

includes the credit “by William Shakespeare with additional dialogue by Samuel Taylor” (543). The story has appeared frequently, sometimes with seemingly reliable derivation—in mentioning the credit in *Shakespeare and the Film*, Roger Manvell, for instance, cites Laurence Irving, a scenic director on this *Shrew*, as his source. The story is so good that it’s a shame it isn’t true.

The print of the film held by the Museum of Modern Art—Fairbanks’s own copy, which he donated to the museum—has only “Adapted and Directed by Sam Taylor.” Scott Eyman, whose *Mary Pickford, America’s Sweetheart* is much the most reliable work on the actress’s career, corroborates the credit and reports that it appears as well in the film’s script and press book.

It is somewhat surprising that the tale has persisted so long, since the film contains almost nothing in the way of additional dialogue for Taylor to claim. There is “O Petruchio, beloved” (which Hodgdon cites), spoken by Kate after she unintentionally combs his noodle with the three-legged stool. There is her howl of pain, which passes for an “I do,” when Petruchio steps on her toes during the wedding. Beyond these, the one significant addition is lifted from David Garrick’s adaptation, *Catherine and Petruchio*. Both at the end of the wooing scene and after arriving soaked and shivering at Petruchio’s house, Kate mutters, with grimly comic determination: “Look to your seat, Petruchio, or I throw you / Cath’rine shall tame this haggard; or if she fails / Shall tie her tongue up and pare down her nails.” The imagery is strange, if not incoherent; but in relation to the version’s “sexual negotiations,” the speech is significant. Although Shakespeare leaves the audience to infer Kate’s motives for entering the marriage, Garrick—and Taylor after him—offers a shrew who intends to win the taming match.

THOMAS A. PENDLETON
Iona College

Reply:

What strikes me immediately about all three letters is that each aims at instructing me and amending my essay’s “faults.” It is tempting to suggest that Petruchio’s position as teacher-tamer seems to come naturally to all these gentlemen—that is, I would say so if I did not consider “naturally” such an extremely vexed term. Thomas A. Pendleton chides me (explicitly) for perpetuating a bit of cinematic gossip that even he admits is tantalizing, if untrue, and (implicitly) for ignoring Scott Eyman’s biography of Pickford. I admit

that the credit line attributing additional dialogue to Taylor does not match that on the Library of Congress film print, but the cartoon, which does exist, neatly sends up Taylor for disrupting Shakespeare’s author-ity, a question also at issue here. Quite rightly, Pendleton pinpoints Garrick’s *Catherine and Petruchio* as the source of some of that dialogue. However, my point is that Kate, not Petruchio, speaks the raided lines. On the one hand, Taylor’s additions accord her greater agency; on the other, that choice underscores Kate’s unruly nature. Pickford, not Fairbanks, changes “Shakespeare.” And, according to Pendleton himself, it is male ownership of texts that counts: he cites *Fairbanks’s* copy of the film as his authority and describes a man’s account as the “most reliable work on [Pickford’s] career.” Women, it appears, may be seen but heard only selectively, their voices circumscribed and managed by those of men.

However problematically, at least Pendleton evokes an empirical base; one cannot say the same of Lucien Goldschmidt and Robert F. Fleissner. Their letters claim a space for old readings of old plays that has been regularly excavated in *PMLA*’s pages (the return of the repressed?), most notoriously in the “Bardgate” controversy between Richard Levin and the feminist Gang of Twenty-Four (104 [1989]: 77–79). Goldschmidt’s letter contains a host of anxious, even hysterical, objections, all characteristic of a foundationalist, antitheoretical position that bears absolutely no relation to my work. Moreover, his scattershot strategy attempts to reinstall a “general consensus” remarkably uninflected by recent historical work that uncovers how early modern social practices demeaned and punished women (see, for example, Lynda E. Boose’s “Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman’s Unruly Member,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42 [1991]: 179–213), by any awareness of how present-day representational strategies position “woman,” or by how current sociopolitical discourse seeks to regulate real women’s bodies.

I do, however, find it immensely heartening that feminist critics of early modern texts now have new allies in those whose critical practice engages with “performance-oriented literary criticism” (Fleissner’s phrase). By pulling the dirty materiality of the stage into the same space as cultural-materialist feminist critique, Fleissner puts me among excellent good company; the association is especially comforting when one is so roundly blamed for degenerative effects—an aspersion like that cast by Matthew Arnold’s anxiety about the inroads of mass culture and by modernism’s pointed exclusion of women writers. Of course, Fleissner claims an even more authoritative position than

either Pendleton or Goldschmidt: he is in touch with Shakespeare's intentions. Yet his notion of "Come back, Little William, and tell us what you wanted" represents a theater of the mausoleum, floating free of history and especially of theater history. Fleissner's "true man from Stratford"—it's always useful, in such an argument, to evoke a geography of origins—is the Bard of High Culture, not Low; Verdi, not Cole Porter. Many theatrical venues, including the Bankside spaces where nobility mixed with the "base, common, and popular," get erased in his value-laden opposition. Indeed, Fleissner's ahistoricism enables him not only to enclose "Shakespeare" within protective barriers but to fly across centuries with the ease, if not the grace, of the falcon he names as *Shrew's* major taming device. To be sure, falconry is one of the rhetorical figures of taming, one Fleissner himself refers to as "manning the haggard," though without noting both the power relation and the gendered term that link bird to falconer. Yet in *Shrew*, as in any text, language is neither as transparent nor as stable as Fleissner might wish; rather, it has sociocultural effects that get played out on bodies: it allows Petruchio to deprive Katherine of food, drink, and sleep, in a campaign that frequently gets embodied on the stage. The contexts Fleissner calls up, however, effectively deny *Shrew's* actors any bodies at all—and certainly not sexed or gendered ones; in his account, sexuality and gender lie down together in a chaste procrustean bed called "common sense." As for his claim that I am "stagestruck," I will take that as a compliment, given both the context of his letter and that in which my essay appeared: a special issue of *PMLA* devoted to performance.

BARBARA HODGDON
Drake University

Death Scenes in *Antony and Cleopatra*

To the Editor:

As impressed as I am with Lorraine Helms's learned and thought-provoking "'The High Roman Fashion': Sacrifice, Suicide, and the Shakespearean Stage" (107 [1992]: 554–65), for me its interpretation of *Antony and Cleopatra* goes wrong by giving an intriguing undercurrent an emphasis that distorts the total experience of an extremely complex play. In analyzing Shakespeare's presentation of Cleopatra's death, Helms overlooks the other deaths in the play. Because of these omissions, Helms's depiction of Shakespeare's attitude toward "the high Roman fashion" of suicide neglects

some of the complexities of Shakespeare's balanced vision.

Although Helms twice refers to Charmian and Iras as though she were analyzing Shakespeare's depiction of the deaths of *three* women, she makes no specific reference to the death of Iras or to Cleopatra's peculiar response to it. After seeing Iras die, Cleopatra says:

This proves me base:
If she first meet the curled Antony,
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. (5.2.299–302)

Shakespeare does not allow his Cleopatra even in her dying moment to trust the unreliable Antony to be faithful. Moreover, the difference between Iras's death and that of her mistress contains another significant Shakespearean touch. Iras, like Enobarbus, dies from sadness; Cleopatra, like Antony, must use "a swifter mean."

The importance of the contrast is evident from Shakespeare's emphasis on it earlier. Shakespeare has Antony (4.14), Cleopatra (1.3), and Enobarbus (4.6) announce expectations of dying from broken hearts. Only Enobarbus and his Egyptian female counterpart, Iras, have such an honor. The contrast between Antony's almost comic death scene and Enobarbus's death by "swift thought" underscores Enobarbus's ability to command his heart to break, a force of will that Shakespeare's Antony lacks. The subsequent parallel with the deaths of Cleopatra and Iras serves to reinforce and complicate further the judgments made by the audience about the play's two central characters. Helms's essay, despite its strengths, overlooks these complexities.

Much can be said about Shakespeare's vision of Cleopatra and Antony. Here it must suffice to suggest that various aspects of Shakespeare's treatment of the two death scenes work to demythologize Cleopatra and Antony, even while the playwright is taking advantage of the figures' mythic status. Shakespeare drags out Antony's death scene, emphasizing that the great soldier is actually a man who could never stop talking—especially about himself. Antony's claim to be "a Roman, by a Roman / Valiantly vanquish'd" (4.15.57–58), almost exactly the same as Plutarch's "overcome . . . valiantly, a Romane by an other Romane," takes on a self-deluded and inglorious tone because it follows a Shakespearean addition—"Not Caesar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony, / But Antony's hath triumphed on itself" (4.15.14–15)—that makes it clear that Shakespeare's Antony, far from having learned from his experience, wants to deny Caesar credit for the victory while refusing to attribute any blame to himself.