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William Shakespeare's Play, *The Taming of The Shrew* Reveals the Plight of Katherine  
Minola, Presumed Shrew But Actual Puppet Master

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## Abstract

William Shakespeare presents a society which is assumed to be a patriarchy, but is actually under the control of a woman in *The Taming of the Shrew*. The title character, Katherine Minola, is perceived to be the shrew by critics and scholars; however, I argue that unknowingly, she governs her family, which consists of her father, Baptista, and her younger sister, Bianca. Katherine's profane speech is condemnable by her family and peers as well as its being a criminal offense by modern standards. Katherine's family perceives her to be an insufferable woman whereas she feels her strident words and problematic actions are justified. She believes that her father is biased because he favors his younger daughter, thereby shunning her. Katherine may physically reside in Padua, Italy, with the other members of the Minola family; however, mentally she lives in a dream world controlled by her "unconscious mind," as explained by Sigmund Freud.

Katherine begins the play as a knowledgeable though repugnant woman, but by the end her new self, Kate, understands that her family members are reacting to her behavior; her actions give each member of her household a role. Katherine is unsure during the first few scenes what her role is in society; she feels like an outsider. Her father, Baptista becomes a hero who protects his younger daughter; Bianca becomes a victim and Katherine is the catalyst, or victimizer. Petruchio, Katherine's husband, is the man who helps expose the Kate she has within.

By the play's end all of the characters have escaped their dream world. They are now in a conscious world that runs with truth and logic. The truth is that by the final scene Katherine has learned that it is not necessary to listen to her husband; it is necessary to know when to answer and what to say. Kate uses her logic and knows the only words she need utter are, "Yes, dear."

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**William Shakespeare's Play, *The Taming of the Shrew* Reveals The Plight of Katherine  
Minola, Presumed Shrew But Actual Puppet Master**

William Shakespeare presents a society which is assumed to be a patriarchy, but is actually under the control of a woman in *The Taming of the Shrew*. The title character, Katherine Minola, is perceived to be the shrew by critics and scholars; however, I argue that unknowingly, she governs her family, which consists of her father, Baptista, and her younger sister, Bianca. Katherine's profane speech is condemnable by her family and peers as well as its being a criminal offense by modern standards. Katherine's family perceives her to be an insufferable woman whereas she feels her strident words and problematic actions are justified. She believes that her father is biased because he favors his younger daughter, thereby shunning her.

This paper will examine the dialogue that exists among the Minola family in order to illustrate the different perceptions each Minola has of Katherine and vice versa. In order to expose their various opinions this paper will also focus on Katherine's unconscious mind and the way it blinds her to her obvious power over others. Following the examination of Katherine, her family, and peers, this paper will examine Petruchio as a teacher who does not tame Katherine; he teaches her to see the ramifications of her actions by portraying a male shrew.

Katherine begins the play as a knowledgeable though repugnant woman, but by the end her new self, Kate, understands that her family members are reacting to her behavior; her actions give each member of her household a role. Katherine is unsure during the first few scenes what her role is in society; she feels like an outsider. Her father, Baptista becomes a hero who protects his younger daughter; Bianca becomes a victim and Katherine is the catalyst, or victimizer. Petruchio, Katherine's husband, is the man who helps expose the Kate she has within. Dale G.

Priest, author of “Katherina’s Conversion in *The Taming of the Shrew: A Theological Heuristic*” argues that “Petruccio’s lordship over Katherine has released her from the prison of her miserable self and given her the freedom to play” (31).

I argue that Kate is a trickster who deceives her family because they believe she has been transformed from a shrew to a quintessential wife (Baumlin 238). However, the only difference between Katherine in the beginning and Kate at the end is her projections: Katherine expresses contempt toward anyone with whom she disagrees, while Kate expresses indifference toward anyone who disagrees with her husband, whom she pacifies. I argue that her change is insincere as it is an attempt to avoid his abuses.

Kate is the woman who masters rhetoric, persuasive speaking, through her marriage to Petruccio. Her husband is the man who states, “I am he am born to tame you, Kate” (II.i.268). His perceived success is solidified in the last few lines of the play when Hortensio, one of his associates and one of Bianca’s unsuccessful suitors confirms, “thou hast tamed a cursed shrew” (V.ii.192). Bianca’s husband also congratulates Petruccio through the statement “Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so” (V.ii.193). However, I argue that Kate learns that Petruccio will give her exactly what she desires in order to be happy in their marriage, household and community, if she obeys his commands (Perret 227). By the end of the play the shrew is changed to Katherine/Kate’s younger and seemingly perfect sister, Bianca, who disobeys her husband. Rebellion is the essential characteristic in this play of a shrew.

In the early scenes of the play, Bianca is able to use Katherine’s imperfections to her advantages. She manages to hide her inner selfishness and mislead viable suitors into thinking that she is interested in them when it is one specific man who she wants. Bianca tells her suitors and tutors that her husband will be her master and she will gladly obey and trust him (III.i.49).

She presents a picture of youth and innocence. Furthermore, Bianca portrays a victim trapped by her sister and in need of rescue. She is able to screen the tutors, hired by her father, who are really her suitors in disguise; consequently, she is able to choose the man she desires instead of allowing him to choose her. Katherine, on the other hand, marries a man who she describes as old, “a crab” and “withered” (II.i.225; 233). The perception of the women changes once Katherine appears to be the perfect wife, who here on in will be referred to as “Kate” as that is the name that Petruchio gives her, while Bianca’s appeal lessens to the men who previously looked on her as though she were the archetype of perfection.

Katherine’s defensiveness toward her father and sister links to the theories of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault who use psycho-analysis to rationalize a person’s unconscious mind. An example of the unconscious in Katherine is her being identified as a Freudian male who is aggressive, and desires to be in command of others. Katherine also projects “penis envy” the concept described by Lacan as she believes she is inferior to men. Foucault helps explain the concept of power, marriage, and the ways that both of these change within society and among people. Katherine uses her shrewish behavior as a shield; she believes she is protecting herself and her sister from mistreatment. Unlike Kate, Katherine is unable to see the points-of-view of her sister and father. She is egocentric because she feels that she is the only person concerned with her opinions, well-being and happiness; therefore, she thinks it necessary to protect herself. This leads to anger which transforms her behavior into hostility and insults geared toward her dismissive relatives and anyone else who speaks against her.

Baptista is a father whose intentions are to support both of his daughters, but he is blinded by the obvious. He reacts to Katherine. He defends Bianca because Katherine abuses her. Why is Baptista so weak? Baptista is tired of Katherine and really wants her to be someone

else's problem. He looks at his daughters, but only sees that which is on the surface. He sees Katherine as an obstacle and presents her to others in a way that attracts men to the prospect of freeing Bianca. Success for Baptista is the happiness of Bianca. Baptista's bias is not intentional. As the leader of his household he feels his most affective role is protecting Bianca. However, happiness is not something he wishes upon Katherine. Baptista's wish that Katherine finds a husband is not her wish for herself.

Katherine's relationship with her father and sister is the foundation for the relationships that she has with others, namely her husband, Petruchio. Their forced union confirms that her opinions are not valued by her father; he wishes to be rid of her, leaving her reluctantly placed under the guardianship of Petruchio. Her husband believes that he can conquer any obstacle given to him and is mimetic to the Biblical Adam in his opinions of superiority and absolute power. Katherine is not a woman with a bad temperament; according to Petruchio, she is a worthy investment who suffers excessive independence. She has yet to meet a person willing to challenge her to see herself as the shrew she is called. In the end, Katherine becomes Kate, the wife who Petruchio wants. But, Kate is not under his control, even though she pretends that she is. She becomes an actress portraying the quintessential wife in order to protect herself from her husband, the male shrew.

Katherine may physically reside in Padua, Italy, with the other members of the Minola family; however, mentally she lives in a dream world controlled by her "unconscious mind," as explained by Sigmund Freud. Dreams most often occur when individuals are asleep. Therefore, living in a dream world is residing in a realm of the imaginary which is controlled by thoughts manifested when a person is literally unconscious or asleep, as in this case (Freud 47). In Act One, Scene One, the exchanges between Katherine, Baptista and Bianca show the different

perceptions each has of the same events. Initially expressed is the contempt that Katherine holds for her father, followed by the envy she has for her younger sister, and ends with her sister's vilification of Katherine which attracts men to Bianca. Baptista appears to love Katherine; however, his love for her does not compare with the love he has for Bianca.

The entire Minola family is introduced in Act One, Scene One, when Baptista enters the play with both of his daughters, and makes an announcement to two men, Gremio and Hortensio, who both want to convince Bianca to choose one of them for her husband. Baptista says

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,  
 For how I firmly am resolved you know:  
 That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter  
 Before I have a husband for the elder.  
 If either of you both love Katherina,  
 Because I know you well and love you well  
 Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure. (48-54)

Baptista's address to these men reveals that he does not view a marriage to Hortensio and Gremio in a distasteful way; he calls them, "gentlemen" who he "knows well...and [loves] well" (I.i.53). In her book, *Literary Theory*, Terry Eagleton explains a part of structuralist theory that refers to words as arbitrary (85-90). The meaning of any word is dependent on the speaker who can mean one thing while the recipient understands it to mean another. It is also true that the "sign," or word which is identified by the signifier, the object representing the sign, can change, and therefore, take on a different meaning if the situation changes (85-86). Baptista's motivation appears to be his desire for Katherine to find a husband.

In presenting his daughters, Baptista uses the two signifiers, “bestow [and] have.” Bianca’s husband must be “bestowed” by Baptista which is defined as “[to] confer (a gift, right, etc.)” (65); whereas Baptista will “have” a husband for Katherine meaning “own or be able to use” (356). Although both daughters are under the control of their father, the elder is presented as the linguist’s equivalent to property while the younger, who is also his property, is displayed as a gift.

Frustration and disgust toward her father are expressed by Katherine following Baptista’s statement to Hortensio and Gremio that she must marry before Bianca can marry. Katherine responds to him with “I pray, you sir, is it your will/ to make a stale of me amongst these mates?” (I.i.57-58). The beginning of her statement reveals that she must address her father with courtesy. However, the second part is both accusatory and rhetorical as she already believes the men are “mates” whose status is insignificant to her. If they were her equals, she would speak directly to them. Instead, she conveys her perspective to her father while the suitors are in earshot; to Katherine these men are not worthy of her time. Therefore, a marriage to them would be her father’s “[making] a stale [out of her].” Katherine presents her relationship with Baptista as synonymous with that of a prostitute and procurer. She has become a commodity, not a person, who is unappreciated and soon to be disposed of.

Katherine is a pioneer in a society that is reactive and full of flaws. Success for a woman is submission. Females are not expected to have an opinion that differs from the majority. Her indifference is considered her weakness, but in fact, it is her strength. “The presumed shrew” is subjected to men who are old and withered and asked to view them as worthy suitors. Katherine rejects the men because she is not interested; their rejection of her is not necessary. It is a virtue ahead of her time to embrace her independence and reject the differences in others. Prejudice

does not prevent Katherine from speaking her mind and remaining that tempestuous vagabond that other men shun.

Unlike Katherine and Baptista, whose relationship is quarrelsome, Bianca and Baptista behave as a father and daughter team. In Act One, Scene One Bianca says, Sister, content you in my discontent/ [To Baptista] Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe/ My books and instruments shall be my company/ On them to look and practice by myself (80-84). Bianca expresses a desire to please her father and accepts his decision unlike her resistant sister. However, Bianca reveals that she feels trapped in her house and destined to be alone. She does not acknowledge that her father gives her the advantage of time over Katherine because she has a much longer duration than her sister to screen the suitors. The younger Minola is more likely to marry a man who is compatible to her instead of the first available candidate.

Lucentio, Hortensio and Gremio all admire Bianca; it is infatuation at first sight. Hortensio even agrees to work with Gremio as Katherine's matchmaker and describes Bianca as "my treasure...the jewel of my life...beautiful Bianca" (I.ii.111-115). These men feel the need to protect Bianca as though she were imprisoned by Katherine. The elder sister's vernacular is described by Robert M. Schuler as a part of "the evil art of witchcraft" (388). If Katherine is a witch then Bianca's resistance is justified and a necessary form of protection against the persecution her sister will inevitably face as a witch (388-389).

Bianca's response has placed her as the opposite of her sister who verbally attacks Baptista. This makes Bianca into "The Ideal I" a concept explained by Jacques Lacan. According to this theory, a person identifies perfection through imperfections. In relation to Shakespeare's play, Bianca is identified as the perfect woman because she is the opposite of her sister, who has thus far been described as "devil," "stark mad" and a "fiend of hell"

(I.i.66;69;88). Therefore all Bianca need do to be perfect is act as the opposite (Lacan 3).

Katherine's shrewishness gives Bianca a template on how to be perfect; she must behave as the anti-shrew. As her "ideal I" self is a projection, her mirror image is what is actually perfect (Lacan 4). Bianca cannot be both perfect and a shrew. She can only project one thing at a time (Lacan 5).

Following Katherine's resistance, Bianca cries which annoys her sister who says, "a pretty peat! It is best/ put a finger in the eye an she knew why" (I.i.78-79). Katherine does not see sincerity in Bianca's tears. In this dream world that Katherine has created, her sister's tears are synonymous with false sympathy (Freud 38). According to Katherine, Bianca deliberately poked herself in the eye so that she would cry. Bianca's tears represent the separation between her and her older sister. Katherine interprets the tears as controlled and deliberate; however, her words are prompted by jealousy, as it is Bianca who the men desire and she who is comforted by her father (Lacan 5). Katherine's protection of self has formed a stone wall which her family is unable to penetrate. In this is part of the dream world of the unconscious, Katherine must always be in charge of her sister. In a dream world Katherine is aware of how it will begin and end (Freud "An Outline of Psycho-Analysis" 38-39). Yet as it is a dream, there is a hidden desire from the dreamer; perhaps it is Katherine's wish to show Bianca to the world as she sees her (Lacan "Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious" 161).

Katherine's words strengthen the assumption that she is the shrew. Margaret Leighton is the voice for Katherine in the audio recording of the play. When Leighton says "pretty" and "peat" it sounds as though she is spitting. Shakespeare's use of these two words together helps convey a legal concept which transcends time. Today an individual spitting on another person can be perceived as a hate crime or a crime of battery, a crime "that involves threats, harassment,

or physical harm and is motivated by prejudice against someone's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability" (1). "Pretty Peat" becomes as hateful as a pejorative term because it is meant to separate Bianca from Katherine and expose Bianca to society as an imposter.

The second crime is battery which can separate Katherine and Bianca further and also works to present Katherine as the enemy and Bianca as her vixen. A battery crime is "unlawful personal violence on another" (59). For Katherine to commit battery against Bianca, she would have to make physical and unwelcome contact with her. In the act of spitting on her, she is making contact with her, and Bianca's words are meant to garnish sympathy. Therefore, spitting upon her is dismissing her as insignificant and making contact with her as unwarranted.

Katherine's spiteful words, "pretty" and "peat" come from her desire to expose "the true shrew" that she feels is hidden beneath Bianca's projection of perfection (Lacan "The Mirror Stage" 4). Katherine has made herself a criminal and her sister a crime victim. Baptista sees Katherine's abusive characteristics as justification literally to protect Bianca from Katherine's flem or saliva.

Katherine's feelings of isolation are solidified when Baptista says "Schoolmasters will I keep within my house/ Fit to instruct [Bianca's] youth.../Katherine, you may stay/For I have more to commune with Bianca" (I.i.94-101). To this "the presumed shrew" responds "Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not? What/ shall I be appointed hours, as though belike I knew not what to/ take and what to leave? Ha!" (I.i.102-104). Katherine has identified herself as powerless. "The other" is part of the unconscious which reveals the factors that separate Katherine's views from the views of the other people around her (Lacan 172). Though Baptista never says that he favors Bianca, favoritism is implied when he dismisses Katherine and hires men to help Bianca pursue her academic passions.

Baptista appears to control Bianca easily because Bianca lets him. What appears to be him discarding Katherine is realistically the only choice he has. Katherine will not embrace Baptista because he has already treated her as an outsider. Loneliness is not motivation for Katherine to establish a sincere relationship with her father. She wishes to be alone because she is the only person she can rely on when she is sad or afraid. Baptista does not know the meaning of empathy where Katherine is concerned.

Katherine expresses contempt for her father who dismisses her to console his younger daughter. Act One, Scene One is a combative scene between Baptista and Katherine that is comparable to a linguistic boxing match in which gloves are replaced by words. In order for Katherine to win, she must outsmart her opponent, Baptista. Martha Andresen Thom, author of "Shrew Taming and Other Rituals of Aggression: Baiting and Bonding on the Stage and in the World," states that "Shakespearean women fear the power of men to master their fates" (124). Therefore her anger toward her father is caused by his control over her life. After Katherine's previous statement, she dismisses herself. Katherine is attempting to regain the control that Baptista has over her. If Katherine figures out how to get revenge on him, she can reclaim her control. She internalizes shrewishness because her father is making a decision to Gremio and Hortensio that affects her entire life without her approval.

As Katherine, her father, and sister lack a combined family unity, Katherine does attempt some semblance of a relationship with the younger Bianca. Nonetheless, this is projected in a way that adds to the misconception that she is the shrew. There is important dialogue between the Minola sisters that occurs prior to Katherine's marriage when Katherine ties Bianca's hands. This connection links the sisters physically and also further correlates with Jacques Lacan's "Mirror Phase" in which a child with the intelligence of a chimpanzee can look into the mirror

and identify the reflection as his or herself (3). Katherine and Bianca both see themselves as individuals however Katherine and Bianca do not see each other the same way.

To Katherine, Bianca further projects herself in a positive light as she begs her older sister to release her. She says “Good sister, wrong me not, nor wrong yourself/ to make a bondmaid and a slave of me/ that I disdain” (II.i.1-3). To this Katherine responds “Of all thy suitors here I charge thee tell/ whom dost thou lov’st best” (II.i.8-9). Bianca says “Believe me, sister, of all the men alive/ I never yet beheld that special face” (II.i.11-12). Katherine does not believe her and says “minion thou liest” (II.i.13). Translated literally, Katherine is asking Bianca to be honest, revealing that Bianca is a liar.

Katherine justifies her sister’s binding because it prevents Bianca from emotionally hurting the men who are pursuing her. The elder sister believes that although she is physically harming her younger sister, it is for her own benefit. Katherine believes that restraining Bianca prevents her from lying to her suitors. This action gives her sister the chance to step out of the mirror and reveal her true self, despite the ridicule she may receive (Lacan 4). The physical connection between the sisters does not compensate for the non-existent mental connection. However, the elder sister wrongly believes that she is the victim; she cannot comprehend that her actions actually make her Bianca’s victimizer, not her savior.

Bianca admits that harming her would be Katherine’s, “[wronging] herself.” As ridiculous as it may seem that a person physically harms and restrains a loved one in order to force him or her to confess to his or her sins, it works. Bianca’s request that Katherine not “wrong herself” warns her that physically restricting her will cause people to have a false perception of her. Perhaps Bianca sees humanity in Katherine. Being her sister, she and Katherine were raised together and should have a deeper understanding of each other than the

random villagers who believe she is a shrew. Likewise, Katherine's being the only other woman mentioned in the Minola household can be the reason behind Bianca's weak attempt at protection over her. Bianca is attempting to secure the only mother figure that she has. However, this moment is brief because Bianca rejects her "mother" when Baptista enters the room and frees her.

Despite Katherine's rationalizations, her father, is unhappy with her actions. She is further vilified by him when he chastises her by releasing the bound Bianca and refers to Katherine as "thou hilding of a devilish spirit," (II.i.26) followed by the question "Why dost thou wrong who never wronged thee?" (II.i.27). His statement affirms finality. He is saying that Katherine has never been hurt in any way by Bianca. This is another occasion that makes Bianca perfect while Katherine stays flawed. Katherine confirms her feelings of separation in her proclamation,

She is your treasure, she must have a husband.

I must dance barefoot on her wedding day,

And for your love to her lead apes in hell.

Talk not to me. I will go sit and weep

Till I can find occasion for revenge. (II.i.31-36)

In these words, Katherine exists in Bianca's shadow; her happiness is secondary while Bianca's delight is Baptista's priority.

Venomous vocabulary and threats pollute Katherine's lexicon and further affirms her as a vile shrew, yet words are her way of protecting herself against the envy she feels toward her family. She has what Jacques Lacan describes as "penis envy." His explanation is that young girls rationalize that they are weaker than young boys because they lack a penis (135). Girls do

not understand that males and females have different anatomies (135). She feels that the man is the superior being, and her lack of genitalia means that originally she had a penis, but it was removed (135). In order to avoid “castration” and preserve herself, the girl will reject her phallus free mother and embrace her father (135).

Her mother is not mentioned thus Katherine has severed ties with her for an unbeknownst but forced reason. However, this theory of psycho-analysis is a projection; therefore, Katherine does not realize that she has internalized such feelings, though she can rationalize them. Therefore, whereas Katherine cannot embrace her father because she is a woman, Bianca has been able to embrace her father as she has rejected the phallus-free Katherine (Lacan 135). Katherine does not have a mother figure to reject. Bianca can only embrace an inferior entity in private. If she were to embrace Katherine amongst the other townspeople as her equal; she would have to transform herself.

Katherine’s physical strength correlates to the description given by Sigmund Freud of a male rather than a female. In Freud’s Three Essays in Sexuality, he attributes “aggression” to the “desire to subjugate” (23). According to him these characteristics define “the sexuality of most male human beings” (23). An example of Katherine’s masculinity takes place in two examples when she defends herself against the insults of her critics. Katherine shows aggression, or masculinity, when she strikes Petruchio because he makes an inappropriate sexual advance; he says “what, with my tongue in your tail?” (II.i.213). A second example of masculinity in Katherine is when she physically attacks Hortensio, her tutor and a prospective suitor for Bianca. This occurs when Hortensio attempts to correct the technique Katherine uses to play the lute. Instead of accepting his instruction, she beats him over the head with the instrument (II.i.146-158).

Katherine's masculinity is as important as a knight's protective armor during a battle. She needs her masculinity to conceal her emotional pain and to attack her oppressors as a knight requires his armor to protect his body from his enemies. The elder Minola demands control as she needs to have it in order to convey the truth that she claims is hidden behind her sister's appearance. Katherine believes that Bianca hides behind "the shrew" and Baptista. Does Bianca really feel sad when she hears the marriage proclamation? She is sad for herself, but, she is also aware that her father's intentions are his only means to rid himself of Katherine. Therefore, Bianca's sorrow is from fear that "the shrew" will never marry. If Katherine does not marry, Bianca cannot marry either.

Release from Baptista and Bianca for Katherine must be through her marriage to a man, and Petruchio is that man. When Petruchio comes to claim Katherine, he is met by the praise and admiration of her father who had a previous relationship with Petruchio's late father, Antonio. Prior to meeting Katherine, Petruchio devises a plan to transform her into his perfect wife who he will call Kate. Hortensio warns Petruchio that Katherine is "intolerable curst/ and shrewd and forward" (I.ii.85-86). However, Petruchio is not intimidated. He responds to Hortensio's notice with "Have I not heard lion's roar? (I.ii.195) and "Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat" (I.ii.197). Both animals are ferocious; however, his comrade, Grumio's response to this question is: "He fears none" (I.ii.206). Petruchio's self proclamation deems him a force who can conquer a jungle, as he would not be intimidated by its king, the lion, and overcome the unpredictable swine that endangers and pollutes the lands, as his rage is synonymous to a boar.

Petruchio is conscious of his supremacy and means to use it as a catalyst for Katherine's change (Freud 47). He audaciously tells her that she will marry him

For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,  
 And bring you from wild Kate to a Kate  
 Conformable as other household Kates.  
 Here comes your father, never make denial.

I must and will have Katherine to my wife. (II.i.268-272)

This statement is a covenant, meaning it is as binding as a wedding vow. As her prospective husband, he promises he will save her from herself. Katherine's biggest problem as of now is her inability to embrace change. She fights her father's announcement of marriage as well as Petruchio's marriage proposal. Katherine wishes to escape her father, but she wants to escape on her own accord. The elder Minola is unable to see that she is her own worst enemy; her shrewish actions are causing people to turn against her. Her transformation will save her aggravation. Embracing change is also a way to achieve power.

Petruchio believes he is superior to Katherine and this is the reason he is synonymous to the Biblical Adam in the creation story, found in the third book of Genesis. Adam is given power by God over the land, to name the creatures, and over his wife Eve (Genesis II.15-23). Adam, like Petruchio, had control because Eve obeyed him. However, God gave both Adam and Eve free will, meaning Adam's power was contingent on her obedience. Petruchio is the same way; he is expected by his people to be Katherine's master. Therefore, he has to separate himself from any sense of resistance that Katherine may express. Adam similarly attempts to relinquish his fault when he and Eve eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil by saying, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree and I ate" (Genesis 3.12). His statement makes the woman and God the proprietors of blame while Adam simply claims that he was deceived. However, despite the situation, he still committed the offense, and

he is susceptible to whatever punishment his master deems applicable. Adam learns this through his condemnation in the garden. However, Petruchio continues to emulate Adam in his belief that he can tame someone who is “curst” (I.ii.78). This type of power is held by God only; Petruchio is not, nor can he ever be, omnipotent.

Hortensio and Gremio are the two men who want Petruchio to marry Katherine. Hortensio refers to Katherine as “froward” (I.ii.178) while Gremio refers to her as “a wildcat” (I.ii.191). To entice Petruchio, the two men also agree to “bear his charge of wooing” (I.ii.211) meaning, they will pay him if he wins over Katherine. Petruchio agrees to pursue Katherine and declare himself her husband if “her dowry please” (I.ii.179). The entire process is the equivalent to a transaction at a bank. Petruchio agrees that the dowry that he would receive from Baptista is worthy of a marriage to Katherine (II.i.118). Petruchio’s motivation is not love; however, he is interested in marrying her because marriage will elevate his financial and economical standing.

Katherine and Petruchio meet in Act Three Scene Two. At this time he wants to get the approval of Baptista to marry his elder daughter. Katherine is strongly against marrying Petruchio, yet the next scene is their marriage. This scene was clarified in the Columbia Pictures 1967 version of the play through the actors who portrayed Baptista, Katherine and Petruchio. Michael Hordern’s portrayal of Baptista reveals a fragile man who is overcome by his daughter’s behavior and who is happy for the arrival of Petruchio. He believes Petruchio is willing to tolerate her shrewishness. Richard Burton’s Petruchio is turbulent; he comes in like a storm ready to erupt and unwilling to be stopped. Elizabeth Taylor’s Katherine is feisty and free spirited. Katherine runs from Petruchio while stating her disgust with him, but he is the first person to challenge her. He does not let Katherine push him away, instead, he embraces the challenge. In this movie version, Katherine is intrigued by his persistence.

Katherine's strength which is associated with her being a Freudian male grows weak and her feminine vulnerability becomes apparent at their wedding when Petruchio is late. At this time, she says, "No shame but mine, I must forsooth be forced/ To give my hand, opposed against my heart" (III.ii.8-9). This is her transforming moment. Katherine's humanity is the most important part of this statement. Despite her shrewish disposition, she is human, not the devil Gremio, Hortensio and Baptista indicate her to be. As a human, she is insulted and hurt by the neglect of her soon-to be husband. However, she is also presenting an opportunity for her father to intervene.

Katherine's father does not scorn her for her tears; he tells her that, "I cannot blame thee now to weep/ For such an injury would vex a very saint/ Much more a shrew of impatient humor" (III.ii.27-30). Baptista chooses to call Katherine a shrew while consoling her. Clearly, this diminishes the value of his consolation. He also insults Katherine after Petruchio arrives. Baptista says "First were we sad, fearing you would not come/ now sadder that you come so unprovided/ Fie, doff this habit, shame to your estate/ an eyesore to out solemn festival" (III.ii.91-94). In shaming Petruchio's estate, he is also shaming his daughter's estate because she will reside in it with Petruchio after the marriage. Marion D. Perret explains that "at marriage the Elizabethan woman moved from obedience to her father to obedience to her husband" (230). Baptista's power over Katherine ends after she is legally bound to Petruchio, therefore, Baptista's opinions in regards to Katherine are no longer accepted by society.

Petruchio does not offer an excuse or apology for his tardy arrival. Instead, Petruchio expresses his impatience. He asks twice "but, where is Kate" (III.iii.86,103) while Baptista asks him to change into something more befitting this "solemn festival" (III.iii.94). Petruchio's unwillingness to change reveals his refusal to alter who he is. He rationalizes his appearance in

saying “to me she’s married, not unto my clothes” (III.iii.110). Petruchio feels that his arrival is affirmation that he wants to marry Katherine, while his clothes are of no consequence. Marriage is defined by Michel Foucault as “a fixation and development of kinship ties, of transmission of names and possessions” (106). This connects with Petruchio’s behavior because he expresses his desire for Katherine to take his name (he gives her the name “Kate”). Why would Katherine take the name appointed to her by a man who causes her to shed tears of sorrow? The newlyweds begin their marriage disagreeing with one another. Katherine is appalled by his appearance and disregard for time while Petruchio is indifferent.

Male dominance is the precedent that Petruchio is setting for the marriage. For example, during the wedding toast he says “I mean to take my leave” (III.iii.61) and Katherine challenges him to honor his vow. Katherine tells him “Now, if you love me stay” (III.iii.77). She challenges him to declare his love for her through his actions, yet, staying or leaving does not prove love; it will prove obedience. Remaining at the reception will allow Katherine to forgive Petruchio for his tardiness; he will have redeemed himself by letting her have control over him. Harold Bloom, author of Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human, argues that “the amiable ruffian Petruchio is actually an ideal--that is an overdetermined-choice for Kate in her quest to free herself from a household situation far more maddening than Petruchio’s antic zaniness” (29). If Katherine wishes to escape her household, she must take the route she was given.

Katherine sees Petruchio’s behavior as condemnable not beneficial. Michel Foucault says “Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere” (93). In terms of Katherine, the opportunity to seize power exists during her wedding. People can only have power over her if their actions affect her. After the groom’s inconsiderate arrival, she attempts to establish her composure. Katherine forgives Petruchio for

his late arrival. If she did not forgive him, she would not be able to marry him. Yet, Katherine is unable to forget.

After Katherine and Petruchio leave Baptista and Bianca demonstrate their true feelings about the new couple. Bianca reveals, “that being mad herself she’s madly mated” (III.i.115) meaning Katherine has found her perfect counterpart, while Baptista tells Bianca that she can have her sister’s old room. The two are unphased by Petruchio’s shrewish treatment to Katherine; they feel it is justified because she treated her father and sister the same way. Now that Katherine is Petruchio’s wife, men can come to court the available Bianca. Harold Bloom describes Baptista as a man with one flaw. According to the critic, that flaw makes him a “dreadful father who...vastly prefers his insipid daughter, Bianca” (29). He obviously relates and reacts in his younger daughter’s favor. Perhaps Baptista supports Bianca because she always agrees with him whereas Katherine rejects all his efforts to relate and console her. In the modern remake of this play titled “Ten Things I Hate About You,” Kat Stratford (Katherine Minola) is portrayed by Julia Stiles and Larry Miller portrays Walter Stratford (Baptista). In the end of the movie, the father reveals that he loves both her and Bianca, equally. He also says that he has a closer relationship with Bianca because she still needs him to play the role of father. He tells Kat that “Father’s don’t like to admit when their daughters are capable of running their own lives. It means we have become spectators.” According to him “Bianca still lets me play a few innings. You have had me on the bench for years;” Katherine has not needed him. In this rendition, he feels isolated from Kate, while Bianca embraces him. Baptista laughs after Katherine’s marriage to conceal his internal feelings. After the marriage, the opportunity has lapsed and he can no longer act as a father to Katherine because another man is responsible for her.

Petruchio and Katherine are both equals on the same side of the mirror because they both behave in the same manner (Lacan 5). However, according to Lacan this restricts them from learning or changing; people cannot see what they strive to be if they only see what is actually in front of them (Lacan 4). Therefore, in order for the newlyweds to be true individuals, one of them has to embrace the ideal while the other can remain the opposite of that ideal (Lacan 4). The modern ideal that a husband and wife must complete each other is rejected by the mirror image. Therefore, to transform either Katherine or Petruchio, one of them, must step through the mirror and exit the dream world (Lacan 3). Katherine will be the person who is transformed because she is the person who everyone believes is a shrew.

To tame Katherine, Petruchio plans to take away from her the comforts that she is accustomed to. For example, he takes food from her which causes her to beg his servants for mere scraps which they deny her. Pearl Hogrefe states that wives are expected to “[supervise] the brewing, baking... [direct] the making of most garments worn by members of the household and [they also] acted as doctors to the family for tenants who needed [their] service” (59). Traditionally a woman is expected to cook and clean for her husband whereas he is to come home and enjoy the food (Perret 226). By Petruchio’s controlling the food that the servants give her, he is taking on a role that is traditionally female (Perret 226). She questions his intentions by asking “What did he marry me to famish me?” (IV.iii.3) The reader knows that he married her to metamorphose her into the perfect wife, and if she were listening to him, she would know that. Katherine’s problem is that she hears Petruchio, but she is not listening to the words he is saying.

Katherine believes marriage intentions are a means to inflict pain and suffering upon her as though she were a low life peasant. For example, the newlywed presents herself as beneath

the servants of her father. Of them she says, "Beggars that come unto my father's door upon entreaty have a present alms" (IV.iii.4) Katherine understands that her father who Gremio described as a gentleman treats people who are financially inferior to him with respect and offers them assistance. Referring to her husband as the opposite of her father means that Petruchio is not a gentleman, and he is not charitable to the less fortunate. Marion Perret, critic and author of "Petruchio: Model Wife," explains that "In his carefully calculated denial of food Petruchio encroaches upon his wife's authority" (226). Katherine is granted Petruchio's permission to be hungry because he will not allow his servants to feed her anything.

Petruchio has taught Katherine that his version of love is correlated to the way he appears in front of other people. "Petruchio's affect undresses his new wife by contradicting enough of her satirical desire to the delight of the assembled males, and to Katherine's manifest discomfort" (Jaster 1). For example in Act Four, Scene Three, Katherine tells Petruchio "I never saw a better fashioned gown/ more quaint, more fashionable nor more commendable" (101-102). Of the same gown Petruchio ridicules the tailor and says, "thou has marred her gown" (113). In this scenario Petruchio ignores her opinion and ridicules the tailor for his destruction of the gown she loves. Katherine's weakness is in her inability thus far to defend herself successfully despite her attempts; he always remains in control (Baumlin 247). However, Petruchio is able to use his words to prevent her from doing or wearing anything he disapproves of.

The only people Katherine can confess her sorrows to are Petruchio's servants who are committed to his wants, not to hers. The servants, according to Katherine, "triumph upon [her] misery" (IV.iii.34), meaning they enjoy her suffering as she is the only person they can control. Meanwhile, Petruchio becomes a man above all for reducing Katherine to what she is now. She professes "I am not a child, no babe/...if you cannot, best you stop your ears/ My tongue will tell

the anger of my heart/ or else my heart concealing it will break” (IV.iii.73-76). Katherine has not changed her personality yet; she is still clutching to her independence and expressing a passion which he attempts to take away. Tita French Baumlin says that in order for this to be a comedy “Katherine must somehow turn her language from an instrument of bitter defense and isolation to a tool for human growth and humane instruction in the community” (238). Her success is contingent on other people’s believing that she has transformed from Katherine to Kate.

Obedience is safety in Petruchio’s household. According to Wayne A. Redhorn “Once Petruchio has been identified as playing the role of rhetor in order to woo Katherine, the play shows that his success with her is not due to rhetoric at all” (295). Petruchio’s power is in Katherine’s comprehension of meaning, whether or not she learns to agree with him. When he deprives her, she does not agree; she merely laments as she is left with nothing. It is his strength in his household that changes her. Prior to the marriage she did not know the means he would take to make her the ideal. She only knew that he wanted to marry her to change her. Katherine has not found anyone in the play who accepts her for the person she is; everyone wants her to be different.

The transformation from shrew to perfect wife occurs during Katherine and Petruchio’s journey to the house of her father, Baptista. While on their way, the two see the sun and Petruchio declares “How bright and goodly shines the moon” (IV.vi.2) while Katherine says “The moon?-the sun. It is not moonlight now” (IV.vi.3). Therefore, it has to be the sun. Katherine is correct in her statement, and Petruchio claims his control by telling her that she is wrong. With the desire to travel, the men ask Katherine to tell him what he wants to hear

(IV.vi.5). Petruchio's response to Katherine is "I say it is the moon that shines so bright"

(IV.vi.4). He also declares that "it shall be moon, or star, or what I list" (IV.vi.7).

Shakespeare uses the moon and the sun to expose Kate because they represent a change from day to night and night to day. Ironically, they are considered opposite entities. Petruchio and Katherine are both perceived as shrews. He wants her to behave the opposite of a shrew. He speaks at Katherine not to her. His statements are not to be questioned because they are not questions; Petruchio believes his opinions are facts. According to Petruchio, Katherine's beliefs are her opinions. They both want to be heard. The moon and sun both work together to expose whether it is day or night at the same time, unlike Katherine and Petruchio who have yet to behave harmoniously.

Petruchio's declaration reveals that he is not interested in whether or not he is accurate in his statements. She is only correct if he says she is correct and vice versa (Benson 192). Katherine cannot be correct in anything that she says or does without Petruchio's permission; it is his word that determines her accuracy (Benson 192). It is all summed up by Tita French Baulmin who says under the rule of Petruchio, "Her speech can no longer serve to isolate her from others, as it has done in the past, because whatever she says will draw an opposite response from him" (241). The appeasement of Katherine comes when she is transformed into the perfect wife, Kate, who says, "Forward, I pray, since we have come so far/ and be it moon or sun or what you please/ and if you please to call it a rush-candle/ henceforth I vow it will be for me," (IV.vi.12-15). She never affirms that she is wrong; simply understands that his words are final and there is no use challenging them as he will inflict some form of pain upon her if she does.

Katherine disappears when she is able to separate her unconscious and conscious mind. "Petruchio does not 'tame' Katherine into subservience; rather, he awakens Kate to her true

nature, helps her to discover self control, a joyful spirit of play, an ability to care deeply for someone other than herself” (Baumlin 238). Kate has the potential to have a good relationship with Petruchio because she understands that through clever wordplay she can convince him to say what she believes is right, while he thinks he is expressing his own belief. Petruchio will support Kate because she tells others that he is her superior.

Petruchio is not a success unless others acknowledge his success and others see Kate as the quintessential wife above their own wives. In Act Five, Scene Two the exchange between Kate and the widow reveals Kate as the linguistic superior. The dialogue is:

Kate: ‘He that is giddy thinks the world turns round’

I pray you tell me what you meant by that.

Widow: Your husband, being troubled with a shrew,

Measures my husband’s sorrow by his woe.

And now you know my meaning.

Kate: A very mean meaning.

Widow: Right, I mean you.

Kate: And I am mean indeed respecting you.

Petruchio, To her, Kate! ...A hundred marks my Kate puts her down. (27-36)

Kate dismisses the widow’s argument as trivial and embraces her husband who responds to the conversation with his praises. Petruchio is the man who tells Katherine that she needs to engage in this conversation. He also tells her that she was to be victorious. Kate did not say much in this dialogue; however, Petruchio still declares her the winner. This is submissive Kate; she simply conforms to his words. She is the champion because he says that she wins.

Kate also outshines her sister and the widow when Petruchio bets 100 pounds that Kate will come at his call. Hortensio, Baptista and Lucentio all believe that she will not. However, Hortensio believes the widow will come at his call, whereas Baptista and Lucentio both believe that Bianca will come at Lucentio's call. The first to fail this task is Hortensio when the widow relays a message that "She is busy and she cannot come" (V.ii.86) while Bianca sends word that "You have some goodly jest in hand/ She will not come. She bids you come to her" (V.ii.95-96). Kate is the only one who obliges and asks "What is your will, sir, that you send for/ me?" (V.ii.103-104). Katherine's response is unexpected, yet canonized. Bianca's reaction is the one that undermines her husband; she dismisses his request as trivial and challenges his authority over her. Kate's response not only supports his claim that she has been tamed. It also proves that the other husbands do not control their wives or their associative females. According to Sean Benson, "Shakespeare's ongoing engagement with hawking tropes suggests the difficulty of attaining an enduring human happiness that is conceived primarily in terms of power relations, tamer versus tamed, even if power must to some extent inform marital dynamics" (198). Hortensio and Lucentio originally wanted this wager to occur to prove that their wives were loyal and supported them. By the women staying where they were, the men are proven wrong; their women or mates will not blindly follow them. Petruchio, whose marriage initiated with his vow to transform Katherine into Kate, is the only one that appears to be successful. This causes the men to rethink their original plan. Is marriage about love or conquest? In this society a harmonious marriage is a marriage without consequence. In a successful marriage, the husband decides what is best for him and his wife, and she obliges.

Kate gives Petruchio the opportunity to display his successful taming in Act Five, Scene One to men; this scene is the final one. Her speech is delivered with "brain-washed automation"

(Andersen-Thom 121). It is not sincere. Kate, however, becomes visible to her father, sister, husband and Lucentio, Bianca's husband. How could she possibly follow the rule or govern of a man who uses deprivation to show his version of love? She only realizes in Act Four, Scene Six that giving him exactly what he wants ensures her self preservation as he loses his combative nature and accepts her docility.

Kate begins the speech after Lucentio verbally chastises Bianca in saying "the wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca/ hath cost me a hundred crowns since supper-time" (V.ii.131-132) which she responds to with "the more fool you for laying on my duty" (V.ii.135). Martha Andersen-Thom states that "by Act V Lucentio's idealization of Bianca is as skewed as Petruchio's first impulse to conquer and possess Kate" (127). Lucentio believes Bianca was perfect and would obey his every request. Bianca misunderstood her "role" in society; men do not ask their wives questions; a request is the same as an order.

There is one thing that Petruchio did prior to the marriage that these other men did not do. Petruchio establishes rules for his marriage; he tells Katherine that he will change her. Therefore, she had forewarning that he will not accept her as a shrew. Kate gains control over the women when Petruchio says she should "tell these headstrong women/ what duty they do owe their lords and husbands" (V.ii.134-135). She is no longer the student under Petruchio's tutelage; she has graduated and is currently the teacher who is telling the students their roles in marriage.

Kate now controls the women. Her dominating speech begins, "Fie, fie, unknit that threat'ning, unkind brow/ and dart not scornful glances from those eyes/ to wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor" (V.ii.140-142). Interestingly, Katherine has defined the husband to an extreme that Petruchio did not explain to her. She is describing the way that she previously

behaved and condemning it. “Kate has learned to shift from bullying to deviousness, and her final bond is not with Petruchio but with a knowing audience who understands that female hypocrisy is the only way to survive to male brutality” (Andresen-Thom 123).

Kate has given her husband three levels of superiority. As lord, he is to be worshipped; as king, he has control over the nation she resides in; as governor, he has control over the laws of the land. Petruchio as husband has these responsibilities over his wife. As the responsible party, he is to take responsibility when things are good, as well as when they are bad. Therefore, if Kate rebels and turns back into Katherine, the shrew, it is the fault of Petruchio.

When describing the work of a husband Kate says “for thy maintenance commits his body/ to painful labour both by sea and land” (V.ii.152-153). Does Petruchio give any evidence of a willingness to make any sacrifices for her? Petruchio, unlike, Katherine has behaved in the same fashion the entire play. However, Katherine’s canonization of Petruchio is a way that she controls him. She is giving him a responsibility. This is what he should be or how he needs to behave. According to Katherine, if he does not do the thing she says in her speech, he is not a legitimate husband to her. She is instructing him in what she wants as he did in the beginning when he told her how he would change her. Tita French Baumlin says “Petruchio indeed teaches Katherine the benefits of approaching life in a ludic manner, as if life were a game” (248). If life is a game, then Katherine is the champion. Petruchio has helped her realize that she has the power to pick roles for everyone else.

Kate also separates herself from Katherine by insulting women and their ignorance. She tells her audience that “I am ashamed that women are so simple/ to offer war when they should kneel for peace” (V.ii.165-166). Clearly, they are described as followers of men. The footnote says that simple means “foolish.” Women are not “foolish” when they disagree. The foolishness

is in the battles that they choose. Kate is powerful because on the surface, she is acknowledging her faults while embracing her husband's "perfection." According to Kate women should choose their "wars" carefully and not declare war haphazardly.

Why do the widow and Bianca resist the men? They said that they did not want to come. Bianca refers to Lucentio's call as foolish; she has dismissed him in public. Bianca did declare war when she could have obliged Lucentio. The embarrassment that she inadvertently caused him will lead to some kind of punishment according to the precedent set by Petruchio. The men see him as the quintessential husband; he controls his wife without strife. Therefore, this speech is Kate's metaphoric graduation. Kate is comparable to a successful litigator representing herself; her final speech, or closing argument, convinces a jury that she is reformed and is now likable.

Kate explains the physical distortion of a shrew when she tells the women that disobedience to the husband "blots thy beauty and frosts do bite the meads" (V.ii.143). She is describing shrewish behavior as more than a crutch. It is an indelible blemish. Therefore, as a shrew, she was only stifling her chance at happiness. The person who benefits the most from a blemish is the other person who sees it and can successfully reject it.

Kate's language has made her a story of success that Petruchio can share with all other people. Not only is she ranked the ultimate female, she has also set a bar for all of the other wives to emulate. Her husband, Petruchio is "[surprised] in finding her aspect more beautiful, her wit more acerbic, and her resistance far stronger than he had anticipated" (Andersen-Thom 130). To this he says "now there's a wench!" However, "wench," a term usually meant to ridicule, as it is defined by Petruchio is a term of endearment, meant to convey on his approval of it her subservience to him.

In conclusion, William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* sends a message about the institution of marriage and the misconception the characters in the play have about it. Although this play is a comedy, there is a serious message within Katherine, Bianca, Baptista, Lucentio, Petruchio and Kate. The final part of this paper will summarize the mistakes of each character, examine Bianca as a shrew, and show the affect language has on Kate. This paper will conclude with "Kate," a true tamer.

Katherine started the play as tempestuous. She was disliked by her father, sister, Gremio and Hortensio. Clearly, she did not have anyone supporting her; everyone just ridiculed her. Katherine is an addict. Her drugs of choice are her callous words. Her family members are the people most affected by her behavior; yet, Katherine's harsh vernacular is projected naturally. She does not evaluate the words she uses, instead Katherine remains defensive; everything people say to her is perceived to be an insult. Katherine is not intentionally malicious. Her husband helps her through the sobriety. However, it is she who is responsible for her transformation into the perfect wife because she makes the conscious choice to change her behavior.

Bianca exposes another female perspective; she is naïve to the ways of men. Marriage to Bianca is about love and support; however, the men of Padua are obsessed with her and promise to give her whatever she wants to be happy. Sadly, Bianca has not idea what she wants. She is afraid to reveal anything that would link her to Katherine, the shrew, but Bianca is human and is not perfect. Once married, the younger Minola believes she can behave any way she wants. Bianca must learn to fail in order to understand what success is.

Baptista is a very confused man whose desire is to find husbands for both of his daughters. He is an enabler. Though he gives Katherine ammunition to act shrewish and allows

Bianca to believe that she is the perfect daughter, these are not his intentions. Baptista does not have a good relationship with either of his daughters; he dismisses Katherine, yet presents Bianca a false view of reality. Bianca should understand the consequences of her actions, but she does not, because according to her father, she never does anything wrong.

Bianca's husband's flaw is his need to prove superiority over Petruchio. At no time does Lucentio communicate to Bianca that he wants her to listen to everything he says without objection. Therefore, his wife is not incorrect for ignoring his call. She had no idea of course that he would bet on her without consulting her. Bianca believes she has the freedom to make her own life decisions. Lucentio wants someone who blindly follows him; however, he does not know that he wants this until he sees that another man has it. Lucentio wishes to have the unattainable. Now that he has Bianca he wants something else.

Petruchio is the character who some may envy as he is the accredited tamer to Katherine; however, he is extremely insecure. He seeks validation through conquest. There are no mentions of successes that Petruchio gains by himself. Petruchio conquered his servants and his wife. However, he pays, Grumio who controls all of the aspects of his household, including the needs of his wife. In order for Grumio and Katherine to maintain their health and wellbeing, it is in their best interest to listen to "their master." Petruchio needs other people in order to be important; alone he is mediocre. At times he acts like a beast in order to diminish any suspicion that he is weak or needs assistance. He gives evidence that he may even be financially inferior to Katherine at their wedding when he appears in tattered clothes. He doesn't care about people, just Kate and her dad. However, behaving in such an unfavorable manner while appearing so unkempt takes attention away from this outfit; people are more focused on his words than his attire.

Kate is the puppet-master who holds the strings of all of the puppets in order to control their movements. It may never be said directly, but Katherine loves her family. The older Minola sacrifices her reputation and disassociates himself from her shrewishness. Other than Katherine, no other character blames Baptista or Bianca for her disposition. Katherine helps her sister in the last scene when she tells her the consequences of disobeying her husband. This is a courtesy that Katherine did not receive before her own marriage. Despite the envy she has for her sister, she still embraces the opportunity to assist her.

By the play's end all of the characters have escaped their dream world. They are now in a conscious world that runs with truth and logic. The truth is that by the final scene Katherine has learned that it is not necessary to listen to her husband; it is necessary to know when to answer and what to say. Kate uses her logic and knows the only words she need utter are, "Yes, dear."

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