

Lynn Enterline. *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion*.

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The subject of early modern English grammar-school education has experienced a healthy renaissance of its own in recent years. When interest in classical influences on early modern English culture was weakened by the flood of interest in popular and material matters, that classical culture reinserted itself through pedagogy as part of that world. Indeed, the one experience that one could guarantee that writers then had in common was learning Latin. The texts read and the level of expertise achieved might have varied, but the mode of teaching was standard: relentless imitation and translation of classical texts, enforced by a master with the power to punish.

Lynn Enterline's *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion* offers a critical intervention in the debate about the impact of that classical education. The most important principle of her work should really go without saying: that is, you should not take the humanist pedagogues at their word. They may have thought or at least professed that they were producing "gentlemanly identity and mastery" (7) in their students, but the results were surely more complicated than that. Through a theoretically sophisticated investigation both of the surviving pedagogical documents and of Shakespeare's poems and plays of schooling, Enterline uncovers the contradictions inherent in a pedagogy that employed the techniques of rhetoric and imitation to shape a character. Her focus is on pedagogy's creation of the "habit of alterity": a habit of impersonation and a way of experiencing emotion through "the passions of others" (25).

Some of the pedagogical ground that Enterline covers is familiar. Ever since Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine first offered their jaundiced view of that education in *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in*

Fifteenth- and Sixteenth- Century Europe (1986), the gruesome story of the grammar school, dominated by the stern master who drilled the students and wielded the rod, has been examined by scholars who have both moderated and complicated that story. But Enterline's work is distinctive in several respects.

First, while her book begins by considering the dynamics of the Elizabethan schoolroom, with its powerful combination of corporal punishment, imitation, and rhetorical performance, most of her study is focused on Shakespeare. No other scholar has offered such a thoughtful and substantive treatment of pedagogy as construed imaginatively in the Shakespearean plays and poems. One chapter is devoted to the unfolding of "loving mastery" displayed in "Venus and Adonis," another looks at the pedagogical "cruelties" in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the third examines rhetorical imitation and the "transference" of woe in *Hamlet*, "The Rape of Lucrece," and *The Winter's Tale*.

Further, in so doing, Enterline deeply embeds her analysis of early modern pedagogy and rhetoric in a contemporary psychoanalytic framework. As she points out, "schoolmasters and Lacan agree on at least one thing: Language precedes and shapes character rather than the other way around" (20). She draws suggestively on the interactions of psychoanalysis with rhetoric (on which she has written much before), as well as with the more well-trodden area of the contradictory dynamics of corporal punishment.

Finally, Enterline is intent on destabilizing conventional ideas about the gendering of the early modern pedagogical project. In each chapter, she demonstrates convincingly how the engagement with the passions essential to rhetorical practice and imitation of an often feminine other "troubles any claims — whether early modern or modern — about the school's seamless production of rhetorically capable 'gentlemen' with a univocally 'male' ego" (152). The boys learned their Latin and constructed a character not only through their own physical suffering but also by enacting the imagined sufferings of the lover and the mother. This rethinking of the gender effects of schooling may prove to be the most important contribution of *Shakespeare's Schoolroom* to our understanding of both early modern pedagogy and Shakespeare's texts on teaching.

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