

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

San Francisco Shakespeare Festival 2014

**Dramaturgical Research Samples
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The “Bad Quarto”

The version of *The Taming of the Shrew* that is best known – and attributed to Shakespeare – was published with the First Folio in 1623.

However, an anonymous quarto was published in 1594, entitled *The Taming of a Shrew*. There are many parallels between the two texts (see below) but there are many more differences.

Things that are the same:

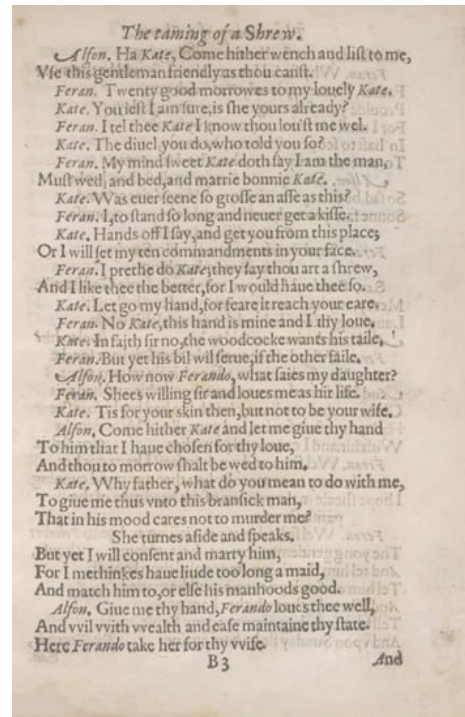
- Katherine and Christopher Sly both appear with the same names
- The structure/plots are the same: taming Kate, wooing the younger sister(s), the framing device of Christopher Sly
- Some language is very similar, though it is attributed to different characters

Things that are different:

- *A Shrew* is 60% the length of *The Shrew*
- It takes place in Greece, not Italy
- All the characters minus Kate and Sly have different names
- The Christopher Sly framing device has an ending that does not exist in *The Shrew* (some productions will actually use this ending, or provide their own)
- Kate has two sisters

Here are the most popular theories about this “bad quarto” (there are a lot more):

- Shakespeare wrote *A Shrew* and later revised substantially
- Somebody else (maybe an actor in the production, or someone in the audience trying to “pirate” Shakespeare’s work) wrote down *A Shrew* from memory...and did a really bad job
- One version is an adaptation of the other, perhaps competing versions of the same story
- Or maybe a combination of all the above?



Kate Through the Ages

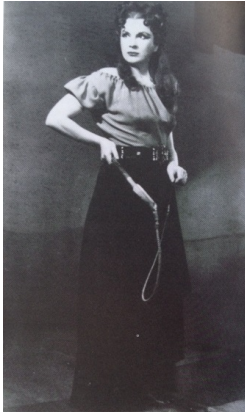
Ada Rehan, 1887



Sinead Cusack, 1982



Diana Wynyard, 1948



Nell Geisslinger, 2013



Paola Dionisotti, 1978



Forbes Masson, 2014

