues,  
Were he the veriest anticke in the world.  
**Lord.** Go first, take them to the Butterie,  
And give them friendly welcome euerie one,  
Let them want nothing that my house affordeth.

**Exit as with the Players.**  
**Sirra** go you to *Lardolomew* my Page,  
And see him dress'd in all futes like a Ladie:  
That dole, conduct him to the drunkards chamber,  
And call him Madam, do him obeisance:  
Tell him from me (as he will win my loue)  
He beare himselfe with honourable action,  
Such as he hath obseru'd in noble Ladies  
Vnto their Lords, by them accomplished,  
Such dutie to the drunkard let him do:  
With soft loue tongues and lowly curtesie,  
And say: What is your Honor will command,  
Wherein your Ladie, and your humble wife,  
May thew her dutie, and make knowne her loue.  
And then with kinde embraces, compting kisses,  
And with declining head into his bosome,  
Bid him the teares, as being ouer-ioy'd  
To see her noble Lord restor'd to health,  
Who for this teene yeares hath esteemed him  
No better then a poore and loathsome begger:  
And if the boy haue not a womans guise  
To raine a shower of commended teares,  
An Onion will do well for such a shift,  
Which in a Napkin (being close couer'd)  
Shall in despite enforce a waterie eie:  
See this dispatch'd with all the hast thou canst,  
Anon He giue thee more instructions.

**Exit a servingman.**  
I know the boy will wel surpasse the grace,  
Voice, gait, and action of a Gentlewoman:  
I long to heare him call the drunkard husband,  
And how my men will fly themselves from laughter,  
When they do homage to this simple peasant,  
He to counsell them: happily my presence  
May well abate the ouer-merrie spleene,  
Whiche otherwise would grow into extremes.

**Enter aloft the drunkard with attendants, some with apparel, Dishes and Ewee, & other apparences of Lord.**  
**Dog.** For Gods sake take a pot of small Ale.  
**Srv.** Will please your Lord to take a cup of ficke?  
**Srv.** Will please your Honor taste of these Conferences?  
**Srv.** What raiment will your honor weare to day?  
**Dog.** I am Christophers Sty, call me mee Honour: nor Lordship: I ne're drank ficke in my life: and if you giue me any Conferences, giue me confesses of *Beefe*: were ask me what raiment He weare, for I haue no more doubt

lets then backes: no more flockings then legges: nor no more shooes then feet, nay sometime more teere then shooes, or such shooes as my toes looke through the ouer-leather.  
**Lord.** Heauen cease this idle humor in your Honor. Oh that a mightie man of such descent, Of such possessions, and so high esteeme Should be infuted with foale a spirit.  
**Dog.** What would you make me mad? Am not I *Christophers Sty*, old *Sies* (sonne of *Burton*, heere, by my father, by education a Cardmaker, by transmutation a Beare-head, and now by present profession a Tinker. Aske *Marrion Hacker* the ne. Alewife of *Wincent*, if I seee know me not: if they I am not with'd, on the score for shere Ale, keere me vp for the lyingst knaue in *Christidonic*. What I am not befrught: here's  
**Srv.** *Marr.* Oh this is it that makes your teeneas droop.  
**Srv.** *Marr.* Oh this is it that makes your teeneas droop.  
**Lord.** Hence comes it, that your kindred flamm your

As beate hence by your strange Lunacie, (howe Oh Noble Lord, be thinke thee of thy birth, Call hence thy ancient thoughts from banishment, And banish hence these abiekt lowlie dreames:  
Looke how fly seruants do attend on thee,  
Each in his office readie at thy becke,  
Wilt thou haue Musicke? Heere *Apollo* plaies, *Amphic* And twentie caged Nightingales do sing,  
Or wilt thou sleepe? We'll lade thee to a Couch,  
Softer and sweeter then the lufffull bed  
On purple tym'd vp for Semiramis.  
Say thou wilt walke: we will bestrow the ground,  
Or wilt thou ride? Thy horses shall be trap'd,  
Their harness studded all with Gold and Pearle.  
Dost thou loue hawking? Thus haue I hawkes will foare  
Abooue the morning Lark. Or wilt thou hunt?  
Thy hounds shall make the Welkin enuier them  
And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth,  
Dost thou loue hawking? Thus haue I hawkes will foare  
As breathed Stage: I better then the Roe, (swift  
As *Ad.* Dost thou loue pictures? we will fetch thee *Heas*  
Adonis painted by a running brooke,  
And *Griseus* all in silver haid,  
Which fetch to moue and wanton with her breath,  
Euen as the wauing fedges play with wind.

**Lord.** We'll shew thee *Leas*, as she was a Maid,  
And how she was beguiled and surpris'd,  
As in this painted, as the deede was done.  
**Srv.** Or *Daphne* coming through a thornie wood,  
Scratching her legges, that one shall sweare she bleeds,  
And at that sight shall sad *Apollo* weepe,  
So wot none like the blood and teares are drawne.  
**Lord.** Thou art a Lord, and nothing but a Lord:  
Thou hast a Ladie faire more Beautifull,  
Then any woman in this waining age.  
**Srv.** And all the teares that the hart shed for thee,  
Like envious floods, ore-run her lowly face:  
She was the fairest creature in the world,  
And yet thee is inferior to none.  
**Dog.** Am I a Lord, and haue I such a Ladie?  
Or do I dreame? Or haue I dream'd till now?  
I do not sleepe: I see, I heare, I speake:  
I feel sweet fauours, and I feele soft things:  
Vpon my life I am a Lord indeede,  
And not a Tinker, nor Christophers Stie.  
Well, bring your Ladie hither to our fight,  
And once againe a pot of th smallest Ale.

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Figure 2. The first page of the First Folio edition of *The Taming of the Shrew*.



## THE Taming of the Shrew.

### INDUCTION, SCENE I

*Actus primus. Scaena Prima.*

*Enter Begger and Hostes, Christophero Sly.*

*Begger. ILe pheeze you infaith.*

*Host. A paire of stockes you rogue.*

*Beg. Y'are a baggage, the Slies are no*

*Rogues. Looke in the Chronicles, we came in with Richard Conqueror: therefore Paucas pallabris, let the world slide: Sessa.*

*Host. You will not pay for the glasses you haue burst?*

*Beg. No, not a deniere: go by S. Ieronimie, goe to thy cold bed, and warme thee.*

*Host. I know my remedie, I must go fetch the Headborough.*

*Beg. Third, or fourth, or fift Borough, Ile answere him by Law. Ile not budge an inch boy: Let him come, and kindly.*

*Falles asleepe.*

*Winde hornes. Enter a Lord from hunting, with his traine.*

*Beggar, Hostess, Christopher*

*Beggar, I'll, feeze, in faith*

*pair, stocks*

*You're, Slys*

*rogues, look*

*have*

*denier, Saint Jeronimy, go*

*warm*

*remedy*

*fifth, I'll answer*

*law, I'll*

*Falls asleep*

*Winde horns, train*

Lo. Huntsman I charge thee, tender **well** my hounds,  
**Brach Meriman**, the **poore Curre** is **imbost**,  
And couple **Clowder** with the **deepe-mouth'd** brach,  
Saw'st thou not boy how **Siluer** made it good  
At the hedge corner, in the **couldest** fault,  
I would not **loose** the **dogge** for **twentie** pound.

*Hunts.* Why **Belman** is as good as he my **Lord**,  
He cried **vpon** it at the **meerest losse**,  
And twice to day **pick'd** out the dullest sent,  
Trust me, I take him for the better **dogge**.

*Lord.* Thou art a **Foole**, if **Eccho** were as **fleete**,  
I would **esteeme** him worth a dozen such:  
But sup them well, and **looke vnto** them all,  
**To morrow** I intend to hunt **againe**.

*Hunts.* I will my Lord.

*Lord.* What's **heere**? One dead, or **drunke**? See doth  
he **breath**?

*2. Hun.* He **breath's** my **Lord**. Were he not **warm'd**  
with **Ale**, this were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly

*Lord.* Oh monstrous beast, how like a swine he **lyes**.  
Grim death, how **foule** and loathsome is thine image:  
Sirs, I will **practise** on this drunken man.

What **thinke** you, if he were **conuey'd** to bed,  
Wrap'd in sweet **cloathes**: Rings put **vpon** his fingers:  
A most delicious banquet by his bed,  
And **braue** attendants **neere** him when he wakes,  
Would not the **begger** then forget **himselpe**?

*1. Hun.* **Beleeue** me **Lord**, I **thinke** he cannot choose.

well  
Breathe Merriman, poor, cur (2), embossed  
deep-mouthed  
Silver  
coldest  
lose, dog, twenty  
Bellman, lord  
vpon, merest, loss  
picked, scent  
dog  
fool (2), Echo, fleet  
esteem  
look, unto  
Tomorrow, again

here, drunk  
breathe  
breathes, lord, warmed  
ale  
lies  
foul  
practice  
think, conveyed (2)  
clothes, upon

braue, near  
beggard, himself  
Believe (2), lord, think

2. *H.* It would seem strange *vnto* him when he *wak'd*  
*Lord.* *Euen* as a *flatt'ring dreame*, or *worthles fancie*.  
Then take him *vp*, and manage well the *iest*:  
*Carrie* him gently to my fairest *Chamber*,  
And hang it round with all my *vvanton* pictures:  
*Balme* his *foule* head in *warme distilled* waters,  
And *burne* sweet *Wood* to make the *Lodging sweete*:  
Procure me *Musicke readie* when he *vvakes*,  
To make a dulcet and a *heauenly* sound:  
And if he chance to *speake*, be *readie* straight  
(And with a *lowe submissiue reuerence*)  
Say, what is it your *Honor vvil* command:  
Let one attend him *vvith* a *siluer Bason*  
Full of *Rose-water*, and *bestrew'd* with *Flowers*,  
Another *bear* the *Ewer*: the third a *Diaper*,  
And say *wilt* please your *Lordship coole* your hands.  
*Some one* be *readie* with a costly *suite*,  
And *aske* him what *apparel* he will *weare*:  
Another tell him of his *Hounds* and *Horse*,  
And that his *Ladie mournes* at his disease,  
*Perswade* him that he hath *bin Lunaticke*,  
And when he *sayes* he is, say that he *dreames*,  
For he is nothing but a *mightie Lord*:  
This do, and do it kindly, gentle sirs,  
It *wil* be pastime passing excellent,  
If it be husbanded with *modestie*.  
*1. Hunts.* My Lord I warrant you we *wil* play our part  
As he shall *thinke* by our true diligence

*unto, waked*  
*Even, flattering, dream, worthless, fancy*  
*up, jest*  
*Carry, chamber*  
*wanton*  
*Balm, foul, warm, distillèd*  
*burn, wood, lodging, sweet*  
*music (2), ready, wakes*  
*heavenly*  
*speak, ready*  
*low, submissive, reverence*  
*honor, will (2)*  
*with, silver, basin (2)*  
*rose, bestrewed, flowers*  
*bear, ewer, diaper*  
*Will't, lordship, cool*  
*Someone, ready, suit*  
*ask, apparel, wear*  
*hounds, horse*  
*lady (2), mourns*  
*Persuade, been, lunatic (2)*  
*says, dreams*  
*mighty, lord*  
  
*will*  
*modesty*  
*will*  
*think*

He is no **lesse then** what we say he is.

*Lord.* Take him **vp** gently, and to bed with him,  
And each one to his office when he wakes.

*Sound trumpets.*

Sirrah, go see what **Trumpet** 'tis that sounds,  
Belike some **Noble Gentleman** that **meanes**  
(**Trauell**ing some **iourney**) to repose him **heere**.

*Enter Seruingman.*

How now? who is it?

*Ser.* An't please your **Honor**, **Players**  
That offer **seruice** to your **Lordship**.

*Enter Players.*

*Lord.* Bid them come **neere**:

Now **fellowes**, you are welcome.

*Players.* We **thanke** your **Honor**.

*Lord.* Do you intend to stay with me **to night**?

2. *Player.* So please your **Lordshippe** to accept our  
**dutie**.

*Lord.* With all my heart. This fellow I remember,  
Since once he **plaide** a **Farmers** eldest **sonne**,  
'Twas where you **woo'd** the **Gentlewoman** so well:  
I **haue** forgot your name: but sure that part  
Was aptly fitted, and naturally **perform'd**.

*Sincklo.* I **thinke** 'twas Soto that your honor **meanes**.

*Lord.* Tis **verie** true, thou didst it excellent:

Well you are come to me in **happie** time,  
The rather for I **haue** some sport in hand,

less, than  
up

trumpet  
noble, gentleman, means  
traveling (2), journey, here  
Servingman

honor, players  
service, lordship

near  
fellows  
thank, honor  
tonight  
lordship (2)  
duty

played, farmer's (2), son  
wooed, gentlewoman  
have  
performed  
think, means  
very  
happy  
have

Wherein your cunning can assist me much.  
There is a Lord will heare you play to night;  
But I am doubtfull of your modesties,  
Least (ouer-eyng of his odde behaiour,  
For yet his honor neuer heard a play)  
You breake into some merrie passion,  
And so offend him: for I tell you sirs,  
If you should smile, he growes impatient.

*Plai.* Feare not my Lord, we can contain our selues,  
Were he the veriest anticke in the world.

*Lord.* Go sirra, take them to the Butterie,  
And giue them friendly welcome euerie one,  
Let them want nothing that my house affords.

*Exit one with the Players.*

Sirra go you to Bartholmew my Page,  
And see him drest in all suites like a Ladie:  
That done, conduct him to the drunkards chamber,  
And call him Madam, do him obeisance:  
Tell him from me (as he will win my loue)  
He beare himselfe with honourable action,  
Such as he hath obseru'd in noble Ladies  
Vnto their Lords, by them accomplished,  
Such dutie to the drunkard let him do:  
With soft lowe tongue, and lowly curtesie,  
And say: What is't your Honor will command,  
Wherein your Ladie, and your humble wife,  
May shew her dutie, and make knowne her loue.  
And then with kinde embracements, tempting kisses,

lord, hear, tonight  
doubtful  
Lest, overeyeing, odd, behavior  
never  
break, merry

grows  
fear, lord, ourselves  
antic  
sirrah, buttry (2)  
give, every (2)  
affords

Sirrah, page  
dressed, suits, lady (2)  
drunkard's  
madam  
love  
bear, himself, honorable  
observed (2), ladies  
Unto, lords, accomplished  
duty  
low, courtesy  
honor  
lady (2)  
show, duty, known, love  
kind

And with declining head into his **bosome**  
 Bid him shed **teares**, as being **ouer-ioyed**  
 To see her noble **Lord restor'd** to health,  
 Who for this **seuen yeares** hath **esteemed** him  
 No better **then** a **poore** and loathsome **begger**:  
 And if the boy **haue** not a **womans giift**  
 To **raine** a shower of commanded **teares**,  
 An **Onion wil** do well for such a shift,  
 Which in a **Napkin** (being close **conuei'd**)  
 Shall in **despight** enforce a **waterie eie**:  
 See this **dispatch'd** with all the **hast** thou canst,  
 Anon **Ile giue** thee more instructions.

*Exit a seruingman.*

I know the boy will **wel vsurpe** the grace,  
 Voice, **gate**, and action of a **Gentlewoman**:  
 I long to **heare** him call the drunkard husband,  
 And how my men will stay **themselues** from laughter,  
 When they do homage to this simple peasant,  
**Ile** in to **counsell** them: haply my presence  
 May well abate the **ouer-merrie spleene**,  
 Which otherwise would grow into **extreames**.

## INDUCTION, SCENE II

*Enter aloft the drunkard with attendants, some with apparel,  
 Bason and Ewer, & other appurtenances, & Lord.*

*Beg.* For **Gods** sake a pot of small **Ale**.

*1. Ser.* **Wilt** please your **Lord** drink a cup of **sacke**?

**bosom**  
**tears, overjoyed**  
**lord, restored**  
**seven, years, esteemèd**  
**than, poor, beggar**  
**have, woman's, gift**  
**rain, tears**  
**onion, will**  
**napkin, conveyed (3)**  
**despite, watery, eye**  
**dispatched, haste**  
**I'll, give**  
**seruingman**  
**well, usurp (2)**  
**gait, gentlewoman**  
**hear**  
**themselves**

*(Bevington footnote is confusing, but I understand it. Perhaps better wording. His footnote can't replace "in despite," but it explains it)*

**I'll, counsel**  
**overmerry (2), spleen**  
**extremes**

*(Signet footnotes 'haply' as 'perhaps')  
 (abate: put an end to; good explanation of 'spleen' in Bev.)*

**basin (2), ewer**  
**God's, ale**  
**Will't, lord, sack**

2. *Ser.* Wilt please your Honor taste of these Conserues?

3. *Ser.* What raiment wil your honor weare to day.

*Beg.* I am *Christophero Sly*, call not mee Honour nor Lordship: I ne're drank sacke in my life: and if you giue me any Conserues, giue me conserues of Beefe: nere ask me what raiment Ile weare, for I haue no more doubt-lets then backes: no more stockings then legges: nor no more shooes then feet, nay sometime more feete then shooes, or such shooes as my toes looke through the o-uer-leather.

*Lord.* Heauen cease this idle humor in your Honor. Oh that a mightie man of such discent, Of such possessions, and so high esteeme Should be infused with so foule a spirit.

*Beg.* What would you make me mad? Am not I *Christophe Slie*, old *Slies sonne* of Burton-heath, by byrth a *Pedler*, by education a *Cardmaker*, by transmutation a *Beare-heard*, and now by present profession a *Tinker*. *Aske Marrian* Hacket the fat *Alewife* of Wincot, if shee know me not: if she say I am not xiiii.d. on the score for sheere Ale, score me vp for the lyingst knaue in Christen dome. What I am not bestraught: here's---

3. *Man.* Oh this it is that makes your *Ladie mourne*.

2. *Man.* Oh this is it that makes your seruants droop.

Will't, honor, conserues (2)

will, wear, today  
me, honor (2)  
lordship, sack, give  
conserues (2), give, conserues, beef (2)  
I'll, wear, have  
than, backs, than, legs  
shoes, than, feet, than  
shoes, shoes, look  
over

Heaven, honor  
mighty, descent      *Why in capital letters in Bev. Version?*  
esteem

infused, foul  
Christopher  
Sly, Sly's, son, birth  
Peddler, cardmaker  
Bearherd, tinker  
Ask, Marian, alewife, she  
*fourteen pence?*  
sheer, ale, up, lyingest, knave, Christendom

lady (2), mourn  
servants

*Lord.* Hence comes it, that your kindred shuns your  
 As beaten hence by your strange **Lunacie**. (house  
 Oh Noble Lord, **bethinke** thee of thy birth,  
 Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment,  
 And banish hence these **abiect lowlie dreames**:  
**Looke** how thy **seruants** do attend on thee,  
 Each in his office **readie** at thy **becke**.  
 Wilt thou **haue Musicke**? **Harke** Apollo **plaies**, *Musick*  
 And **twentie caged** Nightingales do sing.  
 Or wilt thou **sleepe**? **Wee'l haue** thee to a **Couch**,  
 Softer and sweeter **then** the **lustfull** bed  
 On purpose **trim'd vp** for **Semiramis**.  
 Say thou wilt **walke**: we **wil bestrow** the ground.  
 Or wilt thou ride? Thy horses **shal** be **trap'd**,  
 Their **harnesse** studded all with **Gold** and **Pearle**.  
 Dost thou **loue** hawking? Thou hast **hawkes** will **soare**  
**Above** the morning **Larke**. Or wilt thou hunt,  
 Thy hounds shall make the **Welkin** answer them  
 And fetch shrill **ecchoes** from the hollow earth.

1. *Man.* Say thou wilt course, thy **gray-hounds** are as  
 As **breathed** Stags: I fleeter **then** the **Roe**. (swift

2. *M.* Dost thou **loue** pictures? we **wil** fetch thee **strait**  
 Adonis painted by a running **brooke**,  
 And **Citherea** all in sedges hid,  
 Which **seeme** to **moue** and wanton with her breath,  
**Euen** as the **wauing** sedges play with **winde**.

lunacie (2)

bethink

abject, lowly, dreams

look, servants

ready, beck

have, music (2), Hark, plays, music (2)

twenty, caged, nightingales

sleep, We'll, have, couch

than, lustful

trimmed, up, Semiramis

walk, will, bestrow *Bevington says: "scatter rushes on marsh  
plants"-confusing*

shall, trapped

harness, gold, pearl (2)

love, hawks, soar

Above, lark (2)

welkin

echoes

greyhounds

breathed, stags, ay, than, roe

love, will, straight

brook

*Bevington source ref. of Adonis is  
very good.*

Cytherea

seem, move

even, waving, wind

Lord. Wee'l shew thee *Io*, as she was a Maid,  
And how she was beguiled and surpriz'd,  
As liuelie painted, as the deede was done.

3. *Man.* Or *Daphne* roming through a thornie wood,  
Scratching her legs, that one shal sweare she bleeds,  
And at that sight shal sad Apollo weepe,  
So workmanlie the blood and teares are drawne.

Lord. Thou art a Lord, and nothing but a Lord:  
Thou hast a Ladie farre more Beautifull,  
Then any woman in this waining age.

1. *Man.* And til the teares that she hath shed for thee,  
Like enuious flouds ore-run her louely face,  
She was the fairest creature in the world,  
And yet shee is inferiour to none.

Beg. Am I a Lord, and haue I such a Ladie?  
Or do I dreame? Or haue I dream'd till now?  
I do not sleepe: I see, I heare, I speake:  
I smel sweet sauours, and I feele soft things:  
Vpon my life I am a Lord indeede,  
And not a Tinker, nor Christopher Slie.  
Well, bring our Ladie hither to our sight,  
And once againe a pot o'th smallest Ale.

2. *Man.* Wilt please your mightnesse to wash your  
hands:  
Oh how we ioiy to see your wit restor'd,  
Oh that once more you knew but what you are:  
These fifteene yeeres you haue bin in a dreame,  
Or when you wak'd, so wak'd as if you slept.

We'll, show, maid  
surprised, beguiled  
lively, deed  
roaming, thorny  
shall, swear  
shall, weep  
workmanly, tears, drawn  
lord, lord  
lady (2), far, beautiful (2)  
than  
till, teares  
envious, floods, lovely

she, inferior  
lord, have, lady (2)  
dream, have, dreamed  
sleep, hear, speak  
smell, savors (2), feel  
Upon, lord, indeed  
tinker, Sly  
lady (2)  
again, ale  
mightiness

joy, restored

fifteen, years, have, been, dream  
waked, waked

*Beg.* These **fifteene yeeres**, by my fay, a goodly nap,  
But did I **neuer speake** of all that time.

*1. Man.* Oh yes my **Lord**, but **verie** idle words,  
For though you lay **heere** in this **goodlie** chamber,  
Yet would you say, ye were beaten out of **doore**,  
And **raile vpon** the **Hostesse** of the house,  
And say you would present her at the **Leete**,  
Because she brought stone-**jugs**, and no **seal'd** quarts:  
Sometimes you would call out for Cicely Hacket.

*Beg.* I, the **womans maide** of the house.

*3. Man.* Why sir you know no house, nor no such maid  
Nor no such men as you **haue** reckon'd **vp**,  
As *Stephen Slie*, and old *John Naps* of *Greet*  
And *Peter Turph*, and *Henry Pimpernell*,  
And **twentie** more such names and men as these,  
Which **neuer** were, nor no man **euere** saw.

*Beg.* Now Lord be **thankèd** for my good amends.

*All.* Amen.

*Enter Lady with Attendants*

*Beg.* I **thanke** thee, thou shalt not **loose** by it.

*Lady.* How fares my noble Lord?

*Beg.* **Marrie** I fare well, for **heere** is **cheere** enough  
Where is my wife?

*La.* **Heere** noble **Lord**, what is thy will with her?

*Beg.* Are you my wife, and will not **call** me husband?  
My men should call me **Lord**, I am your **good-man**.

**fifteen, years**  
**never, speak**  
**lord, very**  
**here, goodly**  
**door**  
**rail, upon, hostess (2)**  
**leet (2)**  
**jugs (2), sealed**

**woman's, maid**

**have, up**  
**Sly, John**  
**Pimpernel**  
**twenty**  
**never, ever**  
**thankèd**

**thank, lose**

*What does this line mean/refer to?*

**marry, here, cheer**

**Here, lord**  
**call**  
**lord, goodman**

*La.* My husband and my Lord, my Lord and husband  
I am your wife in all obedience.

*Beg.* I know it well, what must I call her?

*Lord.* Madam.

*Beg.* *Alce* Madam, or *Ione* Madam?

*Lord.* Madam, and nothing else, so Lords call Ladies

*Beg.* Madame wife, they say that I haue dream'd,  
And slept aboue some fifteene yeare or more.

*Lady.* I, and the time seeme's thirty vnto me,  
Being all this time abandon'd from your bed.

*Beg.* 'Tis much, seruants leaue me and her alone:  
Madam vndresse you, and come now to bed.

*La.* Thrice noble Lord, let me intreat of you  
To pardon me yet for a night or two:  
Or if not so, vntill the Sun be set.  
For your Physitians haue expressly charg'd,  
In perill to incurre your former malady,  
That I should yet absent me from your bed:  
I hope this reason stands for my excuse.

*Beg.* I, it stands so that I may hardly tarry so long:  
But I would be loth to fall into my dreames againe: I  
wil therefore tarrie in despite of the flesh & the blood

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mes.* Your Honors Players hearing your amendment,  
Are come to play a pleasant Comedie,

lord, lord

Al'ce, Joan (2)

lords, call

Madam, have, dreamed

above, fifteen, year

unto, seems

abandoned

servants, leave

undress

lord

until, sun

physicians (2), have, expressly

peril, incur

*Signet explains the puns better than Bevington*

*Ay Footnote 'tarry'-linger in expectation? Wait?*

dreams, again

will, tarry, despite

honor's (2), players amendment =correction? Change? i.e.

comedy (2)

waking up?

For so your doctors hold it very **meete**,  
Seeing too much **sadnesse** hath **congeal'd** your blood,  
And **melancholly** is the **Nurse** of **frenzie**,  
Therefore they thought it good you **heare** a play,  
And frame your **minde** to mirth and merriment,  
Which **barres** a thousand **harmes**, and lengthens life.

*Beg. Marrie* I will let them play, it is not a **Comon-**  
**tie**, a Christmas gambold, or a tumbling **tricke**?

*Lady.* No my good **Lord**, it is more pleasing **stuffe**.

*Beg.* What, **houshold stuffe**.

*Lady.* It is a **kinde** of history.

*Beg.* Well, **we'l** see't:

Come **Madam** wife sit by my side,  
And let the world slip, we shall **nerre** be **yonger**.

meet  
sadness, congealed  
melancholy, nurse, frenzy  
hear  
mind  
bars, harms  
Marry, comonty (2)  
trick  
lord, stuff  
household, stuff  
kind  
we'll  
madam  
ne're, younger

## *Violence: Sources and Contexts*

### *The Shrew vs. A Shrew*

One of the major facets of the editorial controversy that continues to engage scholars with *The Taming of the Shrew* is its problematic and murky relationship to *The Taming of a Shrew*, an anonymous play that bears considerable similarity to Shakespeare's *Shrew* and emerges within a few years of Shakespeare's play. Multiple theories attempt to explain the existence of this elusive text. Some scholars would like to attribute the work to Shakespeare, claiming that *A Shrew* is a "bad quarto," or earlier draft, of Shakespeare's play. Others believe that it is a pirated version or poor attempt to recreate Shakespeare's play from memory, especially given the random interjections that resemble the work of other contemporary playwrights, such as Christopher Marlowe. Another theory suggests that the two plays share the same unknown source. Since the earliest printed version of *The Shrew* is the 1623 Folio edition, and we cannot be absolutely certain when Shakespeare wrote the play (between 1590 and 1594 is the widely accepted time frame), it is difficult to pinpoint a specific historical relationship between the two plays and accurately place them on a timeline.

When compared side-by-side with the anonymous text, Shakespeare's play proves so far superior in language and its seamless interweaving of three distinct plot strands that the idea of attributing *A Shrew* to his hand remains

unacceptable for many scholars. Scholars have referred to the text as “clearly inferior” and as the product of an author who is “stupid,” “inept,” and “trying to recall phrases he does not even understand” (Holderness 14). Such criticism may be justified by the careful comparison of the parallel sets of lines reproduced below:

❖ **From *The Shrew***

Master, if euer I said loose-bodied gowne,  
sow me in the skirts of it, and beate me to death  
with a bottome of browne thred (IV.iii.130-2)

❖ **From *A Shrew***

Maister if euer I sayd loose bodies gowne  
Sew me in a seame in beate me to death,  
With a bottome of browne thred (74)

These sets of lines are strikingly parallel and serve as one of the more convincing examples of the derivative nature of one play from the other, but Leah S. Marcus is careful to note that *A Shrew* fails to capture the meaning of “sow me in the skirts” as it aptly applies to clothing in this tailor scene and replaces it instead with “sew me in a seame,” a far more bawdy reference to the female body (Marcus 117).

The recurring set of criticisms of *A Shrew* stems from its apparent deficiency in recognizing and recreating Shakespeare’s puns. Though the following scenes occur quite differently in their respective versions, the parallel nature of the language presents the opportunity for comparison.

❖ **From *The Shrew***

*Kate* Ile haue no bigger, this doth fit the time,  
 And Gentlewomen weare such caps as these  
*Pet.* When you are gentle, you shall haue one too,  
 And not till then (IV.iii.69-72)

❖ **From *A Shrew***

*Kate* I will home again vnto my fathers house  
*Fer.* I, when you'r meeke and gentell but not  
 Before (71)

While Shakespeare uses both meanings of the word “gentle” to refer to demeanor and social class (and the use of one to achieve the other), the author of *A Shrew* is comparatively limited to the singular meaning of “gentell” as an ideal quality of behavior (Marcus 118). But this endless “tradition of comparative condemnation” that repeatedly attempts to reprove Shakespeare’s genius at the expense of this contemporary text eliminates the possibility of ever considering *A Shrew* as an independent early modern text, and this very well may be an editorial problem that continues to be overlooked today (Holderness 14).

It must be asked, then, what role does the Shakespearean editor assume in addressing the issue of this anonymous yet undeniably similar play? In her book, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton*, Marcus curiously titles her chapter on *Shrew* “The Editor as Tamer: *The Shrew* and *A Shrew*,” essentially casting the editor in a masculine role parallel to Petruchio. According to Marcus and her account of the editorial tradition surrounding the two plays, *A Shrew* is considered an unruly text that needs taming (108). Though the plays bear narrative resemblance, they are ideologically different, especially in their

treatment of women, with *A Shrew* being significantly less brutal in its attempts to tame the shrewish female character, who is named Kate in both texts. Marcus suggests that standard editorial procedures will not suffice, so the anonymous play, which to a certain degree lessens the effect of male superiority celebrated in Shakespeare's text, must be suppressed.

In the spirit of such suppression, many scholars have chosen to ignore the text altogether, either in an attempt to quiet the ideological differences between the two plays or as a refusal to allow this poorly reconstructed version of Shakespeare's play to stand alone as a challenge to the version that has been held in such high regard for centuries (Marcus 114). Others have attempted to integrate the two plays, particularly in an effort to address the concern with the play's ending. One of the major differences between *The Shrew* and *A Shrew* (and the foundation of arguments in favor of the dramatic quality of *A Shrew*) is the absence of the return of the Sly plot in Shakespeare's play that actually occurs in the anonymous version. As the first of the three plot strands, Christopher Sly, the drunken tinker, introduces the action of the play in the first two scenes (referred to as the Induction), interjects only briefly during the first scene of Act I, and is never to be seen again. Sly's return to the stage in *A Shrew*, however, draws attention to the supposed incomplete nature of the Shakespearean version. Many have asked the question, as Richard Hosely does with the title of his 1961 essay, "Was There a 'Dramatic Epilogue' to *The Taming of the Shrew*?" Was the ending somehow lost, or did authorial intention keep Sly offstage?

If the Sly plot is meant to serve as a theatrical frame, Shakespeare's play

does fail, in terms of pure form, to complete the framing device. The so-called incompleteness of the text is not necessarily what troubles scholars most about this play, however; it is the barbaric, abusive nature of its treatment of women (Raffel xxii). Yet, in many ways, the interrogation of the Induction as a frame is inextricably tied to the idea of the play's unjust gendered treatment because it questions the very nature of performance as performance, the curtain behind which the play hides from critical views of its abusive content. If Sly, for whom the play is performed, never returns to the stage to complete the frame, does the play somehow slip into a reality? And what does *The Taming of the Shrew's* status as a play itself do to complicate or clarify this? As spectators, we are watching a play that serves as a container, successfully or not, for another theatrical performance. The plot, whose ideological agenda is of greatest concern to modern readers and viewers, is twice filtered through dramatic representation. When Sly never returns to stage at the end of Shakespeare's *Shrew*, one of these filters is lost.

As Cecil Seronsy discusses in the essay, "'Supposes' as the Unifying Theme in *The Taming of the Shrew*," which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, Shakespeare does not have much choice in Sly's permanent departure. Once Sly is transformed and thereby introduces the themes of the play, Seronsy argues that there is not much to be done with his character (Seronsy 27).

We alone are spectators now. Shakespeare's Sly is not intended to see much. [...] Against a background of real, bourgeois, solid existence is set an imaginative world of 'supposes' into which Sly can only take us a short

way. It is as though we are being told: Let's play at make-believe, though this poor dolt of a Sly will not understand at all; perhaps this supposed world, uncomprehended by such as he, is more real than the world he lives in. (Seronsy 28)

Sly's return to the stage becomes unnecessary because the reality of the supposed world of *The Taming of the Shrew* supercedes that of the world in which the play begins. Given the nature of the events that take place in *Shrew's* world, however, this is indeed reason for concern.

There has been an overall disjunction between the textual formations of *The Shrew* and theatrical production of the play over the centuries. While modern textual editions of the play have yet to integrate the two versions as Shakespeare's contemporaries and eighteenth-century editors did quite enthusiastically according to Frances Dolan, theatrical productions in the twentieth century have not been as readily able to ignore Sly at the play's end and have often depended on his return to the stage in a fashion similar to the ending of *A Shrew* (Dolan 143, Marcus 124). This dependence on the frame emanates from an increasing sense of viewer discomfort in the context of a women's rights movement in the past two centuries. Using Sly to remind the audience that what they have just witnessed is part of a farcical world of make-believe helps to ease the anxieties that surround the production of a play that may be regarded as so openly misogynistic (Marcus 126-7).

This is not to promote the permanent alteration of Shakespeare's text in favor of a less controversial representation of marital relations, but it is curious

that our print editions refuse to experiment with integrating the texts as such. This may, in fact, be a product of the fundamental difference between altering a stage production that is resigned to memory after its singular occurrence (or run) and supposedly “contaminating” a printed text that will be memorialized in libraries for years to come.

### *A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife*

The presence of two popular shrew plays and the debate that has surrounded their respective or common origins demonstrate that the shrew-taming narrative was very much a part of the early modern consciousness. *A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife*, a popular ballad attributed to an anonymous author and composed around the year 1550, presents a shrew-taming narrative that is considered by scholars to be a source for Shakespeare’s play. Like Shakespeare’s *Shrew*, the ballad presents two daughters, the younger of whom is favored by their father and multiple suitors alike. However, unlike the motherless Kate and Bianca, the sisters of this narrative have a living mother who is a shrew herself and the model for the behavior of the older and more headstrong daughter. She, too, marries and becomes subject to a series of plans developed by her husband to frighten her into submission. Reproduced below is a selection from the ballad that describes in detail the husband’s plan to tame his shrewish wife. If she refuses to obey, he will employ tactics of wrapping her in the salted hide of a dead horse and threatening physical battery to gain her compliance.

❖ *From A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife*

*How the good man caused Morell to be flayn  
and the hide salted, to lay his wife  
therein to sleepe*

Now will I begin, my wife to tame,  
That all the world shall it know,  
I would be loth her for to shame,  
Though she do not care, ye may me trow.  
Yet will I her honestly regard,  
And it preserue where euer ye may,  
But Morell that is in yonder yarde,  
His hyde therefore he must leese in fay.

¶ And so he commaunded anon,  
To flea old Morell his great horse:  
And flea him then, the skin from the bone,  
To wrap it about his wiues white coarse.  
Also he commaunded of a byrchen tree,  
Roddes to be made of a good great heape:  
And sware by deare God in Trinity,  
His wife in his seller should skip and leape.

¶ The hyde must be salted then he sayd eake,  
Bycause I would not haue it stinke:  
I hope herewith she will be meeke,  
For this I trow will make her shrinke.  
And bow at my pleasure, when I her bed,  
And obey my commaundementes both lowde and still,  
Or else I will make her body bleede,  
And with sharp rodde beate her my fill.

¶ Anon with that to her gan to call,  
She bid abide in the diuelles name:  
I will not come what so befall,  
Sit still with sorrow and mickle shame.  
Thou shalt not rule me as pleaseth thee,  
I will well thou know by Gods deare Mother,  
But thou shalt be ruled alway by me,  
And I will be mayster and none other. (861-892)

Though the physical violence outlined by these stanzas is carried out only in thought and threat, Frances Dolan argues that “in raising that question,

depicting the rigors of taming, and casting itself as a fantasy, *A Merry Jest* opens up some doubt about the ideal of marital hierarchy and the means by which it is achieved” (Dolan 257). The examination of this ballad as a source provides access to the general sentiment that surrounds the shrew-taming tale and establishes a model for the discussion of the shrew and her behaviors. However, more essential to the issue of domestic abuse is the precedent it sets for her treatment and control within a comic framework. The husband’s actions are indeed shocking, but what is more jarring is the idea that they are presented as the subject of humor and would have inspired laughter among contemporary audiences and readers.

Placing the two *Shrew* plays on an appropriate historical timeline is not simply the impetus of scholars hoping to prove or disprove the originality of Shakespeare the author. If the milder, less misogynistic *A Shrew* predates Shakespeare’s play, which is notably more brutal and harsh in its treatment of women, this would, according to Marcus, “raise an unpalatable specter of Shakespeare.” Shakespeare would have had to make the conscious decision to make the play more brutal. It seems more plausible and of course, favorable, that he would have utilized a source such as *A Merry Jest* and maintained some elements of its brutality but dismissed the physical violence and torture committed by Petruchio’s equivalent in *A Merry Jest* (Marcus 116). It is therefore important for scholars to maintain the idea that Shakespeare’s play came first and that *A Shrew* was a later attempt to recreate it.

We can quite readily locate the comic yet disturbing depiction of domestic

abuse in early modern cultural and social history. In her edition of *Shrew*, Dolan offers an extensive discussion of the social phenomenon that was the “tenacious popular tradition of depicting domestic violence as funny” (Dolan 244). Fueled by a general fear of the disturbance of the patriarchal social order and overall domestic harmony, the early modern Englishman and woman would have engaged in the acts of “singing songs, repeating stories and jokes, and participating in as well as observing shaming rituals,” both producing and absorbing “lessons in proper gender relations” (Dolan 244). One such public shaming ritual was “cucking,” or dunking the shrewish woman repeatedly into cold water until she quieted, as depicted in the following figure:



**Figure 3. The cucking stool**

The ballad that serves as the comic and literary representation of this taming ritual, “The Cucking of a Scold,” is dependent on the community participation in the cucking as an event as well as in the repetition of the ballad itself. The text explicitly indicates that it would have been sung “*To the tune of ‘The Merchant of Emden,’*” which is likely to have been a popular melody that aided in the memorization and repetition of the ballad and its shrew-shaming content.

## ❖ From “The Cucking of a Scold”

Then was the scold herself  
 In a wheel-barrow brought,  
 Stripped naked to the smock,  
 As in that case she ought.  
 Neats’ tongues about her neck  
 Were hung in open show.  
 And thus unto the cucking stool  
 This famous scold did go.

*The cucking of a scold  
 The cucking of a scold  
 Which if you will but stay to hear  
 The cucking of a scold.*

Then fast within the chair  
 She was most finely bound,  
 Which made her scold excessively,  
 And said she should be drowned.  
 But every time that she  
 Was in the water dipped,  
 The drums and trumpets sounded brave,  
 For joy the people skipped.

*The cucking of a scold, etc.*

Six times when she was ducked  
 Within the water clear,  
 That like unto a drowned rat  
 She did in sight appear.  
 The Justice thinking then  
 To send her straight away,  
 The constable she called “knave,”  
 And knaved him all the day.

*The cucking of a scold, etc.*

Upon which words, I wot,  
 They ducked her straight again  
 A dozen times o’er head and ears.  
 Yet she would not refrain,  
 But still reviled them all.  
 The to’t again they go,  
 Till she at last held up her hands,  
 Saying “I’ll no more do so.”

*The cucking of a scold, etc.*

The she was brought away.  
 And after, for her life,  
 She never durst begin to scold  
 With either man or wife.  
 And if that every scold

Might have so good a diet,  
 Then should their neighbors every day  
 Be sure to live in quiet.  
*The cucking of a scold*  
*The cucking of a scold*  
*Which if you will but stay to hear*  
*The cucking of a scold.* (121-168)

This passage provides a detailed account of the cucking ritual as the creation of a public spectacle of a screaming woman plunged into water while bound to a stool until she agreed to silence and obedience in fear of losing her life. If this event did not leave a lasting mark, the ballad's joyous and melodious transmission was sure to maintain a place for this scold in the consciousness of men and women of the period alike.

### ***Supposes: Warp and Weft***

A consideration of the influence of *The Supposes*, George Gascoigne's 1566 translation of Arisoto's *I Suppositi*, as an additional source sheds further light on the *The Shrew/A Shrew* debate and the representation of the gendered conflict of the play. The subplot of *The Shrew*, otherwise known as the Bianca plot, is undeniably drawn from Gascoigne's play. Like Lucentio, Erostrato of Sicily arrives as a visiting student in Ferrara and falls in love with Polynesta, the daughter of a wealthy man. He, too, switches identities with his servant, Dulipo, to woo Polynesta. Erostrato finds himself outbidding his rival, Cleander, and is thus forced to find someone to act as his father to verify these claims of wealth. However, just as Lucentio's real father arrives and nearly spoils the plan, Erostrato's true father arrives as on the scene at an equally inopportune

moment (Seronsy 16).

Cecil Seronsy suggests that beyond the narrative influence and the inspiration for the Bianca plot strand, Shakespeare adopts the theme of “supposes” and weaves the other plot strands around this motif. The mechanics of a weaving loom provide an appropriate metaphor. The warp, which consists of strong, tightly fitted threads laid lengthwise in parallel order, is the “supposes” motif. The individual plot strands, including the actual Bianca “supposes” plot thread described above, become the weft, the strands that are woven crosswise in and out of the warp to create the tapestry that is Shakespeare’s *Shrew*.

While *A Shrew* does include the *Supposes* plot, it does not integrate the motif of ‘supposes’ as Shakespeare does. It is very tempting to attribute this to the superiority of Shakespeare’s talents as a playwright over those of the author of *A Shrew*. But this specific difference between the two plays may provide supporting evidence for the earlier claim that in the case of this particular play, Shakespeare was a revisionist playwright who drew directly from *The Taming of a Shrew* as a source and improved it by fully developing the “supposes” subplot that ultimately became the play’s guiding theme (Seronsy 17).

Seronsy principally defines “supposes” as “substitutions,” which are indeed what take place in the subplot with the substitutions of true identities for those of others. But if we are willing to broaden the scope of our definition of “supposes,” we open the possibility of reading *The Taming of the Shrew* as a play that masterfully utilizes the powers of expectation, belief, imagination, and assumption, which all become part of the “guiding principle of Petruchio’s

strategy in winning and taming the shrew” (Seronsy 16).

Returning once again to the trinity of plot lines, we see first that Sly is introduced into a world of make believe in the Induction. He is made to believe down to every last detail that he is of noble birth so the Lord can ultimately exert his control over Sly’s vulnerable situation for his own amusement. Hortensio uses pretense to woo Bianca through disguise and false promises. And absolutely essential to the critical issue of the play’s treatment of women is Petruchio’s calculated creation of his own system of “supposes,” established to restore order to the household and marital hierarchy. Petruchio summarizes his “strategy of ‘supposes.’”

Say that she rail; why then I’ll tell her plain  
 She sings as sweetly as a nightingale;  
 Say that she frown; I’ll say she looks as clear  
 As morning roses newly wash’d with dew:  
 Say she be mute and will not speak a word;  
 Then I’ll commend her volubility,  
 And say she uttereth piercing eloquence:  
 If she do bid me pack, I’ll give her thanks,  
 As though she bid me stay by her a week:  
 In she deny to wed, I’ll crave the day  
 When I shall ask the banns and when be married (II.i.171-181).

Petruchio executes this plan with expert intent when he praises the beauty of the moon that is quite clearly the sun in the fifth scene of Act Four. When Kate finally submits and agrees to call it the moon, Petruchio turns the tables once again and calls it the sun. Petruchio then convinces Kate that an approaching old man is a beautiful young girl, and when she agrees, he ridicules her for her thinking that the old man could possibly be either young or female. He also uses the pretence of food and clothing to deny her comfort as a means to gain her

submission. Though Seronsy characterizes Shakespeare's utilization of the "game of supposes" as a part of an overall comic framework, it is undeniably abusive.

Yet, as Seronsy notes, "The final scene of the play presents a shrew not only tamed but enthusiastically joining her husband in the game of showing the others a profitable example of what wifely obedience can be" (Seronsy 23). As careful and critical readers, we must ask ourselves, as scholars do in the following chapter, whether or not we feel comfortable with the complicit nature of Kate's participation in the version of wifely obedience that *The Taming of the Shrew* and other shrew-taming narratives of the time period praise.

## *Commodity: Critical Interpretation*

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,  
 And dart not scornful glances from those eyes  
 To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.  
 It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
 Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
 And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
 A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled-  
 Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;  
 And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
 Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
 Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
 Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,  
 And for thy maintenance commits his body  
 To painful labour both by sea and land,  
 To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
 Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;  
 And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
 But love, fair looks, and true obedience-  
 Too little payment for so great a debt.  
 Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
 Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
 And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
 And not obedient to his honest will,  
 What is she but a foul contending rebel  
 And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
 I am asham'd that women are so simple  
 To offer war where they should kneel for peace;  
 Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,  
 When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.  
 Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
 Unapt to toll and trouble in the world,  
 But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
 Should well agree with our external parts?  
 Come, come, you froward and unable worins!  
 My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
 My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
 To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
 But now I see our lances are but straws,  
 Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
 That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
 Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
 And place your hands below your husband's foot;  
 In token of which duty, if he please,  
 My hand is ready, may it do him ease (5.2.136-79).

### The Critical Debate

Beyond editorial concerns and the science of their execution rest the reasons we continue to study this nearly four-hundred-year-old play and invest time in creating an edition for university students. The critical interpretation section of the edition is designed to give students both a broad and detailed idea of the scholarly debate that surrounds the text, and for *The Taming of the Shrew*, this critical debate finds its center in the issue of patriarchy and its effect on the resolution of the shrew-taming plot whose continuity maintains the play's central issue as an historical and contemporary concern alike. It remains a question for both critics and audiences, according to Molly Easo Smith, "whether the play reiterates or undermines gender-based social expectations" (Smith 1). Asked simply, is Kate "tamed," or is she pretending submission in order to subvert the system that works to oppress her? To argue either side of this debate, critics frequently choose Kate's final speech, reproduced on the previous page, as the primary site of their analysis.

To Kate's last words, her proud husband Petruchio responds, "Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate." In his essay on *Shrew* that was first printed as one in a series of essays on the Shakespearean canon, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, Harold Bloom claims: "If you want to hear this line as the culmination of a 'problem play,' then perhaps you yourself are the problem" (Bloom 35). Yet, many critics are unconvinced that they themselves may be the problem in this reading. Scores of scholars have fiercely debated the nature of Shakespeare's shrew-taming narrative, and there is no doubt

that it is, at least in some sense, troublesome. This is, in part, because this speech, which marks the so-called resolution of the taming plot, employs a language of submission that is, in a word, unsettling.

Frances Dolan notes that “Few modern critics read either Katharine’s final speech or this last enactment of obedience of subjection ‘straight’—that is, few argue that Petruchio has tamed Katharine and that she submits willingly” (Dolan 35). If taken in the context of the performance established in the Induction, Dolan asks, “In her bravura performance as gentlewoman and wife in the final scene, does Katharine do anything different from what Bartholomew does when he plays a lord’s wife?” (Dolan 8). Bartholomew performs the role of a woman at his master’s command, but this does not mean that he has literally become a woman, and Katharine does not necessarily become an obedient wife by performing the role that has been prepared and demanded of her by both her husband and society. Likewise, Sly is provided with the means of performance to assume the role of the Lord, but this does not at all make him a member of the nobility. While *The Taming of the Shrew* does not return to the Induction that establishes these metatheatrical notions of performable identity, the final scene of the play confirms that just as class and gender can be performed in the Induction, so can obedient femininity in the context of marriage. It may be argued that Kate has maintained her identity as Katharine throughout, and “Kate,” the nickname given to her by her husband, becomes merely a sort of stage name. But whether or not it is a marker of a role that she negotiates freely has regularly come under intense question throughout the timeline of critical interpretation of *Shrew*.

Shakespeare's earliest *Shrew* critic was fellow playwright, collaborator, and contemporary, John Fletcher. Fletcher wrote a 1612 sequel to Shakespeare's *Shrew* titled *The Woman's Prize or the Tamer Tamed*. Assuming a "dual role, as dramatist and theater critic at once," Fletcher takes a "more radical stance on the issue of gender" (Smith 1, 4). In Fletcher's sequel, Petruchio, who has since become a widower after Kate's untimely death, remarries a young woman named Maria. With the help of Bianca and the other wives in the town, Maria seeks to act "as a selfless liberator of women" and tame Petruchio (Smith 5). After an organized rebellion of the women concerted by Maria, Petruchio agrees to sign a contract that outlines Maria's demands and marriage conditions, an event that is quite the opposite of his previous plan to tame Kate by verbal means (Smith 6).

Fletcher's play begins the debate about Kate's taming and provides an historical point of reference for our question about the interpretation of Kate's speech. Smith notes that "Fletcher insists on reading Kate's transformation speech ironically or as an unfeeling repetition of learned platitudes" (Smith 5). He also makes it quite clear that Kate, even in her deceased state, continues to have a frightening effect on Petruchio, suggesting that Kate was the one with the upper hand. Using deductive reasoning, Smith concludes that since Fletcher's play remained popular among early modern audiences, "ironic rereadings of Kate's transformation may have been commonplace of the theatrical experience for many early audiences" (Smith 5).

Fletcher's revision of Shakespeare's play seems, at times, far more progressive than the response of some nineteenth and early twentieth literary

critics. More than three centuries later, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch offers a strikingly misogynist reading. In his introduction to a 1928 edition of *Shrew* Quiller-Couch claims, “There are truly few prettier conclusions in Shakspeare than her final submission” (Quiller-Couch 43). Even if we allow Quiller-Couch the space to comment on the beauty of Shakespeare’s language in this final speech rather than the beauty of the submission itself, we cannot disregard the truly troublesome passage that follows:

One cannot help thinking wistfully that the Petruchian discipline had something to say for itself. It may be that these curses on the hearth are an inheritance of our middle-class, exacerbating wives by deserting them, most of the day, for desks and professional routine; that the high feudal lord would have none of it, and as little would the rough serf or labourer with an unrestrained hand (Quiller-Couch 43).

Extracting Petruchio and his shrew from their historical context, Quiller-Couch makes a commentary on both the status of working women and the antiquated abusive treatment he regards as a solution to this problem. While no modern reader should accept this as a tenable view of women, the inclusion of this essay in the edition will contribute to a broader view of the progression (or regression) of women’s issues in literary criticism.

I turn my attention now away from the status of the resolution of the taming plot to the means of the taming—what Quiller-Couch refers to as the “effective ways of dealing with them” (43). We ask not how Kate resolves the issue of her own taming, and whether or not she is the agent of this resolution, but

what she endures in the days that lead up to this moment. Linda E. Boose, who frames Kate's final speech in terms of marriage rites of the period, insists that we historicize the play.

To insist upon historicizing this play is to [...] insist upon invading privileged literary fictions with the realities that defined the lives of sixteenth-century 'shrews'—the real village Kates who underwrite Shakespeare's character. Ultimately, it is to insist that a play called 'The Taming of the Shrew' must be accountable for the history to which its title alludes. However shrewish it may seem to assert an intertextuality that binds the obscured records of a painful women's history into a comedy that celebrates love and marriage, that history has paid for the right to speak itself. (Boose 132)

A consideration of *Shrew*'s historical context helps us to locate the lowly social status of women as well as the abusive treatment they received for any attempt to subvert this order. Boose asks us to look, as we did before in the Sources and Contexts section of the edition, at the shaming rituals of the early modern period to get a sense of the reality that this play represents both willingly and coincidentally. They are, without a doubt, abusive. In her essay "Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds," Boose references quite extensively the practice of using a bridle on scolding women. Adapted from a mechanism used to control horses, the bridle (frequently used as a pun on the word "bridal") was placed around the head of the woman, and the attached metal piece was inserted into the mouth as a tongue suppressor to silence her (Boose 144).



**Figure 4. The Scold's Bridle**

No such instrument is used in Shakespeare's play, but *Shrew's* public declaration of its silencing objectives recall the memory of such shaming rituals. The question becomes, should the play welcome praise for its kinder shrew-taming tactics, or does its revision of this history of physical abuse only perpetuate the persistent social problem of gender relations and the male desire to quell female threats to the social order? We seek the answer, once again, in Kate's speech. Two readings emerge. If we read Kate's speech as a vocal performance of her authority and ability to simultaneously comply and defy, as multiple productions in which Kate slyly winks at the audience have already done, the "kinder" form of taming employed by *Shrew* may seem harmless, if not empowering, for the woman who can manage to manipulate it in her favor. If taken literally, however, the submissive nature of the address suggests that though she is given these 44 lines of speech, Kate has ultimately been bridled.

I would like to focus the remainder of my discussion of critical interpretation on a recent piece that has been extremely influential in the development of my critical interest in *Shrew* and the relationship between the role

of women in literature and the foundations of emergent modernity. It has sparked my own undergraduate interest in the play and inspired my decision to continue studying this particular period and topic. I believe that it will be of irreplaceable value to the undergraduate students who will approach this text through this forthcoming edition.

In the essay entitled “Household Kates: Domesticating Commodities in *The Taming of the Shrew*,” which was originally published in the *Shakespeare Quarterly* in the summer of 1996, Natasha Korda frames the conflict of the shrew-taming narrative in economic terms.

Commentary on Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* has frequently noted that the play’s novel taming strategy marks a departure from traditional shrew-taming tales. Unlike his predecessors, Petruchio does not use force to tame Kate; he does not simply beat his wife into submission. Little attention has been paid, however, to the historical implications of the play’s unorthodox methodology, which is conceived in specifically economic terms (277).

Korda roots her argument onomastically. She points to two specific passages that highlight Petruchio’s decision to change Katharine’s name to Kate as well as introduce a pun on the name Kate:

You lie, in faith; for you are call'd plain Kate,  
And bonny Kate and sometimes Kate the curst;  
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom  
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,  
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,  
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;  
Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,

Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,  
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife (II.i.181-190)

I am he am born to tame you, Kate,  
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
Conformable as other household Kates (II.269-71)

Shakespeare's name choice and Petruchio's constant repetition of the name is no coincidence. The nickname "Kate" is quite conveniently a pun on the economic noun "cate:"

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *cates* as 'provisions or victuals bought (as distinguished from, and usually more delicate or dainty than, those of home production).' The term is an aphetic form of *acate*, which derives from the Old French *achat*(*AH-SHA*), meaning 'purchase.' Cates are thus by definition exchange-values—commodities, properly speaking—as opposed to use-values, or objects of home production. (277)

Upon establishing the economic value of *Shrew's* narrative, Korda argues that "The *Taming of the Shrew* recasts [the medieval shrew] tradition in entirely new terms, terms that map, through the commodity form itself, the market's infiltration and reorganization of the household economy during the early modern period" (297). Prior to Shakespeare's play, the housewife's domestic responsibility was to produce things: to cook, bake, brew, and spin. When the traditional household duties are delegated to servants or to the rising class of male professional merchants who could produce the products of these household duties for less in the emergent capitalism of early modern society, the housewife's role shifts from "skilled producer to savvy consumer" (Korda 278).

Seeking its place in the household, this consumerism transfers the

formerly feminine role of production onto the maintenance of these things, or “cates,” she has consumed. Her role becomes “increasingly centered around the proper order, maintenance, and display of household cates” (Korda 280). Her housework and role in the household economy are devalued because her labor “has no exchange-value” (Korda 279).

The early modern period maintained a long-standing ideal that the household was a microcosm of the state in which the man shared the same authority over his household as the king had over the state. But when women’s household work had a use-value and was central to the function of the domestic economy, this authority was essentially joint, though the husband ultimately controlled the means of production. These economic changes, the essential devaluing of the woman’s household role, according to Korda, resulted in the restoration of this political analogy and the return of male authority over the household.

In *Shrew*, we see the effects of this economic shift in the narrative values of the period. Korda explains that the traditional shrew narrative involved a threat to the order of language through the shrew’s sharp tongue and her verbal refusal to work within the structures of her wifely duties. This new shrew narrative, however, represents a threat to what she terms the “symbolic order of things” *in addition to* the symbolic order of language (281). We can see that Kate is first defined by her sharp tongue, which is exemplified by her screaming and the banter between Kate and Petruchio in the play’s beginning, but according to Korda, the play is not only about her verbal shrewishness. It is also about her

“new managerial role in respect to household cates” and her excessive consumption thereof (280). Rather than being put back to work at the end of this tale, the shrew is tamed in her consumption, which must be delicately balanced between sufficient to display her husband’s status but not so excessive as to threaten the rate of male production or gain of economic capital (285).

Women within this new economic formulation eventually become cates, or commodities, themselves with market value, particularly within the institution of marriage. Much of the initial anxiety surrounding Kate is her inability to be “sold” or her “unvendibility” as someone’s wife (Korda 282). But when Petruchio sees an economic opportunity in Kate’s dowry, “Kate is abruptly yanked out of circulation and sequestered within the home, literally turned into a piece of furniture or ‘household stuff’ (Korda 288).

Petruchio seeks to tame and domesticate his Kate by managing her consumption via the things she consumes: cates—specifically, sartorial and edible cates. In the absence of physical violence, the manipulation of these cates becomes the instrument of abuse, and the domestic violence in this play becomes psychological. In Act IV, Scene iii, Petruchio hires a tailor whose designs he knows Kate will adore. He does not deprive her of what she wants by negatively denying her the clothing. Instead, he casts his refusal in such a light that the clothing is not up to standard, and he finds a flaw in everything that Kate thinks is perfect, telling her she cannot have it. Korda explains that by destroying and wasting everything in which he finds fault, he calls Kate’s attention to the wastefulness of such *cates* (292). This theme of superfluous commodities is

carried throughout the scene as he describes and criticizes every article of clothing with the likeness of fancy desserts, such as an “apple-tart,” and a “custard-coffin,” often associated with “banqueting conceits” whose main purpose was to display one’s status and nothing more (Korda 292). The supposed success of Petruchio’s sartorial tactics is displayed in the last scene when Kate destroys her cap on command to show that she, too, can manage cates according to Petruchio’s system. “It is a gesture,” Korda claims, “of conspicuous yet carefully controlled waste, demonstrating both Petruchio’s ability to afford superfluous expenditure and his control over his wife’s consumption” (293). Similar to this controlled destruction of clothing is Petruchio’s denial of food for Kate. He refuses her the opportunity to enjoy her own wedding banquet, and when the newlyweds finally arrive at Petruchio’s home, he demands that his servants take the lavish banquet they have just placed before her away on account of poor preparation despite its more than satisfactory appearance. Though custom tailored garments and bountiful banquets are luxuries enjoyed by the wealthy, Petruchio essentially denies Kate some of life’s necessities—clothing and food.

In Korda’s argument, I find the recurring central issue of the critical debate that surrounds this play, and this is the nature and extent of Kate’s taming. Korda does not commit to either reading of Kate’s speech, stating that “Both readings, it seems to me, leave Kate squarely within the framework of the medieval shrew tradition” (296-7). The brilliance of Shakespeare’s play is its transformative response to an increasingly capitalist society. Shakespeare locates his response narratively and recasts an age-old tale to read and play according to

the fears and anxieties of his society. Yet, the continuity between the medieval shrew tale and this new version on the cusp of early modernity is maintained in the theme of cruelty, both physical and psychological, against women. And this is the social issue that resonates with readers of *The Taming of the Shrew* today, nearly four hundred years later.

Critical interpretation of *The Taming of the Shrew* is in no way limited to the articles discussed above, and the edition will likely include ten to twelve more selections from critical pieces in addition to the selected bibliography that follows. The most important notion to take away from this section on critical interpretation is that we will never know, one way or another, how the bard intended for us to read these last lines, or any of the play for that matter. In fact, this is true of Shakespeare as a collective body of work. His provocative ambiguity is what has kept him in classrooms for centuries, and it is my hope that this edition will introduce the controversies that surround the play and only inspire more.

### **Permissions: From Editor to Printing Press**

As discussed and demonstrated in the previous pages, the objective of the criticism section of the edition is to create a broad representation of the timeline of literary criticism through the reproduction of substantial excerpts from extant critical essays. The parallel objective, however, is to work within the constraints of a budget. The budget for the edition is outlined as follows:

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The permissions process is not a simple one. Norton's "Guide to Clearing Permissions" explains that while clearing permission with the author of the work is never harmful to the process, the original publisher of the work ultimately owns the rights and must clear any and all permissions to reprint (3). Unfortunately, it is often not as straightforward as contacting the publisher that is listed on the copyright page of the book. Publishers close, and larger publishers assume smaller presses as imprints but do not always maintain the records of copyright holdings. Some prices have been easily determined on a first attempt to contact the publisher, while other requests remain pending for various reasons, including incorrect or no longer valid contact information, lengthy permissions clearing

processes, or back-log.

In Appendix A, I have reproduced a sample of the letter drafted for the purposes of requesting permissions from various publishers. It details the project and the intended use of the material. Most of these letters were faxed to individual publishers and their respective imprints. I was often able to expedite the process by making contact via electronic mail or online forms developed by some publishing companies.

The Permissions Log that follows in Appendix B is a useful tool for tracking and maintaining a proper record of any and all attempts to contact publishers and the results of such contact, which ideally will be permission granted for a reasonable cost. The very fact that it remains incomplete speaks to the current “in process” status of the edition. For legal purposes, Norton has asked the editor to maintain this log as well as a paper trail of all correspondence.

## *Conclusion*

*The Taming of the Shrew* challenges modern editors textually and historically. Its relationship to the anonymous rival text, *The Taming of a Shrew*, calls authorship and authenticity into question. Shakespeare's refusal to complete the farcical frame, intentionally or not, has left audiences, readers, and scholars in a perpetual state of textual and critical hypothesis. The most challenging aspect of this play, however, is its presentation of a treatment of women that is horrifying yet hauntingly familiar.

Such continuity has inspired a variety of adaptations since the first production and subsequent publication of *The Taming of the Shrew*. The first, mentioned in the Criticism section, was John Fletcher's farcical response *The Woman's Prize or The Tamer Tamed*. Since this 1612 play, various dramatic interpretations and revisions have arisen. Famously, the Cole Porter musical *Kiss Me Kate*, featuring songs such as "I Hate Men," and "I Am Ashamed That Women Are So Simple," depicts a divorced couple struggling to put on a production of Shakespeare's play as Katharine and Petruchio. John Garrick's *Catharine and Petruchio* (1838) and Charles Marowitz's *The Shrew* (1975) present the most influential dramatic revisions of their respective centuries. Screen adaptations are equally numerous, the most recent being the popular teen film *10 Things I Hate About You* and the television production of *Shrew* as part of the BBC series, *Shakespeare Re-Told*.

This broad timeline of adaptations reminds us that the play's social issues

are continuous and indeed relevant. Some adaptations carefully follow Shakespeare's plot while others attempt to revise his patriarchal themes. But beyond a discussion of the ways in which authors, screenwriters, and directors have dealt with this play lies the opportunity to critically evaluate our own role as spectator and reader, using the actions and words of George Bernard Shaw as a model. Writing under the name of a woman protesting a production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Shaw submitted the following letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in which it appeared on June 8, 1888.

Sir

They say that the American woman is the most advanced woman to be found at present on this planet. I am an Englishwoman, just come up, frivolously enough, from Devon to enjoy a few weeks of the season in London, and at the very first theatre I visit I find an American woman playing Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*—a piece which is one vile insult to womanhood and manhood from the first word to the last. I think no woman should enter a theatre where that play is performed; and I should not have stayed to witness it myself, but that, having been told that the Daly Company has restored Shakespear's [sic] version to the stage, I desired to see with my own eyes whether any civilized audience would stand its brutality. (Shaw 186)

Though this letter predates us more than a century, we are obligated to assess whether or not we are the type of audience that “would stand its brutality.” When reading, teaching, or producing this play, a series of questions arises: If we continue to laugh at some of the most brutal and manipulative behavior as it is presented by the text, are we celebrating and perpetuating similar behaviors in our own society? Can we, and do we have any right to, soften the play's brutality by framing it as a farce? And if we mitigate the play's brutality, do we then lose the opportunity to maintain an open discussion about the effects of domestic abuse?

Is it even appropriate or desirable to soften a play that calls critical attention to the kinds of abusive behaviors that persist in the modern household?

A twenty-first century reading of *Shrew* is so multiple and simultaneous that it becomes nearly impossible to draw any kind of definitive conclusion. But the delicacy with which we treat the text and the social issues it invokes ensures that students who encounter this play, quite possibly for the first time, will gain a close and informed experience of Shakespeare and his contemporaries unobstructed by the problems of the Folio and temporal changes in language. The intimacy of this experience will ultimately carry through in the development of an understanding of the critical responses to the play's deepest social issues that remain so congruent with one of our greatest domestic concerns.

Like the scolding woman who disturbs the public peace with her loud and quarrelsome behavior, *The Taming of the Shrew* is a text that scholars have attempted to "tame" for centuries. Though we will continue our attempts to create an "authoritative edition," the fact remains that no such version is ever fully attainable. If it were, Shakespearean scholarship and *The Taming of the Shrew* would indeed become stagnant.

## *Selected Bibliography*

The selected bibliography is an essential part of any student edition because it provides a starting point for further research and encourages student interaction with the full texts of scholarly articles. The publisher requests the following for the selected bibliography in the Norton Critical Edition:

The bibliography should be neither an exhaustive listing nor a brief roundup of the most obvious titles. Try to mention not only what the freshman may want for some additional reading but also what a junior would require for a longer paper. Cite a few general works on the author before you get down to books and articles on the work itself. Be sure to include the books and articles you have reprinted in the NCE. (W.W. Norton “Style” 3)

Because a truly exhaustive collection of critical essays written about Shakespeare and *The Taming of the Shrew* would result in a rather large and expensive volume, I have compiled the following listing of titles that I believe a student would find useful for reference and further research. This compilation is drawn from similar selected bibliographies of alternate editions of *Shrew*, searches of online databases such as JSTOR and Literature Online, and individual research of library source materials.

## 1. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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