

NEMLA 2016, March 17-20, Hartford CT

Shakespeare's *Male and Female*: Plays with Two Names

Individually or serially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* present opportunities to engage a range of critical concerns. The double protagonists in the titles foreground gender questions, however. Ladies are not first in the sequence of names, but whether or not they may be said to be first in the action of the plays is the question that this panel seeks to consider. Treating the plays individually or as a sequence, the panel welcomes papers that investigate the masculine/feminine divide. Such investigation can take any number of different approaches: whose agency is privileged in *Romeo* (or either of the two other plays, or in the sequence of all three plays); does the presentation of gender change from the early tragedy to the "problem comedy" to the late tragedy; are there pedagogical strategies that serve to highlight the deployment of gender in the plays; does genre play a role in the presentation of gender in these plays or in these plays by comparison to other plays, *Romeo* in light of *Dream*, for instance, or *Antony* by contrast to other Roman plays, or *Troilus* in the context of the problem comedies. So long as the masculine/feminine divide remains the focus of the paper, any and all approaches to the play(s) are welcome.

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