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Performative Education and Educational Disruption: *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tamer Tamed*

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**Performative Education and Educational Disruption:
*The Taming of the Shrew and The Tamer Tamed***

By Miranda Garno Nesler

Although John Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed* has been performed rarely since the eighteenth century, this sequel and response to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* was extremely popular at the time of its debut. At the play's opening, Fletcher introduces audiences to Maria, who plans to "turn [Petruccio] and bend him as I list, and mold him / Into a babe again, that aged women / Wanting both teeth and spleen, may master him" so that she may be "chronicl'd" (Fletcher 1.2.218-221). The stage history of the play reveals contemporary audiences' desire to assist Maria in achieving such legendary status. Performed with great frequency throughout the seventeenth century, *Tamer* found popularity among higher and lower ranks, in private and public theaters. Queen Henrietta Maria herself, after viewing the play alongside Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* in November 1633 expressed a preference for *Tamer* that appears to have coincided with the larger viewership. As Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, reported, while Shakespeare's play was "likt" by the audience, Fletcher's earned higher marks for being "Very well likt" (in Munro xvii).

This is not to say that Fletcher's *Tamer* had an easy emergence onto the stage. Early documents inform us that Herbert was displeased by certain "foule and offensive matters" the play was rumored to contain, and he demanded last-minute alterations to "purg[e] [it] of oaths, prophaness, and ribaldrye" (in Munro xviii). Though Herbert found the language troubling, he seemed to have little objection to the plot itself. Thus Fletcher's play retained its most transgressive components: a female leader and cohort of women who use their domestic educations to achieve their marital and political goals without violence and while avoiding the socially harmful label of "shrew" that marks their Shakespearean predecessors.^[1]

Unfortunately, the very elements that fascinated Stuart audiences also contributed to the play's disappearance from repertory in the eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. Though Fletcher's on-stage female cohort remain largely within their "appropriate" domestic spaces within the play, Restoration officials feared that the women's effective rebellion against tyrannical husbands too closely evoked the recent Civil War—and might even inspire new uprisings.^[2] Following several revised productions, which sought to tone down the women's coups, the play almost entirely disappeared from the stage. Since the comedy's modern reemergence in 1976, companies have continued expressing discomfort about producing *Tamer*, positioning it in a "combative relationship" with *Taming of the Shrew* (Munro x). The majority of modern companies argue that while *Taming* can stand alone, *Tamer* is simply more

comprehensible to audiences when performed in tandem or conflated with Shakespeare's original play.

Critical views of the plays aid this trend. Performed alone, *Taming* is privileged as a play that represents women's effective training in traditionally masculine humanist education; performed alongside *Tamer*, it allegedly highlights Shakespeare's progressive views of female education while having the extra benefit of toning down Fletcher's bawdiness.^[3] As scholars have recently claimed, after all, Shakespeare's play provides for audiences an *eikastic* lesson that mirrors the comedy itself.^[4] As a result, Fletcher's *Tamer* has to date been produced by a limited number of major theater companies—most recently in 2003 by the Royal Shakespeare Company, in a rendition that purposefully coincided with the release of a new print edition. Because of commonplace assertions that *Tamer* is both incomprehensible without Shakespeare and replaces Shakespeare's humanistic values with erotic vulgarity, the play continues lacking the repertory regularity of its prequel.

Certainly Fletcher's play draws on Shakespeare's. Yet *Tamer* provides sufficient plot context at its opening to guide spectators through the action regardless of their familiarity with Shakespeare's preceding comedy.^[5] In addition, it provides an alternative representation of educational performance that examines feminine training within traditional domestic spaces. In this paper, I do not intend to deny that *Taming of the Shrew* represents humanistic education; and I agree with scholars such as Holly

Crocker and Elizabeth Hutcheon who argue in distinct ways that *Taming's* representations reveal women's rhetorical mastery and potential for gender transgression or empowerment, respectively. Yet at a time when educational institutions engage feminism, gender studies, post-colonial studies, and other theoretical approaches to open the canon to previously marginal texts, I want to query the benefits of embracing *Tamer's* in the classroom as well. Either in dialogue with its predecessor or as a play in its own right, *Tamer* makes valuable contributions to audiences' understanding of gender, education, and mimetic performance. Indeed, it is a fear of *Tamer's* mimetic power that largely ended its repertory success. This paper, therefore, explores what we gain when we stage the pieces together as well as what we might gain if we begin viewing *Tamer* as a piece in its own right. Given the plays' mutual interest in gendered pedagogy, we stand to learn a great deal about early modern conceptions of humanistic and domestic education—two approaches that shape contemporary pedagogical attitudes in women's education. In considering current theatrical and critical discussions about *Taming* and *Tamer*, I argue that increasing Fletcher's presence in theater and classroom performances encourages both teachers and students to critically examine both plays' approaches to education in a way that invites students to collaborate on generating new classroom methods.

Performative Humanism in Shakespeare

The argument that *The Taming of the Shrew* is a play about education has been well-documented in the field, with critics like Dennis S. Brooks recently claiming that the comedy's "disparate themes, anomalies, and subplots [...] coalesce into dramatic unity when framed by the broader Renaissance debate about education" (7). While Lisa Jardine, Lynn Enterline, and Heather James have addressed *Taming's* pedagogical interests by placing its women within a larger framework of classicist or Ovidian-trained Shakespearean heroines, scholars such as Brooks, Holly Crocker, Elizabeth Hutcheon, and Marion D. Perret have emphasized how the play, even on its own terms, explores "what the role of humanist pedagogy in a domestic setting might be" (Hutcheon 316).

The work of these scholars reveals that Petruchio and Kate's theatrical schoolroom is anything but straightforward in its relationship to performative education. There is no consensus on how this space functions. For Brooks, *Taming* exposes the "failures of the conventional trivium-quadrivium" curriculum, positing an alternative *eikastic* model that privileges classroom theatrical performance that produces "habit and imitation" in students (13, 25). Petruchio's success in educating Kate, Brooks asserts, trumps other early modern modes of education by amplifying the use of mimesis rhetorically and physically.

Though Crocker and Hutcheon agree that women in *Taming* play the roles of grammar school students, they differ in their views of the end significance of such training. According to Crocker, Petruchio plays the schoolmaster to Kate; yet in simultaneously training her to be a rhetor *and* urging her to recall her feminine role, he creates a student who can outstrip him in ability. Kate can combine verbal rhetoric with bodily performance, “adopting the model of feminine virtue that masculine discourse constructs” in order to occupy “the place of creator which Petruchio covets” (“Affective” 156). Ultimately, humanistic education trains Kate to “enact passivity without masculine intervention” and thus to “threaten to upset the precarious balance of power that hierarchizes idealized gender relations” (“Affective” 143-44).^[6]

Hutcheon disagrees. In her argument, the representations of gendered performance in humanistic education become balanced in Shakespeare’s play. Kate’s emergence as subject—an emergence predicated in the success of “humanistic methodologies in the domestic sphere”—reveals not only humanism’s “effectiveness as a mode of discipline and education, but also reveals [its] fundamental lack of gendered priorities” (316). In the conventional schoolroom, Hutcheon argues, boys were encouraged to imitate the voices of women and view figures like Hecuba as “good models of appropriate rhetoric” (319).^[7] Petruchio trains Kate to this role, teaching her that the embrace of her feminine position and the enactment of her rhetorical training

can generate social subjectivity and reveal women's equal rhetorical and performative abilities.

Further highlighting the link between mimetic performance and education, Perret examines how such activity unfolds in the blended humanistic and domestic space of *Taming*. In Perret's work, the division between these two pedagogical stages is frequently blurred. Yet for her, Petruchio's success as a teacher—and as a masculine figure—are never at question. Indeed, Petruchio's role as a schoolmaster protects him from accusations of effeminacy. It is the humanistic-mimetic model that requires him to train his student not only through cross-voicing, but by using his body to perform Kate's role: "the shrew-tamer attempts to school the shrew who assumed his privileges by assuming her responsibilities, teaching her by example how a wife should behave" (223).

Despite their differences, the voices engaged in conversation about *Taming's* representation of education converge on one point: that the play stages a traditionally masculinized model of education in a traditionally feminized space. As the critics reveal, such transference can teach us valuable lessons about the humanistic model of education—and it raises questions about the end goals of that model are and whether they remain consistent when applied to variously gendered subjects. Dialogues such as these can be valuable in the classroom setting, urging students to apply a critical eye to their own educations. Yet, as I argue, *The Tamer Tamed* complicates this conversation,

particularly given that its women participate in an educational system frequently devalued, and yet manage to escape many of the restrictions that their humanist-educated compatriots face.

Performative Domesticity in Fletcher

When we examine the educational models of *The Taming of the Shrew*, we can discover that, as Hutcheon puts it, “the play’s idea of ‘gentlewoman’ involves being educated in classical texts,” and that “even though this kind of education was not particularly common for women of the Renaissance, *The Taming of the Shrew* presents it as normal” (316). Critics have provided some apology for the abnormality of feminine humanistic education in Shakespeare’s play, arguing that the representation *is* however in step with the expectation for women to be chaste, silent, and obedient because through such education “the student learns to acquiesce to the prevailing social hierarchies by internalizing the dominant value system and tempering the passions that threaten social order” (Brooks 7).^[8] Yet what of plays such as Fletcher’s that present women’s education within its more traditional household space? And, further, what of plays that present women as being in charge of that education?

Women’s education in *The Tamer Tamed* more clearly aligns with contemporary conduct manuals that categorize domestic education as a feminine duty: “There are certayne thynges in the house that onely do pertaine to the authoritie of the husbände

[...] There are other things in the which the husband geueth ouer his ryght vnto the woman, as to rule & gouerbe her maydens" (Vives sig. U1). As Wendy Wall points out in *Staging Domesticity*, such governance involved teaching the other women of the household; and while this was seen as a necessary activity for maintaining an orderly home, there also existed fears that feminine exchanges were "dangerous conduits for 'foolish' popular knowledge" (97). The danger, of course, lay in the fact that the popular or common knowledge women passed to each other might not be simply 'foolish' but might be functionally performative. In *The School House of Women*, for example, Gosynhill articulates the anxiety that domestic education allows women to assert control, with elder women saying to younger,

Doo as I doo,
Be sharp and quick with [your husband] again
If that he chide, chide you also
And for one woord giue him twain [...]
Thus euer among they keep such schooles
The yung to drawe after the olde. (B1r-B1v)

Domestic education might provide women with more than the ability to control the household or educate other women. It might provide women a stage for controlling their husbands, and that stage might mimetically teach other women to manipulate men as well. This is precisely the kind of education that Fletcher's "seditious play" explores (Bergeron 162).

At the opening of *Tamer*, Maria reveals to the audience and her female coterie that she has purposefully maintained a public reputation for mildness in order to cover

the fact that she is “Made of a North-wind, nothing but tempest; / And like a tempest shall it make all ruins / Till I have run my will out” (1.2.73-75). From this moment, Maria becomes an instructor in three-fold. Within the play, she takes on the roles of schoolmaster for Petruchio and for the other women, teaching them how to safeguard themselves against what Holly Crocker calls the “masculine misgovernance” that threatens domestic order (“Shrewd” 409). Metadramatically, Maria also becomes an instructor for audience members who might learn the behaviors she avows on stage and begin to utilize them in daily life beyond the theater.^[9]

Much as the conduct writers fear, Maria proves that feminine domestic education pushes past the boundaries that men assert: the walls of the household, and the tasks of huswifery. Maria locates a sizeable student body, not only instructing Byancha and Livia how to deploy wifely and maternal expectations to their own ends, but also inviting wives from the city and country to join in the pedagogical activities happening at her home. Notably, Maria establishes her on-stage domestic classroom as a single-gendered performance space—a mirror image of the grammar school rooms to which the women have been denied access. Jaques reports that Maria’s door is “barracadoed [...and] she’s victual’d for this moneth” (1.3.46-48). Locked in and prepared for survival due to their domestic foresight, the women create a transgressive, self-sustaining community independent of men, who are “beaten off with shame” (1.3.82).^[10] Such a situation allows the women to generate disruptive compliance insofar as they keep

conduct requirements for domestic enclosure while also utilizing that enclosure to shut out men and obtain power over their own households and bodies.^[11] Away from men's eyes, the women "daunce with their coats tuckt up to their bare breeches," raising concern about whether they might learn to perform successfully in male roles—political or sexual—through the use of mimetic cross-voicing and cross-dressing (2.6.34-40).

Unlike the women of Shakespeare's *Taming*, Fletcher's female characters earn solid critical acclaim for their activities. David Bergeron associates them with the female writers of the *querrelle des femmes*, positing that they are made stronger by physical unity, which enables them to "push beyond argument and into social action" that "reorganize[s] knowledge from a feminist perspective" (153, 149).^[12] In a later piece, Crocker argues that the women, and Maria in particular, gain strength by "embrac[ing] the dignified power that sometimes accrues to maternity," realizing both a mother's desirable potential to "form her children" as well as "the nightmarish potential [...] to infantilize [husbands] in order to unsettle patriarchal presumption" ("Shrewd" 412). Neither shrews nor whores, the women earn admiration within the play itself as well as the surrounding criticism because they manage to use their domestic educations to locate cracks in the patriarchal system and pursue their desires within those spaces.

Performing Education On Stage and In the Classroom

Given the varieties of education presented on Shakespeare and Fletcher's respective stages, and given early modern beliefs about the pedagogical uses of performance and mimesis, I want to push forward to explore how these issues unfold on our own stages—whether those stages exist in theaters or classrooms. As I do so, scholars' continuing linkage between performance and pedagogy shapes my interrogation. Prominent among them is Laura Ridonis Bates, who asserts that "to scholars and educators, the necessity of literacy and the humanizing effects of literature are self-evident," particularly in the case of Shakespeare (151).^[13] In her work on Shakespearean pedagogy, Bates examines how teaching Shakespeare's plays to inmates can aid those students in uncovering their own humanity and can tell us, as educators, something about their pasts. Discussing her experience in teaching and performing *Taming of the Shrew* in a women's prison, she describes the women as overly sympathetic to Petruchio, asking, "what did it say about these women [...] that they unanimously saw Petruchio's behavior as acceptable and understandable, and as 'Pete's' way of indicating his love for 'Kate'?" (160).^[14] While we may be able to learn about our students given their reactions to texts, our assumptions about the educational value of performance might actually tell us more about ourselves as scholars and teachers. Considering the kinds of education these plays perform alongside current

theatrical trends for the plays that we choose might also aid us in examining our goals as scholars and educators.

Theater critics in the 1980s often noted that productions of *Taming of the Shrew* featured Petruchio as a “drunken sot” —a figure whose suggestive pelvic thrusts and tearing “a piece of meat asunder in ‘madness’ over its being overdone” caused hilarity for audiences (Bost 122). More recently however, *Taming* has trended away from gag humor and slapstick. Laury Magnus describes a 2007 production that eschews humanist education in favor of verbally beating Katherine into Pavlovian submission to certain patriarchal cue words (71). And Kelly N. O’Connor’s account of a 2008 production traces a shift into a graphically “sadistic depiction of domestic violence” in which Petruchio’s educative methods include “groping under [Kate’s] skirt, physically dominating her, and pushing her up against a table and pretending to penetrate her from behind” (42, 70). While these reviews provide a limited sample of *Taming* productions, which are numerous and varied, they are telling. Increasingly directors and scholars view the play’s educative practices in terms of sexual aggression and dominance—specifically, masculine aggression and dominance of which Kate is the victim. Such productions do not present Kate’s end speech as a tongue-in-cheek sign of feminine rhetorical performance or mastery, but as straightforward signs of her taming. And rarely do audiences witness her as a successful humanistic student in control of her own bodily rhetoric. Rather, the performances of this play begin corresponding with

the rhetoric of the title itself, which, as Alyssa Hertzog argues, provides a “masculine dominance model” that “corroborat[es] the argument that the action of taming constitutes this play’s pedagogy of gender” (195).

Stage representations of Kate’s education and final speech resonate powerfully for students who watch and perform the play. This seems not only to be the case for female inmates like those Bates teaches, but also for more privileged students in all-women’s preparatory environments. Ann Bradley explains of her experience teaching Shakespeare at a private girls’ school that *Taming* is one of the few plays that she has students watch first and *then* perform on their own in the classroom. This is because “the girls do not like it, generally, of course” insofar as they cannot comprehend from text alone “what on earth [Shakespeare] is trying to say about *them*” (1, emphasis mine). Much like Bianca and Katherine, the young women are in the process of obtaining humanistic educations, after all. Bradley goes on to say that over the years, her students have become increasingly troubled by the play when they see it on stage: “given Shakespeare’s own skill in presenting strong women,” they seek to understand what precisely, aside from women, he is mocking (1). Production trends for *Taming* suggest that the young women’s interpretive hopes are off-target, insofar as recent performances deny Kate her ironic end. And according to Bradley’s report, the assertiveness of such productions often cows the students from reasserting their own feminist interpretations.

Bringing *The Tamer Tamed* into pedagogical conversation with its predecessor can provide a more balanced approach to discussing and critiquing gendered education—both early modern and contemporary. Though the early stage history of *Tamer Tamed* marked it for vulgarity, modern productions have been praised for effectively balancing “coarse sexist humor, generous lashings of innuendo, and visual gags” with the “penetrating theme[s] that [have] crucial contemporary value” (Chetty 95). Rajendra Chetty’s review of the RSC’s 2003 production commends the performance and the play itself, which “becomes a celebration of female sexuality, of female pleasure” as Maria and her women shift “women’s power and strength from the periphery of society to the center”—an action reflected by the production’s (and Fletcher’s) use of space (94-95). Chetty notes that it is the women’s language, witty and eloquent, that provided viewers with the greatest enjoyment. Though the audience reacted with laughter to Petruchio’s rage and frustration, they were more drawn to Maria and her increasingly large coterie. Such productions treat women’s education as empowering; it is a tool through which private actions can, as D. Schneider puts it, “inform public life” and “generate the dynamic interaction between ostensibly separate spheres” that results in “a politicization of the private” (235). Schneider notes that it is typically the case that publicizing of this kind plays “a role in controlling aberrant women” because a publicized woman is “confronted with the social role appropriate to her gender and class—one which is informed by patriarchy” (236).

Yet I would argue that Fletcher's play and its more recent performances are more nuanced. Because Maria and her women publicize themselves, they manage to alter the terms of the text around them. They can achieve this because, rather than breaking the text entirely, they have learned their domestic roles so well as to discover every loophole and site of authority for themselves. Performing control over their educations the women make it difficult (or impossible) for men to punish them publicly because their "behavior defies the discrete classifications of wifely misconduct" (Crocker "Shrewd" 416). The women take charge of their lives by publishing their rational control over their own voices and bodies, choosing who can and cannot access them. In doing so, they contrast against *Taming's* troubling example of Kate by proving themselves good domestic students as well as the kind of rational, thinking individuals a humanist education might hope to produce.

Do Performances Tame, Assist in Taming, or Aid in the Avoidance of Taming?

To date, I have not located any pedagogical performances of *The Tamer Tamed* in schools, universities, or prisons. But I think that this absence aids me in raising the question: what does it say about our values in the classroom?

This question leads me to numerous others. If productions of both of these plays are linked to education in theme and practice, what lessons do they each privilege and present? Why might a play about a woman struggling to learn and conform to

masculine education in her performance be more popular than a play presenting women's collectively effective deployment of domestic and traditionally feminine education? Why might the former invite increasing representations of sadism, while the latter is reduced to genital jokes or, at its extreme, mere absence? My research leads me to wonder whether the answers to these questions are rooted both in the respective plays' representations of gendered education and its performance, as well as in larger, modern cultural assumptions about these same issues.

At base, bringing *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tamer Tamed* into performative, pedagogical conversation can provide students a more complex understanding of early modern women's education. It can also urge them to question the educational models available to them in their own time, and can raise questions about the educational power of mimesis and acting. After all, while Shakespeare's Petruchio effectively crows Kate and the female audience watching her, Fletcher's "Maria, as schoolmistress, rouses the onstage women—and vicariously the female playgoer—to learn from her" (Hertzog 201). Such a pairing empowers students to debate and to blend multiple methods of education into their own lives. The combination invites us as teachers to consider what lessons we want shaping our classrooms.

Endnotes:

[1] As Holly Crocker notes, Fletcher's *Tamer* at no point marks the women as shrews. Indeed, the term does not appear in the play. For more, see Crocker, "The Tamer as Shrewd in John Fletcher's *The Woman's Prize: Or, The Tamer Tam'd*." *Studies in English Literature* 51:2 (Spring 2011), 409-10.

[2] In the introduction to her edition of *The Tamer Tamed*, Lucy Munro documents that a June 1660 performance of the play included a prologue and epilogue that sought to frame both *Tamer's* action and its audience's response. Due to officials' fears that viewers might be tempted by actors to "put in practice what we play," the epilogue clarified that "we exhibit to your approbation/ Not the rebellion but the reformation" (1.6, 11.15-16 in Munro xix).

[3] Levels of praise and apology for *Taming* based on its representation of education vary. Dennis S. Brooks positions the play as a critique of rote learning, and he argues that its value emerges from Petruchio's successful deployment of *eikastic* education as an alternative pedagogy. Holly Crocker asserts that *Taming* presents Petruchio as a schoolmaster who is outstripped by his student Katherine; as Katherine becomes capable of enacting her own rhetoric, controlling her own body, and presenting her own subjectivity, Petruchio and his masculine educational model lose control over her. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Hutcheon defines Petruchio's activities as neither gender-dominant nor violent, but in line with the behavior of a Latin schoolmaster; and she argues that the play reveals women's ability to perform well in the humanistic model, and the humanistic model's inherent lack of gender bias. For more, see Brooks, "'To Show Scorn Her Own Image': The Varieties of Education in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 48:1 (1994); Crocker, "Affective Resistance: Performing Passivity and Playing a-Part in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54:2 (Summer 2003); and Hutcheon, "From Shrew to Subject: Petruchio's Humanistic Education of Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Comparative Drama* 45:4 (Winter 2011).

[4] *Eikastic* models of education, according to Dennis S. Brooks, uses the theater as a model for the classroom and privileges acting and mimesis over rote repetition. Brooks, for example, posits Shakespeare and his culture's "belief in the educative power of theatre" and praises both its representation and its effects as "innovative methods" (23). Similarly, Laura Ridonis Bates asserts that "to scholars and educators, the necessity of literacy and the humanizing effects of literature are self-evident," and that Shakespeare rests firmly at the core (151).

[5] Within the first 38 lines of 1.1, Tranio, Moroso, and Sophocles inform the audience that Petruchio, husband and alleged tamer of Katherina, has been widowed and has just remarried the quiet Maria. In addition, the men insinuate that it was Petruchio's cruelty that led to his first wife's death; and they express concern for Maria's well-being. See John Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize: Or, The Tamer Tam'd*, Ed. Lucy Munro (New York: Methuen Drama, 2010).

[6] In this sense, performing the role to which she has been educated allows Kate to touch on what Gary Schneider identifies as the "manifest danger [of] when the private becomes public." As an educated subject, Kate can strategically reveal the functions and failures of ideology, making it overt and visible. For more on the public and private in *Taming*, see Gary Schneider, "The Public, the Private, and the Shaming of the Shrew," in *Studies in English Literature* 42:2 (Spring 2002): 235. For more on women's will and intentional compliance with patriarchal expectations, see Kathryn Schwarz, *What You Will: Gender, Contract, and Shakespearean Social Space* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

[7] Notably, however, male writers and poets would have generated such female literary voices. This fact complicates Hutcheon's assertion in a way that does not get discussion in her article.

[8] Elizabeth Hutcheon, Lisa Jardine, and Anthony Grafton all agree that humanist education creates "obedience and docility" by teaching students socially sanctioned speech. I would argue that it teaches students *to perform* such speech, which also opens the door to disruptive compliance, transgression, and independent thought. Yet we must acknowledge that humanistic education, though not alone in this tendency, does aim in part to contain "unacceptable" impulses. For more, see Hutcheon 320.

[9] Alyssa Hertzog argues that "the theatre, as opposed to grammar schools and universities, acted as a viable alternative educational space for early modern patrons—both male and female." This is a point to which I'll return; but it's important to note, here, that Maria becomes an instructor for a multi-gendered audience. For more, see "Modeling Education in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tamer Tamed*," in *Performing Pedagogy in Early Modern England*, eds. Kathryn M. Moncrief and Kathryn R. McPherson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 191.

[10] This representation has implications for women's sexuality as well, implying that a community of women can be sexually self-sustaining in the absence of men as well. For more on the lesbian possibilities of this scene and scenes like it, refer to Fiona McNeill's "Gynocentric London Spaces: (Re)Locating Masterless Women in Early Stuart Drama"

(1997); see also Valerie Traub's "The (in)Significance of 'Lesbian' Desire in Early Modern England" (1994) and *The Renaissance of Lesbianism* (2004).

[11] By "disruptive compliance" I denote any action through which an individual simultaneously complies with and breaks a social expectation. For more, see Miranda Garno Nesler, "Closeted Authority in *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *Studies in English Literature* 52:2 (Spring 2012): 363-85.

[12] It is important to clarify that while I agree with Bergeron's assertions linking these characters to the *querrelle* writers, his claim that "the women [...] have triumphed pure and simple" is overstated. Certainly they have "transgressed and subverted most social custom and threatened the fabric of patriarchal society." But they have done so by manipulating patriarchy's own rules—the very action that allowed exposure of ideology and threatened the social fabric. For more, see Bergeron, "Fletcher's *The Woman's Prize*, Transgression, and the *Querelle des Femmes*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama* 8 (1996): 162.

[13] Bates's prominence in my argument is not always because of agreement with her work. For example, even in this claim I would want to question whether these components of Shakespearean literature exist and are "self evident." However, her work does seem representative of a body of pedagogical criticism and popular assumptions related to Shakespeare and the classroom.

[14] I undoubtedly find Bates's work on inmate education interesting and valuable for the questions it raises. Yet I must acknowledge some of the shortcomings of her study here. As she uses pedagogical performance in three prisons—a minimum security men's, a maximum security men's, and a women's facility—she reveals her own bias about what these inmates are like or what experiences have shaped them. This revelation occurs because she does not teach the same play in all three situations. Rather, she uses *Romeo and Juliet* to discuss gang violence in the first, *Macbeth* to explore murder in the second, and *Taming of the Shrew* to touch on domestic violence with the third. Additionally, she exposes certain preexisting assumptions about her students' abilities based on gender. For more, see Laura Ridonis Bates, "The Uses of Shakespeare in Criminal Rehabilitation," *Shakespeare Matters: History, Teaching, Performance* (2003): 151-63.

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