

name *Quintus*, and Horace comments that sensitive ears enjoy the praenomen (*gaudent praenomine molles auriculae*).

5. For example, *praestant* (16) is here usually translated “keep,” but its first meaning is “hold out, present,” consistent with Horace’s irony that to all the world he *appears* secure.

6. In S.2.6.1 Horace had said that this was what he’d prayed for, yet by line 5 he admits he might pray that the gifts (*munera*) might be his very own (*propria*), which can only mean they were not an outright gift. By Ep.2.2.160 he rationalizes that the field that feeds you is yours (*qui te pascit ager tuus est*), just as he says in Ep.1.16 that his estate feeds its master by the plow (*fundus meus . . . arvo pascat erum*, 1–2). Note in Ep.1.7.80–81 that Philippus did not give Mena the farm, but lent him money to buy it.

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Shakespeare's A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

A Midsummer Night's Dream takes a different approach to gender and the empowerment of women in a Renaissance era. The play is unique in its presentation of strong women, especially in its portrayal of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. Unlike Elizabethan women, who remain submissive to patriarchal law by depending on men for their survival, Hippolyta has been the leader of a dynamic and fearless group of women; the ruler of a kingdom where men are dependent on women. Shakespeare, aware of medieval attitudes toward an Amazonian culture, enlightens audience members, exposing them to a hierarchical system where women are authority figures. Louis Montrose notes, “Amazonian mythology seems symbolically to embody and to control a collective anxiety about the power of the female not only to dominate or reject the male but to create and destroy him” (71).

Hippolyta, however, a warriorlike woman, uses feminine allure to overpower an admirer. From the time Hippolyta and Theseus, duke of Athens meet, Theseus is enamored of Hippolyta. Despite her forceful image, Hippolyta is the object of Theseus’s passion. His admiration causes him to profess his love for the beautiful Amazon queen,

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon; but, O methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires. (1.1.1–4).

Theseus, ruler of Athens and conqueror of the Amazons subjugates himself to the woman he desires. In taking her as his wife and, henceforth, laying

down his sword, the weapon which gave him power and authority over her, Theseus surrenders himself to Hippolyta. By entering into a marriage with the duke, Hippolyta gains a new source of power as queen of another realm.

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Shakespeare's RICHARD III

The prince who hopes to survive, wrote Machiavelli, "must be a fox in order to recognize traps" (99), a "deceiver" (100) to defeat men of bad faith. Some half-century after Machiavelli, in 1553, Thomas Wilson called rhetoric indispensable to those who "either shall beare rule over manye, or muste have to do wyth matters of a Realme" (6). In act 4, scene 4, of *Richard III*, the second courtship scene, Richard asks his sister-in-law Elizabeth for her daughter's hand. Critics are divided over whether she agrees.¹ Shakespeare creates dramatic irony as Elizabeth plays the fox, safeguarding the princess while using a sophisticated rhetorical figure—amphibology—to deceive Richard but not the more alert playgoers.

Whereas Richard holds his own against Anne and eventually gains rhetorical mastery over her, in this second debate the preponderance of stichomythic responses are Elizabeth's, hers the sarcasm and greater dramatic force.² When Richard tries the ploy on Elizabeth that had succeeded against Anne and won her consent to marriage, he promptly fails:

King Richard. Say that I did all this [murdered her family] for love of her.
Queen Elizabeth. Nay then indeed she cannot choose but hate thee,
Having bought love with such a bloody spoil.
(4.4.288–90)³

Certainly, for the greater part of this interview Richard seems tongue-tied, slow, and pedestrian compared with Elizabeth.

That should not surprise us when we recall Elizabeth's interview with Edward IV in *Henry VI, Part 3*. Edward wins his widow not on his terms but