

THE DISCOURSE OF BEING “TAMED”: FEMINISM, SELF-IDENTITY,  
AND THE NATURE OF POWER IN *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*  
AND ITS AFTERLIVES

by

Kourtney Kinsel

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for Departmental Honors in  
the Department of English  
Texas Christian University  
Fort Worth, Texas

May 3, 2013

THE DISCOURSE OF BEING “TAMED”: FEMINISM, SELF-IDENTITY,  
AND THE NATURE OF POWER IN *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*  
AND ITS AFTERLIVES

Project Approved:

Ariane Balizet, Ph.D.  
Department of English  
(Supervising Professor)

Babette Bohn, Ph.D.  
Department of Art History

Theresa Gaul, Ph.D.  
Department of English

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1.....	8
CHAPTER 2.....	30
CHAPTER 3.....	45
CONCLUSION.....	67
WORKS CITED.....	70
ABSTRACT.....	75

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is a highly clichéd thing to say, but this project truly would have never developed without the guidance, support, and encouragement of my mentors. Dr. Balizet did an absolutely fantastic job of guiding me through the research, draft, and revision processes, and she was an indispensable part of this paper. Her comments were keen and intuitive, and often pinpointed the exact thoughts that I needed to change or expand upon. I am indebted to her for the time she spent helping me, and I am so appreciative of her mentorship! Dr. Gaul and Dr. Bohn were also extremely helpful and formative mentors to me and for this paper. Their perspectives and questions challenged me to think deeper and to think in new ways about the issues that I approached. I am incredibly thankful for their suggestions and for the time they spent reading drafts and finding articles for me to read!

I also want to extend a “thank you” to all of those that have impacted my TCU learning experience. I have had nothing but amazing professors, and I am grateful for each of you for the love of learning that you have imparted to me.

My family, friends, and boyfriend also played a big part in this project by keeping me motivated and for perpetually being supportive. As my dad says, “We’ll still support you even if you want to drop out and start a cupcake shop.” Their unfailing support has meant the world, and I think this paper would be stuck on page twelve without them!

## INTRODUCTION

“Before today and long before then, we women went along in meek silence with everything done by you men.”- from *Lysistrata*

In 411 BC, the stages of Athens were filled with the presence of Lysistrata, the protagonist of Aristophanes’ play *Lysistrata*. The play tells the story of a woman who wants to bring peace to Athens by discouraging war between Athens and Sparta. To do so, she rallies women of Athens and Sparta to strike against their soldier husbands by withholding sex. While organizing and encouraging the women, Lysistrata also has occasion to explain to some of the male magistrates of Athens why she is taking action: “We weren’t allowed to speak back,/ though you yourselves left a lot to be desired.../ and we’d smother our anguish, put on a demure smile” (442). She, here, decries the expectation that women are expected to be silent, even when their welfares and livelihoods are at stake, such as in matters of war. Lysistrata ultimately succeeds in negotiating peace between the two city-states, but her legacy extends far beyond that of the fictional Athenian peace agreement. Lysistrata’s story stands as one of the first to focus overtly on issues of gender relations and is also one of the first to depict a battle of the sexes. Further, the complications of pinning down Lysistrata as a protofeminist character exemplify the problems that exist in labeling any sort of female character as a feminist or protofeminist. For example, Lysistrata breaks traditional gender roles, but she also rallies the women in a way that stresses their position as sexual objects. Most significantly in the context of this paper, its presentation of a dichotomy between “meek, silent” women and politically active and loquacious women anticipates the ideologies surrounding Early Modern women in English society.

The gender concern embedded in the idea of meek, tamed women is echoed nearly a thousand years later in Early Modern England. Early Modern England, home of Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth, was also home to building tension between the genders: “The sense of impending breakdown in social order was never ‘more widespread, or more intense, than in early modern England’” (Boose 184). Early Modern Englishmen and Englishwomen were surrounded by evidence of gendered battles and debate over societal roles. This evidence appeared in plays and in pamphlets and became part of the cultural reflection of society. For example, some plays produced during the Early Modern era used gender battles as a main source of plot and entertainment. These plays, moreover, reveal interesting dynamics between men and women and explore the social positioning and experience of women in Early Modern society. Specifically, analyzing the characters of women in these Early Modern plays and their afterlives in terms of the “feminist” and “proto-feminist” labels reveals a great deal about society, then and now, and their views of shrews as challenges to, yet productions of, society.

The word “shrew” is important to this project. The set of terms “sheep and shrew” was used as a diametrical descriptor for women’s positioning in society. Beginning in 1573 with Tusser’s *Five Hundreth Points Good Husbandry*, desirable womanhood and wifhood were linked with “sheep” while undesirable women were linked with “shrews” (“sheep,” OED). The epithet of “shrew,” moreover, had been linked to women as early as 1386 in Chaucer’s *Merchant’s Tale*: “But of hir tonge a lobbyng shrewe is she” (“shrew,” OED). These sources for “shrew” demonstrate both the connection between shrewishness and undesirable feminine traits and the idea that shrews are portrayed as independent (non-sheepish) and loud (a “lobbyng” shrew). Public entertainment, including pamphlets

and plays, during the Early Modern period struck upon and incorporated the idea of the “shrew” in varied ways. Some media productions lauded the shrew while others portrayed shrews as women who made their husbands miserable (Bayman and Southcombe, 13). Anna Bayman and George Southcombe explain that “London tended to discuss shrewishness rather than simply shrews, treating it as an attribute, often adopted according to circumstance, as much as a character-type” (13). The tone of the attribute of shrew, whether positive or negative, varies according to the specific play or pamphlet, yet the existence of so many media discussions surrounding shrews and shrewishness indicates that many of those living in Early Modern England would have been conscious of the cultural discourse surrounding women’s place in society.

Boose also points out, though, that the cultural understanding of shrewishness extended beyond mere plays and pamphlets. The concept of “shrew” took on a physical aspect in terms of gendered punishments. Women were punished for “‘scolding,’ ‘brawling,’ and dominating one’s husband. The veritable prototype of the female offender of this era seems to be, in fact, the woman marked out as a ‘scold’ or ‘shrew.’” (184-5). There is a link, then, between appearing “shrewish” by stepping outside of gender expectations and appearing criminal. Further, she argues that “what is striking is that the punishments meted out to women are much more frequently targeted at suppressing women’s speech than they are at controlling their sexual transgressions” (184). For example, the shrew’s “scold” was a contraption placed on women’s heads. It was caged in shape, surrounding the woman’s head and often including some sort of tongue depressant or mouth cover. Shrews were expected to wear the scold and many

scolds came with a chain by which they could be walked through town. This punishment given to shrews clearly shows the “loose tongue” of a shrew as a need for punishment.

With his sixteenth-century play *The Taming of the Shrew*, Shakespeare directly entered into this discussion and gendered milieu of shrews, scolds, and roles. *The Taming of the Shrew* boldly ventures into the rocky territory surrounding the “crisis” of gender in Early Modern England. The play focuses on the courtship of two sisters, Katherine and Bianca. Katherine, the older sister, personifies the idea of a shrew: she is described by male characters as “too rough” and “stark mad,” and they want to “cart” her and make her “bear the penance of her tongue” (1.1.55, 69, 55, 89). These classic shrewish qualities of roughness and loquacity are contrasted against the ideal of a marriageable woman, much like the contrast of a shrew against a sheep. Hortensio, one of the two main suitors of Bianca, tells Katherine “No mates for you/ Unless you were of a gentle, milder mold” (1.1.59-60). Similarly, Lucentio, the other suitor of Bianca, compares Bianca to Katherine: “But in [Bianca’s] silence do I see/ Maid’s mild behaviour and sobriety” (1.1.70-71). The fact that Bianca is seen as the more marriageable of the two sisters is complicated by their father, Baptista, who proclaims that Katherine must marry before Bianca is able to. Bianca’s suitors despair until Petruchio arrives to visit Hortensio, who tells Petruchio that there is a rich, albeit shrewish, woman available for him to “wive.” Petruchio replies that “thou know’st not gold’s effect;/ Tell me her father’s name and ‘tis enough./ For I will board her though she chide as loud/ As thunder when the clouds in autumn crack” (1.2.92-95). These words launch Petruchio’s courtship of Katherine, and they are soon married despite Katherine’s tears. More, Petruchio’s promise to “board her though she chides” indicates his strategy for making Katherine marriageable: he plans to

“tame” her. His methods of taming take on different forms; he refuses to let her eat meat, for example, and forces her to accede to his ideas and commands. One of these commands, coming in the ultimate scene of the play, leads to Katherine’s infamous final speech. Spanning forty-three lines, she denounces shrewishness and lauds wifely duty: “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?” (5.2.157-160). By this time, the fiery and independent Katherine from the beginning of the play has become unrecognizable, and Petruchio is congratulated by the play’s male characters.

Given the tension between Petruchio and Katherine and the sudden “tamed” version of Katherine that audiences are left with, it is no wonder that the play’s depiction of gendered conflict and gender relations generated controversy and discontent in its own time as well as beyond. This discontent is concretely manifested in some of the many responses that were produced to try and solve the “problem” of the ending of *The Taming of the Shrew*. One response, John Fletcher’s *A Woman’s Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed*, materialized in Shakespeare’s lifetime and saw a Restoration-era revival. As the play’s title hints, this version of a shrew-taming narrative aims to “tame” the male rather than the female. Speckled with some of the same characters as *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Tamer Tamed* takes place after the seemingly early death of Katherine at the hands of Petruchio’s taming. Petruchio has taken a new wife, Maria, who, like Lysistrata, promises to put aside passion in the name of peace and withholds sex from Petruchio as a form of “taming” him. Yet, also like Lysistrata, Maria’s story illuminates the problems of assigning a “feminist” or “protofeminist” label to female heroines and calls into question

societal constructs of power. By juxtaposing questions of gender with questions of power, Fletcher's play adds the element of "power" to the conversation surrounding gender roles and taming.

The "problem play" nature of *The Taming of the Shrew* has enjoyed a long lifespan. As Velvet Pearson explains, "When faced with a 'problem play' such as this one, theater companies often avoid the difficulties involved by ignoring the play entirely or substituting an altered version. . . . If a way is not found to make the text compatible to the sensibilities of a modern audience, performances of it will cease, and the text will sink into obscurity, to be read only by the most dedicated Shakespeare scholars" (229). Pearson's argument highlights the impetus for transformation that problem plays create as well as the importance of cultural context in the staging and analysis of play productions; the production must be acceptable, at least on some levels, to its audience, and thus the play itself becomes a reflection of the audience that it is intended for. This is manifested more than four hundred years after *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Tamer Tamed*, when Gil Junger's *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999) appeared on-screen as an adaptation of Shakespeare's shrew story intended for a teenage audience. This version appeared in a time of resurgence of Shakespeare in popular culture—"Shakespop"—and during an outcrop of teen films set in high school. This Katherine, named Kat, echoes Maria's stronger appearance and takes on attributes that make her seem to be a stronger female character. Kat aligns herself with feminism and with the Riot Grrrl movement of the 1990's, spurning love and definition by high school identity. The setting of this shrew tale brings the concept of modern feminism into the conversation about gendered relationships and identity. How does Kat's feminist identity relate to her relationship with

Petruchio, for example? Further, the movie's modernity offers the chance to better understand audience feedback, letting us see how recent "theatergoers" interpret the play and its gender roles and adding another layer of intertextuality with *The Taming of the Shrew* and its intercentury reverberation.

Shakespeare stands as a historical figure, but his writing most certainly remains present in terms of its subject matter and ability to incite debate. As we try to understand the ways in which Shakespeare has been adopted and appropriated into culture and society, it is essential that we keep in mind the interrelation of texts over time and space. Julie Sanders rightly notes that "any study of Shakespeare's adaptation of sources indicates the rich intertextual readings such incorporation makes possible" (47). It is important to both recognize the sources that have contributed to a work and the ways that that work, in turn, is appropriated and included in works that follow. This paper seeks to trace the intertextuality of three widely consumed and popular works that take gender relations as their focus and which each contribute to conversation surrounding the idea of feminism. *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Tamer Tamed*, and *Ten Things I Hate About You* show how feminism and gender are still divisive, complicated topics, and also demonstrate how examining the ways in which plays and cinematic productions have approached the question of gender relations can lead to a better understanding of how the discourse surrounding gender has changed, or perhaps continued, over time. In a modern society where gender still defines relationships and the ways in which genders are treated, it is important to recognize the echoes of the voices of Katherine, Maria, and Kat and use them to inform and assess our own cultural understandings of how "meek" and silent may still apply to women today, and of what it means to be a shrew, a woman, and a feminist.

CHAPTER 1: “COMES THERE ANY MORE OF IT?”: HIERARCHY, ALTERITY,  
AND THE FEMININE CROWD IN SHAKESPEARE’S RENAISSANCE AND *THE  
TAMING OF THE SHREW*

Mikhail Bakhtin’s explanation of the “grotesque” body, or a body that is “unfinished, outgrows itself, and transgresses its own limits” may seem to characterize any body that appears to overstep its boundaries (qtd in Stallybrass, 126). Yet, one of the effects of understanding the idea of the body in terms of the classical versus the grotesque is that certain bodies appear grotesque far more frequently than others. Indeed, as this chapter will seek to show through evaluating *The Taming of the Shrew*, entire sections of Renaissance society, such as the poor and women, were embodied with an idea of the grotesque. Further, these same grotesque groups were acted upon in an attempt to bind their bodies and bring them into the realm of the “classical” that men and the wealthy inhabited. The way that these groups are brought from the grotesque to the classical is analogous to the “taming” that is within this Shakespearean play’s namesake, and the ways that seemingly grotesque and marginalized groups react to such taming indicates differences in both the manner and effects of taming. These differences, moreover, indicate a hierarchy *within* the grotesque marginalized groups that turns upon ideas of class and gender in comparing the taming of poor men to that of women and creates an unsettling conclusion. In essence, Shakespeare’s portrayal of this nuanced hierarchy, his representation of the psychological and positional effects that being “tamed” entails, and his organization of the play all act to show that this hierarchy involves mistreatment of marginalized groups, and that most negative effects impact women who dare to step aside from social expectations. In doing so, his play illustrates that the accepted system

deprives women, especially, of the ability to act outside the social code and that women should possess, and fight for, the opportunity to think and act as autonomous individuals.

Shakespeare's look at the intersection of gender and class is accomplished through investigating the marginalization of two types of groups: the poor, represented by Sly, and women, represented by Katherine and Bianca. The textually shown marginalization of these characters, to be discussed below, corresponds to marginalization that was actually taking place during the Renaissance. For example, the poor were treated differently than other classes of citizens. In her book *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature*, Linda Woodbridge provides an account of the way the poor were viewed in Renaissance England, arguing that they were often equated with disease. She states that "the identification of poor people with disease is crucial to understanding Renaissance attitudes toward beggary and vagrancy" (179). As she explains, this idea that the poor were diseased greatly affected the way in which they were treated and viewed by society. For example, as with quarantining plague victims, vagrants were "rounded up" and kept off the streets (179). Similarly and in symmetry with how bloodletting and expulsion were seen as cures for diseases during the Renaissance, some saw expulsion of the poor as a "cure" for the envisioned "social evil" that the poor presented (181). "Expulsion" is further explained by Woodbridge through a citation from a source about Cardinal Wolsey of the Tudor era: "[Wolsey] and More were responsible for the first efforts by an English government to prevent the spread of plague. Infected houses in London and Oxford were to be identified and marked so that people might avoid them" (179). Because the poor were so often associated with disease, such a quarantine of sickness would also be a quarantine of the poor. In another citation,

Woodbridge includes a royal proclamation from 1580 that commanded “all manner of persons... to desist and forbear from any new buildings of any house or tenement within three miles from any of the gates of the said city of London” (178). The movement of tenement houses to outside of London’s gates shows that the poor in Renaissance England were not only seen as diseased, but they were treated as objects to be cured and were marginalized, both abstractly and concretely, to fringe positions of society.

Sly is visibly presented in the play as a member of this group of the marginalized poor. Sly is described as “old Sly’s son of Burton-heath, by birth a pedlar, by/ education a cardmaker, by transmutation a bear-herd,/ and now by present profession a tinker” (induction 2. 16-19). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the noun “tinker,” meaning “a craftsman (usually itinerant) who mends pots, kettles, and other metal household utensils,” has historically been associated with those of ill repute, such as vagrants and gypsies. The dictionary cites the phrase “as drunk as a tinker” to exemplify the connection between drunks and tinkers (“Tinker, n.”). Sly, indeed, seems to be this sort of drunk tinker of ill repute. The audience is introduced to him as he is thrown from a drinking den for not paying for his drinks, and he is soon asleep on the doorstep. This image of Sly as both a drunk and a vagrant is significant when assessing his social position within the play. It is clear that the lord and his huntsmen view Sly as a lesser being. The lord spends lines 13-26 of induction 1 talking about the qualities of and cares for his hunting dogs, yet wastes no time in calling Sly a “monstrous beast” at line 31. In this comparison of language, the lord appears to value the hunting dogs more than he does Sly. This dehumanization of Sly may be seen as linguistic proof of his marginalization. Further, the lord calls Sly’s head a “foul head” (induction 1.45). The

description of Sly as “foul” is supportive of Woodbridge’s explanation of the view of the poor as dirty and unhygienic: the lord, through linking Sly with imagery that indicates the filth of his appearance, exhibits the Renaissance’s classification of the poor as those who lack cleanliness.

This categorization and view of the poor can also be seen in context of aforementioned theorist Bakhtin’s concept of the grotesque body. As Janet Wolff explains, the body can be described as classical or grotesque. Classical bodies are closed off, like a “classical statue”; they have neither orifices nor bodily functions and there are no boundaries transgressed. Grotesque bodies, on the other hand, have “orifices, genitals, protuberances,” and transgress the boundaries of their spaces (416). In this view, then, bodies can be grotesque due to physical appearance and process or due to action. For example, a body that sneezes, protruding bodily fluids, is grotesque and a body that is loud or overly talkative, protruding a voice, is also grotesque. Sly demonstrates these characteristics of the grotesque in the short scene that opens the play. Sly’s opening position as filthy, drunk, and doorstep-inhabiting emphasizes a transgression of boundaries: he is physically protruding from an alehouse door and both his filth and drunken state bring to mind bodily processes such as drinking, vomiting, sweating, and excreting. The lord’s decision to “carry” Sly out and clean him represents an attempt to bring him closer to the classical by taking him away from an unbound position on the doorstep and by clearing his features of indicators of the bodily. Thus, the Renaissance’s marginalization of the poor into certain areas is parallel to the attempt to make the poor clean, as cleaning someone of filth and disease may be seen as bringing him or her into the bound form of the classical body. This represents a clear separation between the

upper and lower classes, primarily turning, through the parallel dichotomies of cleanliness/filth and classical/grotesque, on the upper-classes' attempts to bind the lower classes to certain actions and positions.

In opposition to the grotesque body that Sly exhibits within the play, Katherine and Bianca, at least initially, show alignment with the classical body. Katherine means "pure" while Bianca means "white," showing a surface-level association with the ideals of the classical. Further, the two women are first presented in the play as static, quiet figures. As Baptista, Katherine, and Bianca enter the play, the two women stand by, unspeaking, as Baptista talks about them and offers Katherine up for marriage (1.1.45-54). They lack action here, making them seem statuesque. The women are also connected to the classical through their class status, as they are portrayed as coming from a wealthy father. In act 1, scene 1, Gremio explains that "[Katherine's] father be very rich" (123). The women's association with the upper-class is combined with the characterization of Katherine and Bianca as classical—and thus silent, clean, and pure—, provides another example of the association of the wealthy upper-class with a desire for cleanliness.

Yet, despite their classical, clean bodies and thus alignment with the upper-class, Katherine and Bianca, like Sly, are also presented as occupying a marginalized place in society. Feminist theorist Sara Lennox explains that "almost all American feminist scholars now agree that gender relations are social constructions. They define gender as a social category that must be distinguished from sex, the biological substratum on which gender rests and which allows various societies to define masculinity and femininity as opposite, if dialectically related, terms" (qtd in Brinker-Gabler and Endres, 241). Although this analysis of the interaction of gender with society is American as well as

modern, it can still speak to the position of women in Renaissance England. Scholar Joan Kelly-Gadol argues that “there was no ‘renaissance’ for women, at least not during the Renaissance. The state, early capitalism, and the social relations formed by [the developments] impinged on the lives of Renaissance women in different ways according to their different positions in society. But the starting fact is that women as a group... experienced a contraction of social and personal options that the men of their classes did not experience as markedly” (Kelly-Gadol, n.p.).<sup>1</sup> In this view of Renaissance women, social options are directly correlated with gender. Further, Lennox’s argument that gender is a social classification in itself is supported by Kelly-Gadol’s argument that women, specifically, are adversely affected by the social and state developments that occurred during the Renaissance. No matter what social class they are, they, as a *group*, are lower on the hierarchy than men.

Women’s positioning as categorically lesser or hierarchically lower than men is also supported by women’s alignment, as a group, with the grotesque. As Peter Stallybrass explains in his analysis of Bakhtin, “the woman’s body... is *naturally* [sic] ‘grotesque.’ It must be subjected to constant surveillance.... The surveillance of women concentrated upon three specific areas: the mouth, chastity, the threshold of the house” (126). Here, Stallybrass indicates that women were seen as naturally seeming grotesque. Their breasts, menstruation, and protruding stomachs during pregnancy all would have indicated the “transgression” of boundaries that calls to mind the grotesque. Although these are uncontrollable, Stallybrass argues that features such as the mouth and chastity

---

<sup>1</sup> David Herlihy makes a claim against Kelly-Gadol’s sweeping argument that women did not have a Renaissance. He asserts, instead, that women had an “alternate route to personal fulfillment and social leadership, that through charisma” (16). Despite this route and importantly for this chapter’s argument, however, he still maintains that women lost power over the Middle Ages; women lost control in administration, property rights, and economy, for example.

were aspects of women's boundaries that could be controlled. Yet, controlling features such as speech and purity to make a woman classical would go against her "nature." In terms of Katherine and Bianca, although they initially appear as classical due to their silence and wealth, they would essentially be more aligned with the grotesque due to their status as women. This is indicated in their opening scene, as their silence is juxtaposed with their father's speaking and marriage dealings. Here, and as will be explored below, the attempt to make women classical is seen in Baptista's overshadowing of the females' voices and the subtext of the idea of chastity in the marriage negotiations.

The position of women as both opposed to masculinely-defined roles, as Lennox argues; constrained by society, as Kelly-Gadol argues; and grotesque and opposed to the ideal, as Stallybrass argues, is apparent in *the Shrew*. Bianca and Katherine, for example, are shown almost exclusively in the realm of domesticity. Their education even happens domestically, as men come in from the public to tutor them. The power of these men is demonstrated by their ability to travel away from the domestic space and in their education of women and dictation of what they learn. This power is further demonstrated by their ulterior motives in educating women. By coming into the domestic space to "instruct" Bianca, Hortensio also wants to gain power over her relationally. He explains, "Now shall my friend Petruchio do me grace,/ And offer me disguised in sober robes/ To old Baptista as a schoolmaster/ Well seen in music, to instruct Bianca,/ That so I may by this device at least/ Have leave and leisure to make love to her,/ And unsuspected court her by herself" (1.2.129-135). Bianca, by being socially constrained to a role of domesticity, is vulnerable to this scheme because she has no other option than to be audience to male tutelage in the form of education. Her position, to analyze it in

Lennoxian terms, as domestic subordinate is diametrically opposed to Hortensio's as public actor. Further, Hortensio's desire to "have leave and leisure to make love" eclipses any agency on Bianca's part. She truly is, as Kelly-Gadol would argue, constrained socially and personally.

Although Bianca and Katherine are both women and are thus ascribed by their gender to a position with less agency than that of men, their positioning diverges as Bianca continues to be associated with the classical while Katherine begins to exhibit the grotesque. Where Bianca is still "white" at the end of the play, Katherine's grotesqueness becomes most apparent in her loudness, proclivity to speak out, desire to fight against boundaries, and the bawdy (and body) jokes that surround her (5.2.187). As Natália Pikli explains, shrews are commonly portrayed in these characteristics of the grotesque carnival. Further, she argues that shrews are part of an association with the grotesque carnival because they "exemplif[y] gender and social inversion" (236). Katherine as grotesque because of inversion is apparent in her interactions. In act 1, scene 1, she responds to her father giving her permission to stay in the room with "What,/ shall I be appointed hours, as though, belike, I know not/what to take and what to leave? Ha!" (103-4). This exclamation for independence of mobility and action is then commented upon by Bianca's suitor Gremio, who says "You may go to the devil's dam: your gifts are so/good here's none will hold you" (1.1.105-6). Here, Gremio links Katherine with transgressing borders, a grotesque characteristic that implicates that the reason for this appearance as grotesque stems from a struggle against the system that marginalizes both Bianca and her; by speaking out and bringing notice to her mouth, she is subverting the "classical" expectations of her class as well as the normative expectations that place her

as a being to be acted upon. Somewhat ironically, however, this action that separates Bianca as classical and Katherine as grotesque ultimately marginalizes Katherine even further, as her association with the grotesque links her to an interpretation that places her in the same marginalized group that Sly is presented in and suggests that upper-class women can forfeit their appearance as classical and thus their relation to their class if they fail to bind themselves by expectations and conventions.

With Katherine and Sly established as the play's similarly and most purposely marginalized characters, its represented attitudes towards these marginalized groups of people can begin to be analyzed through use of Joshua Wexler's summary of the concept of alterity: those who define an Other use the Other as a "blank screen" from which to draw conclusions about the self (Wexler). An Other needs to be "blank," then, for one to adequately self-define. In terms of Lennox's "dialectically related" concepts of masculinity and femininity, a "blank screen" can also represent the attempt to dichotomize and see the self as part of a system of oppositions. Brinker-Gabler and Endres explain this through a summary of an argument by theorist Jacques Derrida: "the history both of metaphysics and of Western civilization is based on the presupposition of certain structures whose existence depends on some central point of reference. They constitute a set of hierarchical opposites, with reference to the presence or absence of some value, such as self/other, subject/object, law/chaos, or man/woman" (237). This reading of social constructions combines Wexler's idea of Othering with social hierarchicalization: not only does Othering present an attempt to define the self through "some central point of reference," but the act itself also produces "hierarchical opposites" that presuppose a certain set of values.

Woodbridge's research about the Renaissance poor can be seen in these terms of hierarchical Othering. The act of the higher classes' attempts to bind the poor into certain areas based on the conception that they are dirty and unhygienic represents a break between "self" and "other," balancing upon the reference that the "self," the higher classes, are clean and classic, while the "other," the lower classes, are dirty and grotesque. The dichotomy and its intrinsic hierarchy are apparent in light of the Renaissance's obsession with the idea of cleanliness (see Woodbridge). The "self" that the higher classes try to preserve by keeping the poor enclosed by borders is a socially higher self, as such a self represents cleanliness and the classical body. The man/woman dichotomy that Derrida mentions is also apparent in Renaissance and *the Shrew* as an act of hierarchical Othering. Kelly-Gadol's analysis of women's position in Renaissance society helps shed light on the ways in which Katherine's "grotesque" actions place her outside the realm of the expected and explains gender hierarchy through her argument that men were less constrained than women. She discusses the idea that many sources from the nobility "establish chastity as the female norm and restructure the relation of the sexes to one of female dependency and male domination. The bourgeois writings on education, domestic life, society constitute the extreme in this denial of women's independence. Suffice it to say that they sharply distinguish a specific domestic realm of women from the superior public realm of men" (Kelly-Gadol). Here, the Othering is apparent through the "female dependency" on men that is socially contrived and used to define the ways in which men's and women's roles are distinguished. As Kelly-Gadol points out, hierarchy is a clear part of this creation of "realms" as men were socially elevated by their positioning in the "superior" public realm while women were placed

within the “domestic realm.” Like the poor, they were ideally kept inside, enclosed and constrained.

These ideas about how certain Others should be and where they should be enclosed are the basis for the “taming” that is part of the play’s namesake. Taming in the play is triggered when those that envision, or create, the Other see an individual as transgressing their boundaries or their societally-expected role. When the lord first encounters Sly in his drunk position on the doorstep, he exclaims “O monstrous beast, how like a swine he lies!/ Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!/ Sirs, I will practise on this drunken man” (Induction I.31-33). The desire to “practise” upon Sly seems to stem from the lord’s revulsion of Sly’s obviously inebriated state. When the lord is given directions for Sly’s “induction,” further, he commands the huntsmen to “balm his foul head in warm distilled waters,/ And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet” (Induction I. 45-46). These directions to make Sly clean and to make his environment smell “sweet” are, again, in direct accordance with the Renaissance views of the poor as dirty and grotesque. The lord, then, is “taming” Sly by making him come under the social expectations that the filth of the poor should be contained and bound.

Like the lord, Petruchio also acts to define an Other. Aggressive and determined, Petruchio acts within the play to define himself through creating a definition of women and their role in society. In this context, a man needs a “blank screen” from which to base his definition of himself. A woman, therefore, must be seen as blank so that a man can draw conclusions. If a woman is not blank, she is no longer purely an Other for men to define; she is threatening, as she threatens man’s ability to define his self. Within *The Taming of the Shrew*, Katherine is not blank. Indeed, she already comes with the

definitive name of “shrew” in the play’s title. Petruchio’s attempt to make her blank by “taming” her may also be seen as an act of Othering in that he desires to control her so that he can prove himself as powerful. In act 4 scene 5, Katherine makes herself blank after bickering with Petruchio. Petruchio, purposely being contrary, insists that the moon is the sun. Katherine, tired of fighting him, agrees that the sun or the moon is only so labeled according to what Petruchio believes: “Then, god be blessed, it is the blessed sun,/ But sun it is not, when you say it is not,/ And the moon changes even as your mind:/What you will have it named, even that it is,/And so it shall be so for Katherine” (18-22). Here, Katherine has given up any of her own understandings of the features that surround her; she has become “blank” in the sense that she will agree with and do anything that Petruchio tells her, giving him the power to “write” her beliefs. After Katherine makes the accession, Petruchio’s friend Hortensio says, “Petruchio, go thy ways, the field is won” (23). Aside from depicting male-female relations as a war to be won or lost, this line also concludes that Petruchio has “won” by making Katherine agree with him. He has accomplished his goal, and now, through controlling her, he can define himself as powerful. By overcoming the threat that Katherine placed on his self-identity as a man by not allowing him to have control, he has “tamed” her and pushed her back into the space of marginalization that women, as defined through hierarchical Othering, were expected to inhabit.

As with the similarity in how Sly and Katherine are Othered, the “taming” of both the poor and of grotesque women as presented in *the Shrew* represents continuity in the way that these marginalized groups are treated by groups higher in the social hierarchy. In act 4, scene 1, Petruchio explains his method for taming: “she ate no meat today, nor

none shall eat./ Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not” (184-85). By forcibly keeping Katherine from eating and sleeping, he hopes to bring her under his control. The reader finds that Petruchio has indeed followed his plan when Katherine is depicted as begging for food from Grumio in act 4, scene 3, with “I prithee go and get me some repast, I care not what, so it be wholesome food” (15-16). The lord and his servants act in a similar manner in their treatment of Sly. Aside from working to make Sly clean, they also keep him from sleeping and deny the sustenance that he requests. At act 1, scene 1, where Sly is given his only appearance within the actual acts of the play, a servant rebuffs him with “my lord, you nod, you do not mind the play” (247). If Sly was indeed “nodding,” then the servant’s comment would have acted to wake Sly up. Thus, like Katherine, he is being kept awake. The similar way in which both Katherine, as a woman, and Sly, as a vagrant, are “tamed” and made to come under control is further evidence of the similarity, in terms of hierarchy, of both characters’ positions.<sup>2</sup>

An analysis of the “taming” of the poor and of grotesque women takes on even greater significance in the context of alterity. Within alterity, a tension between “I/not I,” takes place, where there is a sense of separation in identities between how one sees oneself and how one sees others (Wexler). While the “I/not I” terminology generally applies to relationships between the views of the self and of others, it can also be used in assessing the impact that Othering has on those being Othered. In induction 2, Sly has come to believe his new identity that the lord has given him by line 70. He says, “upon my life, I am a lord indeed,/ And not a tinker nor Christopher Sly.” This self-reference in

---

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note here that Sly, although being socially tamed, is given food while Katherine is kept from food as part of her taming. This aligns with the argument that women are more grotesque and affected more by their marginalization than poor men are, as keeping Katherine from food is another way of “closing” her boundaries by closing her mouth and by not letting food transgress her boundaries.

third-person format represents a division between “Christopher Sly” and the person that Sly now believes himself to be. In other words, the break in these identities suggests the tension between the “I/not I,” as Sly cannot be “Christopher Sly” while living as a tinker; he must adopt a new self-identity for the new role the lord gave him. Katherine, too, exhibits tension between “I/not I” through her third-person self-referrals. These instances embody times when she is being “tamed,” or made to act within her socially contrived identity. In act 3 scene 2, Katherine is about to marry Petruchio and she self-refers as “Katherine” twice: “Now must the world point at poor Katherine,” and “Would Katherine had never seen him though!” (18, 26). Here, her references to herself draw on her recognition that her body, “Katherine,” is being made to do something that is incongruent with her self-identity; she is being made to come under the power of a man when she actually desires autonomy. Similarly, Katherine self-refers in act 4 scene 5 when she laments “What you will have it named, even that it is,/ And so it shall be so for Katherine” (22). In this scene, Katherine is acceding to Petruchio’s wish to “control” her by agreeing to whatever he says. In this circumstance, like that in act 3 scene 2, Katherine’s actions and external identity are separate from her self-identification as an autonomously thinking and deciding individual. Like “Christopher” for Sly, her self-identity, “Katherine,” no longer fits with the role being given to her, and thus there is a break between her desires and her role.

Although the treatment of Sly and Katherine by higher groups leads to self-doubt and a questioning of self-identity, these two characters react differently to the changing of identity. As seen above, when Sly begins to believe that he truly is a lord, he states “I am a lord indeed,/ And not a tinker nor Christopher Sly” (induction 2.70-71). While Sly is

refuting his name and his identity in favor of the Other- and socially-given title, he is identifying himself with a new identity. He defines himself as a “lord indeed,” and begins to see himself in view of this identity. Soon after, he tells his “wife” that “my men should call me ‘lord’; I am your goodman” (induction 2.103-4). Here, he seems to have no problem or resistance to the new identity that being “tamed” gave him. Further, he expresses a move toward accepting the new identity in place of his old identity when he explains that “I/ would be loath to fall into my dreams again” (induction 2.123-24). In the structure that the lords and servants created, where “dreams” are Sly’s true, tinker state and reality is his lordship, Sly is expressing desire to stay in the identity created for him rather than go back to his actual identity. Sly, then, can be seen as completely giving up his old identity.

Where Sly embraced and believed this new, socially-given identity, however, Katherine had a much more difficult time. As briefly mentioned above, Katherine portrayed herself as valuing autonomy, especially of thought. In act 3, scene 2, she explains that “I see a woman may be made a fool/ If she had not a spirit to resist” (222-23). Similarly, she expresses a value in freedom of opinion in act 4, scene 3: “my tongue will tell the anger of my heart,/ Or else my heart concealing it will break” (77-78). Within these two assertions of the value of autonomy that Katherine holds, it is apparent that her view of herself and her desires is directly in contrast with the view that Petruchio has of her. He sees her as fulfilling the role of a woman to be tamed, while she sees herself as an autonomously thinking and acting individual. This divide highlights the tension taking place in women between their social role and self-identity. To invoke the “I/not I,” terminology once more, the “I” can be seen as the part of women that they see as their

selves, or their self-identity. For example, Katherine's expressions of autonomy would be her "I," or self-identity. The "not I," in contrast, is the social-identity, or way that men want women to be. In other words, it is the way in which women must act in order to fulfill the norms of society. Petruchio's desire to control Katherine, and Katherine's eventual fulfilling of his desire, then, would be her "not I," or social-identity. This contrast between social- and self-identification can be seen in act 3, scene 2, when Katherine explains "I must forsooth be forced/ To give my hand, opposed against my heart" (8-9). Here, her "hand" would be her external or social self that is being forced to bend to Petruchio's will to control her in marriage, while her "heart" would be her internal self-identity that desires autonomy. In this way, men's Othering *of* women creates an internal Othering *within* women, where the social- and self-identities are separated.

This division in how being "tamed" and given a social-identity affects the self-identities of Sly and Katherine represents a break in Shakespeare's treatment of these two marginalized groups within *the Shrew*. While showing grotesque women and the poor as groups affected and treated similarly by those wishing to "tame" them, Shakespeare further presents a hierarchy *within* marginalized peoples by differentiating Sly and Katherine's reactions to taming. After Sly begins to believe in his new identity, he self-identifies verbally as a lord. With this new self-identification comes a proclivity to "tame" an Other, as the lord displayed. Specifically, within his circumstance as bound in the lord's space, Sly attempts to "tame" women, in this case the "wife" given to him as part of the lord's ruse. Like Petruchio demonstrated in his determination to "win" battles with Katherine by controlling her, Sly also presents a similar determination to control his

wife, acting to refuse to recognize his wife's name. Also, as Petruchio refused to call Katherine by "Kate," as she requested, Sly also refused to call his wife "madam." The lord tells him that he should call her "'Madam', and nothing else, so lords call ladies" (induction 2. 109). Sly, though, calls her "madam wife" most often (induction 2. 110, 139). Although the lord is the individual who gives the wife her title, Sly's refusal to acknowledge this title is an attempt to give the wife another new, male-given identity. Thus, although Sly is also "tamed" as a member of the poor class, he embraces the chance to hold power over, and indeed "tame," others.

Sly's acceptance of his new position and his ability to tame others aligns with Stallybrass's take on the grotesque and classical in society's roles. He posits that a "third position" of people within society, the class aspirants, exists away from either continuing or subverting "social closure": "like the members of the male elite," he explains, "the class aspirant has an interest in preserving social closure, since without it there would be nothing to aspire to. But, at the same time, that closure must be sufficiently flexible to incorporate *him*" (134). Sly, as one who consciously decides to embrace a higher social position at the expense of becoming more "classical" and thus bound, can be seen as a class aspirant. Further, he shows the signs of "preserving social closure" that Stallybrass indicates. He both accepts the binding that gives him a higher social position, thus validating the system's existence, and propagates the system by taming women and thus preserving social closure. Yet, the system that allows Sly to become socially closed and to act to continue social closure keeps others socially closed as well. This is evidenced by Sly's immediate attempt, upon becoming socially constrained through becoming less grotesque, to tame a woman. Thus, as a class aspirant, he is able to become a part of the

society that used to tame him and that still tames others. The problem with the class aspirant's place in society, however, is that it excludes women from having an opportunity to aspire. Although the "flexibility" of the system allows men to aspire to a position with more power given that they become constrained and more classical, women cannot viably aspire to a position of more power. As Katherine and Bianca show, if women become more constrained and thus more classical, they *lose* power rather than gain it; the hierarchically "higher" position that being classical entails means that women lose power and agency. Thus, women are unable to either aspire or enforce boundaries—the only social location they can inhabit is that of the group being constrained.

The presentation of women at the bottom of the social hierarchy taken in conjunction with the negative psychological effect of women's taming, as evidenced by Katherine's loss of self-identity, is significant when seen in the context of women as playgoers. Richard Levin, in his analysis of addresses to the audience within plays, finds that "Shakespeare was aware of women as a distinct component of his audience that he had to please" (168). If Shakespeare was writing with the awareness of a women audience, then he would have been writing with the knowledge that the scenes of Katherine's taming would indeed be seen by female audience members. This is significant because, as Levin finds, trends in comments regarding female playgoers show a tendency for women to feel "gender-concern or even gender-loyalty" (171). In other words, he finds that female audience members show identification with the females depicted in plays. This gender concern and "identification with female characters becomes even more significant when the play presents a version of the battle of the sexes" (171). As *the Shrew* is almost entirely concerned with the struggle for power

between Katherine and Petruchio, a “battle of the sexes” is very conspicuously given the spotlight. It is conceivable, then, that women in the audience of *The Taming of the Shrew* would have identified with Katherine as a female character going through a gendered struggle.

This context of theatre audiences as containing gender-loyal and female-identifying women matters due to the placement of Katherine’s taming as the end of the play as the climax. The way that the play is organized with Katherine’s subordination acting as the conclusion sets the stage, so to speak, for women to feel upset about Katherine’s “taming.” At a base level, ending the play with Katherine rather than Sly makes Katherine’s story stick more in the minds of the audience. The recency effect, where one best remembers the thing last seen, would be at work, which is significant for an audience that includes gender-loyal women. If women indeed identified with the female characters they saw as going through gendered battles, then women would continue to identify with Katherine for longer after the play than if Sly’s story embodied the concluding lines. Even more, Shakespeare’s plays have purpose. As Stephen Orgel argues, “if drama for Shakespeare does not create a world, what then does it create? What it creates, I would like to suggest, is something the Renaissance would have recognized as an *argument* [sic]. This is what critics... mean when they say that mimesis is only the means of drama, not its end. Its end, they assume, is the same as the end of poetry and other verbal arts, to persuade” (558). Orgel clearly makes the argument that Shakespeare, as well as other dramatists, wrote with the end of persuading. In another vein of thought, Orgel argues that the Sly “ending” given in act 1 casts Sly as an imperfect audience member. He dismisses the play, thus separating himself from it. The play-within-a-play

becomes the play, thus taking on a more concrete and known position (554). The concept that the Katherine subplot is made to become *the* plot combined with the idea that Shakespeare wrote his plays with a purpose supports the argument that he very consciously wrote Sly out of the play in act 1, and thus very consciously wrote to provide an ending image of a subordinate, Othered woman that would stick in the minds of the female audience, propelling an argument through the means of making women identify with a powerless woman on stage.

The idea that Shakespeare concluded the play with a purpose toward generating unrest amongst women is further supported by the unease that the play did cause. Audiences and playwrights alike were uncomfortable with the ending, as evidenced by attempts to write a new conclusion. Fletcher wrote a response in 1611 entitled, *The Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed* (Levin, 171). This shrew-taming narrative will be discussed in chapter 2. Another work that attempted to provide closure to *the Shrew* was the anonymous *The Taming of A Shrew*. This version includes more Sly scenes such as an ending where Sly falls asleep and is carried back to the doorstep where he was found. In his last words of the play, he claims "I know now how to tame a shrew: I dreamt upon it all this/ night till now, and thou has waked me out of the best dream that ever I had in my life. But I'll to my wife presently and tame her too an/ if she anger me" (Oliver, 235). These two play "responses" represent discomfort with the way that *the Shrew* ended. However, by providing resolution, these plays offer less impacting ends. In an analysis of the epilogue (see page 40 below) of *The Woman's Prize*, the female audience is given a satisfying ending, yet the conclusion fails to put women in a place of agency or autonomy. Instead, it is the men that are called upon to act and to change their ways. In *a*

*Shrew*, the ending given to Sly takes away from Katherine's ending position of subordination. While there is still a dark undertone to Sly's proclamation that he will "tame" his wife, the Tapster's response that he will "go home with thee,/ And hear the rest that thou has dreamt tonight" makes the entirety of Katherine's plot seem dreamt and unreal (Oliver, 235). By giving Sly this final ending, the author of *a Shrew* casts Katherine's ending as unrealistic, making it much less serious and thus much less likely to affect the opinions of women theatre-goers.

The ambiguity of Shakespeare's writing is one aspect of his canon of achievements that makes him such a celebrated and renowned author and playwright. This ambiguity, however, leaves enormous spaces for questions about what his true intentions and meanings were. This "space," or "air," can be seen as one of the means through which Shakespeare is able to make an argument. In Alexander Leggatt's summary of his analysis of Renaissance comedy, the argument is made that "open thinking is characteristics of all these plays [of comedy]: in their different ways they question, challenge, and experiment. They take what can be the stultifyingly tight conventions of comedy, unlock them, and let in some air. In the process they expand, in various directions, our sense of what comedy can do" (10). Through analyzing this Shakespearean comedy with an eye towards a variety of aspects, including but not limited to the written language, the arc and relationship of plots and subplots, and the historical underpinnings of Renaissance reaction and thought, perhaps further steps can be made in unraveling the ways that the author's works critically engage with the social milieu in which they were produced. In this analysis of Sly, Katherine, and their finale and audience, clear delineations are made between classes, genders, and the ways that various

methods of “taming” negatively affect the marginalized of each. The portrayal of these negative impacts coupled with the fact that Katherine, as a grotesque character because of her refusal to accept the gendered social norm, suffers the most and yet stars in a particularly unsettling ending suggests that *The Taming of the Shrew* stands as a comedy that argues against the accepted system and social expectations of the Renaissance, implicating that it can be read as a champion for women, the poor, and a new system of society.

CHAPTER 2- FEMINISM AND THE NATURE OF POWER IN JOHN FLETCHER'S *A WOMAN'S PRIZE; OR, THE TAMER TAMED*

Katherine's story, the taming that it portrays, and the effect that it had on audiences is evidenced in publications and plays that were "responses" to *The Taming of the Shrew*. One such response, John Fletcher's *A Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed*, reimagines Petruchio's relationship with women. Set shortly after the death of Katherine, *Tamer Tamed* follows Petruchio's relationship with his new wife, Maria, and her plan to gain power in her marriage and "tame" Petruchio. The contrast of Katherine's and Maria's motivations and actions has widely led to interpretations of Maria as a "feminist" or "proto-feminist" character. The majority of discourse surrounding her as a feminist centers on an analysis of her strategy for taming Petruchio, such as her use of strong actions, her creation of some agency, and her resolve. Indeed, Maria does show agency and power: she gives speeches, acts aggressively, and employs "taming" actions. However, each of the main moments of "power" that Maria demonstrates and possesses comes at the expense of either her "self" nature or her freedom. Specifically, in some demonstrations of power she takes on male forms of power and in others her power over another actually makes her tame herself. In other words, Maria *reflects* male-oriented understandings of power as well as the taming that she attempts to complete. This notion of reflectivity pervades and informs each circumstance of agency or control that makes Maria appear to have power, and essentially creates a play with a less straightforwardly "feminist" and powerful female character, instead illuminating the gendered norms of power and asking what it means for a woman to have power.

The idea of reflectivity is introduced in *Tamer* when comparing the newly married Maria and widowed Petruchio: they both act (or have acted) to tame one another, and they both act similarly in doing so. Most interestingly, throughout *Tamer* Maria uses many of the same tactics that Petruchio employed against Katherine, adopting similar means to get power and tame Petruchio. For example, she denies what Petruchio desires, acts aggressively, is overbearing in conversation, and appears distant. Many of these actions are seen as proof of Maria's "strong" or unconventional stance, yet their reflection of Petruchio's actions demonstrates the idea that Maria is only seen as strong when compared to how well she reflects a man. This is first evident when Maria denies Petruchio what he desires: sex. Symbolically and bawdily, Maria's refusal to give Petruchio "meat Lady" to satisfy his sexual appetite is reflective of Petruchio's withholding of meat while serving dinner to Katherine in *the Shrew* (Fletcher, 1.3.221). Further, in act 3, scene 3, Maria refuses to acknowledge Petruchio's desire to be heard as she talks about material objects and ignores him, as Petruchio did to Katherine in act 4 scene 3 of *the Shrew* when Petruchio ignores Katherine's favorable opinion of a cap. In Maria's scene, she responds to a question of Petruchio's by answering unrelatedly, "I like the seate, but tis too little, *Sophocles[sic]*/ Let me have thy opinion, thou hast judgment" (3.3.81-2). With this answer, Maria largely ignores Petruchio and the subject of his comments. While these instances of Maria withholding from fulfilling Petruchio's desires are ultimately different from Katherine's interactions with Petruchio and his desires, Maria is here *reflecting* the manner that Petruchio tamed Katherine. Her modes for taming are the same as her husband's, and this has implications as to the nature, derivatives, and extent of her power.

The ideas of reflection and power also surface in other ways that Maria "tames." One of the most prominent modes of power that Maria employs in her taming of Petruchio is that of speech. In the previous chapter, the connection between gender and speech was explored in the context of assumptions regarding classical men and grotesque women; women, to be more classical, should have boundaries that are more closed off (see Bakhtin and pages 8 and 11). To achieve less of a "transgression of boundaries," women should talk less-- a "should" that is dichotomous with the norm of men as holders of public titles and of speaking roles. In *Tamer*, Maria uses loquacity to tame Petruchio by speaking and dictating the terms of conversation. In one scene, for example, Maria is both determined and loquacious. She responds to Petruchio's call for her to leave her chambers, where she has refused anyone to enter, with the response of "This distance I must keep" (1.3.167). Petruchio responds with, "If you talk more, I am very, very angry," eliciting Maria's response of "I am glad on't, and I will talk" (1.3.169-170). Maria, here, is concretely detaching herself from her husband's wishes and talking, thus taking power from Petruchio and subordinating his speech. Similarly, "Maria...changes strategies mid-play, going from the physical to the rhetorical. Once the barricade plan is successful...Maria's 'battle' becomes entirely intellectual and verbal" (Livingston 227). In this sense, one of Maria's man "tactics" is in the control of language.

Although Maria may use public speech and action for the purpose of gaining freedom from and sway over her husband, her decision to speak publicly to earn power aligns with a system of power that equates public speaking with maleness. While Maria is certainly free to "act like a man" in her rhetoric and use any form of speech that she chooses, her choice to pursue power through a mode associated with men portrays irony:

to earn power as a woman, she must become like a man. In other words, she can earn power only through the male-associated means of public speech. This form of power puts her femininity aside, as Maria must become like a man, failing to generate her own form of power. As Jane Donawerth explains in her discussion of women and public discourse, women could find power in discourse “rather than the power over the audience that rhetoric gives the speaker emphasized in renaissance and empiricist rhetorics” (197). She also analyzes three women theorists of the Renaissance and finds that “these women theorists radically revised classical rhetoric by centering their theories on conversation rather than public speech. They seize on conversation as permitted to women in order to challenge the construction of categories of private and public that confine them to a certain sphere” (198). These women, as Donawerth finds, established their own manner of gaining power that questioned gendered norms (ie males speak publicly while females are silent) and created a *feminine* form of power. Maria, while portraying power in the way that the gender norms dictated and expected, does not challenge these roles; she works within the system rather than modifying it, which would demonstrate a form of feminine agency that still refutes usual representations of a wife but that also opens the question of what it means for a woman to take on power.

Maria’s use of public speech also presents an overall *risk* to her liberty. As evidenced in *The Taming of the Shrew*, public speech and discourse pose a risk for those women that utilize them: Katherine is outspoken and loud, qualities that are reclaimed by Petruchio and used to maintain gender roles during the concluding scene when Katherine lectures Bianca (5.2.136-79). Katherine’s experience represents the danger that women are faced with when acting to gain power within the defined gender norms: women can

act to earn power, but such actions can be reclaimed for the purpose of enforcing gender roles and then used to push them, and others, back into the system. Gary Schneider clarifies this idea when he explains that women that behaved publicly became liable to "shrew-shaming": "For a woman to be publicized means to be confronted with the social role appropriate to her gender and class—one which is informed by patriarchy and its social, economic, and political imperatives" (236). When Maria is acting in public defiance and speaking publicly, she is opening herself up for censure by the social system that she is working within and defying. As she and her female allies publicly march against Petruchio and other men by beating "all the pans i'th Town," for example, she is publicly presenting herself as a refuter of the system (4.2.2). This appearance can in turn, according to Schneider, prompt "shrew-shaming," a form of taming where women are ridiculed for acting outside of their expected roles. By engaging in public rhetoric and activity in a society that is poised to shame her for them, Maria is participating in an action, then, that will tame her.

The tension between taming, the nature of power, and gender is also exposed in Maria's language and tendencies. In his analysis of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, Peter Berek analyzes Clara of *Love's Cure*. He looks at her, a cross-dressing woman interested in war, and uses her to help define normative gender stereotypes: "For the warrior maiden, honor breeds love, love awakens sexual desire, and desire impels her to make peace with *her own natural womanhood*" (363, emphasis mine). Here, Berek draws a connection between women and war that creates opposition between women and interest in warlike principles such as honor and chivalry; a "warrior" woman may be interested in honor, but this interest inevitably leads to desire and "peace," as opposed to

war. The inevitable path from war to love to sexual desire to “natural womanhood” shows that women *cannot* sustainably hold aggressive or warlike stances. While such an assumption about women may be too narrow in many cases, Berek’s understanding of Fletcher’s Clara also holds for the same playwright’s Maria. In *Tamer Tamed*, Maria represents the tension between possessing the qualities of a “warrior maiden” and honoring what is “natural” to her. After Biancha asks Maria near the start of the play if she has “stomack” to be able to fight against Petruchio, Maria responds that she “never shew’d it” (1.2.64). Shortly after, when she decides to oppose Petruchio, Maria proclaims that she is “no more the gentle tame Maria;/ Mistake me not; I have a new soule in me” (1.2.71-2) By deciding to tame Petruchio, Maria is thus giving up her true, gentle nature in favor of “spight & anger” and verbalizing the idea that acting in an aggressive manner is incongruent with her own ideals and nature (1.2.69). In short and as Berek indicates, Maria, although trying to be aggressive, is acting against her nature, a break between self and action that will be explored below.

The shrew-shaming associated with public discourse and the tension that Maria shows between her nature and her actions show that women who reflect male ideals to gain power can undermine (their own) female identity and desire. This is manifested and summed up most simply when comparing across genders the long-term effects of taming on the tamed. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the actions that Shakespeare’s Petruchio used to bring Katherine within the normal gender constraints of society caused a psychological break that made her balance between her true self and desires (I) and her “othered” self and duties (not-I). This break caused by “taming” was severe, causing Katherine enough stress to wholly change her personality and beliefs. Becoming tamed,

for Katherine, meant giving up her self and adopting a life that encompasses only a piece of who she is (see pages 20-21). In *Tamer*, the negative effects of Katherine's taming are heightened: Petruchio was so hard on Katherine that she died. Yet, when Petruchio is supposed to be tamed at the end of *Tamer*, the consequences are quite different. Throughout the play, Petruchio becomes irritated, showing exasperation at Maria's actions and manipulation of events. However, Petruchio never experiences much more than annoyance or sexual frustration. The comparatively non-serious nature of the consequences of taming for Petruchio is highlighted at the end of the play; Maria vows to please him and he resumes his position as the main head of the household. In the ultimate scene of the play, she proclaims "As I am honest,/ And as I am a maid yet, all my life/ From this houre since, since ye make so free profession,/ I dedicate in service to your pleasure" (5.4.54-57). Maria, here, verbally indicates that she is giving domestic power back to Petruchio. Further, because Maria tamed herself and her desires, as seen above, Petruchio thus ends up untamed while Maria is tamed back into domestic servanthood, making Maria's ending position more akin to Katherine's than to Petruchio's. The difference between Petruchio and Katherine's "taming" is demonstrated again in the play's ending soliloquies. Unlike Katherine, who ended her play with a soliloquy that solidified her new social and psychological positioning as a tamed woman, Petruchio ends the play with a speech that confirms his identity as the head of the house and the holder of power. The sum effect of his taming, then, is to put him in the same place where he started: in power.

The ending of the play, too, holds the clearest indication of Maria's overall lack of power. After Petruchio rises from a coffin after pretending to be dead in hopes of

awakening Maria's sympathy (and failing in doing so), crying, "Oh my unhappinesse, my misery," Maria proclaims her triumph: "I have done my worst, and have my end, forgive me;/ From this houre make me what you please: I have tam'd ye,/ And now am vow'd your servant" (5.4.41, 44-46). The play ends soon after, leaving Maria the "servant" of Petruchio. Power relations seem to be restored, as Petruchio says in the last lines "I have my colt again" (5.4.88). By likening Maria to a colt, he is referencing her pliability and tameness and contrasting her with the "jade" of earlier acts.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the audience's final heard reference to Maria is of a tame, rideable colt. Even if Maria does tame him, the ending of the play suggests that such a taming that places women over men is unsustainable and will not last. Women's taming of men is presented as impractical in that it is damaging to women and presents a social order that cannot be maintained.

Whereas Petruchio does not show any negative psychological signs or breaks, Maria exhibits identity dissonance at the very beginning of the play. This dissonance is most vividly apparent in the dichotomy between caricaturing the domestic and personifying the male-- as discussed above on page 35 in regard to her natural opposition to acting aggressively-- that Maria exhibits. This transition from gentle woman to spiteful wife introduces the idea that to tame a man a woman may need to step outside of her self or true personality; she must become someone that she naturally may not naturally identify with, a positioning which is akin to Katherine's psychological break in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Specifically, the two women show a continuity of needing or being forced to "tame" their own selves or desires. Maria, in act 1, asks, "And when I kisse [Petruchio], till I have my will,/ May I be barren of delights, and know/ Onely what

---

<sup>3</sup> "Jade" as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary: a worn-down or ill-bred horse, or a contemptuous name for a woman ("Jade," OED).

pleasures are in dreams, and guesses.” (1.2.119-121). By asking not to feel any pleasure or delight from kissing Petruchio, Maria is asking to be able to tame her desire for him. She is, in essence, closing off the part of her that desires him, thus taming her sexual desires. The problem with this is that, if Maria must give up her natural amicability and passivity to become a tamer, there is a sort of double-bind for women in relation to power. Either a woman may tend toward passivity, indicating lack of power, or she may tend toward activity or aggression, indicating shrewishness. Katherine and Maria each inhabit either end of this bind: Katherine seems to most naturally be aggressive and active, yet she is tamed into becoming more dependent and passive. Maria, on the other hand, is naturally more passive and must tame this aspect of her identity in order to attempt to have power. Thus, women are either shrewish, making them liable to taming and thence loss of power, or passive, making them liable to have to change to have any sort of power. Yet, the true sign of the double-bind is that, even when passive women become more aggressive in order to garner power, that power proves unsustainable and they are again tamed, as Maria is by the play’s end.

The potential resonance and meaning of Maria’s final subservient position is more easily understandable when put into the context of the play’s framework. Like *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tamer Tamed* is also set within a theatrical framework that helps to contextualize the play (or play-within-the-play in the case of *the Shrew*). Whereas *The Taming of the Shrew* was framed, or at least introduced, by Christopher Sly’s story, *The Tamer Tamed* is framed by a prologue and an epilogue. Like the functioning of the Sly plot in *the Shrew*, the prologue in *Tamer* helps the audience to understand the setting and purpose of the play. *Tamer*’s prologue seems to open with a

strong feminist stance: “Ladies to you, in whose defence and right,/ Fletchers brave Muse prepar’d herself to fight” (prologue.1-2). Fletcher, by addressing the female audience and acknowledging their “rights,” appears to be preparing the audience for a play in which the women will win the upper-hand. As with the rest of the play, however, this surface goal is qualified and weakened by the discourse with which it is written and by what follows. The language of feminine power is written in the language of war. “Muse prepar’d herself to fight” and “Yet not to go too far/ In promises from this our female war” both employ war-related semantics. This structuring of discourse in terms of war provides a hint of male-dominated subject material. Male domination is obvious, too, as the prologue goes on to reclaim the play from a “fight” for women’s rights. The prologue states, “Yet not to go too far/ In promises from this our female war,/ We do intreat the angry men would not/ Expect the mazes of a subtle plot, / Set speeches, high expressions; and what’s worse, /In a true Comedy, politique discourse./ The end we ayme at, is to make you sport” (9-15). This part of the prologue, aside from working to ensure male comfort with the plot and subject of the play, steers the audience away from thinking of the play as “politique.” Yet, if the play is not political, the fighting for rights that the beginning of the prologue claims cannot be the true end of the play. A comedy cannot include politics, this latter part of the prologue argues, and thus should only be viewed as a means toward entertainment, or “sport.” The prologue, then, subordinates a possible feminist stance under the importance of having a true entertaining, non-political comedy. Similarly, even if the play were to include political advocacy for women, the prologue maintains that such discussion is merely entertainment, not to be taken seriously.

*Tamer*, unlike *the Shrew*, has an ending that matches the framework set out in the beginning of the play. While Christopher Sly never receives an ending, *Tamer's* prologue has a corresponding ending in the form of its epilogue. And, like the prologue, the epilogue gives contradictory and seemingly ambiguous messages as to the purpose of the play, beginning with a seemingly feminist statement but soon turning to a softer stance:

The Tamer's tam'd, but so, as nor the men  
 Can finde one just cause to complaine of, when  
 They fitly do consider in their lives,  
 They should not raighn as Tyrants o'r their wives.  
 Nor can the women from this president  
 Insult, or triumph: it being aptly meant,  
 To teach both Sexes due equality;  
 And as they stand bound, to love mutually.  
 If this effect, arising from a cause  
 Well layd, and grounded, may deserve applause,  
 We something more than hope, our honest ends  
 Will keep the men, and women too, our friends.

The call that men should “not raighn as Tyrants o'r their wives” fits with the claim in the prologue that a focus of the play is the fighting of rights for women in husband-wife relations. This epilogue, too, reinforces the definition of rights that the play emphasizes in its “response” to taming: the right of defense. However, this focus on defense as highlighted in the epilogue stifles any sort of call for female agency: defense, in this sense, means men taking certain action. The epilogue's moral that men should not be tyrants places the sphere of action completely within the context of men's agency; in order for the tamer to be “tamed,” he should not be a tyrant. This epilogue, then, fails to see women as able to fight for their own agency and instead charges the males with acting less tyrannically. The emphasis on defending rather than enabling women to act keeps the text away from a situation in which women are given agency.

The placement of agency into the hands of men is enumerated in the lines of the epilogue which claim that women should not “triumph” in any way from this moral given to men. Here, the epilogue concretely fails to grant women any sort of power position or raised agency. Instead, they are called to recognize the “due equality” of the sexes. While “equality” in the modern sense may recommend a reading of this term that advocates for fairness and equal treatment of the sexes, David Wootton suggests that the contemporary audience of many of *Tamer*’s productions may have understood “equality” differently. Using an analysis of classical forms of proportionality and equality, Wootton states that:

“My guess is that when Fletcher... uses the phrase ‘due equality’ he is referring to the Aristotelian concept of geometrical equality, or distributive justice, and so he means ‘due inequality’.... The ideological pressure to interpret the epilogue’s discussion of the relationship between husbands and wives in terms of superiority and inferiority [would have been] so great, that, knowing full well that there were contrasting senses in which the word equality could be used, they would, I feel sure, have interpreted “due equality” to mean that husbands and wives should have distinct roles and a relationship of superiority and inferiority” (214).

Wootton’s statement speaks both to the pressure to view gender relations in terms of power balances and to the shades of meaning that words take on and shift between over time. While Wootton focuses on a mathematical and classic meaning of equality that the more learned members of the audience may have noticed, the Oxford English Dictionary also indicates a different sense of the word with which more members of the audience may have been familiar. Sense three, with an origin in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, gives two

definitions: one for people and one for things. The definition for things is of most interest here, as Fletcher is talking about equality between the two categories of gender rather than equality between two individual people.<sup>4</sup> This sense defines equality as “due proportion, proportionateness” (“Equality,” OED). Equality, then, can mean “proportional” rather than “fair” or “same”. Applying this meaning to the epilogue yields a meaning that significantly underlines Maria’s final position of subservience in the play. If the goal of teaching “both Sexes due equality” can be read as to teach “both Sexes due *proportionality*,” Maria’s bequeathal of power back to Petruchio can be seen as restoration of the proper *proportion* of power; men are supposed to hold more agency and power than women. Thus, Fletcher’s call for due equality is merely a call for the continuation of gender relations.

While it may be argued that a woman's rebellious acts throughout a work weigh more in the minds of an audience than the normal gendered positions represented in a comedic play's ending, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski argues in "Writing Women and Reading the Renaissance" that the ending creates an action that, to mimic, women would have to place themselves in a subjugated, non-rebellious position (797). As Richard Levin argued in “Women in the Renaissance Theatre Audience,” women in theatre audiences identified with the women depicted in gendered battles for power (171). At a surface level, women identifying with Maria would seem to be positive: she acts differently and unexpectedly, manipulating Petruchio and his words. Yet, while women may identify with these actions of power and with roles that differ from what may be expected from a wife, they are also shown that such actions are temporary, unsustainable, and that a wife, no matter her

---

<sup>4</sup> One could also argue, more abstractly, that Fletcher treats his characters as “things” themselves. George B. Ferguson, in his 1966 critical edition of *The Tamer Tamed*, argues that the play’s characters are flat, failing to possess qualities that give them a non-stereotyped, round identity (15).

actions, will still end up a "servant" to her husband. Further, even if women were to identify with Maria's actions and replicate them, the actions of "power" that Maria takes intimates that women must act like men in order to earn sway in the household. Women are not shown examples for how *women* can use their gender as a means to garner power. Instead, Maria and her battle for agency show that women may need to sacrifice self-identity in order to become more male and thus more powerful. Women are not given a female role model to follow, as instead of claiming new modes of power, Maria adopts the same used by men, thus denying her true nature and desires. In essence, Maria may represent a character that enables women to think about their roles and positioning in a new way, but she does not stand as a role model that encourages women *as women* to claim a power that is natural and sustainable.

*The Tamer Tamed* shows that analyzing characters and weighing the label of "feminist" or "proto-feminist" is nuanced and dependent upon multiple variables; it is not enough to label a female character as a feminist character solely because she opposes a man or claims power. Indeed, such a singular dimensionality of analysis leaves much to be expanded upon, as it posits an understanding of a work that fails to take into account multiple factors such as the source of power and how this power relates to the overall arch of male and female power over societies and over time. Specifically, the nature of Maria's power as reflective of patriarchal modes and ideas of power illuminates questions that feminist scholars can ask of characters that have been labeled "feminist" or "proto-feminist." While it is true that modern scholars and audiences will not be able to fully understand how a play affected its contemporary audience or what a playwright truly intended to argue, analyzing another era's or society's work in terms of patterns of power

can reveal the ways in which power is perceived, distributed, and claimed. Maria's story and final position makes clear that the power she possessed was unsustainable and asks today's scholars and critics to rethink the ways that they judge power; power may have been reclaimed from Maria, but today's scholars should think about ways in which women can take power and reclaim it for themselves.

CHAPTER 3: “I’M NOT HOSTILE, I’M ANNOYED”: IDENTITY,  
ADAPTATION AUDIENCE, AND THE MODERN KAT IN *10 THINGS I HATE  
ABOUT YOU*

Like *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Tamer Tamed* also leaves the potential for a feeling of discontent; a strong female character is presented, but she is ultimately tamed and her power is superficial. As the disquieting ending to *Shrew* fueled a response in the form of *Tamer*, discontent with *Shrew* and its afterlives is still producing responses today. The most recent response, Gil Junger’s 1999 teen movie *10 Things I Hate About You*, gives Katherine’s story a modern twist: Katherine becomes Kat, a high school senior with conventionally “feminist” interests. By creating such a Kat, Junger and the movie’s screenwriters, Karen McCullah Lutz and Kirsten Smith, enter into the conversation of what it means to be tamed as well as what it means to be feminist. The film’s ready and obvious engagement with the portrayal of feminism makes this *Shrew* response appear much more woman-strong at the surface. Throughout the movie, there are many occurrences that spark hope that Kat will stand as a shrew that is independent, free, and powerful through her own source; yet, the movie overturns each of these circumstances, instead creating a situation in which there are strong dichotomies between power and subordination. While this version of the shrew-taming story incorporates questions about modern feminism, what it is to be a shrew in modern times, and how identity shapes a woman’s experience, the film’s emphasis on identity as derived from male action and Kat’s ultimate change in identity are reminiscent of the alterity and reflection that tame Katherine and Maria; in essence, the film reveals itself to be less of a revision of *the Shrew*’s problems as it first seems to be, and instead creates a Kat that amplifies the

taming situations surrounding Katherine and Maria and problematizes our assumptions about Shakespeare, happy endings, and modern society.

### **High School Social Code**

As Kat drives her way on screen at the beginning of *10 Things*, the bold lyrics “I don’t give a damn about my reputation” from Joan Jett’s “Bad Reputation” reach the audience’s ears. The song sets up a certain identity and social position for Kat, and the expectation that she has a bad reputation is supported as the movie’s characters refer to her as a “hag,” a “heinous bitch,” and a “particularly hideous breed of loser.” Her “bad reputation” follows her into the classroom, where she is sent to the guidance counselor for “terrorizing” class by expressing strong opinions. Boys describe dating her as “extreme dating,” and few get in her way. As the movie progresses, the audience discovers that her reputation is, in part, based on her social categorization. Kat’s sister, Bianca, questions why Kat “got tired of” being popular, and insinuates that she is not normal because she is not trying to fit in. Further, the movie’s emphasis on high school teen identity is manifested in most characters. Characters are described in terms of certain categories at the beginning of the film, such as White Rastafarians and Coffee Lovers, and almost all characters are presented according to the strict stereotypes that they are assigned to. The movie, in short, is strongly based on teen identity, suggesting one of the commonalities between Shakespeare and modern teen films. Although set in modern times, *10 Things* demonstrates that there is still an important preoccupation with social identity and stratification, albeit within high school categorizations rather than socioeconomic class positioning.

As with *the Shrew* and *Tamer*, the production's concern about social identity sets up tension regarding self-identity. Monique Pittman explains the tension between social identity and independent identity: "although material culture may have altered dramatically, the individual still must negotiate desire for independent selfhood with the overwhelming pressures that make freedom nearly impossible" (147). In the context of high school, the negotiation between selfhood and pressures can be seen between "the desire" to have an independent self-identification, as Kat does, and the pressure to fit into a specific social category. This is the same tension that is demonstrated in *the Shrew*: like Sly's need to tame his body's grotesqueness in order to join a higher social class in *the Shrew*, *10 Things* sets up a plot arc that necessitates that Kat tame her self—her feminism, her independence, and her position as a social outlier—in order to become "normal" and move into a more socially acceptable position. And, as with Katherine, the impulse to tame Kat and bring her into a more prestigious class stems from her initial independence and refusal to date. The importance of identity in Kat's experience and development, then, echoes the stories of Sly and especially Katherine. Further, the following sections will show that Kat's identity underwent a change, as did Katherine's and Maria's.

The change in identity between the Kat at the movie's open and the Kat kissing Patrick at the end is demonstrated clearly by the framing that Junger employs. Like *the Shrew* and *Tamer Tamed*, amongst countless other plays and movies, *10 Things* also functions within a frame that takes the form of music rather than prologues and epilogues. The framework of songs that bookend the movie highlights the change in identification that Kat undergoes. As Hodgdon notices, "the songs framing the film take

Kat from Jett's 'Bad Reputation' to 'I want you to want me'... voicing her metamorphosis from perfidious 'shrew' to potential girlfriend" (260). As explained in the previous paragraph, Kat opens the movie as a modern-day shrew: she is feared by others, she refuses to become attached to a man, she is bitter, and she steers away from following the wishes of anyone, including her father and her peers. She spends much of the movie explaining the significance of independence. For example, she explains that "I don't like to do what other people expect" and that "you don't always have to be what people want you to be." She tells Bianca that she is "a firm believer in doing something for your own reason and not someone else's." In short, she repeatedly marks her separation from the cares and desires of others, a stance that is reminiscent of Katherine's statement that "I see a woman may be made a fool/ If she had not a spirit to resist" (Shakespeare 3.2.222-3).

### **Hate and Happily Ever After**

As the movie progresses, Kat becomes much more concerned with what others think and less concerned with resisting others' influences. In the penultimate scene, she reads a self-written sonnet to her English class, the "10 Things" of the film's title. Elizabeth Deitchman notices that Kat looks different in this scene: "Instead of her usual cargo pants and t-shirt, Kat wears a skirt and a feminine blouse... making her a picture of girlish femininity" (484). In her new, more socially appropriate attire, she reads, "I hate the way you talk to me and the way you cut your hair/ I hate the way you drive my car, I hate it when you stare./ I hate your big dumb combat boots and the way you read my mind./ I hate you so much it makes me sick; it even makes me rhyme./.../ But mostly I hate the way I don't hate you, not even close/ Not even a little bit, not even at all" (see

page 63 for the full poem). Aside from demonstrating that Kat has ceased to be angry, the poem also indicates that Kat has experienced a psychological break. She wants to hate Patrick, and she hates herself for not hating him. In essence, she is torn between her inclination to be independent, wary of boys and others, and her interest in Patrick. Diane Henderson, noticing the poem's simplistic rhyming and structure, also points out that there seems to be an intellectual break: "Taming this shrew means temporarily erasing her intelligence and sarcasm, and replacing them with emotional submission: we have been here before [in *The Taming of the Shrew*]" (137). As Kat cries at the end of the poem and runs from the classroom, "her self-created role has cracked wide open" (Leggatt 250). Yet, if her self-created role fails to exist, what is left? Is it only her socially-contrived role that remains?

The question of Kat's role is brought up again in the last scene, as Patrick catches up to the fleeing Kat outside her car. The ending song, "I Want You to Want Me," accompanying their conciliatory kiss indicates that Kat has found someone that she is willing to change for, and indeed someone she needs, as the song moves from wanting to "I need you to need me." That Kat has changed much of her identity in favor of a more dependent, more others-centered persona creates a problem of interpretation: is Kat's decision to go along with social expectations the happily ever after? As Ariane Balizet explains, "Kat has changed for Patrick, but the conventions of the film suggest that her change is really the exposure of her true self. The rebellious punk teen is really a front—created out of a crisis of peer pressure—for the 'soft conditions' that truly constitute the Katherina character" (131). Indeed, the movie does create an ending that portrays the idea that Kat has found her "true" identity, if only because she appears to have broken the

“face” of her anger and become more like what an audience would expect her to want to be. The Kat of the movie’s finish has a boyfriend, a new feminine look, and has been emotionally cleansed—all attributes that point to the normative happy ending. Yet, the position of Kat in this “happy” ending, like both Katherine and Maria before her, implies that she had to undergo a change of identity in order to become “happy,” a claim that problematizes any interpretation of Kat as different from her shrewish predecessors.

### **Bawdy, Body, and Sex**

The beginning-to-end linear image of Kat’s changing identity is complicated by—and begins to break during—her explanation to Bianca of the reason for her anger and lack of desire to date and obtain popularity. Right before prom, she confesses to Bianca that she had dated Joey, a boy intent on dating Bianca, in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. He pushed her to have sex, and she decided to because “everyone was doing it.” After, when she realized that she was not ready and told him that she did not want to have sex again, he dumped her. The movie’s emphasis on the reason for Kat’s actions highlights the idea that she cannot be acting on her own accord; something must have happened to *make* her a shrew. This same emphasis placed on motive is also present in *Tamer Tamed* as Maria decides to tame Petruchio, but is absent in Katherine of *the Shrew*. Katherine appears shrewish from the beginning of the play, and Shakespeare fails to offer a definitive reason other than the possibility that she is jealous of Bianca. The lack of emphasis on Katherine’s back story and a reason for her actions creates a character that seems more “naturally” shrewish; she is strong, refusing to be dependent, by nature. Kat lacks this association with any sort of natural inclination toward independence. Even more, there is a gap between the screenplay and the movie: Kat and Bianca’s mother has left in the movie, while she is

still present in the screenplay. This gap is apparent in the scene between the sisters, as Kat tells Bianca that her decision to have sex with Joey was “right after mom left,” indicating that emotional fragility may have played a factor in her decision. The movie ensures the audience, then, that there is also a reason that Kat had sex aside from the fact that “everyone was doing it.” By creating an emphasis on the external and internal catalysts for Kat’s decision, the movie posits that women must be pushed into acts of independence or import; such decisions do not come naturally.

The prominence of sex in Kat’s explanation to her sister of her actions is also a signifier of the movie’s use of innuendo, sexual jokes, and the female body to propel the plot and generate humor. The emphasis on the sexual, like in *Tamer Tamed*, helps to draw focus on the politics of sex in its depiction of identity. As when Maria decides to sexually revolt against Petruchio, Kat’s decision to withhold sex becomes the catalyst for the change in identity that engenders her as a shrew. Such a connection between unavailability for sex and shrewishness makes the argument that “normal,” desirable, non-shrewish women are sexually available, or at least appear to be. *10 Things* often makes the connection between desirable women and sexual availability. Aside from Kat’s shrewish actions that began after becoming sexually unavailable, part of Bianca’s popularity and desirability stems from her presumed sexual availability. Boys describe Bianca as “totally pure,” indicating her virginity, but one boy also proclaims that he wants to “put her in the spank bank.” Yet, when she refuses to date Joey, thus indicating sexual unavailability towards him, he calls her a “bitch,” one of the terms associated with Kat and her shrewishness. The movie’s depiction of sexual politics in the high school setting argues that, to be popular, a girl must appear to be sexually available. This

message echoes the bind that Katherine of *the Shrew* faced: although she had decided not to marry, thus making herself sexually unavailable, the social strictures and marriage expectations of her time mandated that she marry. In a sense, then, Katherine was also faced with the expectation that she be sexually available.

The significance of sex within *10 Things* also appears in the innuendos. While many of the jokes and innuendos—such as the guidance counselor’s, Ms. Perky’s, passion for writing steamy romance scenes—can be attributed to the tastes of the movie’s intended teen audience, many of the sexual undertones highlight the strength of male gaze and desire in *10 Things*. This is best demonstrated with Kat after she begins to become attached to Patrick. After Kat gets drunk at a party that she went to in order to appease Bianca, Patrick refuses to let her kiss him. Kat, rejected and embarrassed, avoids Patrick’s company. To make amends, he orchestrates a public performance of Frankie Valli’s “Can’t Take My Eyes Off You” during Kat’s soccer practice. The title of the song emphasizes Kat’s external appearance and physique, directly citing the idea of male gaze. The strength of the act of male gaze within society and the movie, as signified through the song, is demonstrated by Kat’s reaction: Patrick receives detention for his musical number, and to let Patrick know that she has forgiven him, Kat distracts the detention teacher by talking to him about soccer while Patrick slips out the window. When soccer fails to adequately hold his attention, Kat decides to flash him by lifting her shirt. While Kat does act to direct the detention teacher’s gaze, the fact that she decided to lift her shirt as the ultimate form of distraction shows the strength of the idea of the powerful male gaze in society. Kat knew that male gaze stands as a powerful force, and this scene demonstrates that society enables her to use her body as a means to trade for attention.

Thus, her body is placed in the movie as both something that signifies love and something that can be used as a commodity to earn freedom or power. In short, the movie enforces today's beauty-centered ideal of the female body that "locates a young woman's strength in her ability to look good" (Deitchman 481). Kat is able to find love and get what she wants, but her physical appearance is a big factor of her success, at least as *10 Things* portrays.

### **Feminism: Riot Grrrls and Media Interference**

Aside from music, another frame that the movie employs is that of feminism. Kat's independence in the first part of the film is strongly linked with a feminist identity. In one of the first major scenes in which Kat has a speaking role, she asserts the opinion during English class that "Frankly, I'm baffled as to why we still revere Hemingway. He was an abusive, alcoholic misogynist who had a lot of cats." Soon after, the movie audience is introduced to Kat in her home, where she is reading Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* and where her room evidences her interest in some of the girl bands of the 1990's. Elizabeth Deitchman sees Kat's interest in music and books as a link to the Girl Power movement, "a concept first introduced into early 1990's popular culture by the third-wave feminist Riot Grrrls, emerging out of the alternative rock scene in America's Northwest" (479). Further, Baumgardner and Richards explain that "Riot Grrrls weren't pushing a rational feminism. They scrawled *slut* [sic] on their stomachs, screamed from stages.... They mixed a childish aesthetic with all that is most threatening in a female adult: rage, bitterness, and political acuity" (qtd in Deitchman 479). With Kat's rage and her interest in both Riot Grrrl bands and creating her own girl band, she does appear to part of the Riot Grrrl and Girl Power movement.

However, the simplification and stereotypical nature with which the movie treats Kat as a feminist is part and parcel of the media trend that “produced its own version of Girl Power,” creating a flat stereotype of the Riot Grrrl and transforming Girl Power into a more feminized movement (480). In other words, the media’s treatment of Riot Grrrls is reflected in Kat’s feminism: the bitter, independent Kat at the beginning of the movie can be contrasted against the calmer, feminine Kat of the movie’s ending. Further, the fact that bitter, Riot Grrrl Kat is the “shrew” of the movie, the woman that needs to be tamed, represents media and society’s unwillingness to accept a Riot Grrrl as normal, and Kat’s happy ending with Patrick indicates that a woman *needs* to become softer and more feminine in order to achieve happiness, success, and a normal social position. A Riot Grrrl cannot sustainably have power and success, akin to Maria’s inability to sustainably hold power in *Tamer Tamed*. She may have some form of power for a time, but it ultimately is subordinated to “truer” forms of power, such as male power in Maria’s case or a non-feminist stance in Kat’s. Deitchman also explains the significance of Kat’s change from Riot Grrrl to media-accultured Girl Power with her argument that “Whereas Riot Grrrl challenges the politics of licensed gender performance by pushing at its boundaries, Girl Power merely re-draws those boundaries by licensing a mildly transgressive performance while reaffirming the basic codes of conventional gender roles, ensuring that girls remain girls even when they seem to be acting like boys” (481). Thus, even while Kat may primarily appear as a transgressive feminist who challenges social mores, the movie’s plot instead tames her into a “mildly transgressive” woman who is more like a girl, as evidenced by her willingness to enter into a heterosexual relationship with Patrick. Kat not only undergoes a change of identity throughout the film

that tames her shrewishness, but this change also apportions blame for her shrewishness onto her Riot Grrrl persona, indicating that more transgressive feminists, too, should be tamed.

The movie's willingness to move from a Kat who appears as a strong feminist to a Kat who seems more "normal" is explained by Zachary Lamm through his term "manifest femininity": "In my usage, manifest femininity is the essentialist belief that, at the core of their being, all women want to be pretty, to be popular, and to have a man with whom they can have heterosexual intercourse. Kat's efforts to construct a 'queer' feminist identity for herself can only signify, we are to believe, a misguided attempt to shun the heterosexuality that would make her truly happy" (17). Given the tension between Kat's popular 9<sup>th</sup>-grade self, her post-virginity angry and independent self, and her more feminine Patrick's-girlfriend self, manifest femininity explains the movie's depiction of Kat's change in identity. If Kat's ending position as happily coupled and more socially accepted is the end to which she was striving, she was aiming for manifest femininity. Her interim years of anger, then, were "misguided" and wasted, and she is only able to regain her true sense of self when she begins to date again. Yet, if Kat's decision not to date or trust boys is misguided, as it steers her away from a heterosexual relationship, then her reaction to Joey's insensitivity is devalued; to achieve the manifest femininity that the movie hints that women should strive for, Kat should have kept trying to find a boyfriend in order to be truly happy. Her experiences throw into question the idea that all women should seek popularity and heterosexual relationships no matter what; instead, some may find happiness through other means. However, the film's ending reverses this flexibility and instead posits that Kat could only achieve happiness by being

more social and willing to date. While the argument can be made that Kat was able to become happy by finding a partner that supports her independence and decisions, manifest femininity points out that the idea that Kat is happier within a heterosexual relationship turns on expectations that assume that all women are happier in relationships. The movie, then, instead of celebrating teens breaking free from the bonds of high school cliques and categorizations, celebrates teens finding a certain preconceived notion of happiness—a notion that aligns with Lamm’s concept of manifest femininity.

### **A Tamer Tamed?**

Kat essentially becomes tamed and part of a relationship as the result of a guise amongst some of the school’s boys to date Bianca. As with *the Shrew*, Kat and Bianca’s father refuses to let Bianca date unless Kat does. To ensure that Bianca can go to the prom, two boys, Joey (the same Joey that Kat dated in 9<sup>th</sup> grade) and Cameron, along with his friend Michael, decide to push matters by setting up a relationship for Kat. They pick Patrick, who has a “bad reputation” of his own, and help him become attractive to Kat. To help him along, Joey pays him for dates and for the prom, and Cameron and Michael give him hints as to what Kat likes. These hints, moreover, act to “tame” Patrick’s actions in the sense that he must constrict his natural inclinations when he is around Kat.

Cameron: Okay -- Likes: Thai food, feminist prose, and "angry, stinky girl music of the indie-rock persuasion".

Patrick: So what does that give me? I'm supposed to buy her some noodles and a book and sit around listening to chicks who can't play their instruments?

Similarly, Cameron tells Patrick that he must become a non-smoker, as Kat is sensitive to the risk of lung cancer. Thus, at the face, it seems that *10 Things* offers a Petruchio figure that becomes tamed, at least in one sense.

Yet, the concept of reflectivity is also at play between Kat and Patrick, as it was between Maria and Petruchio in *Tamer Tamed*. Maria, as she took steps to tame Petruchio and make him less aggressive, also tamed her own self and desires. Kat, too, becomes tamed *as* Petruchio is taming his actions; she is reflecting his taming. This is evident in her reactions to Petruchio's change in actions. She enjoys that he has stopped smoking, and she is impressed that he is at the girl band concert. And, the concert is the interaction that fuels Patrick and Kat's other interactions: there, he asks her to go to a party with him, where Kat gets to know him and begins to "fall" for him. The difference between Kat and Patrick's taming, however, is that Patrick's is not a change of identity and is less permanent. During a fight with Kat right before prom, he begins to smoke again. Similarly, aside from going to the one concert, he has no other need to listen to or pretend to like girl bands. Kat, however, seems more deeply changed: she has become a different person, allowing herself to become part of a relationship and becoming more concerned about others. The balance of tamer against tamed is portrayed most directly during the final kiss. As Kat draws back twice to give stipulations, it is ultimately Patrick who "silences" her midsentence with a kiss. Her loss of power within this embrace indicates that "The fiercely independent Kat is forced to admit that she has been 'tamed' by Patrick, even in the face of his duplicity" (D.J. Hopkins et al 155). The taming that Kat undergoes here is emblematic of the ending positions of both Maria and Katherine. The scene ends, specifically, on the same note as *the Shrew* and *Tamer Tamed*. Patrick, like *Tamer's* Petruchio, reclaims power by becoming "untamed" at the expense of taming a woman: Kat has been tamed into loving Patrick, as Maria has been tamed into wifely duty to Petruchio. Too, Kat's silencing echoes Katherine's final speech in that it

subordinates the voice of the Katherine character. Katherine, by *the Shrew's* end, is speaking in a voice that largely attunes with what Petruchio and the play's male characters want her to say. It is their voices that define hers. Similarly, Kat may be trying to speak and voice her opinion, but it is ultimately Patrick who decides on the final voice: silence.

The tamed Kat is especially significant as both an echo and amplifier of Katherine's taming. Erica Hateley argues that "whereas Shakespeare's Katharina is disdained by suitors, Junger's Kat disdains romance, an attitude the film links with her political sensibilities. As the film progresses, and in keeping with Shakespeare's play, Kat will be 'tamed' by a romantic relationship that will 'help' her see not only that existing ideologies are acceptable, but that she is happiest when least resistant" (131). The taming of Kat's disdain of love can be extended, too, to Katherine. In this context, the film's ending also highlights the enormity of effect that the act of taming causes. Both Katherine and Kat have been spurned by suitors and have sworn off of love, yet both end up in relationships. These similarities counter any argument that Katherine is not, after all, tamed because she has fallen in love with Petruchio, who may be seen as her "match" in terms of wit and play. The character of Kat and her ending position as tamed romantic shows, instead, that even companionate partnerships can be part of what it means to tame a woman. Katherine and Kat each expressed views divergent from the norm, but through patriarchal influence—Katherine's father's decision to marry her off and Bianca's suitors' decision to manipulate Kat, via Patrick, into a relationship—both are tamed into static relationships. Companionate "love" is not the saving grace of either Shakespeare's

or Junger's shrew stories; instead, it is part and parcel to the transformations that the female leads must undergo.

### **Screenplay versus Screenview**

The debate over whether Katherine and Petruchio have a companionate partnership often points to directorial decision in how Katherine should deliver her final lines. For example, does she deliver them solemnly, saucily, or with a wink? The timbre of the actress' voice and her accompanying actions can go a long way in leading the audience to an interpretation of Katherine's ending position. A clear advantage that is intrinsic to any analysis of modern or recent movies is that we, the audience, have the opportunity to see both the writing behind the action and the action itself. Whereas it is difficult to assess how Shakespeare's players were directed to deliver lines and act while speaking, today's movies clearly show how actors and actresses appear and interpret. These interpretations demonstrate, too, gaps between the screenplay and the final product, showing divergences between the writers' and director's intentions. Many of these gaps and directorial decisions lead to the emphasis on the male gaze and female body that contribute to the sexualization of Kat that is discussed previously. For example, instead of "Can't Take My Eyes off You," the screenplay prescribed that The Partridge Family's "I Think I Love You" should be the song that Patrick serenades Kat with. This song would have emphasized feeling more than external appearance, making this scene more about emotion than the male gaze. Further, Kat's outfit in the last two scenes, significant because of its break from earlier scenes and indication of internal change, was not something that the screenwriters wrote in. Because the director's version is essentially the only version that is seen and consumed by the audience, it is the version

with the most import. For this reason, it is also important to recognize the differences between the two and to perceive the gaps between messages conveyed.

### **Audience and Response**

Whatever the differences between screenplay and final movie, the movie is part of the cultural production of Shakespeare. Critics and Scholars, such as Elizabeth Abele, have noticed an increase in the appearance of Shakespeare in popular culture, and especially in teen films. She explains that Shakespeare's recently and modernly popularized works, as shown by *10 Things*, "can market themselves as more 'fun' than Shakespeare, but 'smarter' than a standard Hollywood comedy" (Abele 7). These movies can appeal to a wider audience than a Shakespeare adaptation usually would, but can also offer a more sophisticated level of action and interaction. This means, essentially, that more individuals are being exposed to Shakespeare's works as they become more appealing. Teens, especially, have been on the audience end of the growing trend toward popularizing Shakespeare. Moreover, many of these teens are able to either learn about Shakespeare through these movies or compare adaptations with the original plays that they have engaged with in the classroom. L. Monique Pittman writes of her experience teaching both *the Shrew* and *10 Things*:

"Most students [33 out of 35] found the reconfigured gender relationships acceptable, the considerably empowered women satisfying (especially when compared to the limited options enjoyed by Shakespeare's Katherine and Bianca), and the male protagonists appropriately nonthreatening. Furthermore, any tinges of misogyny or gender inequity that some

students may have perceived were forgiven in the face of the romance conjured between Kat and Patrick and Bianca and Cameron” (148).

Pittman shows that the teenage audience of *10 Things* has a favorable interpretation of Kat and her ending with Patrick. They view Kat as powerful, and despite their exposure to the gender dynamics of *the Shrew*, they do not note many similarities in gender relationships between the source and the adaptation. They find the ending satisfying, and support the romantic finale.

It is interesting to note the generally positive audience reactions in dialogue with the reactions to *the Shrew* and its ending. As George Bernard Shaw has stated, “No man with any decency of feeling can sit it out in the company of a woman without being ashamed of the lord of creation moral implied in the wager and the speech put into the woman’s own mouth” (qtd in Wells 10). Indeed, the problematic ending of *the Shrew* has been noted throughout this paper as well as throughout the articles, reviews, responses, and adaptations of others. Given the discomfort resulting from to the resolution—or lack thereof—of *the Shrew* and Katherine’s final speech, Junger’s ending should be just as problematic as Shakespeare’s. Kat, like Katherine, has gone through a change of identity that is revealed most during her final speech, the “10 Things” poem. While Katherine’s final speech and indication of changed identity is jarring, though, Kat’s is meant to be indicative of a happy ending. There is no sense of unsettlement or unease, as Kat has found her match and is *now*, after changing her identity and her values, truly happy. The danger in this happy ending, conditioned by societal and audience expectations, is that it obscures the change that Kat has gone through and the taming that made her less of a “shrew.” Thus, Kat’s position is seen as normal, good, and satisfying. In this version,

then, it is okay that she has undergone an identity change in order to become part of a couple. Audiences are content with this ending, although they are presented with a similar formula for a discomforting finale, albeit packaged differently according to audience expectations. The positive response of audiences coupled with the negative response cited by Shaw suggest, then, that Shakespeare's version of a shrew-taming narrative actually went farther in inciting social discomfort, and thus change, than Junger's modern movie.

The possibility that *10 Things*, in its packaging of Kat's femininity and final heterosexual relationship as normal as compared to her former Riot Grrrl feminism, fails to end in a strong feminist position or incite social change aligns it with the concepts of antifeminism and postfeminism. Pamela Aronson explains that "media pronouncements of the 'death' of feminism rest on widespread presumptions that young women do not appreciate gains made by the women's movement, are not concerned about discrimination, and do not support feminism" (516). Although Aronson goes on to explain that such assumptions are not necessarily true, she acknowledges that they form the basis for the idea that we are in a "postfeminist" era that lacks a need for feminist movements (517). Thus, the media and its interpretations of feminism have helped to shape perceptions both of feminists and of the state of women's rights. The shrew-taming version in *10 Things* not only fails to sustainably promote feminism, but also falls in line with the antifeminist movement, acting to promote the very stereotypes of feminists that deter young women from aligning with the "feminism" label.

## The Shakespeare Paradigm

The movie's combination of Shakespeare with modern concepts such as feminism and postfeminism is evidence of how *the Shrew* has been culturally appropriated to the present. Aside from showing that "classic literary and theatrical texts have a place in the modern world, and can still be meaningfully adapted and interpreted," the juxtaposition of the modern with the classic brings up questions of interpretation (Edwards 114). For example, the movie's use of Shakespeare as a source for cultural appropriation and interpretation is evidenced during the classroom scene where Kat's English teacher tasks his students with creating a sonnet based on Shakespeare's Sonnet 141, spawning the "10 Things" of the movie's namesake. The two poems can be viewed in relationship:

### Sonnet 141

In faith, I do not love thee with mine  
 eyes,  
 For they in thee a thousand errors note;  
 But 'tis my heart that loves what they  
 despise,  
 Who in despite of view is pleased to  
 dote;  
 Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune  
 delighted,  
 Nor tender feeling, to base touches  
 prone,  
 Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited  
 To any sensual feast with thee alone:  
 But my five wits nor my five senses can  
 Dissuade one foolish heart from serving  
 thee,  
 Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a  
 man,  
 Thy proud heart's slave and vassal  
 wretch to be:  
 Only my plague thus far I count my  
 gain,  
 That she that makes me sin awards me  
 pain.

### "10 Things"

I hate the way you talk to me,  
 And the way you cut your hair.  
 I hate the way you drive my car.  
 I hate it when you stare.  
 I hate your big dumb combat boots,  
 And the way you read my mind.  
 I hate you so much it makes me sick.  
 (It even makes me rhyme.)  
 I hate the way you're always right.  
 I hate it when you lie.  
 I hate it when you make me laugh—  
 Even worse when you make me cry.  
 I hate it when you're not around, and the  
 fact that you didn't call.  
 But mostly I hate the way I don't hate  
 you—not even close, not even a little  
 bit, not even at all.

The juxtaposition of the source sonnet with the sonnet that Kat creates offers a concrete example of the variety of modern appropriations of Shakespearean material. Here, the underlying feel of the sonnet is translated into modern high-school romance: loving someone in spite of logic and the five senses is explained through the lens and language of a late twentieth-century teen girl. In other words, the sentiment is the same but the language used to describe it is different, both because of a different speaker and a different era. Kat's poem, for example, reflects the high school romance for which it was written and the cultural symbols of its time, such as combat boots and not calling. This represents how snippets and bytes of Shakespeare are appropriated to the present, creating understandings that are both new and culturally made. In essence, it shows the shift from source material to part of a work of popular culture.

The modern understanding of Shakespeare, as reflected in the shift from Sonnet 141 to student-created sonnet and in the movie adaptation as a whole, is created and modified by the popular culture that surrounds it—the “Shakespop.” Here, the “Shakespop” label aligns with a divergence between past and present: the “Shakes” prefix creates a paradigm in which a work or thought of the past, represented by the label “Shakespeare,” is juxtaposed against the present's popular culture. In other words, the fact that the movie is Shakespeare means that audiences are automatically given a lens to view the film through. They may automatically think that it is a “new” adaptation as compared to the “old” source, and assume that, because the adaptation is newer, positive changes or bettering of social situations and positioning will be present. This explains how audiences can ignore the facets of the film that point toward a tamed Kat. “Shakespeare,” in all its forms and cultural connotations, provides the framework through

which modern audiences can comfortably label Kat as “feminist” while still accepting her as a figure that does not stray too far from the social script that women are expected to follow; audiences can laud Kat as an individual woman while sighing contentedly over her pairing with Patrick at the movie’s close. This can best be explained through the Shakespeare Paradigm, which I define as the manner through which the audience-ascribed gap between Shakespeare and modernity also subordinates any continuity across source and adaptation. There may be similarities between source and modern materials, but the differences—especially the differences that prove a perception of society’s changes and improvements—are more apparent to its viewers. There is a certain expectation that a more modern adaptation is also more culturally sensitive, reflecting the idea that society continuously progresses. In the modern era, where gender equality is a political and cultural goal, it makes sense that audiences would see greater gender equality in a shrew adaptation. Yet, as this analysis hopes to show, it is important to look at modern films in relation to their sources and cultural antecedents; rather than assuming them to be stand-alone reflections of the more progressive society in which audience members hope to live in, these films may actually be reflections of these source materials. Whichever, it is important that audiences look beyond the Shakespeare Paradigm and realize that movies, because they are more recent, are not necessarily better in terms of depictions of gender relations.

### **Conclusion**

When talking about reflection in *10 Things*, perhaps it is significant to realize that the concept of mirroring may be most pivotal in a more large-scale context: the relationship between film and audience. As a modern adaptation of *the Shrew*, *10 Things*

had the task of creating a story that solved the “problems” of *the Shrew*, such as Petruchio’s violent taming of Katherine, that modern audiences would find unpalatable. Yet, we can still find traces of the seemingly atavistic taming even under the guise of this newer film. Given the positive audience reactions despite the challenges to female identity that the film still raises, we can begin to see the cultural constructs that guide filmmakers in producing a work that is an accurate reflection of the values and expectations that its audience holds. For example, the film demonstrates that the U.S. audience of *10 Things* still supports rigid social constructions that separate individuals on the basis of their identifications. The audience also accepts open sexualization of the female body and the normality of the strong male gaze. Women can be strong, but modern audiences accept depictions of feminism that stem from media stereotypes. Further, these feminists are not normal; they are in the margins of society and will be normal only so long as they modify their self-identifications and begin dating.

It is tempting to view *10 Things* and take note of “how far we’ve come” from the audiences that saw and were entertained by Shakespeare’s *the Shrew*, and, in some ways, this is true: Patrick does care for Kat and he, in some ways, tames himself for her. Yet, assuming that the problems of *the Shrew* have been solved on the basis of Kat’s feminism obscures the fact that the movie fails to solve many of the same problems that made its source so controversial. There is something unsettling about an adaptation that packages the same problem ending in a way that makes it seem happier and more palatable, and this ending is a challenge to our modern perception that Katherine’s position is a thing of the past. We may have made strides, but we still need to travel farther.

## CONCLUSION

Shakespeare is a powerful cultural authority. Zachary Lamm points to the idea that “Shakespeare has come to represent the universal in Western culture. Critics of Shakespeare have long noted the appeal of Shakespeare within U.S. culture as a kind of universalizing source of authority” (3). His work appears and reappears in a variety of places, and this claim of universal representation helps to explain the connections of his works and their adaptations over time. *The Taming of the Shrew, A Woman’s Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed*, and *10 Things I Hate About You* are as interconnected as they are similar. Hugh Davis explains the relationship of adaptations to source materials: “Just as Shakespeare is being twisted into a teen-ready, seemingly clichéd prom film, the very movies that transform the text offer reminders of the classics themselves, showing that the films have not completely detached themselves from their sources” (55). As modern-day interpretations are created, they maintain connections to the works from which they are derived. These connections exist despite changes, and modern-day audiences should recognize that a new material cannot be completely divorced from its source. This interconnection also stands for questions of women’s positioning in cultures and in creative works. Like movies and modern interpretations, studies of women and feminists cannot be completely detached from the past. Similarly, as shown with the “Shakespeare Paradigm,” the women and movements of the past color our interpretations in the present. It is impossible to look at a female character in literature or film and analyze her apart from her predecessors and the works that influenced her. This is evidenced in the new continuities between and understandings of both Maria and Kat that emerge when they

are analyzed and compared in terms of Katherine as well as in dialogue with the cultures in which they were written.

One of the continuities that these texts illuminate is the problem of identifying a feminist protagonist. In essence, each of the works analyzed in this paper shows and complicates a view of what a “strong woman” should look like. *The Taming of the Shrew* explores the treatment of a strong woman, *Tamer Tamed* questions the sustainability and base of power in strong women, and *10 Things* offers modern “girl power” and feminism. Yet, despite the dialogue about shrews that each of these versions introduces, each strong woman ends up in the same subjugated position. *The Shrew*, *Tamer*, and *10 Things* all close with speeches that indicate the leading women’s lack of power: Katherine asserts her wifely duty, Maria promises to be a servant to Petruchio, and Kat is silenced in her demands. Why must each shrew have a speech that indicates that she is tamed? Given the adaptations’ attempts to “fix” the problematic position of Katherine and her disquieting monologue, the persisting pattern of tamed females is especially disquieting.

While the ripples of discontent and discomfort caused by Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* demonstrate that audiences are uncomfortable with theatrical depictions of overtly violent or shrew-taming men, the positions of Maria and Kat in *Tamer Tamed* and *10 Things* also demonstrate that it is difficult for society, no matter the generation, to accept a woman completely free from the powers that tame. Women may appear to be strong or different from less agent predecessors, but there are still expectations placed upon strong female characters that limit and qualify their power. This is evidenced in both *Tamer* and *10 Things*, where the characteristics and embodiments of power—such as Maria’s speeches and Kat’s feminism—prove unsustainable and

ultimately set them up for taming. Both of these characters, too, experience psychological breaks in identity akin to Katherine's, showing that audience expectation of proper power relations perhaps stifles these women's true identities. Much of the audience of *10 Things*, after all, celebrated Kat's story as feminist while enjoying her happy coupling. There is something to be said for the fact that, despite audience reception and writers' attempts to address the gender problems in Shakespeare's play, responses and adaptations still exhibit the same taming tactics, leaving female characters that have been stripped of identity, power, and agency.

In the end, the strength of Katherine's character may not be in what she said or how she appeared at the end of her play, but in how her voice still reverberates to this day. *The Taming of the Shrew* still causes problems for those who read it, those who adapt it, and those who view these adaptations. There is as much debate as ever surrounding *the Shrew* and the gendered battles that it creates, and the creation of a Katherine figure that is truly and sustainably able to eschew taming and hold power has been elusive. Until the day when Katherine stands up at the end of her play or movie and gives a speech that indicates neither a reversal of identity nor a deferral of power, we wait.

WORKS CITED

- 10 Things I Hate About You*. Dir. Gil Junger. Touchstone Pictures, 1999. DVD.
- Abele, Elizabeth. "What is Shakespop? Taking Stock of Shakespeare in Popular Culture." *College Literature* 31.4 (Fall, 2004): 1-11. Web.
- Aristophanes. *Lysistrata*. *Aristophanes: The Complete Plays*. Ed. Paul Roche. New American Library: New York, 2005.
- Aronson, Pamela. "'Feminists or 'postfeminists'? Young Women's Attitudes Toward Feminism and Gender Relations." *Feminist Frontiers*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Ed. Verta Taylor, Nancy Whittier, and Leila J. Rupp. McGraw Hill: New York, 2012. 516- 26.
- Balizet, Ariane M. "Teen Scenes: Recognizing Shakespeare in Teen Film." *Almost Shakespeare: Reinventing His Works for Cinema and Television*. Ed. James R. Keller and Leslie Stratyner. Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2004. 122-36. Print.
- Bayman, Anna and George Southcombe. "Shrews in Pamphlets and Plays." *Gender and Power in Shrew-Taming Narratives, 1500-1700*. Ed. David Wootton and Graham Holderness. Palgrave: Great Britain, 2010.
- Berek, Peter. "Cross-Dressing, Gender, and Absolutism in the Beaumont and Fletcher Plays." *Studies in English Literature* 44.2 (Spring 2004): 359-77.
- Boose, Linda E. "Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42.2 (Summer 1991): 179-213).
- Brinker-Gabler, Gisela, and Elizabeth Naylor Endres. "Alterity-Marginality-Difference: On Inventing Places for Women." *Women in German Yearbook* 8 (1992): 235-245. Web. 24 April 2012.

- Davis, Hugh H. "I was a Teenage Classic: Literary Adaptation in Turn-of-the Millennium Teen Films." *The Journal of American Culture* 29.1 (2006): 52-60.
- Deitchman, Elizabeth A. "Shakespeare Stiles Style." *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*. Ed. Barbara Hodgdon and W.B. Worthen. Kundli: Blackwell Publishing, 2005. 478-93. Print.
- Donawerth, Jane. "Conversations and the Boundaries of Public Discourse in Rhetorical Theories by Renaissance Women." *Rhetoric* 16.2 (1998): 181-199.
- Edwards, Kim. "To Whelm or Not to Whelm: "10 Things I Hate About You." *Screen Education* 65 (2012): 109-114.
- "Feminist, adj. and n." OED Online. March 2012. Oxford University Press. Web. 5 May 2012.
- Fletcher, John. *A Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed*. Ed. George B. Ferguson. Mouton: The Hague, 1966. Print.
- Hateley, Erica. "A Gendered Educational Agenda: What's Wrong with '10 Things I Hate About You?'" *Screen Education* 57 (2010): 129-35.
- Henderson, Diane E. "A *Shrew* for the Times, Revisited." *Shakespeare the Movie, II: Popularizing the Plays on Film, TV, Video, and DVD*. Ed. Richard Burt and Lynda E. Boose. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 120-39. Print.
- Herlihy, David. "Did Women Have A Renaissance?: A Reconsideration." *Medievalia et Humanistica* 13 (1985): 1-22.
- Hodgdon, Elizabeth. "Wooing and Winning (Or Not): Film/Shakespeare/Comedy and the Syntax of Genre." *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works: Volume III, the*

- Comedies*. Ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard. Bodmin: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. 243-65. Print.
- Hopkins, D.J., Catherine Ingman, and Bryan Reynolds. "Nudge, Nudge, Wink, Wink, Know What I Mean, Know What I Mean? A Theoretical Approach to Performance for a Post-Cinema Shakespeare." *Performing Transversally: Reimagining Shakespeare and the Critical Future*. Bryan Reynolds. New York and Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. 137-70. Print.
- Kelly-Gadol, Joan. "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" Reprinted from *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*. Edited by Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz. Houghton Mifflin, 1997. Web.
- Lamm, Zachary. "The Cinematic Shrews of Teen Comedy: Gendering Shakespeare in Twentieth-Century Film." *Genders* 49 (2009): 1-28. *Academic OneFile*. Web.
- Leggatt, Alexander. "Teen Shakespeare: *10 Things I Hate About You* and *O*." *Acts of Criticism: Performance Matters in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*. Ed. Paul Nelsen and June Schlueter. Cranbury: Rosemont, 2006. 245-58. Print.
- . *Introduction to English Renaissance Comedy*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999. Print
- Levin, Richard. "Women in the Renaissance Theatre Audience." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40.2 (1989): 165-174. Web. 22 April 2012.
- Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. "Writing Women and Reading the Renaissance." *Renaissance Quarterly* 44.4 (1991): 792-821.

- Livingston, Meg Powers. "Herbert's Censorship of Female Power in Fletcher's 'The Woman's Prize.'" *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 13 (2001): 213-32.
- McCullah Lutz, Karen and Kirsten Smith. "Ten Things I Hate About You." Revised final script. 12 November 1997. *The Daily Script*. 11 March 2013.  
<http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/10Things.html>.
- Oliver, H.J. Appendix A. *The Taming of a Shrew*. By unknown. New York: Oxford UP, 1982. 233- 235. Print.
- Orgel, Stephen. "Shakespeare Imagines an Audience." *Poetics Today* 5.3. (1984): 549-561. Web. 22 April 2012.
- Pearson, Velvet D. "In Search of a Liberated Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*." *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 44.4 (1990): 229-242.
- Pikli, Natália. "Across Cultures: Shakespeare and the Carnavalesque Shrew." *European Journal of English Studies* 14.3 (2010): 235-48. Web. 30 November 2012.
- Pittman, L. Monique. "Taming '10 Things I Hate About you': Shakespeare and the Teenage Film Audience." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 32.3 (2004): 144-52. Web.
- Sanders, Julie. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. Routledge: London and New York, 2006.
- Schneider, Gary. "The Public, the Private, and the Shaming of the Shrew." *Studies in English Literature* 42.2 (2002): 235-58.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Oxford Shakespeare: "The Taming of the Shrew"* Ed. H. J. Oliver. Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 1999. Print.
- "Sheep." OED online. April 2013. Oxford University Press. Web. 5 April 2013.
- "Shrew." OED online. April 2013. Oxford University Press. Web. 5 April 2013.

- Stallybrass, Peter. "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed." In *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* Ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Print.
- "Tinker, n." OED Online. March 2012. Oxford University Press. Web. 6 May 2012.
- Wells, Stanley. "Some Shrewd Interpretations." *The Stage* (9 Feb 2012): 10-11. Web.
- Wexler, Joshua. "Alterity." The University of Chicago. Web. 20 Feb. 2012.  
<<http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/alterity.htm>>.
- Wolff, Janet. "Reinstating Corporeality." In *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* Ed. Amelia Jones. London: Routledge, 2003. Print.
- Woodbridge, Linda. *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001. Print.
- Wootton, David. "The Tamer Tamed, or None Shall Have Prizes: 'equality' in Shakespeare's England." *Gender and Power in Shrew-Taming Narratives, 1500-1700*. Ed. David Wootton and Graham Holderness. Palgrave: Great Britain, 2010.

## ABSTRACT

Shakespeare stands as a historical figure, but his writing most certainly remains present in terms of its subject matter and ability to incite debate. As we try to understand the ways in which Shakespeare has been adopted and appropriated into culture and society, it is essential that we keep in mind the interrelation of texts over time and space. Julie Sanders rightly notes that “any study of Shakespeare’s adaptation of sources indicates the rich intertextual readings such incorporation makes possible” (47). It is important to both recognize the sources that have contributed to a work and the ways that that work, in turn, is appropriated and included in works that follow. This paper seeks to trace the intertextuality of three widely consumed and popular works that take gender relations as their focus and which each contribute to conversation surrounding the idea of feminism. Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, John Fletcher’s *Tamer Tamed*, and Gil Junger’s *Ten Things I Hate About You* show how feminism and gender are still divisive, complicated topics, and also demonstrate how examining the ways in which plays and cinematic productions have approached the question of gender relations can lead to a better understanding of how the discourse surrounding gender has changed, or perhaps continued, over time. In a society where gender still defines relationships and the ways in which genders are treated, it is important to recognize the echoes of the voices of Katherine, Maria, and Kat and use them to inform and assess our own cultural understandings of what it means to be a shrew, a woman, and a feminist.