

July 16-20, 2014
The Poe House
206 Bradford
Avenue
Fayetteville, NC



\$12 General Admission
\$10 Military/Seniors
\$7.50 Students.
\$5 FSU Students
\$5 Children 6-12 years,
Free under 5 years

A Tale of Two Extremes

A book published in 1616 entitled, *The Goode and the Badde* provides “Descriptions of the Worthies and Unworthies of this Age” wherein “The Best may see their Graces, and the Worst discern their Baseness.” The irony of the title is that the perceived “baser” half of the intended audience likely could not read, let alone afford the text, but the character descriptions therein are nevertheless illuminating and entertaining.

The book characterizes a Virgin as “the beauty of nature...the love of [Virtue]...the grace of Youth” and a Wanton Woman as “the figure of Imperfection..an Ape...a Witch...a [kind] of [Devil].” The text also compares a Quiet Woman and an Unquiet Woman and lists the qualities of a Good Wife. (For an excerpt, visit the Folger Shakespeare Library website.)

Consider how characters label each other (and even themselves) based on these stereotypes; to what extent is Katherina described as “a kind of devil” and Bianca, whose very name means “white” and “fair” cast as “the grace of youth?” How does the play’s final scene challenge the comfortable stereotypes of the audience?



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The Taming of the Shrew

What You Need To Know

The action begins when several nobles deceive a drunken Christopher Sly into the belief that he is a lord. They then entertain him with a play which contains the main plot. Baptista Minola, a merchant of Padua, has two daughters, the younger (Bianca) renowned for her beauty and the elder (Katherina) infamous for her sharpness. Young student Lucentio falls in love with Bianca, but cannot court her until Katherina is married. He therefore enlists Petruchio, newly-arrived in Padua with his servant Grumio, to wed Katherina & disguises himself as a schoolmaster to court Bianca and outwit his rivals Hortensio & Gremio

Ordering Chaos: Conflicting Authority

This play has perennially polarized audiences and produced critical debate with its content; the title alone incites conflict with its key words: “taming” and “shrew.” “Taming” implies that something/someone is wild, uncouth or “out of order.” When applied to a person, the word seems unnecessarily harsh and demeaning. Yet, the implications for Shakespeare’s audience would be less demeaning and more redeeming; “taming” brings someone back into order and into his/her given authority. This play is filled with characters from Christopher Sly to Katherina who usurp (and often misuse) authority and must learn balanced behavior and respect for the autonomy of others. A question to ponder during the show is who might be the “shrew” at any given moment.

Fun Facts About The Play

~Written 1590-91 - one of Shakespeare’s first plays
~ The play has been adapted many times for stage and screen, including Broadway musical *Kiss Me, Kate* (1949), Richard Burton & Elizabeth Taylor’s *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967), *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999) & BBC’s *Shakespeare Re-told* (2005).

~Watch for an anapopism - a geographical error - when Shakespeare places Tranio’s father as a sailmaker in Bergamo, a totally land-locked part of Italy. The closest water is the Italian lakes. - Bill Bryson, *Shakespeare*

~Astronomer William Lassell named a Uranus satellite planet after Bianca in 1986. - *The Shakespeare Miscellany*

~ Shakespeare’s contemporary John Fletcher penned a sequel to the play entitled, *The Tamer Tamed* in which Petruchio learns a lesson from his second wife. - *The Shakespeare Miscellany*

