

# InsideOUT

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Denver Center  
Theatre Company  
KENT THOMPSON  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## THE TAMING OF THE Shrew

*THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*  
by William Shakespeare  
Directed by Kent Thompson



2011/12  
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LARIMER SQUARE



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# InsideOUT

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## Synopsis

PETRUCHIO: *Kiss me, Kate, we will be  
married o' Sunday.*  
—The Taming of the Shrew, II, i

The madcap Petruchio has come to town seeking a rich wife. He sets his sights on Katherine —the perfect wife in all respects but one—she is sharp-tongued and stubborn. From their first explosive encounter Petruchio subjects Katherine to a series of verbal and physical indignities under the pretext of kindness and love. She is all resistance at first, but when she is deprived of food and sleep, she finally succumbs, swearing that the sun is the moon and that an old man is a virtuous virgin, if Petruchio says it's so.

Meanwhile, Bianca, Katherine's pretty younger sister, is being courted by the disguised Lucentio and Hortensio who are unaware of her manipulative manners. In the end, Katherine defends marriage and submission as adamantly as she condemned them in the beginning—or does she?

Katherine is full of surprises. ■

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# WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: AN ENCAPSULATED BIOGRAPHY

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For all his fame and celebration, William Shakespeare remains a mysterious figure with regards to his personal history. There are just two primary sources of reliable information on the Bard: his works and various legal and church documents that have survived from Elizabethan times. There are many gaps in this body of information, which tell us little about Shakespeare the man.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, on or around April 23, 1564. Church records from Holy Trinity Church indicate that he was baptized there on April 26, 1564, and a child's baptism would have followed a few days after its birth. Young William was born to John Shakespeare, a glover and leather merchant, and Mary Arden, a landed heiress. William, according to the church register, was the third of eight children in the Shakespeare household—three of whom died in childhood. John Shakespeare had a remarkable run of success as a merchant and later as an alderman and high bailiff of Stratford. His fortunes declined, however, in the 1570s.

There is much conjecture about Shakespeare's childhood years, especially regarding his education. Scholars surmise that Shakespeare attended the free grammar school in Stratford, which at the time had a reputation to rival that of Eton. While there are no records extant to prove this claim, Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin and Classical Greek tends to support this theory. In addition, Shakespeare's first biographer, Nicholas Rowe, wrote that John Shakespeare had placed William "for some time in a free school."<sup>1</sup> John Shakespeare, as a Stratford official, would have been granted a waiver of tuition for his son. As the records do not exist, we do not know how long William attended the school, but certainly the literary quality of his works suggest a solid education. What is certain is that William Shakespeare never went on to university, which has stirred some of the debate concerning the authorship of his works.

The next documented event in Shakespeare's life is his marriage to Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. William was 18 at the time and Anne was 26—and pregnant. Their first daughter, Susanna, was born on May 26, 1583. The couple later had twins, Hamnet and Judith, born February 2, 1585 and christened at Holy Trinity. Hamnet died in childhood at the age of 11, on August 11, 1596.

For seven years, William Shakespeare effectively disappears from all records, turning up in London circa 1592. This fact has sparked as much controversy about Shakespeare's life as any period. Rowe notes that young Shakespeare was quite fond of poaching and may have had to flee Stratford after an incident with Sir Thomas

Lucy, whose lands he allegedly hunted. There is also a rumor of Shakespeare working as an assistant schoolmaster in Lancashire for a time, though this is circumstantial at best. It is estimated that Shakespeare arrived in London around 1588 and began to establish himself as an actor and playwright. Evidently, Shakespeare was envied early on for his talent, as related by the critical attack of Robert Greene, a London playwright, in 1592: “—an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger’s heart wrapped in a player’s hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shakescene in a country.”<sup>2</sup>

Greene’s bombast notwithstanding, Shakespeare must have shown considerable promise. By 1594, he was not only acting and writing for the Lord Chamberlain’s Men (called the King’s Men after the ascension of James I in 1603), but was a managing partner in the operation as well. With Will Kempe, a master comedian, and Richard Burbage, a leading tragic actor of the day, the Lord Chamberlain’s Men became a favorite London troupe, patronized by royalty and made popular by the theatregoing public. When the plague forced theatre closings in the mid-1590s, Shakespeare and his company made plans for the Globe Theatre in the Bankside district, which was across the river from London proper.

Shakespeare’s success is apparent when studied against other playwrights of this age. His company was the most successful in London in his day. He had plays published and sold in *octavo* editions, or “penny-copies” to the more literate of his audiences. It is noted that never before had a playwright enjoyed sufficient acclaim to see his works published and sold as popular literature in mid-career. While Shakespeare could not be counted as wealthy, by London standards, his success allowed him to purchase New Place and retire in comfort to Stratford in 1611. New Place was the second largest house in town and one of Stratford’s most desirable properties.

William Shakespeare wrote his will in 1611, bequeathing his properties to his daughter Susanna (married in 1607 to Dr. John Hall). To his other daughter Judith, he left 300 pounds, and to his wife Anne he left “my second best bed.” William Shakespeare allegedly died on his birthday, April 23, 1616. This is probably more of a romantic myth than reality, but Shakespeare was interred at Holy Trinity in Stratford on April 25 of that year. In 1623 two working companions of Shakespeare from the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, John Heminges and Henry Condell, printed the First Folio edition of the Collected Works, of which half the plays contained therein were previously unpublished. The First Folio also contained Shakespeare’s sonnets.

William Shakespeare’s legacy is a body of work that will never again be equaled in Western civilization. His words have endured for 400 years and still reach across the centuries as powerfully as ever. ■

1. [www.bardweb](http://www.bardweb)

2. Ibid.

<http://www.bardweb.net/man.html>

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# THEMES OF *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

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*Old fashions please me best.*  
—The Taming of the Shrew, III, i.

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There are many themes in Shakespeare's play. One of these is that marriage is an economic institution. A couple's courtship has a financial effect not just on the lovers, but also on their parents, friends and servants. Petruchio arranges with Baptista to marry Katherine but not without the transaction of funds between the two men. Meanwhile, Lucentio convinces Baptista that he is fabulously rich and can give Bianca all the comforts that she desires and more.

Social roles also affect an individual's happiness. Everyone in the play occupies a certain social position and is expected to behave accordingly.<sup>1</sup> Katherine's problem is that she wants nothing to do with her position and so her shrewish behavior knows no boundaries. Katherine also rages at Bianca's suitors as Baptista defines the marriage conditions—that Katherine must marry *before* her younger sister. Lucentio occupies the role of the wealthy young suitor and Tranio that of his servant. What Shakespeare seems to show in this play is the hilarity that can ensue when people try to subvert the social order.

Disguise is one way the characters try to change their social roles. For example, Lucentio dresses as a Latin tutor, Tranio as Lucentio and Hortensio as a music tutor. As Petruchio implies on his wedding day, when he shows up in an assortment of rags, a garment is simply a garment and the real person remains the same no matter what disguise is worn.

Shakespeare also focuses on marriage. Baptista and Vincentio are fathers dealing with children of marriageable age and are concerned with making the very best matches for them. Never mind love, for marriage concerns more than the bride and groom. It affects the family, the community and, again, the entire social order. ■

[http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/the\\_taming\\_of\\_the\\_shrew/teachers-resources/themes.aspx](http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/the_taming_of_the_shrew/teachers-resources/themes.aspx)



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# COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE

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*Everyone wants to laugh at something. Mostly at other people's troubles, if they're not too rough. —Mack Sennett*

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In *The Taming of the Shrew* Shakespeare draws upon the styles of *Commedia dell'Arte* for most of his major characters. *Commedia dell'Arte* began in Italy in the 16th century, the name shortened from *Commedia dell'Arte all'Improviso*, or comedy of the craft of improvisation. Their goal was laughter not trouble, so the actors never satirized or criticized the pillars of society.

*Commedia dell'Arte* was known for the development of certain comic elements. One was the use of masks; the more comic the role, the greater the part of the face that was covered. The actors playing the lovers, however, were never masked. Dialects were part of the comedians' routines. The dialect became broader as the character mined humor for the fun of the audience. The plots were full of intrigue, unsolvable situations and improvisational antics. The *lazzi*, or bits of comic action, were usually supplied by the servant characters.

*Commedia* was known for its stock characters. In the play Petruchio is the *Cavaliere*, a suave womanizer with the ability to charm everyone. In his wedding outfit Petruchio becomes like *Il Capitano*, a blustering, bullying military man. Baptista and Gremio are the classic *Pantalone* figures, old, moneyed powerful patriarchs. Lucentio might be compared to *Arlecchino* who is a clever acrobat, but childlike and amorous. The servants Tranio and Grumio are the *zanni* (clowns) who provide most of the visual gags. ■

Gay, Penny. *The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare's Comedies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Jory, Jon, ed. *Commedia dell'Arte and the Comic Spirit*. Louisville, KY: Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1996.

<http://italian.about.com/library/weekly/aa110800b.htm>

[http://www.oldwoodtoys.com/punch\\_&\\_judy.htm](http://www.oldwoodtoys.com/punch_&_judy.htm)

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# SOURCES OF THE PLAY

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The character of the shrew was common in medieval mystery plays. Shakespeare may have seen one in Stratford's Trinity Church where "15th century misericords depict husband and wife beatings."<sup>1</sup> He may have drawn upon Chaucer's *A Merchant's Tale* and *The Wife of Bath* in which the wife wanted mastery and sovereignty over the household.

Shakespeare probably heard or read the 1550 ballad "A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife, Lapped in Morel's Skin, for her Good Behavior." The story features a shrewish mother who wants her firstborn daughter to seek mastery over her husband. There are also two sisters, the younger one pursued by suitors. When the wife refuses to do the household chores, her husband beats her. But the tale concludes with a communal feast where the wife performs like a proper hostess.

There are also folk-tale motifs in the play. Pressure was put on women to be obedient and avoid rebellion. In addition, there were men as well as women shrews who were put in stocks or paraded around town to be mocked by the public.

*The Book of Common Prayer* (1559) also seems to be reflected in the play. It declares that the conception of marriage is based on female obedience: "wilt thou obey him and serve him, love, honor and keep him." The husband is urged to "give honor unto the wife as the weaker vessel."<sup>2</sup>

Another possible literary source is *Supposes in the Whole Woorkes of George Gascoigne Esquyre* (1587) by Lodovico Aristo, translated by George Gascoigne that may have supplied the Bianca and Lucentio story. ■

1. Hodgdon, ed. p. 39.

2. Ibid, p. 51-52.

Hodgdon, Barbara, ed. *The Arden Shakespeare: The Taming of the Shrew*. London: Methuen Drama, 2010.

<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/Shakespeare/taming.htm>

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# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW IN PERFORMANCE

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Though readers and scholars never lost sight of Shakespeare's text since it was first published in the first Folio in 1623 (at least 30 years after it was first seen on stage), the stage history of *The Taming of the Shrew* has been less faithful to Shakespeare's script. Shakespeare's play was popular at least into the 1630s when it was printed again as a separate "quarto"—the equivalent of our paperback. John Fletcher, Shakespeare's successor as the resident playwright for the King's Men, offered a sequel that he called *The Woman's Prize or the Tamer Tamed*, in which Petruchio suffers "taming" by his second wife, Maria, who uses sexual denial to challenge his views of marriage. Between 1663 when Shakespeare's version of *The Taming of the Shrew* last appeared on London's stage as an "old revival," and 1844, when it was finally restaged in its original, Shakespeare's text disappeared in performance for 181 years. Its story, however, remained popular and was borrowed and adapted frequently by other playwrights.

In 1663, following the restoration of the monarchy and the reopening of London's theaters—and a failed revival of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—the King's Company made a final attempt to produce a Shakespearean comedy, using an adaptation of *Shrew* written by an actor named John Lacy. Renamed Sauny the Scot and set in London, this adaptation excluded the Christopher Sly Induction, and portrayed Grumio as a stereotypical Restoration Scotsman. Fifty-three years later in 1716, Charles Johnson produced a farcical version, *The Cobbler of Preston*, in which Christopher Sly would become the hero of this tale.

David Garrick, the famous actor and director of London's Drury Lane, returned to an abbreviated version of Shakespeare in his *Catherine and Petruchio*, first produced in 1754. Garrick's play, eliminating Christopher Sly, Bianca, and her suitors completely, remained popular for more than a century, serving as a "star piece" for famous lead actors. An opera written in 1828 was based on Garrick's rendition of the story rather than Shakespeare's—by then long silenced. It was not until Benjamin Webster revived Shakespeare's text in 1844 that *The Taming of the Shrew* reclaimed its place in live performance—but still it competed against Garrick's adaptation for the next 40 years.

Here in the United States, the play has evolved its own unique history. *The Taming of the Shrew* was the first Shakespearean film with sound to be made in America. It starred Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford—the leading couple in 1929. In 1930 the famous husband-wife acting duo, Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne, toured *The Taming of the Shrew* throughout the United States.



The production included a clown band, dwarves and acrobatics. It is commonly held stage lore that the offstage relationship of this famous thespian couple, as witnessed by stagehand-turned-producer Saint Subber, was the inspiration for the Cole Porter musical *Kiss Me, Kate*. Shakespeare's text takes a backseat in the musical adaptation in which a divorced couple, cast as Katherine and Petruchio, push each other's buttons throughout the rehearsals for the play.

In the early 1900s, *The Taming of the Shrew* was considered the Birmingham Repertory Theatre's most successful experiment in presenting Shakespeare in modern dress. In addition to the modern costumes, the 1928 production featured press photographers and a movie camera in the wedding scene, and a young Laurence Olivier in a small role.

As the twentieth century progressed, *The Taming of the Shrew* proved as popular as it was controversial. Franco Zeffirelli created his famous version for the screen in 1967, starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Like Pickford and Fairbanks before them, Taylor and Burton were the most famous Hollywood couple of the mid-Sixties; their tumultuous off-screen relationship brought new levels of ferocity to their on-screen battles. This work, like Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*, is characterized by the relationship between two characters: the Bianca subplot recedes into the background, and the Christopher Sly framework disappears entirely as a stage device of no use to Zeffirelli's naturalistic vision as a director. Katherine and Petruchio fall in love at first sight, and the subsequent taming plot is approached by the film's stars as an elaborate game. Their battle is not one so much between the sexes as between two bohemian anarchists and the conventions of the hypocritical and repressed society in which they live. There is no submission by Katherine in Zeffirelli's eyes: she delivers her speech with knowing looks shared privately with Petruchio.

The same text is used to very different ends in another production readily available and widely known: Jonathan Miller's *The Taming of the Shrew* filmed for the BBC television series in 1980. Like Zeffirelli, Miller banished Christopher Sly from his stage, but the similarity in interpretation stops there. In the hands of John Cleese as a cerebral, funny and rather gawky Petruchio, the taming of Katherine becomes more a studied lesson play or well-devised therapy process than a sexy game of mutual attraction. Miller's Petruchio teaches rather than tames his Katherine. Katherine's closing speech is portrayed as a statement of Elizabethan family and sexual values. The film ends with the wedding party joining in to sing a Puritan hymn extolling marital harmony.

Just two years earlier, in 1978 a very different interpretation of Shakespeare's text, directed by Michael Bogdanov, appeared on London's stage. Like much of the Royal Shakespeare Company's work in this period, Bogdanov's work was deeply influenced by Jan Kott's groundbreaking book, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, which posits that the themes relevant in Shakespeare's particular

moment of history are equally relevant throughout human history. History repeats itself, and we return to the same problems wrapped in different circumstances (for example, the feud of the Capulets and Montagues as portrayed through the experience of rival gangs in New York City in *West Side Story*). Bogdanov's *Shrew* made a strong and relentless statement against the repression of women by a capitalist society. The production began with a drunken Christopher Sly planted as an "audience member." The innkeeper was played by a female "usher" who, in attempting to throw this rowdy "patron" from the theater, is victimized by Sly's inebriated abuse. The Sly Induction was so realistic that at one performance audience members called the police to intervene. The struggle between Katherine and Petruchio was violent and abusive. Paduan society was portrayed as a cold, repressive bed of capitalism where women were bought, sold and used. In light of Bogdanov's dark interpretation, Katherine's final speech was a somber one—with evidence of the woman's angry but suppressed resistance to the role she had been unfairly dealt in this society of males and money.

In the 1985 Royal Shakespeare Company tour, director Di Trevis used the play-within-a-play as a springboard for a commentary on property and poverty. The show began with the players crossing the stage in tattered costumes. Leading the procession pulling an oversized property basket on wheels was a young unwed mother, who would later take on the role of Katherine. Both the players and the characters in the play were portrayed as needy. Like Sly, the players were playthings for the wealthy, and acting provided them with a life of fantasy and some income.

Turkish director Yücel Erten interpreted the play in 1986 as a love tragedy. In Erten's production, Petruchio broke down Katherine's defensive wall as she fell in love, and subsequently his humiliation of her resulted in her emotional breakdown. After delivering her infamous speech of female submission, Katherine removed her shawl to reveal her slit wrists and suicide.

*The Taming of the Shrew* has appeared on Chicago Shakespeare's stage as a full-length production twice before, and once as an abridged adaptation for Team Shakespeare and family audiences. David H. Bell's full-length production (2003) was set in 1960 along the Via Veneto, an area in Rome made famous by Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*. Bell created a world of glamour, wealth and high fashion. The set was filled with the balconies, fountains and marble arches of a glamorous Italian street. Around the café owned by Katherine's father, paparazzi swarmed and Vespa scooters zoomed. To reflect the time period of the show, Bell updated certain lines: horse references, for example, were changed to motorcycles. Bell staged an optimistic view of Katherine's taming, and the "Kiss Me, Kate" scene left the audience believing that Katherine and Petruchio were very much in love. Katherine's final speech was delivered by actor Katherine Fry as a woman changed by love, not tamed by torture.

A decade earlier in 1993 staged at CST's previous home, the

Ruth Page Theatre, Artistic Director Barbara Gaines directed CST's first production of *Shrew*. Gaines retained the Christopher Sly framework of the original script and set the production in Renaissance Italy. Actors were dressed in ornate colorful costumes, with the warm woods of the set inviting the audience into this antique world. Gaines chose not make a political statement with Katherine's transformation from shrew to wife, but allowed the audience to interpret Katherine's final speech on their own.

Teen comedies dominated movie screens in the 1990s, so it was perhaps no surprise that a teen flick, called *10 Things I Hate About You*, premiered in 1999. What is surprising, however, is the fact that its story is based upon Shakespeare's 400-year-old play. The setting moves to Tacoma, Washington. Kat (Katherine) is now an antisocial, Sylvia Plath-reading, ball-breaking, vicious field hockey-playing high school student, frequently called a "heinous bitch" by her sister Bianca, who is the most popular and sought-after girl in school. In the movie's contemporary high school world, Bianca doesn't want to get married. She just wants to go on a date with a boy, which her pregnancy-phobic father forbids until the older sister starts dating. Money is still the impetus for Patrick (Petruchio). Cameron (Lucentio) sets a plan in motion where Joey (Hortensio) pays Patrick to date Kat so that Cameron can have a chance with Bianca. Patrick, who is feared by fellow classmates, is the only one not deterred by Kat's man-hating reputation.

Kat's taming is, in fact, quite a bit tamer than her namesake's. The famous speech of submission at the end of Shakespeare's play is transformed in the film into Kat publicly reading a poem she has written about Patrick, first listing all his vile characteristics, and culminating with the line: "But mostly I hate the way I don't hate you. Not even close, not even a little bit, not even at all." True to both its derivative genres—teen movies and Shakespeare comedy—*10 Things I Hate About You* delivers a happy ending.

ABC Family launched the sitcom *10 Things I Hate About You* in 2009—loosely based off the movie. This time, however, Kat and Bianca are the new girls in town who are seeking to find their place in Padua High. Kat, a self-righteous feminist, prides herself on her independence but develops a crush on the leather-wearing school rebel, Patrick (Petruchio). Meanwhile, Bianca desperately longs for the popularity she had established at her old school. Taking a turn from Shakespeare's original character, this Bianca has only one suitor, Cameron (Lucentio), whom she labels her "GBF" (gay best friend), completely oblivious to his affections. While this sitcom has many deviations from Shakespeare's original plot, it manages to capture many of the complex emotions found in *The Taming of the Shrew*, such as what it means to not conform to mainstream ideas, how it feels to be new in town, and what it's like facing social hierarchies.

The twenty-first century has ushered in a trend in performance that faces *Shrew*'s gender politics through re-inventing a convention from the Early Modern English stage: single-gender

casting. Of course, men played all roles in Elizabethan times, but in 2003 Shakespeare's Globe started an all-female troupe called the Company of Women. In its inaugural season, the company performed *Shrew*, directed by Phyllida Lloyd. Lloyd did not feminize the story or characters in any way. The patriarchal structure remained firmly in place, with the machismo of many of the male characters highly exaggerated. Petruchio, for example, urinated on a pillar of The Globe's stage. Katherine's final speech was presented as an obvious satire. She leapt on to a table and lifted up her dress, embarrassing Petruchio who couldn't convince her to come down. Encouraging all the wives to place their hands under their husband's feet brought only gales of laughter in response. The all-female cast of *Shrew* shifted the play's controversial theme from female submission to male power in general.

In 2005, the BBC launched a new series of contemporary Shakespeare adaptations, entitled "Shakespeare Retold." Screenwriter Sally Wainwright reframes Shakespeare's story in modern-day Britain, where Katherine Minola is a successful, outspoken politician, poised to become the next leader of the opposition party. Her sister Bianca is a jet-setting model, who vows she'll marry only when her older sister does—which means never. Bianca's spurned boyfriend has a cash-strapped aristocrat friend named Petruchio, who decides that the unattainable, unlovable—and very wealthy—politician will be his. Petruchio traps Katherine at their honeymoon villa in Italy, slashing the car tires and hiding her phone and clothes. The two do, indeed, fall in love—just as Katherine wins the leadership of her party and kicks off her campaign to become prime minister. When Bianca insists that her boyfriend Lucentio sign a pre-nuptial agreement, Katherine delivers an impassioned speech, declaring that wives obey their husbands, and that if her sister requires a pre-nuptial agreement, then she shouldn't get married. In the end, the credits are run against a backdrop of blissful family photos of the new Prime Minister, her adoring husband and their triplets.

Rebecca Bayla Taichman's 2007 production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Shakespeare Theatre Company, in D.C., embraced the troubling treatment of women in the play by setting it in a modern-day Padua, infiltrated with pop-culture and superficial ideas about beauty and success. Emphasizing how society today objectifies women, a large billboard hanging above the stage sported a shapely young woman in a red bathing suit—reminiscent of 1940s pin-up girls. The top of the billboard was lost behind the curtains, poignantly denying the audience a view of the model's face. The production illuminated the persistent, problematic view of women's place in society, a notion that in the twenty-first century might be viewed as no longer relevant, but nonetheless gave a fresh perspective to the same theme Shakespeare's 400-year-old play still reveals.

As part of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Complete Works

Festival in 2006, Propellor, an all-male English theater company, brought *The Taming of the Shrew* to the stage. Director Edward Hall (who directed CST's production of *Rose Rage: Henry VI, Parts 1, 2 and 3* in Chicago and subsequently in New York) chose to preserve the Induction with Christopher Sly and the play-within-a-play. In an interesting twist, Sly was eventually goaded into taking on the part of Petruchio in the play. The sets (moveable mirrored cupboards that allowed actors to appear and disappear) and the props and costumes (a mix of contemporary and traditional) created a dream-like world. This surreal world created by the director and the play-within-a-play framework helped to distance the production from the script's politically incorrect issues. Hall's Katherine was broken by Petruchio's taming tactics, and delivered her final speech as a brainwashed shell of a woman. Audiences may have been more able to witness Katherine's torture and engage in a production in which the character was played by a man. British theater critics saw correlations between the production's disturbing tactics of taming to the tactics of torture being utilized in the current war on terror.

– *Reprinted with permission from the Chicago Shakespeare Theater Education Department*

#### **P.S. A BIT MORE PERFORMANCE HISTORY**

A Wild West setting of the play was done first in 1911 by Selig Polyscope, and then made Denver Center stages in the 1994-95 season. In 1948 Michael Benthall set the play in 1880s Oklahoma while Trevor Nunn's 1967 staging featured a Katherine who resembled an Elizabethan Annie Oakley.

Perhaps one of the best of all the American stagings came in 1976 when Marc Singer and Fredi Olster took on the lead roles under the direction of Bill Ball at the American Conservatory Theater. One of its most memorable scenes is viewable on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=RdqOHvcD-VU>



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# WHO IS KATHERINE?

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PETRUCHIO: *You lie, in faith you are called Plain Kate  
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst.*  
—The Taming of the Shrew, II, i

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**K**atherine is characterized as a shrew. A shrew is an animal with a venomous bite. It is about the same size as a gray mouse and can be recognized by its long pointed nose and very sharp teeth. Ounce for ounce, a shrew is the most voracious animal on the planet. It hunts constantly, eating animals five times larger than itself, but mostly feeding on insects, worms and snails. The shrew makes its home in grasslands and marshes, building nests out of leaves, grass and hair beneath logs and rocks. This animal is active day and night; in fact, it is not known to sleep.

But in Shakespeare's time the term shrew was a "derogatory term for a woman with a sharp tongue and a bad temper—a common character in *Commedia dell'Arte*." <sup>1</sup> In Shakespeare's day women were educated by tutors and could not inherit titles. But, writes Graham Holderness in his book *Gender and Power in Shrew Taming Narratives*, women were in a transition phase. "Women wielded and exercised power in many areas of social life: control over medicine, food production and other peoples' bodies." <sup>2</sup> Yet women were still thought of as commodities, as is reflected by Petruchio when he calls Katherine "my chattel, my ox."

Critics have various opinions about Katherine. Robert B. Heilman says she is a "modern girl who develops from a shrew to a mistreated and lovelorn daughter to a fighting feminist." <sup>3</sup> Harold Goddard writes "a woman can lord it over the man so long as she allows him to think he is lording it over her." <sup>4</sup> Katherine combines a willful nature and imagination with feelings that evoke sympathy and a cooperative spirit that can bring the war of the sexes to some kind of settlement.

We have to judge Katherine with the Elizabethan worldview in mind. "God created the world out of chaos and produced concord out of discord. He made the world perfect, with all things ordered as they should be." <sup>5</sup> Disorder occurs when women challenge men; they should be loyal to their husbands. Yet in *The Taming of the Shrew* the commonwealth, the household and the marriage contract "are presented as parts of a cosmic controversy that involves both concord and discord." <sup>6</sup>

Many critics find *The Taming of the Shrew* a sexist play. For example, in 1978 Michael Billington questioned "... whether there is any reason to revive a play that seems totally offensive to our age and society." <sup>7</sup> George Bernard Shaw found the play "altogether disgusting to modern sensibility." <sup>8</sup> The problem lies largely with Katherine's final speech that paints her as submissive

and weak. While Petruchio wins Katherine over by flattery that was not based in truth, Katherine wins Petruchio as a loving and endowing husband with her compliance to his will. “Kate’s spirit of aggression is not dead, just redirected towards others.”<sup>9</sup> John C. Bean argues that “Kate discovers her inward self with love as personal and hence with the relationship of lovers who face together the problem of reconciling liberty and commitment in marriage.”<sup>10</sup> According to Heilman, Katherine’s great victory is, with Petruchio’s help, over herself; she has come to accept herself as having enough merits so that “she can be content without have the last word and scaring everybody off.”<sup>11</sup> Perhaps, as Barbara Hodgdon suggests, this is a story of “two psychologically vulnerable people: a Katherine cast aside by her father, a Petruchio still mourning his father’s death.”<sup>12</sup> ■

1. A Noise Within, p.22.
2. Holderness, p. 3.
- 3 Heilman, p. 40.
4. Goddard in Heilman, p. 47.
5. Heilman, p. 48.
6. Holderness, p. 173.
7. Ibid, p. 175.
8. Fynes-Clinton and Mills, p. 178-79.
9. associatedcontent.
10. cedardrest.edu.
11. Heilman, p. 179.
12. Hodgdon, p. 129.

Aspinwall, Dana E., ed. *Taming of the Shrew: Critical Essays*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Heilman, Robert B. “The *Taming* Untamed or the Return of the Shrew.”

Fynes-Clinton, Michael and Mills, Perry. *The Taming of the Shrew: Cambridge School Shakespeare*. Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 1997.

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Holderness, Graham. “Introduction.”

A Noise Within 2008/2009-repertory season

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/94742/katherines\\_final\\_speech\\_in\\_the\\_taming\\_pg3html? Cat=2](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/94742/katherines_final_speech_in_the_taming_pg3html?Cat=2)

<http://www.cedarcrest.edu/academic/eng/lfletcher/shrew/efurstnau.htm>

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# WHO IS PETRUCHIO?

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KATHERINE: *Call you me “daughter”? Now I promise you  
You have showed a tender fatherly regard  
To wish me wed to one half-lunatic,  
A mad-cap ruffian and a swearing Jack  
That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.*  
—The Taming of the Shrew, II, i.

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Petruchio has come to Padua to enrich himself monetarily by marriage. He tells Hortensio that his father has died and he has come to gain experience he could not find at home. (I, ii). Therefore, he arranges with Baptista to marry Katherine for money. His speeches in Act I show he is confident, selfish, materialistic and determined to be lord and master of his home.

Petruchio woos Katherine by flattering her with compliments about qualities she doesn't possess. *“For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous.”* (II,i). He recognizes her intelligence and wit when they joust in puns. (II, i). Finally, he foresees a good marriage when he says: *“Thou must be married to no man but me/ For I am here to tame you, Kate.”* (II, i).

Petruchio tames Katherine in not the gentlest of ways. First, he deprives her of food by declaring the mutton was burnt; then he deprives her of sleep when he says: *“This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.”* (IV,i). All the while he calls her lovely things such as *“honey love, sweet Kate.”* When he is stomping and shouting at his servants, he is mirroring Katherine's shrewish behavior. On the return to Baptista's house, “he begins a language game that turns on redefining the external world...which makes it possible for her to join in and begin creating a new world and a new society between the two of them.”<sup>1</sup> Katherine becomes a partner in the game rather than an object. “Because they are so much alike, Kate takes quickly to Petruchio's game of words.”<sup>2</sup>

Finally, Petruchio seems to be the kind of challenging person who would have been disappointed if he had won his victory easily, and disappointed in Katherine if she had allowed herself to be truly tamed. ■

1. Novy, p. 19.

2. 123Helpme.com.

Aspinall, Dana E., ed. *The Taming of the Shrew: Critical Essays*. London: Routledge, 2002.

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<http://www.123Helpme.com/view.asp?id=2880>

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# THE 1950s

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**D**irector Kent Thompson has chosen to set this production of *The Taming of the Shrew* in the 1950s. The end of World War II brought thousands of young servicemen back to America to pick up their lives and start new families in new homes with new jobs. With an energy never before experienced, American industry expanded to meet peacetime needs. Americans began purchasing goods not available during the war, which created corporate expansion and jobs. Growth was everywhere and the baby boom was underway. The Cold War, which began in the late 1940s, continued between the United States and the Soviet Union, the postwar superpower rivals.

Here is a short list of important historic and cultural events of the 1950s:

**1950** - President Harry Truman approved production of the hydrogen bomb; he also sent troops into Korea in June.

**1951** - Transcontinental television began with a speech by President Truman.

**1952** - The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 removed racial and ethnic barriers to becoming a U.S. citizen.

**1953** - General Dwight D. Eisenhower became president, a position he held until 1961.

**1953** - Fighting ended in Korea with the country divided into two states, North Korea and South Korea.

**1954** - U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy began his televised hearing into alleged Communists in the army, which expanded into Communists in any American industry.

**1954** - Racial segregation was ruled unconstitutional in public schools by the U.S. Supreme Court. In Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus which began the Civil Rights movement.

**1955** - The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merged, making the new AFL-CIO an organization with 15 million members.

**1955** - Dr. Jonas Salk developed a vaccine for polio.

**1956** - The Federal Highway Act was signed, marking the beginning of work on the interstate highway system.

**1958** - Explorer I, the first U.S. satellite, successfully orbited the earth, while the first jet-airline passenger service was begun by National Airlines between New York City and Miami.

**1959** - Alaska and Hawaii became the 49th and 50th states of the United States. ■

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# AMERICAN CULTURE

## IN THE 1950s

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**D**uring the 50s American education underwent dramatic and, for some, shattering changes. Until 1954 an official policy of “separate but equal” educational opportunities for African Americans had been determined to be the correct method to insure that all children in America received an adequate and equal education in the public schools of the country.

In 1954 Chief Justice Earl Warren and other members of the Supreme Court wrote in *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* that separate facilities for blacks did not make those facilities equal according to the Constitution. Integration began across the nation. Although integration took place quietly in most towns, it was fiercely resisted in parts of the South. After a struggle, Autherine J. Lucy successfully enrolled at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa in 1957. In the same year Elizabeth Eckford was the first black teenager to enter the all-white Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. The conflict in Little Rock was the first of many confrontations in southern states that showed that public opinion on this issue was deeply divided. Another crisis in education was uncovered by critics such as Rudolph Flesch in his book *Why Johnny Can't Read*. He claimed that the American educational system was inadequate. He was joined by other critics such as Robert Hutchins (*The Conflict in Education*) and Admiral Hyman Rickover (*Education and Freedom*).

Families worked together, played together and vacationed together at family-themed entertainment areas such as national parks or the new Disneyland. Gender roles were strongly held; girls played with Barbie Dolls and Dale Evans gear, while boys liked Roy Rogers and Davy Crockett paraphernalia. When the family wasn't watching TV, they attended drive-in movies. Cars became the indicator of prosperity and cool-ness as highways were built to take people quickly from one place to another. The advent of shopping malls came with the acquisition of cars; Sharpstown Mall was developed in Houston, Short Hills in New Jersey and Park Meadows outside of Denver.

Fifties' clothing was conservative; men wore grey flannel suits and women wore dresses with pinched-in waists and high heels. French fashion designers Dior, Chanel and Givenchy were copied in the United States.

Fashion successes were Bill Blass and his designer jeans, poodle skirts made of felt and trimmed with sequins and appliqués, pony



tails for girls and flat tops and crew cuts for guys. Teenagers were defined as a special generation and were represented by James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* who wore blue jeans and an attitude. Activities teens liked were hula-hoops, flying saucer watching and dancing to Dick Clark's "American Bandstand."

In the world of theatre and film, works by well-known playwrights still found audiences and won new admirers. Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (which were written in the 1940s) were still popular in the 1950s. Eugene O'Neill finally finished *Long Day's Journey into Night* in 1957 while Williams wrote *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955) and *Baby Doll* (1956).

The musical hit of the decade was *South Pacific* with music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II and book by Joshua Logan. One of the most emotionally charged plays of 1956 was *The Diary of Anne Frank*. In 1958 Alvin Ailey created the American Dance Theatre which featured African American casts and dance styles that were culturally based. The top five movies of the 50s were *Singin' in the Rain*, *12 Angry Men*, *Rear Window*, *Sweet Smell of Success* and *Bridge on the River Kwai* along with *The African Queen*, *High Noon* and *Some Like It Hot*.

The favorite film actresses of the 1950s were Elizabeth Taylor, Katharine Hepburn, Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn, Bette Davis, Natalie Wood, Lana Turner, Eva Marie Saint, Thelma Ritter, Marilyn Monroe, Jane Russell, Debbie Reynolds and Doris Day. Major film actors of the 1950s were James Dean, Marlon Brando, Rock Hudson, Paul Newman, Jimmy Stewart, Cary Grant, Montgomery Clift, Henry Fonda, Yul Brynner, Charlton Heston, Gregory Peck, Tyrone Power, and Robert Mitchum. ■

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## MUSIC IN THE 1950s

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When the 1950s are mentioned, the first type of music to come to mind is rock'n'roll. Developed from a blend of Southern blues and gospel music with an added strong back beat, this type of music was popular with teenagers who were trying to break out of the mainstream, conservative, American middle class mold. Popular artists such as Bill Haley and the Comets, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis were promoted on radio by popular disc jockeys such as Alan Freed and the Big Bopper. The deaths of Lubbock-born singer Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and the Big Bopper in a plane crash are still lamented by fans. The influence of these early rockers has been felt in popular music worldwide. For non-rockers, there were crooners such as Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Perry Como and Dinah Shore. Some of them became teen idols while some of their songs became part of the Great American Songbook. ■

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## SPORTS IN THE 1950s

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People in the 50s loved sports. More leisure time and greater general prosperity led to more participation in athletic activities for the average person and added large numbers of fans to all types of sports. Unlike many segments of society in this decade, athletes were a diverse group. Popularity was not based on social status, but on the ability of the individual to perform. All-American sports such as baseball and football provided opportunities for the rise of stars such as Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella, Henry (Hank) Aaron, Juan Marichal, Jim Brown and Frank Gifford. As television became more available, other sports found a growing number of fans. College football was widely followed. Professional golf became very popular, with star players such as Ben Hogan and Arnold Palmer helping to create the idea that to succeed in business men needed to play golf. Women like Babe Didrikson-Zaharias created the Ladies Professional Golf Association in 1950, so women were joining men on golf courses all over America.

People watched the Olympics in 1952 and 1956 because of the Cold War rivalry between the U.S. and Russia. Sports such as tennis, basketball and boxing were also popular. Althea Gibson was the first African-American to play in the U.S. Lawn Tennis Nationals at Forest Hills, NY. Major names in basketball were Wilt Chamberlain, Elgin Baylor, Bob Cousy, and Oscar Robinson. Another favorite, boxing, gave opportunities to Sugar Ray Robinson and Rocky Marciano. ■

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# COMMUNICATIONS IN THE 1950s

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Perhaps the most far-reaching change worldwide was the advance of television broadcasting. During the 1950s television became the dominant mass media as people brought TV into their homes in greater numbers of hours per week than ever before. As the 50s progressed the number of young people watching TV steadily increased, a trend that has changed little since that time. What was portrayed on TV became accepted as normal. The ideal family, the ideal schools and neighborhoods, the world, were all seen in a way that had only a partial basis in reality. Programs such as “You Are There” brought historical events into the living rooms of many Americans. The effect on print news media and entertainment media was seen in lower attendance at movies and a greater reliance on TV news for information.

Suddenly, in 1954, black and white broadcasts bloomed into color. Programs called “sitcoms” such as “The Honeymooners,” “Lassie,” “Father Knows Best,” “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet” and “I Love Lucy” featured popular characters whose lives many viewers emulated.

Families also enjoyed variety shows such as “Disneyland” and “The Ed Sullivan Show” on Sunday evenings. News programs changed from newsmen simply reading the copy to shows that included videotapes of events happening elsewhere in the world. Live broadcasts of events sometimes preempted scheduled shows. This was made possible in 1951 with the development of coaxial cable and microwave relays coast to coast. When Edward R. Murrow began offering the weekly program “See It Now,” the world of news broadcasting was irrevocably changed.

The 1950s was the age of togetherness when women’s magazines suggested life should revolve around home and family; domesticity should be the wife’s chief goal. A strong current of conservatism and anticommunism ran through the society. One indicator of this frame of mind was the addition of the phrase “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance and the presence of religion in most people’s lives. ■

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<http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade50.html>

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# CONNECT

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A series of free discussions providing a catalyst for discussion, learning and appreciation of the productions

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**Perspectives** - Denver Center Theatre Company's own "Creative Team" and community experts host interactive, topical discussions with attendees that provide a unique perspective on the production. This provides an in-depth connection that makes the stage experience even more rewarding.

1/27, 6pm, Jones Theatre

**Talkbacks** - Perhaps the best way to fully appreciate a production is by engaging in a stimulating dialogue with your fellow audience members and the actors who bring it to life.

2/12, Post-show

**DCTC@The TC** - Discover the secrets behind the art and the artist at the DCTC. Gain deeper insight into the artist's journey to the creation and development of their work. Gregory Smith, Director of Audience Development for the Denver Center for the Performing arts, hosts these lively and engaging discussions with directors, writers or cast members of the current DCTC productions.

2/14, noon, Tattered Cover LoDo (1628 16th St.)

**Theatre & Theology** - In our continued partnership with Pastor Dan Bollman of the Rocky Mountain Evangelical Lutheran Synod and cast members, this discussion examines the relevant connections to the productions through a theological lens.

2/21, Post-show

**Higher Education Advisory Discussions** - Audience members gain scholarly insight into the productions through discussions, facilitated by faculty members from regional colleges and universities.

2/5, Post-show



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# TOWN HALL MEETING

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The Denver Center Theatre Company, in partnership with  
Rocky Mountain PBS, Presents  
**Town Hall Meeting - Women: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**  
**The Studio at Rocky Mountain PBS (1089 Bannock Street)**  
**Jan 28 | 10am-5pm**

The Town Hall Meeting, Women: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, brings together members of the community in an open discourse surrounding the history and status of women in the United States.

**10-11:30am** — That Darn Speech - You know the one. Katherine's final speech of the play. Typically each director of a production of *The Taming of the Shrew* must wrestle with providing intent and meaning for this monologue and the thematic issues of the play.

**11:30am-1pm** — Two Steps Forward. Two Steps Back – Rosie the Riveter lays down her rivet gun and picks up a dust mop. Women became a vital part of the war effort and workforce during WWII. After the war, they were summarily banished back to more traditional roles. How do gender roles determine the course of our society?

**2-3:30pm** — Sisters Doing It For Themselves - Contributions of women of color in the US. Despite the constraints of race, gender and class, women of color were and continue to make invaluable contributions to the fabric of American society.

**3:30-5pm** — The Journey to Equal Rights - Standing on the shoulders of those who fought the fight. Women's Suffrage Movement, Reproductive rights, Women's Lib. Many of the young women growing up in the 1950's became fierce champions for equality in the 60's and 70's.

This is a free event!  
For more information about the Town Hall Meeting  
visit [www.denvercenter.org/connect](http://www.denvercenter.org/connect)

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# QUESTIONS

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## PRE-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

1. How have relationships between siblings, parents and children, and husbands and wives changed over the last several hundred years? What remains the same and why do you think they are unchanged? Do you think all cultures share the same beliefs about how members of a family should behave? Does money play a difference? Is birth order important? What is the difference between courting and dating? Or are they the same thing?
2. Why do you think parents in the past arranged marriages for their children? What are the benefits and drawbacks to an arranged marriage?
3. What does the title, *The Taming of the Shrew*, imply? What do you expect to see in this production?

## POST-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

1. How does the setting of the Denver Center Theatre Company's production of *The Taming of the Shrew* in the 1950s add to or take away from it being done as originally written?
2. How would you describe Shakespeare's characterization of women in *The Taming of the Shrew*? How do Bianca and Katherine compare to other women in Shakespeare's canon?
3. How are the servants characterized in the play? How do the relationships between Lucentio and his servants differ from Petruchio and his servants?
4. Why does Baptista, the father, decide that Bianca cannot marry until Katherine is wed? Is this fair to the sisters?
5. How are disguises and clothing used in this play? How else are appearances and reality muddled or clarified?
6. How are contrasts used in this play? Describe some moments when opposites and contrasts are used in character portrayals, relationships, in the story or in the language?
7. Why does Lucentio hatch his plan to woo Bianca? Is all fair in the pursuit of love?
8. Describe Petruchio's "taming school" and the steps he takes to tame Katherine. Petruchio begins the play in pursuit of a wealthy wife. By the end of the play what are his intentions? If they have changed discuss how and why.

9. How would you describe Katherine's famous monologue at the end of the play? What is she trying to achieve by saying it? Is she being truthful, sarcastic or something else? Do you agree with what she says?
10. What do you think happens to Katherine and Petruchio after the play is over? What happens to Bianca and Lucentio after the play?
11. What do you think the story would look like if it was told from Katherine's perspective? Would it still be a comedy?

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# ACTIVITIES

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## CHARACTER MAPPING

1. This activity looks at the internal and external characteristics of a certain character. Start with a circle in the middle of a piece of paper. As there will be writing inside and outside the circle, be careful to leave space. At the top of the page, either place a generic title such as “Suitor,” “Shrew,” etc. or the name of a character from the play. If this activity is played before seeing the production, start with generic titles.
2. Inside the circle, write descriptive words, phrases, or draw pictures that describe the characters’ perceptions of themselves. These descriptions are traits that we know and are the essential characteristics and also those that cannot be changed. For example, Bianca is female, the younger sister of Katherine and beautiful.
3. Outside the circle, write descriptive words to describe how the characters are perceived by the other characters. These would be immediate qualities that are obvious or those traits that characterize the character.
4. After seeing the production or reading the text, create another circle for a specific character. For example, if the character is Katherine, in the circle, write quotes that Katherine uses to describe herself. On the outside of the circle, write quotes that the other characters use to describe her.

**New Colorado Writing PG: Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes.**

**New Colorado Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.**

**New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG: Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.**

## PERSPECTIVE WRITING – PERSONAL NARRATIVES

1. Take a moment from a typical day at your school; right before the morning bell rings, the morning announcements, a school wide assembly, the cafeteria at lunch, the final bell, or a football game. This should be a moment that has more than one person in attendance.
2. Write a short monologue describing the moment from your perspective. Make sure the moment is appropriate for school and that you are willing to share with the rest of the class.
3. From one of the more detailed monologues, continue to expand the moment by adding more of the perspectives from the other students.

4. Discuss the similarities and differences in these moments. Did someone see something or did the moment affect them differently? Were the differences or similarities subtle or obvious?
5. Write a short monologue from the perspective of a character from *The Taming of the Shrew* from a moment in the play that was not spoken. For example, write a monologue from Baptista Minola's perspective about why he has chosen to make Bianca wait for Katherine to marry first.

New Colorado Writing PG: Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic.

New Colorado Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.

## CONTEMPORIZING SHAKESPEARE

1. The director of the Denver Center Theatre Company's *The Taming of the Shrew* chose to set the play in the United States during the 1950s rather than its original time and place. This is a common practice in the production of Shakespeare because the language and stories are universal to any time period.
2. Do you think *The Taming of the Shrew* would translate into the United States in 2012?
3. Try setting the characters in Padua High School, a modern high school in the United States. What type of student, teacher or administrator would each character be? Who would be a cheerleader? A football player? A computer wizard? Class president? History teacher? Principal?
4. Where would you set each scene? A locker room? The cafeteria? The office?
5. Create a short scene with two of your modern-day characters. How does the situation stay the same but mannerisms and language differ?
6. What other settings would adapt well to the play? Create a list of potential settings. Are there some settings that are more adaptable than others? Why are some settings more adaptable than others?

New Colorado Writing PG: Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic.

New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG: Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.

## THE DATING GAME

1. Divide the class into smaller groups. Each group will focus on one character from the play *The Taming of the Shrew* and will create both a dating profile of the character and a list of potential questions for their suitors.



2. To create the dating profile, start with information that you know from the text or from the performance about the character. This would include how the character describes themselves or what other characters say about them. List some of the character's mannerisms and characteristics. Create some fictional facts about the character to fill in some of the blanks about likes and dislikes.
3. With your group, create a list of three or more questions that the chosen character would ask to potential suitors. What information would they like to gather about the other characters? What questions could they ask that are designed to explore, compare and contrast what the other character may have in common with them?
4. Once the profiles and questions have been created, share the information by choosing a representative from the group to play the character and have them ask the questions to the other representative and answer the questions to the best of their ability.
5. Discuss what questions and answers surprised them and which questions and answers they agree or disagree.

**New Colorado Writing PG:** Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic.

**New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG:** Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.