UNDERGRADUATE PAPER

Male Bonds in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Othello*

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The theme of love dominates Shakespeare's comedies, as well as select tragedies; however, the marriage bond between lovers is not the only form of affection understood and addressed by Shakespeare. As Janet Adelman writes,

> We do not move directly from family bonds to marriage without an intervening period in which our friendships with same-sex friends help us to establish our independent identities; and marriage is notoriously disruptive of these friendships and sometimes of the identities based on them.[1]

Shakespeare was concerned with the potential conflict between the marriage bond and these same-sex associations and friendships, particularly among men. These I collectively label homosocial male bonds, after Eve Sedgwick's term.[2] When the conflict between homosocial bonds and marriage can be peacefully resolved to value the marriage bond most highly, comedic closure is achieved, as in *Much Ado About Nothing.* When masculine alliances take precedence over the marriage bond, as will be seen in *Othello,* tragedy ensues.

Much Ado About Nothing

In *Much Ado About Nothing,* two differing perspectives on the ascendancy of love over friendship coexist. Count Claudio's courtship of Hero represents a means, not only of obtaining a wife, but also of solidifying and binding relationships between men through marital transactions. Alternatively, in the case of Beatrice and Benedick, Benedick must choose between allegiance to his soldier friends and the new tie he has established with Beatrice.

At the opening of the play, the troupe of soldiers led by Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon, returns from war to the peaceful city of Messina. The battlefield is an important forge for exclusively masculine bonds. Soldiers form a continuum of mutual trust and

brotherhood, fostered by the commonality of their shared experience in battle. This masculine society is perhaps impossible to replicate during peacetime, where a multitude of other concerns draw the soldiers' fellowship apart. This distinction between war and peace, the battlefield and the home front, is deftly underscored in the first dialogue of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Echoes from the battlefield are heard in Messina as Don Pedro's regiment approaches. Although polite and interested inquiries are posed by the townspeople, the wars are clearly now in the past, and their effects did not touch Messina in any material way. Leonato, governor of Messina, converses with Don Pedro's messenger and asks him, "How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?" (1.1.5-6).[3] The messenger responds, "But few of any sort, and none of name" (1.1.7). Clearly the people of Messina experienced the war only distantly. The "you" of Leonato's inquiry, as opposed to a self-inclusive "we," attests to this fact and differentiates Leonato from the returning soldiers; he is not, nor is the town he represents, involved in the battles with which the other gentlemen have been intimately concerned. As a result of the residual, though swiftly disintegrating, distinction between these two worlds, the returning soldiers—Don Pedro, Claudio, and Benedick—occupy, at the start of the play, an interesting position within Messina society. They are not quite outsiders, yet they have lingering traces of the war about them, most visibly in the form of their close camaraderie that differentiates them from Messina society at large.

However, after the mayor's perfunctory inquiries regarding the wars, his niece Beatrice quickly changes the tone of the opening conversation, shifting it away from martial concerns and towards wit, wordplay, and spirited antagonism with her intellectual rival, Benedick. Beatrice re-appropriates and trivializes the masculine language of war. She asks of the messenger "I pray you, how many hath he [Benedick] kill'd and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he kill'd? for indeed I promis'd to eat all of his killing" (1.1.42-45). A serious enough topic in its own martial context, the number of "kills" Benedick has made is transformed into a joke and a witty thrust for Beatrice in her ongoing verbal conflict with Benedick. Leonato tells the messenger, "You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them" (1.1.61-64). As this conversation indicates, the strictly masculine wars and associations have been left on the battlefield, and as Benedick, Claudio, and Don Pedro arrive in Messina, they enter a world where words take the place of weapons, celebration

and joy represent the dominant mood, and wit and courtship become the grounds for a very different set of relationships.

Count Claudio makes the successful transition from the battlefield to the society of Messina swiftly, through his developing passion for Leonato's daughter Hero. He discloses to Don Pedro that when he left for the wars,

> I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
> That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
> Than to drive liking to the name of love.
> But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
> Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
> Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
> All prompting me how fair young Hero is. (1.1.298-304)

Claudio adroitly adapts to the dual-gendered world of Messina and the corresponding role of lover. Don Pedro urges Claudio to pursue Hero, signaling his equally complete, though more passive, transition towards civilian life and the marital concerns of peacetime.

The two noblemen's friend Benedick, however, stubbornly resists a transformation that would give preeminence to love and marriage. He clings to his homosocial bonds and to an indefatigable state of bachelorhood. He rails against Claudio for falling victim to love and betraying their soldierly bond:

> I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe; I have known when he would have walk'd ten mile afoot to see a good armor, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet. (2.3.12-18)

Benedick resents the new marital interests of Messina, and he refuses to leave the battlefield behind, as it were. Alternatively, Claudio's transformation is perfectly appropriate. He no longer has a need for the "drum and the fife," and to be enamored of a suit of armor, rather than a fair, virtuous, and wealthy woman, as Hero is, would put Claudio out of step with the new society that has been formed by the conflux of soldiers and civilians.

Uniformly male relationships are not wholly absent from Messina, however. Rather, the social structure of the city allows for a different form of exclusivity among men. Gayle Rubin argues that anthropological work on kinship and gift-giving has important implications for the ways in which Western culture is understood.[4] The purpose of a gift, according to Rubin, is to "[confer] upon its

participants a special relationship of trust, solidarity, and mutual aid. One can solicit a friendly relationship in the offer of a gift; acceptance implies a willingness to return a gift and a confirmation of the relationship."[5] Marriage is the most fundamental and important form of gift. "If it is women who are being transacted, then it is the men who give and take them who are linked, the woman being a conduit of a relationship rather than a partner to it .... If women are the gifts, then it is men who are the exchange partners."[6] Rather than viewing marriage as a contract solidifying a bond exclusively between a man and a woman, Rubin identifies matchmaking as a site of exclusively male interaction. Although it has its limits, this theoretical device is enlightening when applied to Shakespeare and the analysis of the courtship arrangements within *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Interestingly, Claudio himself does not propose to Hero, but rather his friend and superior, Don Pedro. The Prince affirms the propriety and validity of Claudio's choice by offering to woo the lady for him.

> If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
> And I will break with her, and with her father,
> And thou shalt have her. (1.1.308-310)

Hero is sole heir to Leonato, and the script betrays some ambiguity as to whether Claudio's suit is strong enough to win her. The approbation of the Prince and his active participation on behalf of Claudio's suit adds legitimacy and credibility to it. Moreover, by acting as proxy suitor for Claudio, Don Pedro solidifies the bond of trust and intimacy that had already existed between the two men as a result of their association during the war. Viewed within the context of Rubin's essay, Hero becomes a gift that Pedro obtains and, subsequently, bestows upon Claudio as a means of identifying their "relationship of trust, solidarity, and mutual aid."[7] Simultaneously, the Prince's wooing of Hero for his friend establishes new kinship ties with Leonato, for Claudio, through the medium of the governor's daughter. Claudio's marriage is an important economic and social transaction, as well as an affair of the heart. As such, it necessitates the involvement of other men and elucidates a complex set of masculine bonds and associations already extant.

Rubin maintains that gift-giving can establish rivalries and competition at the same time that it can foster social bonds between men.[8] It is significant, therefore, that the friendship of Don Pedro and Count Claudio is broken, along with Hero's and Claudio's

contract, by another man, the malevolent Don John, bastard brother to the Prince. At the masquerade Don John tells Claudio that Don Pedro intends to wed Hero himself. Claudio takes these words as truth, transferring to Don John the trust he had, only moments before, placed in Don Pedro.

> 'Tis certain so, the Prince woos for himself.
> Friendship is constant in all other things
> Save in the office and affairs of love. (2.1.174-176)

However, the Prince reassures Claudio, "I have woo'd in thy name, and fair Hero is won. I have broke with her father, and his good will obtain'd" (2.1.298-300). Hero becomes the medium for the strengthening of male bonds and kinship ties. She is also the critical figure around which revolves the threat that those bonds may be severed. As the marriage engagement between Hero and Claudio, at the end of Act 2, is seemingly made sure, the friends and lovers of Messina resolve to bring another match to pass: that of Beatrice and Benedick. As will be seen, this second relationship is ultimately less dependent upon male alliances. Rather, his new tie with Beatrice requires Benedick to break with his friends and to leave behind, more completely than Claudio, the exclusively masculine camaraderie to which he had at first so tenaciously clung.

Benedick's most virulent point against wedlock is the fear of cuckoldry. "Because I will not do them [women] the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none" (1.1.242-44). Issues of trust and mistrust are at the heart of Shakespearean marriage ventures. Insofar as the threat of cuckoldry becomes reality, it is a serious matter, breaking apart former bonds of trust and creating new bonds of enmity. True cuckoldry parallels Gayle Rubin's discussion of gift-giving, as it is the seizure of a "gift" without the owner's consent, similar to theft. However, in the case of this comedy, hypothetical cuckoldry becomes the fodder for numerous jokes that serve to superficially bond the men of the play together, as well as to provide Benedick with an ostensible objection to marriage.

There is an abiding sense, however, that Benedick's attacks on matrimony constitute a front rather than a true representation of his feelings. This is seen in his complete transformation upon hearing that Beatrice is in love with him. He immediately resolves to requite Beatrice's alleged secret passion for him. In considering the possibility of derision from his cronies upon the public announcement of his changed heart, he asks, "Doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot

endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humor?" (2.3.238-242). Benedick's blithe renunciation of bachelorhood indeed reveals a ready "humor" for love and marriage.

The crux of the play, and the challenge to both sets of marriages as well as to the gentlemen's friendship, is Don John's assertion that Hero is "disloyal" (3.2.104). Don John couches this second lie in terms of the love he claims to have for his brother and his brother's friend. As a direct and sentimental appeal to male bonds, the falsehood is more enticing and therefore more dangerous. "You may think I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest" (3.2.95-97), he tells Claudio. Claudio and Don Pedro unquestioningly believe Don John, and they begin laying plans to openly "shame" Hero (3.2.125) at the wedding the following day. It is perplexing that the two men listen to Don John, given the fact that he had misinformed them at least once before, at the masquerade. Their ready faith in him reveals the trust they place in their male bonds and the disquieting extent to which these bonds can unjustly obscure their faith in Hero. Indeed, Don John is not so culpable for telling his lie (one rather expects it of him) as Claudio and Don Pedro are for believing it.

By joining Don John in maligning Hero, Claudio chooses allegiance to homosocial male bonds before trust in his future wife. Benedick, on the other hand, claims to doubt Don John's assertion. When he asks Beatrice to let him prove his faith, "Come, bid me do any thing for thee," she immediately and succinctly responds,

> *Beatrice.* Kill Claudio.
> *Bentrice.* Ha, not for the wide world.
> *Beatrice.* You kill me to deny it. (4.1.288-291)

Beatrice correctly discerns the finer villainy at the heart of the "ado." She is cognizant of the paramount role Benedick's homosocial friendships have played in shaping his character and identity. She has witnessed Claudio's lack of judgment in remaining loyal to these relationships to the destruction of his marriage to Hero, and she seeks to prove to Benedick the folly of this. Beatrice's bitter and difficult request plays a vital interceptive role in wooing Benedick from allegiance to his homosocial bonds to a higher level of trust in her. Moreover, Beatrice is a woman of wit, intelligence, beauty, dazzling language, and a brilliantly public presence. She is a more than adequate replacement for Benedick's male friendships and represents the one individual who can bring him the most fulfillment. When he comprehends that Beatrice's request is indeed

made in earnest, Benedick exercises his own good judgment, agreeing to challenge Claudio.

However, because this is a comedy, by the end of the play Don John's devious intrigue is unearthed, Hero's reputation is restored, and the repentant Claudio's blood is not required. "Come, come, we are friends," Benedick concedes at the end of Act 5. "Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels" (5.4.117-19). Male bonds and marriage peaceably coexist, yet Beatrice has gained her ascendancy in Benedick's heart. Benedick's willingness to challenge his friend reveals that he no longer relies exclusively upon male bonds, signaling his successful transition to the married state.

Othello

This transition is certainly not achieved in *Othello.* In the tragedy's concern with cuckoldry, fidelity, the false accusation of a chaste woman, as well as in its portrayal of the disparate worlds of soldiers and civilians, *Othello* rewards comparison with *Much Ado About Nothing.* Indeed, *Othello* can be read as Shakespeare's tragic revision of the earlier work. Even the characters within the two plays loosely parallel one another: Hero becomes Desdemona, Othello takes Claudio's role, Don Pedro becomes Cassio, and Don John is reincarnated as Iago. Within *Othello*, Shakespeare allows these initially comic situations and characters to play themselves out to their tragic extremes.[9] Othello must make the same choice as Benedick and Claudio and, like Claudio, he chooses to trust a devious male companion. Othello's poor judgment destroys his marriage bond; accordingly, the antagonism between male bonds and marriage is at the heart of this dark play.

The marriage of Desdemona and Othello begins with a great degree of trust. Although Desdemona ultimately takes on a role similar to Hero's—that of a passive, slandered woman rejected by her husband—she begins the play as a more active personality, and I would argue that her bond with Othello at this point has more in common with the passionate Beatrice-Benedick relationship. Desdemona eloquently defends her marriage before the Venetian senate, and she determinedly petitions the state to allow her to follow Othello to Cyprus. "That I did love the Moor to live with him,/ My downright violence, and storm of fortunes,/ May trumpet to the world" (1.3.248-50). Othello's attachment is equally intense. Desdemona is Othello's "soul's joy" (2.1.184). He acknowledges that matrimony is indeed a bond that will alter or

limit the freedom he seemed to enjoy as a "wheeling" (1.1.136) soldier-bachelor.

> But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
> I would not my unhoused free condition
> Put into circumscription and confine
> For the sea's worth. (1.2.25-28)

However, his extreme affection for and trust in Desdemona render him willing, like Benedick, to consciously sacrifice this freedom in order to join her in marriage.

Despite these examples of the love and trust within the Desdemona-Othello bond, the seeds of its destruction are also present. Othello famously, almost hyperbolically, boasts, "My life upon her faith" (1.3.294). When this faith is challenged, "Chaos is come again" (3.3.92) to his mind and world, and Desdemona's situation looks increasingly like Hero's as the play progresses. The Claudio-Hero bond would not have withstood Claudio's belief in the insinuations of the pernicious Don John without the comedic intervention of Dogberry. Similarly, after the first act of *Othello,* the Moor transfers his trust to the one homosocial bond that he should be most wary of, taking up Iago's false view of his wife and ceasing to trust in her. Unlike *Much Ado, Othello* offers no intervention or release from this situation, short of death.

Within the first act of *Othello*, the influence of Iago is held at bay by the power and presence of the Venetian state. Because of his important military position, Othello maintains a privileged relationship to that state. The Duke and the other gentlemen of the senate refer to him as "the virtuous Othello," and the Duke famously counsels Brabantio, "If virtue no delighted beauty lack,/ Your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3.289-90). The state's trust in Othello is overwhelmingly apparent in his assignment to head the urgent defense against the Turks at Cyprus. Venice needs Othello to defend it from invasion; Othello needs Venice, correspondingly, to approve and validate his marriage bond to Desdemona. Because the state is so vocal in Othello's praise, Othello is self-assured and without doubt as he enters the courtroom in Act I. In Venice, the state's overwhelming approbation, trust, and commendation render Iago's voice, which would call upon the inner fears and doubts within Othello's mind, inaudible.

When Othello journeys to Cyprus, a military outpost on the borders of Venetian authority, he abandons the state's immediate protection. Cyprus, with its proliferation of militarism and male

bonds, is a dramatization of the battlefield banished to the off-stage past of *Much Ado About Nothing.* Therefore, its soil is fertile for the cultivation of male bonds. Without the Venetian state at hand, to which he can turn for protection and affirmation, Othello is exposed to the dangerous influence of his bond with Iago, as well as to the doubts and fears within his own mind. The combination and clash of the martial world of war and male bonds with the conjugal life Desdemona and Othello attempt to establish within that world characterizes much of the conflict of *Othello* and links it, inversely, with *Much Ado About Nothing.*

Iago's malicious plot works upon, manipulates, and strains a wide array of the human bonds of affection and association. Iago, as both a Venetian and a man of the military, has been on the inside of both social worlds and knows how to simulate to perfection their respective bonds. Iago first attacks Othello through his friend and lieutenant, Michael Cassio. Othello's and Cassio's relationship is similar to that existing between Don Pedro and Claudio in *Much Ado.* Cassio served as companion and intermediary between the lovers in Othello's courtship of Desdemona. Desdemona reminds Othello of Michael Cassio "that came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,/ When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,/ Hath ta'en your part" (3.3.71-73). In *Much Ado,* such trusting bonds between male friends turned to rivalry, insofar as Claudio, at Don John's suggestion, feared Don Pedro had betrayed him by wooing Hero for himself. Iago, like Don John, asks similar questions and raises these same doubts concerning the trustworthiness of Cassio: "Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,/ Know of your love?/.../ I did not think he had been acquainted with her" (3.3.94-99). Othello immediately replies, "O yes, and went between us very oft./ *Iago:* Indeed!" (3.3.100-101). Iago's "Indeed!" speaks a world to Othello. As the connotations of this one word germinate within Othello's mind, his bond with Cassio begins to unravel.

Iago further weakens this bond of friendship (and through it the marriage bond) by invoking another form of masculine association: that of military camaraderie and alehouse culture. On Cassio's night watch, during the celebrations of Othello's nuptials, Iago tempts and persuades Cassio to indulge in a glass of wine with "a brace of Cyprus gallants" (2.3.31). Cassio at first resists the offer, claiming that he has "very poor and unhappy brains for drinking" (33-34). Rather than offering the drink purely for its own sake, which he knows Cassio will refuse, Iago appeals to the lieutenant's sense of courtesy and fraternity. "What, man? 'Tis a

night of revels, the gallants desire it" (2.3.43). Iago knows him all too well: only for the cause of conviviality does Cassio relent. Shakespeare dramatizes this instance of male bonding with the scene of "English" drinking songs that follows. True to his character as role-player and manipulator, Iago is the life of the party, spurring and inciting the others to pitch their drunken revels to his own (feigned) level.

As a result of his intemperance, Cassio is easily inflamed by Roderigo's deliberate baiting, and the two men draw to fight. The sounds of the scuffle and the pealing of the watch bell bring Othello to the scene. Othello's affection for Cassio is evidenced by the abrupt, grieved manner in which he dismisses his friend: "Cassio, I love thee,/ But never more be officer of mine" (2.3.248-49). Cassio bemoans the tarnish of his reputation and the loss of Othello's trust. His mortification will not allow him to approach Othello directly: "I will rather sue to be despis'd" (2.3.277). Therefore, Iago, supposedly offering the aid of his courtly experience, advises Cassio to go to Desdemona for intercession with Othello: "This broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter; and ... this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before" (2.3.322-25). However, Iago comes between the two men through the medium of Desdemona, the pilfering of her strawberry-spotted handkerchief, and his allegations to Othello that she has been "disloyal"—most devastatingly, that she has played him false with his friend.

With brilliant and malicious acuity, Iago perceives Othello's weaknesses and uses them. Throughout Acts Three and Four, Iago is by Othello's side, casting the darkest light possible on Desdemona's innocent and good-hearted pleas for Cassio's reinstatement. Indeed, Shakespeare goes to great lengths to portray Iago's hand in Othello's jealousy. When Othello begins to recall Desdemona's gentleness and virtues in 4.1, Iago repeatedly repels his general's inclination towards leniency and reconciliation: "Nay, that's not your way" (4.1.186), he assures Othello.

Othello. So delicate with her needle! an admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear. Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!
Iago. She's the worse for all this.
Othello. O, a thousand, a thousand times. And then of so gentle a condition!
Iago: Ay, too gentle.
Othello. Nay, that's certain. But yet the pity of it Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend, for if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.
Othello. I will chop her into messes. Cuckold me! (4.1.187-200)

Iago deftly fans the flames of Othello's jealousy, even suggesting the mode of Desdemona's murder. Rather than consulting with his wife regarding the veracity of Iago's claims, Othello rashly, even passionately, turns to Iago's love and spurns Desdemona's protestations of loyalty. In doing so, Othello places and esteems his homosocial bond with Iago above his marriage bond.

The curious solemnization of the Othello-Iago relationship occurs in 3.2, after Othello demands proof of Desdemona's guilt, and the duplicitous ensign seemingly delivers it in the form of the strawberry-spotted handkerchief. The scene following this can be read as a figurative "marriage" between the two soldiers, who vow fidelity to one another. Othello kneels and tells Iago:

Othello. Now by yond marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words.
Iago. Do not rise yet. [*Iago kneels.*]
Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever. [They rise.]
Othello. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to't:
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio's not alive.
Iago. My friend is dead; 'tis done at your request. (3.3.460-474)

Like the "Kill Claudio" scene of *Much Ado,* in which Benedick's vows to Beatrice are tested against his allegiance to Claudio, Othello tries Iago's love by requiring that he "kill Cassio," Iago's professed friend. The men agree to murder Cassio and Desdemona, and their parting words—the last lines of the scene—indicate their new relationship of intense trust: "*Othello.* Now art thou my lieutenant./ *Iago.* I am your own for ever" (3.3.479-80). Othello's bond with Desdemona is thus completely undermined.

The public nature of Othello's and Desdemona's bond also contributes to its dissolution. Othello, rather than accusing Desdemona in private, humiliates her, striking her in Act 4, Scene 1, in front of her cousin Lodovico, emissary from Venice, and the Cyprus officials. Lodovico is shocked:

> My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,
> Though I should swear I saw't. 'Tis very much,
> Make her amends; she weeps. (4.1.242-44)

Instead of treating the adultery as a private affair, Othello cruelly publicizes it. Only after this scene does Othello address his doubts to Desdemona privately. However, at this point it is too late; he is indelibly committed to his violent purpose, and he refuses to give ear to his wife's claims of innocence. Their bond is effectively destroyed by Othello's insistence on publicizing their relationship, exposing his marital discord even to Venice's emissary before seriously addressing it in private with his wife. Instead, Iago is granted exclusive access to Othello's private mind and heart.

Othello ultimately must grapple with the two-fold nature of the marriage bond that Claudio, Hero, Beatrice, and Benedick each had to face.

> O curse of marriage!
> That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
> And not their appetites!" (*Oth.* 3.3.268-70)

The theme of conjugal trust is indeed at the heart of the cuckoldry jokes that pervade the comedies; collapse of that trust creates the dramatic tension that turns these jokes to violence in the tragedy of *Othello.* As Shakespeare demonstrates so well with these two plays, inordinate reliance upon male bonds and associations can have a ruinous effect on the life and vigor of marital trust. Othello, in his doubt and jealousy, turns too trustingly to Iago. Like Don John of *Much Ado*, Iago is more malicious than anything that can be confined to comedy without being stopped in its course. Unlike Don John, Iago is not stopped, and what could be a farcical cuckoldry plot is carried to its tragic extreme.

Notes

1. Janet Adelman, "Male Bonding in Shakespeare's Comedies," in *Shakespeare's Rough Magic': Renaissance Essays in Honor of C.L. Barber,* ed. Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), 73-103.

2. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

3. All quotations of Shakespeare are from *The Riverside Shakespeare,* ed. G. Blakemore Evans, et al (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

4. Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Literary Theory: An Anthology,* ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 533-560.

5. Rubin, 541.

6. Rubin, 542.

7. Rubin, 541.

8. Rubin, 541.

9. Pascale Aebischer, "*Much Ado About Nothing:* a comic *Othello*," British American Drama Academy, November 3, 2000.