

The New Kittredge Shakespeare

William Shakespeare



The Taming of The Shrew

Series Editor: James H. Lake

Edited by
Laury Magnus

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THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

Editor

Laury Magnus

The United States

Merchant Marine Academy

Series Editor

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Publisher's Note

George Lyman Kittredge was one of the foremost American Shakespeare scholars of the 20th century. The New Kittredge Shakespeare, builds on his celebrated scholarship and extensive notes. Each edition contains a new, updated introduction, with comments on contemporary film versions of the play, new and revised notes, including performance notes, an essay on reading the play as performance, plus topics for discussion and an annotated bibliography and filmography. For this an accomplished Shakespeare and film scholar has been commissioned to modernize each volume.

The series focuses on understanding the language and allusions in the play as well as encountering Shakespeare as performance. The audience ranges from students at all levels, as well as to readers interested in encountering the text in the context of performance on stage or film.

Ron Pullins, Publisher
Newburyport, 2009

INTRODUCTION TO THE KITTREDGE EDITION¹

For *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*, the Folio of 1623 is the sole authoritative playtext, but the date of the play is uncertain. *The Taming of the Shrew* bears a complicated relationship to another play with a very similar title, *The Taming of A Shrew* (hereafter called *A Shrew*) printed in 1594 but written some years earlier: *A Shrew* draws especially from the Italian comedy *I Suppositi* of Ariosto (1509), which had been translated into English in 1566 by George Gascoigne as *The Supposes*. Scholars remain in dispute about the relationship between the *A Shrew* version and Shakespeare's *The Shrew* version—the “authoritative” Folio text.

Though there is no exact original for Shakespeare's taming story, the theme of taming a scold or wild person is one that widely circulated in the folklore of the Orient and has had points of contact with a large variety of tales and proverbs in the West. “The tongue can no man tame,” St. James avers “is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison”;² and the Abbess in *The Comedy of Errors* (another early comedy of Shakespeare's) echoes St. James's words, applying them to the play's heroine:

The venom clamors of a jealous woman
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.

(*Comedy of Errors*, 5.1. 69–70)

The tale of *The Shrewish Wife Who is a Terror to Demons* has an ancient pedigree in the East, and it finds an English analogue in the ballad of *The Farmer's Curst Wife*: she is carried off to hell, but the devil—who has gotten more than he bargained for—is glad to take her back to her husband.

In Tudor England, there were several punishments for women of a shrewish temper. The cucking stool³ was not the only corrective for shrews. Witness a savage old verse story printed in Shakespeare's youth of *A merry Ieste of a shrewde and curste*

1 Kittredge's Introduction is largely unchanged, except for matters that are still being debated among scholars today. I have deleted some obscure references, added explanatory footnotes, and inserted a few clarifications. [L.M.]

2 James 3:8.

3 A seat to which reputedly shrewish women were tied and dunked in the river. Sharped-tongued shrews were also punished by having to wear a “scold's bridle.”

Wyfe lapped in Morrelles skin. Petruchio's declaration about Kate in 3. 2. 232–234 that

She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my dog, my ass, my anything

sounds like an echo from other medieval European folk-tales. For example, in *El Conde Lucanor* by Juan Manuel (1282–1347; first printed in 1575), a bridegroom tames his shrew by killing his dog, his cat, and his horse when they disregard his call for water to wash his hands. In another tale in the same collection, an obedient wife agrees with her husband that certain cows are mares (as Katherine agrees with Petruchio in 4.5 that the sun is the moon and vice versa). A folk-tale from Jutland combines these two animal anecdotes and includes a test of obedience like the wager at the end of the play. Variations of all these kinds of episodes show up in Shakespeare's play.

In reworking his source material,⁴ Shakespeare combined or re-combined three basic stories 1) the main plot involving a shrew's "taming" by an eccentric suitor 2) the story of the shrew's younger sister (Bianca, in *The Shrew*) and her suitor or suitors, and 3) an initial, "framing" story (which later editors have called the "Induction") involving an elaborate practical joke on a drunken tinker. The tinker is made to think he is a lord and that the play performed is being played for his viewing pleasure. While *A Shrew* does good work in combining the framing story (3) and the main story (1), *The Shrew* increases the complexity of the Bianca plot (2) and goes far beyond *A Shrew* in the ingenious unification of several disparate elements.

In Ariosto's earlier *I suppositi*, rivalry and disguise are important elements. When it begins, Polinesta has been carrying on an intrigue for two years with Erostrato. He had come to the city to study, fallen in love with her, exchanged identities with his servingman Dulipo, and entered into service with her father. Cleandro, an elderly lawyer, is now suing for her hand. To thwart him, the servant Dulipo, in the character of Erostrato, is posing as a rival suitor. In *The Taming of the Shrew* we have a similar situation—with different names, but also with assumed disguises. Lucentio, who has come to the city to study, falls in love with Bianca, exchanges identities with his manservant Tranio, and takes service with her father as "Cambio," a tutor in polite letters. Shakespeare has two already-established rivals for her hand—young Hortensio and old Gremio. Hortensio, disguised as Licio, is engaged by her father as instructor in music.

Clearly, in the *A Shrew* version, things are much simpler. The student (Aurelius) is a duke's son, but he neither exchanges identities with his manservant nor enters the service of the girl's father (Alfonso). While he does conceal his high rank, he passes himself off as the son of a merchant, and is acceptable to Alfonso as a suitor for his second daughter. Polidor, a friend of Aurelius, is equally acceptable as a suitor for the youngest daughter. The only obstacle is Alfonso's determination that his

4 For clarity, I have numbered the basic plot elements in Kittredge's description.

eldest daughter, the shrew, must be married before either of her two sisters. There is no rival for the Bianca figure, old or young, in either case. Neither Aurelius nor Polidor disguises himself as a tutor. Aurelius does cause his serving man, Valerio, to take service with Alfonso as an instructor in music, but this involves no changes in or exchanges of a high rank for a low: the music tutor ruse is there merely to enable the two younger girls to meet their lovers while the eldest is busy with her lessons on the lute, for otherwise she would keep them at work in the house. There is no Latin tutor in *A Shrew*, nor does either lover enter the father's house as a servant. This comparison shows that Shakespeare had recourse both to the older *I Suppositi* (1509) as well as to *The Supposes* (1575).

Shakespeare's more complex development of the Bianca plot makes clear his reliance on Ariosto's *I Suppositi*—with its emphases on the inversions and “suppositions” of “counterfeiting” or playing, as we can see clearly in 4.2.59–121 and 5.1.120. There is also one passage in *The Shrew* in which Shakespeare can be seen as making explicit his indebtedness to Gascoigne's translation: “While counterfeit supposes blear'd thine eyne” (5.1. 120).

The third plot element, Shakespeare's Induction, is based on an ancient tale current in Shakespeare's time and still known to modern readers as “The Sleeper Wakes” in *Arabian Nights*, i.e., Scheherazade's *Tales of 1000 Nights*, also a framed narrative.

The Induction of *A Shrew* is quite different from that of *The Shrew*, but both are parallel in detail and there are many shared phrases. In *The Shrew*, however, after line 259 of Act 1, Scene 1, nothing further is heard of the drunken Sly or any of the others who are playing an extended joke on him. By contrast, in *A Shrew*, the Sly *motif* persists, emerging at appropriate intervals and re-emerging after the play-within-a-play is finished. Sly falls down drunk, asleep. Stripped of his fine clothes and dressed “in his own apparel,” he is left near the alehouse door. He tells the tapster, who rouses him, that he has had a fine dream which has taught him “how to tame a shrew” and that he will straightway go home and tame his wife. The tapster declares that he will accompany him and hear the rest of the dream, and thus the old tale is brought to a traditional conclusion. One suspects that the absence in *The Shrew* of material that might close the frame at the end may be due to a cut in the Folio text.⁵

In 1611, the playwright John Fletcher capped *The Taming of the Shrew* by a sequel play entitled *The Woman's Prize; or, The Tamer Tamed*⁶ which, as the title implies, pays back Petruchio for his high-handed control of Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*. In Fletcher's sequel, Petruchio weds one Maria after his first wife's death. Petruchio's friends pity Maria for marrying “this dragon,” but she soon reduces him to submissive decorum.

5 Scholars still debate this perception, but evidence remains lacking.

6 In 2003, The Royal Shakespeare Company performed the rarely seen *The Tamer Tamed* in the same season as it performed *The Taming of the Shrew*; oddly enough, though, plans for performing *The Shrew*'s Induction scenes were scrapped. For a review of this double-bill, see <http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2003/apr/11/theatre.artsfeatures2>.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOCUS EDITION

Early comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Elizabethan Constructions of Gender

It is an illuminating fact in the history of the English language that the term *shrew*, meaning a small, sharp-toothed mammal, was originally applied to evil men, then to both genders, and only gradually came to refer exclusively to women.¹ Readers of *The Taming of the Shrew* don't have to go much further than the play's title, it would seem, to encounter a host of paradoxes connected with gender, power relations, role-playing and identity confusions, common themes of Shakespeare's early comedies. These remind us that it was written in the early 1590s, when Queen Elizabeth was the most powerful "male" in the country. In fact, in order to be able to rule her country at all, Elizabeth had been required quite literally to take on a masculine legal identity. Although under her rule England had defeated the Spanish Armada and emerged as a world power, Elizabeth's sovereignty had necessarily to be cast in a male mold. More disturbingly, despite the fact that Elizabeth was England's head of state and thus endowed with great power, she had to remain unmarried so as to avoid ceding her sovereignty to a husband. Once married, Elizabethan wives, whether of noble or of humble origin, had no legal or political power whatsoever. If they got out of line, or scolded too much, they could be subjected to the punishment of the scold's bridle or the cucking stool. And even if they somehow managed to wield power behind the scenes, women could still not even represent themselves on stage.

Such paradoxes of gender identity carry over into the reading and performances of the play today. Despite its daunting if misguided reputation for misogyny, *The Taming of the Shrew* has an irresistible comic appeal and is one of the most frequently produced of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare drew his materials from many different sources, and several storylines romp around playfully in *Taming* like so many juggler's balls. Rather than answering questions, these plots and subplots provoke new questions about issues of gender, power, and identity.

1 According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term came to be used for women as well as men in Chaucer's time. Curtis's line "he is more shrew than she" (4.1.63) calls attention to a gradual shift of shrewishness from Katherine to Petruchio and then to Bianca and the Widow.

Most readers approach the play with some knowledge of the main action—the supposed “taming” of the shrewish Kate by the eccentric Petruchio. Few are aware, however, that the play opens with a so-called “Induction”² that is not about Kate and Petruchio but concerns one Christopher Sly, whose story frames theirs as a play-within-a-play. In addition, Shakespeare grafts an important secondary plot concerning Kate’s sister Bianca and her suitors onto the Kate-Petruchio story. The Induction and other parts of this complex architecture are very often cut in production. Sometimes productions add an epilogue adapted from elements of *Taming*. It can safely be said, then, that of all of Shakespeare’s plays, what one takes away from a given *Taming* performance as a statement of the relationship between the sexes depends completely on the production one is seeing, and that understanding the text of this particular play requires diligent acts of close reading and imagination.

The play’s mysteries swirl especially around the character of Katherine, a shrewish-seeming young woman (originally played by a boy actor). Yet if foolish males like Gremio deride the headstrong, tempestuous Katherine, Shakespeare never turns her into the simple butt of audiences’ laughter. She is always a colorful individual with a history, and once we get a sense of the inside story, our laughter co-exists with a sustained and ardent sympathy. Petruchio is similarly complex. However over-the-top he may seem, however preemptory he is in browbeating Kate into obedience, his bullying is for public show, as close reading confirms. Most significantly, it does not extend to the bridal chamber, which is characterized, ironically, by restraint and abstinence.

Early in the play we listen to the suitors’ gossip about this unruly female, and see evidence of Kate’s shrewish temper. She breaks a lute over a music tutor’s head, binds up her sister’s hands, and taunts Bianca’s suitor Gremio that any future wife of his will “use” him “like a fool” (1.1.66). Later on, defying the threat of Petruchio that “Will you, nil you, I will marry you” (2.1.277), she responds, “I’ll see you hanged on Sunday first” (2.1.305). Though in Petruchio, Kate has obviously met her match, and though there are initial signs that she enjoys the combat, her spirited resistance to Petruchio’s rough wooing appears as something altogether different from the ostentatious playacting of all the other characters—especially that of her sister Bianca. To be sure, as Petruchio’s harsh taming regimen sets in during Act IV, *Taming* begins to look like a cautionary tale that celebrates with heavy-handed comedy Petruchio’s triumph in grinding down a feisty woman. Nevertheless, there also is plenty of evidence to suggest that the emphasis is not on womanly subjugation but on the heroic woman’s sustained resistance to being possessed and controlled in what becomes a love match.

One constant in *Taming*’s kaleidoscopic universe sheds light on the play’s interpretative questions, and that is its concern with the appearances that often belie reality. This concern is manifested in two ways: First, the play has a so-called “Induction” framework suggesting that the entire Kate/Petruchio story may really be

2 In 1723, Alexander Pope started an editorial tradition by re-titling the first two scenes as an “Induction.” An unfortunate consequence is that the two Induction scenes have often been cut in production.

nothing more than the deluded dreaming of the drunken Christopher Sly. Second, the play-within-the-play, especially in its Bianca plot, places great stress on disguise—on characters dressing up and pretending to be, or “supposing” to be, other characters underneath the clothes that they wear. Yet against omnipresent evidence of crude or sophisticated masquerading, what emerges is the possibility of genuine transformation, of change that is not just playacting. Kate and Petruchio, confronting other people’s limitations and their own by dint of their unvarnished and headstrong personalities, are theatrical in the extreme: They clash outwardly like two “raging fires” (2.1.129) and grow inwardly from their experience.

The theme of transformation that Shakespeare drew from Ovid is first sounded in the two Induction scenes, with their separate, complex action that takes place on a barren heath in Shakespeare’s own native Warwickshire. Here one cold night, Christopher Sly, a drunken low-life, is bounced out of a tavern by an irate hostess for refusing to pay for glasses he has broken. A noble Lord and his huntsmen, arriving at the tavern, see him dead drunk on the ground and decide to play a practical joke on him: They will make him believe that he, Sly, is a nobleman too, one who has been in a coma for many years. To add to the jest, the Lord hires a company of players to perform a comedy for the drunkard. Sly will be carried to the Lord’s chamber, and, when he wakes, “Lord Sly” will be treated to fine garments, food, drink, and erotic pictures from Ovid’s mythology of beautiful heroines who are pursued by lustful gods. Sly will also be introduced to his supposed “wife,” played by the boy Barthol’ mew, the Lord’s page. As Sly’s supposed wife, Barthol’ mew must defend “herself” against Sly’s sexual advances by pretending that his doctors have forbidden him to resume sexual relations for a time, lest he fall back into his comatose state. When Sly demands that she undress, his “wife” Barthol’ mew claims that instead they had much better pass the time by watching a comedy (which the real Lord has arranged). *The Taming of the Shrew* then begins, with Sly and his Lady settled in above the stage to watch, from which perch Sly interrupts once or twice early on. After Act 1, though, he disappears from the play.

Just as with Christopher Sly, his cross-dressed “wife” Barthol’ mew, the playactors who engineer his waking dreams, and the phonies and hypocrites who line up to woo Bianca, Kate and Petruchio are not what they appear to be when they first flaunt their anti-social personae, though both seem loudly direct about their feelings. But as we watch the protagonists, we are alert to the nuanced, paradoxical motivations that lie beneath their outlandish behavior. As in all of Shakespeare’s work but particularly in his early comedies, the intense focus on contradictory appearances forces us to explore the realities underneath them.

While laughing at Kate’s initial shrewishness and her abuse of Bianca, audiences get past their own ridiculing laughter, tending to sympathize with a woman whose father is auctioning her off to the highest bidder. We begin to see Kate’s behavior as a genuine vitality that has been deformed by constant confrontations with the bullying of a harsh, mean-spirited, judgmental, and crass society, one that wrongly values the “womanly” virtues of Bianca’s seeming compliance and vapid good looks. We continue to value Kate’s forthrightness in scenes throughout the play that show us

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

DRAMATIS PERSONAE¹

Characters in the Induction Scenes

Christopher Sly, a beggar and tinker

Hostess of the Inn

Lord

Barthol'mew, the *Lord's* Page (later,
disguised as wife to *Christopher Sly*)

Servants

Huntsmen

Players who arrive at the Inn and
whom the *Lord* hires to perform
the Play-Within-the-Play

Characters in the Play-Within-The-Play

Males:

Baptista Minola, a gentleman of Padua

Vincentio, a merchant of Pisa

Lucentio, son to *Vincentio*, suitor and later husband to *Bianca*.

Lucentio borrows his servant *Tranio's* clothing and disguises himself as the Latin tutor, *Cambio*.

Petruchio, a gentleman of Verona, suitor to *Katherina* and friend of *Hortensio*.

Gremio, a very old, rich suitor to *Bianca*.

Hortensio, another suitor to *Bianca*, friend to *Petruchio*, and later husband of the
Widow; *Hortensio*, disguises himself as *Licio*, a tutor in music.

Tranio & *Biondello*, servants to *Lucentio*.

Tranio disguises himself as his own master, *Lucentio*

Biondello remains a servant but pretends to serve *Tranio-as-Lucentio*

Grumio, *Curtis*, & others} servants to *Petruchio*.

A *Pedant* of Mantua, later disguised to impersonate the true *Vincentio*, father of
Lucentio.

Tailor, *Haberdasher*, and *Servants* to *Petruchio*.

Females:

Katharina (also called *Katherine* and *Kate*) *Minola*, elder daughter to *Baptista*,
wooed by and then wife to *Petruchio*

Bianca Minola, younger daughter to *Baptista*, wooed by *Lucentio*-in-disguise
(as *Cambio*) and then wife to him; also wooed by the elderly *Gremio* and
Hortensio-in-disguise (as *Licio*).

A *Widow*, later wife to *Hortensio*.

¹ Lists of characters were not part of early editions of Shakespeare's plays but were later added by editorial tradition. I have modified Kittredge's list of "Dramatis Personae" to clarify the relations among characters and to remind readers of the characters' disguises as other characters. [L.M.]

INDUCTION

SCENE I. [*Implied Location:*[†] *In front of an alehouse on a heath.*]*Enter Beggar (Christopher Sly) and Hostess.*[‡]

BEGGAR I'll pheeze you, in faith!

HOSTESS A pair of stocks, you rogue!

BEGGAR Y'are a baggage. The Slys are no rogues. Look in the chronicles: we came in with Richard Conqueror. Therefore paucas pallabris; let the world slide. Sessa! 5

HOSTESS You will not pay for the glasses you have burst?

BEGGAR No, not a denier. Go by, Saint Jeronimy! Go to thy cold bed and warm thee.

The explanatory notes at the foot of the page are my own, as are the performance notes. Where I have relied on Kittredge's excellent glossary, I have marked the note with a "K" in brackets.

— Laury Magnus

INDUCTION. SCENE I.

The scene labels "Induction, Scene 1" and "Induction, Scene 2" are later additions to Shakespeare's Folio text. What editors have called "Act I, Scene 1" doesn't start till the third scene of this play. **Implied scene location:** The alehouse location becomes clear in line 6, when the hostess demands payment for broken glasses. **Stage direction:** *Enter Beggar (Christopher Sly) and Hostess:* Shakespeare was inconsistent in the way that he used speech prefixes, especially in the early plays. "Beg." (i.e. "beggar") is the speech prefix to identify Sly's lines. The list of *Dramatis Personae* will be helpful to consult to keep the characters' names straight. 1. **I'll pheeze you:** I'll fix you!—Sly's drunken boast. 2. **pair of stocks:** stocks were wood blocks with holes cut out to shackle the legs, a shameful form of punishment. 3. **baggage:** a derogatory term for a woman. — **chronicles:** the historical chronicles (on which Shakespeare based many of his plays). 4. **Richard Conqueror:** Sly is confused and mixes up William the Conqueror and Richard the Lion-Hearted. — **paucus palabris:** in few words (Spanish). 5. **slide:** slip by. — **Sessa!** The precise meaning is unknown, but the idea is *knock it off* or *cease*. 7. **denier:** a French coin of little value. — **Go by, Saint Jeronimy!** As in his earlier mixed-up reference to "Richard Conqueror" (see line 4 and n.), the drunken Sly mixes up names, confusing "Hieronomo," the hero of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, with St. Jerome ("*Hieronymous*" in Latin). 7–8. **Go to thy cold bed and warm thee.** Sly taunts the hostess with a standard insult, also implying that the hostess can't get a man to warm her (but see line 30 when the Sly falls down drunk in his "cold" bed).

† Where a given scene takes place was not specified in the Folio text (or in any other text of Shakespeare's plays). Instead the "implied location" was created by the words of dialogue (see Introduction, p. xiii).

‡ The fact that Shakespeare's Sly is going to tangle with a female "hostess" (rather than the male "tapster" of the *A Shrew* version) directly foreshadows the gender wars that will follow in Shakespeare's play-within-the-play. The two Induction scenes also frame the action of the play-within-the-play by creating ongoing analogies first between servants and men of lowly stature and then between women and servants: both are "mastered"—women by men, and the lower classes (including actors) by noblemen with power.

- HOSTESS I know my remedy; I must go fetch the thirdborough. [*Exit.*]
- BEGGAR Third or fourth or fifth borough, I'll answer him by law. I'll not budge an inch, boy. Let him come, and kindly. 11
Falls asleep [on the ground].
- Wind horns. Enter a Lord from hunting, with his Train [of Huntsmen and Servants].*
- LORD Huntsman, I charge thee, tender well my hounds:
 Breathe Merriman, the poor cur is embossed;
 And couple Clowder with the deep-mouthed brach.
 Saw'st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good 15
 At the hedge corner, in the coldest fault?
 I would not lose the dog for twenty pound.
- 1ST HUNT. Why, Belman is as good as he, my Lord
 He cried upon it at the merest loss
 And twice today picked out the dullest scent. 20
 Trust me, I take him for the better dog.
- LORD Thou art a fool. If Echo were as fleet.
 I would esteem him worth a dozen such.
 But sup them well and look unto them all.
 Tomorrow I intend to hunt again. 25
- 1ST HUNT. I will, my Lord
- LORD What's here? One dead, or drunk? See, doth he breathe?*
- 2ND HUNT. He breathes, my Lord
 Were he not warmed with ale,
 This were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly. 30
- LORD 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.
 What think you? If he were conveyed to bed,
 Wrapped in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers, 35

10. **thirdborough:** constable. *After* 11. **Stage direction:** *Wind:* blow. 13–14. **Breathe Merriman... couple Clowder:** i.e., give Merriman a chance to catch his breath by unhitching him. —**embossed:** foaming at the mouth. —**brach:** bitch hound. 15–16. **made it good...coldest fault:** i.e., Silver picked up the lost scent and his baying saved the day after the scent went cold. 30. **This were a bed but cold:** i.e., Sly's bed would be too cold to sleep in if he hadn't already been "warm'd with ale." 33. **practise on:** play a joke upon. The practical joke framework introduces the first level of a "play-within-a-play," the Lord and his servants playacting roles as "servants" of Christopher Sly—the beggar who is now elevated to be a supposed "lord."

* Sly's drunkenness and susceptibility to delusional "dreams" interweaves with the theatrical framework of lord and servants playacting a joke on him, and, later, with a second theatrical scenario of professional actors getting ready for a performance.



"Good morrow Kate": Fairbanks and Pickford approach each other gingerly—with whips in hand, but woman, as yet, on top of the staircase in the Sam Taylor film of 1929.

- KATHARINA Moved? In good time! Let him that moved you hither
Remove you hence. I knew you at the first
You were a moveable.
- PETRUCHIO Why, what's a moveable?
- KATHARINA A joined-stool.
- PETRUCHIO Thou hast hit it! Come sit on me. 195
- KATHARINA Asses are made to bear, and so are you.
- PETRUCHIO Women are made to bear, and so are you.
- KATHARINA No such jade as you, if me you mean.
- PETRUCHIO Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee!
For, knowing thee to be but young and light— 200
- KATHARINA Too light for such a swain as you to catch,
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.
- PETRUCHIO Should be! should—buzz!

192. **moved**: inclined, heading toward. "Moved" sets up a series of puns in lines 194-202 between being emotionally moved and being a "movable" thing, like a stool. —**in good time**: indeed. 194. **movable**: a piece of furniture. 195. **a joined-stool**: a stool with jointed legs. —**hit it**: got the right idea. 197. **to bear...you**: Petruchio puns on "bear" as in having children as well as bearing a man's weight during lovemaking. 198. **jade**: an old, worn-out horse.[K.] 201. **Too light**: too light on my feet. 202. **heavy**: weighty, serious. 203. **Should be...buzz**: Petruchio turns Kate's "be" into "bee," but "buzz" also conveys the sense of dealing in gossip.



"Where did you study all this goodly speech? It is extempore from my mother wit!"
Gymnastic Kate and Petruchio duke it out in William Ball's *commedia-delle'arte*-style production of the American Conservatory Theater of San Francisco (see *Filmography*).

- KATHARINA Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.
- PETRUCHIO O slow-winged turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?
- KATHARINA Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard. 205
- PETRUCHIO Come, come, you wasp! i' faith, you are too angry.
- KATHARINA If I be waspish, best beware my sting.
- PETRUCHIO My remedy is then to pluck it out.
- KATHARINA Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.
- PETRUCHIO Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? 210
In his tail.
- KATHARINA In his tongue.
- PETRUCHIO Whose tongue?
- KATHARINA Yours, if you talk of tales. And so farewell.

—**buzzard**: a slow-witted hawk that cannot be trained, continuing the “buzz” wordplay and foreshadowing Petruchio’s soliloquy in 4.1.158-81. 204. **Turtle...take thee**: turtle-dove, the emblem bird of love; much slower, however, than a buzzard and easily overtaken by one. 214. **talk of tales**: Kate reverts to the earlier allusion to “tales” as gossip or the “buzz” of rumor.

HOW TO READ *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* AS PERFORMANCE

The first step in reading any play as performance is to try to imagine the words as being spoken to other characters on stage. Shakespeare's stage was a simple bare platform thrust out among surrounding audience members, with two upstage doors (and a third "discovery space" between the doors) for entries and exits. Imagining the play's action on such a stage while reading, however, is hard to do, first of all because Shakespeare's stage directions are both minimal and often puzzling. Shakespeare was part of an evolving acting company that was also beginning to perform his plays, so it seems likely that he was on hand to answer actors' questions directly. Thus, almost all the action and details of location are implied by the characters' words, rather than described by the playwright. As readers, we may remain blissfully unaware that one setting has morphed into another, but we need to be alert to Shakespeare's magician-like ability to manipulate the setting at will just by a few words spoken. An explanatory note about the *Implied Location* at the beginning of each scene will tell readers where the action is occurring, and which words in the dialogue establish or change the place of action.

Speech prefixes in this play also cause some difficulty. In Shakespeare's early works, he was focused on fellow actors who were playing roles as much as he was on specific characters. The Folio texts of his early plays are very slapdash about specifying which characters—in which disguises—speak certain lines. Readers can get lost in *The Taming of the Shrew* when characters such as Lucentio, Tranio, and Hortensio are masquerading and going by other names. For this reason, the few stage directions that Shakespeare *does* give us are crucially important in establishing just who it is that the underlying character is pretending to be at any given moment. Kittredge also inserted bracketed identifications into the Folio stage directions that mark a character's entries and exits, telling us if that character is now disguising himself as someone else. As readers of this play of disguises, we always need to be just as mindful of who is speaking, hearing, and reacting to a speech as to what is being said.

Another complication of reading is that as master of dramatic suspense, Shakespeare invariably begins his scenes *in medias res*, that is, in the middle of things. Only then does he gradually fill in the story. In this play of disguises,

The New Kittredge Shakespeare

With its careful glosses and lively supporting essays on film and performance, this *Taming of the Shrew* provides the puzzled and the offended with a useful and intelligent guide to the possibilities of this play in a way that is historically informed yet alert to the pleasures of theater. The book does an especially fine job in its treatment of the Taylor and Zeffirelli film versions.

—Pamela Allen Brown
University of Connecticut, Stamford

Laury Magnus' edition of *The Taming of the Shrew* is much more than a revision of Kittredge. Her splendid introduction and appendices are sensitive to the play's language and its paradoxical nuances of gender, and she understands that the play is, after all, a love story. Her explanatory notes are excellent, but most impressive and original is her emphasis on film, theater, and television performance.

—Maurice Charney, Emeritus,
Rutgers University

Laury Magnus is Professor of Humanities at the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Her books include a study of poetic repetition in early twentieth-century poetry and a co-translation of Ivan Goncharov's nineteenth-century Russian novel, *The Precipice*. Her articles have appeared in *The Wallace Stevens Journal*, *Assays*, and *Language and Style*. Her work on Shakespeare includes the New Kittredge edition of *Romeo and Juliet* (co-edited with Bernice W. Kliman), articles and reviews in *Literature/Film Quarterly*, *Connotations*, *College Literature*, and frequent reviews in *The Shakespeare Newsletter*. She is an Associate of the Columbia Shakespeare Seminar.

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