William Shakespeare's

The Taming of the Shrew

ENG102
3rd Quarter

Study Dates: 1.31.11 – 2.25.11
Day 1: January 31, 2011

- Introduction to Shakespeare
  - What do you know about Shakespeare?
  - What have you read by Shakespeare? Was it easy or difficult? Why?
  - Why do so many people find Shakespeare difficult?
  - Why do you think he is so well respected that his plays are on every high school reading list and most Universities offer several courses just on his works?
  - What is the difference between tragedy and comedy?

- Journal: What are your views on love and marriage? How do you view the roles of women and men in love relationships? Who should ask whom to get married? Out on a date? Is love necessary for marriage? (1-2 pages)

Day 2: February 1, 2011

- Brief discussion of Journal
- Define Sexism
- Small groups: research the way that women have been treated at several stages in history and make a presentation to the class on findings.

**Women’s Changing place Through History**

It isn’t likely that the characters in The Taming of the Shrew would have thought of themselves as being affected by sexism. In fact the word did not exist until quite recently. The way that women have been seen has changed dramatically throughout history. Your small group will research the treatment of women during a specific period in history. We are focusing on Europe and the US for this study but if you find relevant information about another part of the world you may check with me to see if you should use it in your presentation.

**Research Questions:**
1. What were the customs regarding marriage, divorce, dating (?), ownership of property, etc.?
2. What were the customs regarding education and employment for women?
3. What did women wear? What rules were there regarding clothing for women? What does this say about a woman’s place in society?
4. What did the women who lived then think of their own place in society? How many women were writing about their lives and experiences? What did they say?

**Time Period Groups**

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<th>Renaissance</th>
<th>Victorian Age</th>
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<td>1980’s to the present</td>
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**Project Requirements**

- Discuss and write down what you know about the time period you are assigned to study. Use the Internet to check your facts, make sure you know what you think you know.
- Find at least three relevant sources of information about the time period you are assigned and women’s rights. Make an accurate works cited list of the resources you find and their location. (Websites etc.)
- Check your resources for reliability and perspective. What is the bias of the site? How trustworthy is it?
- Fill out your note chart about your group’s time period. Add notes to it when the other groups present.
- Write up a short paper (1 page) that synthesizes the information you gathered and explains what it was like to be a woman at that time in history. This is a group writing assignment, so make sure all of your names are on it.
- Plan and organize a short (5 min) presentation to the class about your learning.
Day 3: February 2, 2011

Present findings from yesterday’s research; take notes on each time period in the chart below.

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Day 4: February 3, 2011
- Read Induction and respond to the questions below.
  1. What is the setting as the play begins?
  2. What trick is played upon Christopher Sly? Why?
  3. Why is *The Taming of the Shrew* considered a play within a play?

Day 5: February 4, 2011
BLOG
Imagine you are directing this opening scene. You need to focus the audience's interest on the new story after the highly theatrical Induction. How might you do this? Some directors make lines 1-45 funny. Find at least three points where you would attempt to make the audience laugh aloud and explain how you would do that. [200 words minimum. Respond to 5 peers in at least 50 words each.]

Day 6: February 7, 2011
- Read 1.1. Consider how the two sisters would actually say lines 78-83 and Kate’s exit lines (102-104).
- Small Group Activity: Translate Katharina and Bianca’s lines into modern English – how would these be spoken/acted today? Present. Group Roles: LEADER, WRITER, KATE, BIANCA.

Day 7: February 8, 2011
- Read Act 1.2 and then complete the questions below on your own paper:
  1. What is Petruchio’s motive in coming to Padua?
  2. How are Katherine and Bianca’s reputations further clarified? What words/phrases describe both women throughout the scene?
  3. What does Petruchio’s monologue reveal about him?
  4. What is the suitors’ reaction to Lucentio joining them as a rival to Bianca?
  5. What specific images are used to describe the wooing of Bianca?
  6. At the end of Act I, why are Bianca’s suitors friendly with one another and indebted to Petruchio?
  7. What role do the servants play?
  8. Journal [1/2 page]: Is this a sexist play? How do you know?

Day 8: February 9, 2011
- Read Act 2.
- Complete the questions below on your own paper:
  1. What information does Katherine hope to gain by tying Bianca's hands and questioning her?
  2. What type of language does Petruchio use to describe Katherine during his discussion with Baptista? (l. 42-65) What does this tell us about his character?
  3. What names do Hortensia and Lucentio assume? What roles will they play?
  5. Summarize the content of Petruchio and Baptista's conversation (l. 111-141) – be brief.
  6. How is Hortensia injured?
  7. When Katherine and Petruchio meet how do they get along? Particularly, what is the pervading attitude in lines 182-196, 209-220, and in Petruchio’s lines 264-277.
  8. What does Petruchio claim about his and Katherine’s interaction? How does Baptista react?
  9. At the end of Act II what are Tranio, Gremio, and Baptista discussing? What decision is made? What must Tranio do in light of this decision?

Day 9: February 10, 2011
- Act I and II Quiz
- View Acts I and II
Discussion:
- How is it similar/different from the play version?
- What elements of these scenes could not be shown on a stage?
- What is left out? Do you miss it?
- What is added? Is it helpful?

Day 10: February 11, 2011

BLOG: Respond to one of the following:
1. What kind of guy is Petruchio? How do you know?
2. Does Kate envy Bianca? What do you make of their relationship?

[200 words minimum. Respond to 5 peers in at least 50 words each.]

Day 11: February 14, 2011

- Read Act 3.1.
- Respond to the following questions:
  1. What is Bianca's response to Lucentio's (Cambio's) and Hortensio's (Litio's) argument over who will tutor Bianca first? (lines 16-22) What does this reveal about her character?
  2. What is Lucentio's translation of his lesson? (lines 31-36) What is Bianca's translation of the same passage? (lines 40-43)
  3. What message to Bianca does Hortensio (Litio) encode in the gamut (scales)? What is her response? (lines 71-78)
  4. Contrast Hortensio's statement in Line 76 with his statement in lines 89-90. What does this reveal about his character?

Day 12: February 15, 2011

- Read 3.2 and complete the following:
  1. Reread Kate’s speech lines 8-20. How much sympathy do you think the other characters feel towards her at this point?
  2. Read Biondello’s description of Petruchio’s arrival at the wedding, lines 42-63. Write a modern equivalent about a bridegroom arriving at the church in an old ugly car.
  3. Read through from line 63-115. Once again Tranio is the one who tries to explain what Petruchio is up to, although he doesn’t get very far. What meaning do you think there is in Petruchio’s strange attire?
  4. Read Katherina’s speech lines 190-210. In this speech Kate fights back and loses. She says she has ‘a spirit to resist’, and tries a number of different tactics during the scene. How is her behavior similar and different from her behavior in previous scenes?
  5. Go back and review the language of this scene. Why do you think Shakespeare didn’t show the wedding on stage? In the film Franco Zefferelli did show this scene and it is very funny. Do you think that is a good idea? Why?
  6. “I will be master of what is mine own, / She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house, / My household-stuff, my field, my barn, / My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything, / And here she stands.”
    “These are the most unpleasant words Shakespeare ever wrote,” said one student. Do you agree? To explore your reactions to Petruchio’s lines, complete the following activities:
    A. Reread the lines, substituting “he” for “she.”
    B. In pairs, one student reads, pausing at each punctuation mark. The other says at each pause: “Oh no I’m not, because....” (Give reasons)
    C. Experiment with different styles of speaking the lines, for example: as a formal lecture, as a ranting politician, as a comedian. Can you find a style to fit the language?
    D. Substitute modern items (TV set, car, etc.) for Petruchio’s nouns.
    E. Is there any danger of these lines being taken seriously? Are they, after all, just a joke?
    F. Debate on the theme: “Petruchio is simply a male chauvinist pig.”

Day 13: February 16, 2011
While we watch 4.1, read along. Mark what lines are left out of the film. Discuss why directors cut the script and what they think is lost in doing this.

On the same paper, explain Petruchio’s behavior in this scene.

Read 4.2 aloud.

Complete the following questions for homework:
1. Summarize Tranio and Hortensio's conversation concerning Bianca. What do they both decide? What is ironic about this?
2. What are Hortensio's plans for marriage? (lines 37-39)
3. What role does the Pendant play in Tranio's plot? How does Tranio get him to play along?

Day 14: February 17, 2011

Read Act 4.3 and respond to the questions below.
1. What does Kate’s opening monologue reveal about her condition?
2. What must Kate do before Petruchio will feed her? (lines 38-47)
3. What does Petruchio think of the hat? the dress?
4. What does Petruchio tell Hortensio to do in line 162? What does this imply about Petruchio's behavior?

Day 15: February 18, 2011

BLOG: Read this scientific description of the shrew:

“Shrews are very active, solitary, surface-dwellers. They are very voracious and suffer from lack of food within a few hours... Shrews are preyed upon extensively by birds, but much less so by mammalian carnivores... Dispersion is maintained by aggressive behavior at all times, except during the brief period of oestrus and copulation. The fighting is stereotyped and involves great use of the voice, resulting in 'squeaking matches'. “ (Corbert, The Terrestrial Mammals of Western Europe)

Do you think Katherina is anything like this description? Think about the whole of this scene and earlier scenes.

Day 16: February 21, 2011

Read 4.4 and 4.5 aloud. Questions below are due tomorrow.

4.4 questions:
1. How should the part of the merchant be played? What famous actors would be good in this role?
2. What do you think is going on with Baptista and the pretend Lucentio & Vincentio? What does this show us about the role of women in society?
3. Read lines 74-106- Biondello’s conversation with Lucentio (the real one). What purpose do these lines serve? What would be lost if the whole passage was cut, as it is often done in performance? (It is completely gone in the film version)
4. Is Biondello smarter than his master, Lucentio? Can you think of any other examples where the servant seems to be more knowledgeable than the master? What purpose does this serve?

4.5 Questions:
1. How does Petruchio test Katherina’s acceptance of his authority? What is he trying to prove?
2. How do you think Katherina feels about her actions in this scene?
3. Is she in fact “tamed”? Explain.
Day 17: February 22, 2011

- Read 5.1 – 5.2 and discuss.
- Discuss Kate’s last speech. Is this play sexist? What would you leave the audience with at the end?
- Complete the following questions for tomorrow:

  **ACT V Scene 1:**
  1. What's ironic about Vincentio's arrival at Lucentio's house?
  2. What does Vincentio think has happened to his son?
  3. Why do Lucentio and Bianca ask pardon of their fathers in lines 109-111?
  4. How do the fathers react to the news of Bianca and Lucentio’s wedding?
  5. What do Petruchio and Kate do at the end of the scene?

  **ACT V Scene 2:**
  1. What offensive does the widow make to Kate? What does Petruchio tell Kate to do?
  2. What is Bianca doing during the banter? (lines 42-43)
  3. Describe the bet? What does the majority expect will be the outcome? What is the outcome?
  4. What is the message of Kate’s final monologue? Do you think she is sincere? Has she been tamed or is she only acting?

Day 18: February 23, 2011

- View the final scene of the film
- Review for Test

Day 19: February 24, 2011

- Test
- Literary Criticism – due Monday [typed]
  Choose one of the topics below and compose an essay of 500-1000 words. Must be submitted to turnitin.com. Cite the play with at least three quotes.
  1. Many characters in The Taming of the Shrew take on different identities, while the behavior of two characters changes drastically by the end of the play. Describe three to four ways in which The Taming of the Shrew develops the idea that appearances should not be confused with reality.
  2. In The Taming of the Shrew, Petruchio employs various strategies to trick or to coerce his wife into obedience. Describe the methods Petruchio uses to tame his “shrew,” and evaluate his effectiveness.
  3. The Taming of the Shrew seems to make a case for male supremacy. But at times this bid for the naturalness of male dominance is overplayed hyperbolic, and treated comically of Shakespeare. Consider the instances of chauvinism in the play and reflect upon the ways in which this play portrays maleness and supremacy.

Day 20: February 25, 2011

BLOG
Write a last scene for the play explaining what happens to Sly.
[200 words minimum. Respond to 5 peers in at least 50 words each.]