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"Do me the kindnes to looke vpon this"  
and  
"Heere, read, read":

An Invitation to the Pleasures of Textual/Sexual Di(Per)versity

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Many enticements beckon us to read Shakespeare's texts in their earliest available forms, and if we would only choose, the technology of fast and cheap xeroxing throws into our hands the variant quarto and Folio versions. Nevertheless, for many no doubt practical reasons very, very few of us read these plays in facsimile, nor do many of us ever suggest such facsimiles to our students at any level. But I do, and as quickly as possible I'd like to show you why. And then I'd like to encourage you to explore these texts further.

You have a handout with two versions of Romeo and Juliet, 2.6, and two versions of the last thirty-odd lines of The Merry Wives of Windsor. Let's look at what they offer.

Romeo speaks first in the Q1 version of 2.6, and both his and Friar Lawrence's speeches ring with joy, exuberance, and hope:

Rom: Now Father Laurence, in thy holy grant  
Consists the good of me and Juliet.

Fr: Without more words I will doo all I may,  
To make you happie if in me it lye.

Rom: This morning here she pointed we should meet,  
And consummate those never parting bands,  
Witnes of our harts love by joyning hands,  
And come she will.

Fr: I gesse she will indeed,  
Youths love is quicke, swifter than swiftest speed.

The language characterizing every aspect of the ensuing action resonates with positive virtue: words like "holy" and "good," "happy" and "morning," "never-parting," "love," "youth," "quick," "swifter" and "swiftest" build a local lexicon of unrelieved cheer.

At this point a stage direction and Laurence's language indicate a further extravagantly joyful eruption:

Enter Juliet somewhat fast, and embraceth Romeo,  
See where she comes.

So light of foot nere hurts the troden flower:  
Of love and joy, see see the soveraigne power.

Jul: Romeo.

Rom: My Juliet welcome. As do waking eyes  
(Cloasd in Nights mysts) attend the frolicke Day,  
So Romeo hath expected Juliet,  
And thou art come.

Jul: I am (if I be Day)  
Come to my Sunne: shine foorth, and make me faire.

Rom: All beauteous fairnes dwelleth in thine eyes.

Jul: Romeo from thine all brightnes doth arise.

Friar Laurence exclaims positively over Juliet's lightness, and he celebrates her as a queen of love and joy. Romeo and Juliet transfigure one another as "Day" and "the

Sunne,” and their physical embrace signalled in the stage direction extends verbally to the coupling of their assonantal and consonantal rhymes, “in thine eyes” and “doth arise.”

Laurence separates the two in order to bring them more quickly to the sacramental joining of marriage, but he promises that the “soft and fair” delay of the marital rite will make their marriage “sweetest work” where simple haste would hinder their pleasures.

Fr. Come wantons, come, the stealing houres do passe  
Defer embracements till some fitter time,  
Part for a while, you shall not be alone,  
Till holy Church have joynd you both in one.  
Rom: Lead holy father, all delay seemes long.  
Jul: Make hast, make hast, this lingring doth us wrong.  
Fr: O, soft and faire makes sweetest worke they say.  
Hast is a common hindrer in crosse way. Exeunt Omnes.

The bright spirit here could well grace a Walt Disney movie or a Pepsi commercial, all sunshine and bubbles, life-affirming sanctification and concord between a boy, a girl and a totally-supportive father-substitute. Shucks, ain't it nice?

The 1599 equivalent instead tolls with the dark, driving discords of sex and death, leibestodt, patriarchal cynicism, compulsion, and ominous forebodings.

Enter Friar and Romeo.  
Fri. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,  
That after houres, with siorrow chide us not.  
Ro. Amen, amen, but come what sorrow can,  
It cannot countervaile the exchange of joy  
That one short minute gives me in her sight:  
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,  
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,  
It is inough I may but call her mine.  
Fri. These violent delights have violent endes,  
And in their triumph die like fier and powder:  
Which as they kisse consume. The sweetest honey  
Is loathsome in his owne deliciousnesse,  
And in the taste confoundes the appetite.  
Therefore love moderately, long love doth so,  
Too swift arrives, as tardie as too slowe.

Consider first that the lexicon of the Second Quarto's opening exchange between Romeo and the Friar registers these words with no equivalents in the earlier text: “sorrow,” “love-devouring death,” “dare,” “violent,” “die,” “consume,” “loathsome,” “con-founds,” “tardie,” and “too slow.”

When Juliet enters, Friar Lawrence's greeting crackles with ironic criticism rather than praise, and—as far as we can tell from the action indicated by stage direction and dialogue—Juliet neither embraces Romeo nor even addresses him directly.

Enter Juliet.  
Here comes the Lady, Oh so light a foote  
Will nere weare out the everlasting flint,  
A lover may bestride the gossamours,  
That ydeles in the wanton sommer ayre,  
And yet not fall, so light is vanitie.  
Ju. Good euen to my ghostly confessor.  
Fri. Romeo shall thanke thee daughter for us both.  
Ju. As much to him, else is his thankes too much.

For the Friar in the Second Quarto, Juliet exemplifies idle vanity rather than sovereignty, and the Friar draws on common-places of misogyny rather than Petrarchan

celebration. And in the presence of a father-substitute who bristles with denigrating barbs, Juliet here in the Second Quarto speaks with decorous restraint and personal abnegation. Her initial greeting, "Good even" or "God give you good evening," which places this meeting at the latter end of day rather than at Q1's cheery morning, and her subsequent reply focus steadily on the Friar.

Instead of the child-like whoops of "Romeo" and "My Juliet welcome," Romeo in the Second Quarto gingerly and with densely-ornamented mannerisms conditionally asks merely that Juliet turn from Friar Lawrence to speak to him, and he then directs that she discourse specifically about her image of their happiness.

Ro. Ah Juliet, if the measure of thy joy  
Be heapt like mine, and that thy skill be more  
To blason it, then sweeten with thy breath  
This neighbour ayre and let rich usicke tongue,  
Unfold the imagine happines that both  
Receive in either, by this deare encounter.

But Juliet at first seems still to refuse him. We can't tell that she will accede to his request in any way until the third and fourth lines of her speech gradually reveal that she has been spinning out an elegantly delineated "inexpressibility" common-place.

Ju. Conceit more rich in matter then in words,  
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament,  
They are but beggers that can count their worth,  
But my true love is growne to such excesse,  
I cannot sum up sum of halfe my wealth.

This speech and her two earlier lines addressed to Friar Lawrence fit a sophisticated observer deeply sensitive to the linguistic and physical codes of reticence and display that regulate Verona social interactions. Juliet and Romeo in this text fully participate in those codes rather than appear simply as innocent victims of them, as seems to be the case in the 1597 version.

And then, rather than in happy concert with the two lovers as in Q1, here Friar Lawrence alone drives the scene to its conclusion:

Fri. Come, come with me, and we will make short worke,  
For by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,  
Till holy Church incorporate two in one.

The Friar promises only "short work" rather than "sweet work," and he strives only to make their bonds legal rather than soft and faire. Here he represents the authority of the Church, not a friendly escort to the greater pleasures of marital de-light, and he speaks with the cautionary voice of experience. And Romeo and Juliet obey him silently; no dancing rhymes here at their exit nor elsewhere in the exchange.

We have, it appears, two radically different conceptions of this scene in the two earliest printed texts of Romeo and Juliet. One rings exuberantly, one tolls ominously. Many editors of this passage insert the bubbly stage direction from Q1 at this point, and then they cordially but absurdly explain "Romeo shall thank thee daughter for us both" as some cryptic reference to an exchange of embraces. (See handout, page 2.) But the Friar's and then Juliet's lines about "thanks" may be triggered by Juliet's invocation of God's gift, "Good even," rather than any amorous clasps exchanged by the betrothed lovers. Scores of instances in the canon show greetings of "good day" or "farewell" or "Greet-ings, my lord" will prompt a reply of "thank you."

The tinkly, sparkling, "Enter Juliet somewhat fast, and embraceth Romeo" spliced into a context replete with "loathsome deliciousness, "fire and powder," and "love-devouring death," creates what seems to me to be an inadvertently nightmarish theatrical oxymoron:

the visible sign completely incommensurate with the audible signifier. The Little Mermaid meets the Sex Pistols.

Now jump to the final thirty-odd lines of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. In the first printed version, the 1602 Quarto, when she enters with her new husband, Anne Page is harshly challenged by her mother and her father.

Mis.Pa. How now daughter, where have you bin?  
An. At Church forsooth.  
Pa. At Church, what have you done there?

Where witty daughter answered angry mother, manly son-in-law replies to raging father; and then in the next few speeches both Ford and Mistress Ford with neighborly office assuage the indignant Pages.

. . . what have you done there?  
Fen. Married to me, nay sir never storme,  
Tis done sir now, and cannot be undone.  
Ford: Ifaith M.Page never chafe your selfe,  
She hath made her choise wheras her hart was fixt,  
Then tis in vaine for you to storme or fret.  
Fal. I am glad yet that your arrow hath glanced  
Mi.For. Come mistris Page, Ile be bold with you,  
Tis pitie to part love that is so true.

Mistress Page accedes to the fait accompli and gives her belated permission for Fenton to "take her." (As a theatrical director I would suggest that Mistress Page cross to her daughter and bring Ann towards Fenton at "Here M.Fenton, take her," but this is only one of many possible ways to enact such a line.) Then both Sir Hugh and Master Ford work on Anne's father until he changes into a model of benevolence and reconciliation.

Mis.Pa. Altho that I have missed in my intent,  
Yet I am glad my husbands match was crossed,  
Here M.Fenton, take her, and God give thee joy.  
Sir Hu: Come M.Page, you must needs agree.  
Fo. I yfaith sir come, you see your wife is wel pleased:  
Pa. I cannot tel, and yet my hart's well eased,  
And yet it doth me good the Doctor missed.  
Come hither Fenton, and come hither daughter,  
Go too you might have stai'd for my good will,  
But since your choise is made of one you love,  
Here take her Fenton, & both happie prove.

Note especially Master Page's direct addresses both to Fenton and to his daughter, and note the implied joining of the new couple in the circuit of Page's arms at "Come hither Fenton, and come hither daughter," and his repetition of his wife's parental grant, "Here take her."

The play concludes in this 1602 text with two silly and joyful speeches by the proud and gentle parson/schoolmaster and by the reconciled jealous Master Ford:

Sir Hu. I wil also dance & eat plums at your weddings.  
Ford. All parties pleased, now let us in to feast,  
And laugh at Slender, and the Doctors jeast.  
He hath got the maiden, each of you a boy  
To waite upon you, so God give you joy,  
And Sir John Falstaffe now shal you keep your word,  
For Brooke this night shall lye with mistris Ford.  
Exit omnes.

Ford stresses the ameliorative delights of the play's resolution as he initiates the common exit to feasting and laughter. He mollifies any painful sense of ridicule for Slender and the Doctor by granting them their faux-brides as pages, perhaps to serve them during the ensuing feast, and he celebrates Falstaff's role in the integrative ending with his announcement of his forthcoming sexual reunion with his tested and faithful wife. The final concordant tableau gives each of the subsidiary figures a nearly equal moment's attention.

Now quickly observe the equivalent resolution in the 1623 Folio version. At the outset, note that Anne's father, Master Page, first challenges Fenton, not his daughter, and then Anne herself moves to take the stage with a compelling gesture of appeal, the substance of which her parents pointedly ignore as if she had not spoken at all:

Page. . . . Here comes Mr. Fenton.  
How now Mr Fenton?  
Anne. Pardon good father, good my mother pardon  
Page. Now Mistris:  
How chance you went not with Mr Slender?  
M.Page. Why went you not with Mr Doctor, maid?

Anne's new husband steps between his penitent wife and her angry parents, protectively taking on himself the role of family spokesman.

Fen. You do amaze her: heare the truth of it,  
You would have married her most shamefully . . .

And he gives a capsule defense of children's right to marry after their own desires.

In this text, the angry father is the first to turn from anger to acceptance, and he changes his mind after a single appeal by his friend Ford, unlike the two speeches from Ford and one additional enticement from Sir Hugh scripted in the Quarto version.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd, here is no remedie:  
In Love, the heavens themselves do guide the state,  
Money buys Lands, and wives are sold by fate.

Falstaff has a longer interjection than his equivalent in the Quarto, and then Master Page accedes:

Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee  
joy, what cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

Falstaff has a second interjection, and then Mistress Page has her turn to accept Fenton as her son-in-law:

Mist.Page. Well, I will muse no further: Mr Fenton,  
Heaven give you many, many merry dayes:

Two oddities: first, Mistress Page is not prodded by her friend Mistress Ford as in the earlier version. Both parents have been persuaded not by their "communities" but rather primarily by Fenton's social authority and then by Ford's sententious rhymes of State and Fate. But, for me far more interesting and disturb-ing in this text in contrast to the Quarto, notice also that Master and Mistress Page say nothing whatsoever conciliatory to their daughter Anne. She seized the audience's attention when she took the stage at her entrance with a striking appeal for pardon. (At least she should in my imagined production.) But neither parent grants her a word. In the speeches subsequent to their initial challenges to her, they both address only Fenton and, as far as we can tell, direct their blessings to him alone:

Master Page's "Fenton, heaven give thee joy" notably uses the second person singular and thus excludes Anne, and then Mistress Page omits any reference to Ann in a speech which explicitly identifies other objects of her address, "Mr Fenton" and "Good husband."

Instead of the Quarto's inclusive and ameliorative festival, the final tableau of the Folio re-asserts social hierarchies of patriarchy, gender, and class:

. . . Good husband, let us every one go home,  
And laugh this sport ore by a Countrie fire,  
Sir John and all.  
Ford. Let it be so (Sir John:)  
To Master Broome, you yet shall hold your word,  
For he to night, shall lye with Mistris Ford: Exuent.

Gone are the boys to wait upon the losers, gone the invocations to joy, gone the enthusiasm for dancing and wedding plums, gone the repeated parental gesture of handing bride to groom, and gone the egalitarian invitation to the kind of feast Barber and Bakhtin would have applauded. Instead Sir John and Fenton dominate the parents' attention, other players in the drama are subsumed into the omnibus "and all," and our most dear Anne Page has been, as we have learned to say, "erased." No one answers her ingratiating plea for pardon, no one embraces her with good wishes, no one, not momma nor poppa nor neighbor nor pedagogue nor prowling fat fool nor even Post-master's boy lends her even one kind word of affirmation for her daring revolution.

If the Quarto version seems to follow from a reading of Barber, Folio Merry Wives of Windsor seems to reflect deep study of Lisa Jardine's *Still Harping on Daughters*. This talk is about alternative versions of texts: in the First Quarto of Merry Wives, Mistress Page hands Mistress Ford the letter she received from Falstaff, and she says, "I prethie looke on that Letter." Mistress Ford invites her to collate it with a second exemplar of the same text:

Ile match your letter just with the like,  
Line for line, word for word. Only the name  
Of misteris Page, and misteris Foord disagrees:  
Do me the kindnes to looke upon this.

In the Folio version Mistress Ford rather than Mistress Page makes the first presentation, and she offers the text far more urgently: "Wee burne daylight: heere, read, read."

In the modern tradition of editing, our friends the editors, for one reason or another, have been withholding from us the real pleasures of reading and comparing two texts of Romeo and Juliet and of Merry Wives of Windsor. Do we know "What Shakespeare Meant" by erasing Ann Page from the conclusion of Merry Wives in the Folio? Nope. But we do see the erasure with painful clarity when, and I claim only when, that text is juxtaposed with the Quarto version. And do we know What Shakespeare Meant by the dark imagery and ambiguous greetings of Q2 Romeo and Juliet? Nope, again. But we should see them clearly when contrasted with the the sunlight and embraces scripted in Q1.

The textual instances I've chosen reflect radically distinct literary and theatrically self-consistent formulations of gendered subjects. Hence the "Textual/Sexual" part of the paper's title." And finally for the "Diaperversity." It seems that editors in the orthodox and authoritarian tradition of Greg and Bowers insist on swaddling and pampering both texts and read-ers because otherwise, don't you know, we'll make those horrible messes. But perhaps it's time, perhaps we ourselves have the self-control and readerly sophistication, to confront the naked texts in their old spelling, in their compositorial blunderings, and in our basic confidence in our common wealth of diverse interpretive skills.

With the two merry wives, indignant over having been targets for a bloated, self-important good-ol'-boy who assumed his victims would be restricted to a single text, I

priethee, look upon these texts as sources of delight and critical empowerment. We burn daylight. Here, read, read!

Thank you.