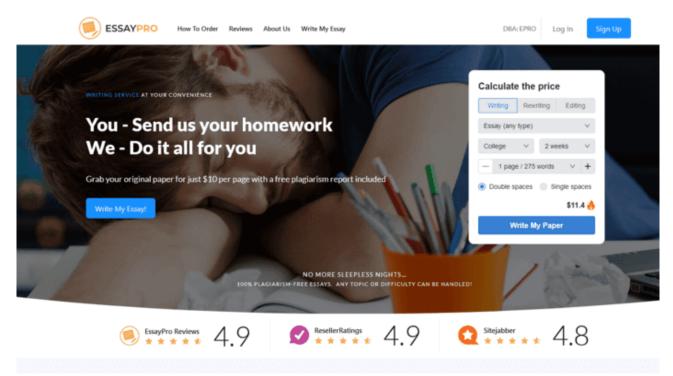
Role of Women in Shakespear's The Taming of the Shrew



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Role of Women in The Taming of the Shrew "The Taming of the Shrew" is a great example of Shakespear's use of women. Shakespeare indeed does transcend the stereotypes of his own time. In Shakespeare's, "The Taming of the Shrew" the relationship between the sisters Katherine and Bianca appears to be strained with rampant jealousy. Both daughters fight for the attentions of their father. In twisted parallel roles, they take turns being demure and

hag-like. Father of the two, Baptista Minola, fusses with potential suitors for young Bianca

married. The reader is to assume that meek, mild-mannered, delicate Bianca is wasting away while her much older, aging, brutish sister torments the family with her foul tongue.

Katherine and keeps them away from each others' torment. When gentlemen come calling, Bianca cowers behind her father and Katherine speaks up for herself. "I <u>pray</u> you sir, is it your will to make a stale of me amongst these mates?" (1.1.57-58) Bianca and Katherine

and will not let them come calling until his elder, ill-tempered daughter Katherine is

Katherine seems to hold resentment toward Bianca. Her father favors Bianca over

dislike each other feverishly. Katherine torments Bianca with words and physical harm. She binds her hands, pulls her hair then brings her forth to her father and the gentlemen callers. Bianca denies liking any of the visitors and portrays herself an innocent that merely wants to learn and obey her elders. She says, "Sister, content you in my discontent to your pleasure humbly I subscribe. My books and instruments shall be my company, on them to look and practise by myself." (1.1.80-84) Because Katherine speaks freely and asserts herself she is labeled as "shrewish." When Hortensio describes her to Petruccio, he spews out that she is "renowned in Padua for her scolding tongue." (1.2.96) He gilds the lily further by clearly telling of her fair fortune if suitable man comes courting and wins her hand in marriage. Petruccio sees dollar signs and rushes onwards in grand dress and fluently gestures to court the gracious "Kate." When he first begins his ritual of winning the family and Katherine to his love, he is seeking his fortune in her dowry. The mention of her being at all undesirable does not put rocks in his path.

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