



2017

Navigating Tricky Topics: The Benefits of Performance Pedagogy

Christopher Bungard

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DIDASKALIA

Volume 13 (2016–2017)

<http://didaskalia.net>

ISSN 1321-485

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Didaskalia is published at Randolph College.

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Navigating Tricky Topics: The Benefits of Performance Pedagogy

Christopher Bungard

Butler University

Performance confronts an audience with a text that demands a response. Students in my classrooms frequently refer to anything that we read that does not look like a math or science textbook as a novel, and I believe this misunderstanding underscores a fundamental problem in the way students read literature, i.e., they read the poems of Catullus, the histories of Tacitus, and the plays of Plautus as simply stuff written by ancient people. By shunting the material to antiquity, students may dismiss the ability of these texts to speak to their modern experiences. I propose that asking students to approach ancient texts through a kind of double-vision facilitates student-driven understanding of how these texts challenge and/or support modern ideas. Since ancient playwrights, as Mary-Kay Gamel notes, “wrote for performance, not for reading,”¹ plays are especially useful in exploring tricky topics where ancient and modern attitudes may collide, such as rape. Through performance, we can present students with a text that insists on discussion, and through a double-vised approach, we can encourage students to probe ancient attitudes while thinking more critically about their own.

Before delving into the classroom activity that will be the focus of this paper, I need to clarify what I mean by double-vised approach. Modern students, lacking the cultural background of the ancient audience, might be confused by the reactions of characters when those reactions do not align with modern expectations. In order to examine the intentions of the ancient playwright with his ancient audience in mind, students need a window into that world.² To open it, I borrow heavily from Amy Richlin’s techniques.³ She gives students a series of potential spectators from a wide variety of social statuses (e.g., a magistrate and his wife, a *thermopolium* owner, freed slaves, wet nurses). While each audience member is described only briefly, the whole series of sketches provides the picture of a richly complex audience through which students can explore issues of class, race, and gender.

Since my aim is to get students thinking outside of their 21st-century selves, I assign them roles from Richlin’s activity randomly, without trying to match the sex of student and character. For example, it may be helpful for a white male student from the suburbs to have to think about what it would be like to be a freed, working-class woman. Once the roles are assigned and students have had a chance to ask questions about any details in their roles that they may find confusing (e.g. what is a *thermopolium*?), I tell the students to take 10–15 minutes to introduce themselves to each other, with the purpose of giving them a fuller sense of the status and experience of their fellow audience members. This is a crucial step, since it encourages students to see each other not as the modern classmates they have been sitting with for several weeks, but rather as a differently complex collection of people from ancient Rome. They can now react to a play both from their own perspective and that of an ancient audience.



Video Clip 1:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRONUgbPUUg



Video Clip 2:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMFTgtCSRKg

My “Roman Perspectives,” a general-education course attracting students from across the university, includes a unit on Roman Comedy in which students view, adapt, and perform scenes from Plautus and Terence. They first read Terence’s *Eunuchus* to begin thinking about how to handle tricky aspects of other plays in their own performance. During the play, the *adulescens* Chaerea is smitten when he catches a fleeting glance of Pamphila, currently a slave in the house of the *meretrix* Thais (293–297). Acting on a slave’s joking suggestion that he dress up as his brother’s eunuch to gain access to the girl (370–390), Chaerea finds himself alone with her. He takes “inspiration” from a painting of Jupiter and Danae, and rapes the unsuspecting Pamphila (584–606).

The theme of rape is not uncommon in the Greek New Comedies that Plautus and Terence adapted, but the fragmentary evidence indicates that no rapes happen during the play, let alone in broad daylight and without the excuse of drunkenness.⁴ The rape in *Eunuchus* is also noteworthy for being described as violent (e.g., 643–667), whereas others serve merely as background, without circumstantial detail (e.g., *Hec.* 382–384).⁵ For Sharon James, Terence is interested in showing “the privileged perspective of the citizen male, who is in a position to consider people in terms of their utility for himself.”⁶ This is a perspective that many modern students find rightfully problematic, but given the frequency of Title IX violations on college campuses (1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men are sexually assaulted while in college), not as alien as we might like it to be.⁷

Before continuing with my discussion of my classroom activity, it is important to emphasize a few points raised by the insightful works of Madeleine Kahn, Sharon James, and Sanjaya Thakur on the issue of talking about rape in the Classics classroom.⁸ We do a disservice to our students by not acknowledging the presence of rape in the texts we assign, and it falls equally to male and female professors to address these issues in class. As Thakur notes, “although an absence of male voices addressing [issues of rape and sexual violence] might not in any way be a validation of them, some students might interpret silence in such a way.”⁹ If we ask our students to engage with texts involving rape, we all have an obligation to explain our belief in the importance of doing so.

In her recommendations for beginning such a discussion, James emphasizes the importance of students’ respectfully engaging in dialogue aimed at better understanding how the ancient text treats rape (e.g., focus on social versus psychological consequences, questions of responsibility).¹⁰ Once students have a solid understanding of the range of ancient attitudes, she encourages students to be critical of positions privileged by such attitudes, particularly the view that non-citizens can rightly be exploited by the citizen class.¹¹

Such an approach dovetails with Kahn’s reflection on a class discussion of rape in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. She recognized that her students were responding to the text in very different ways, from complete rejection to relative indifference. From that understanding, she could push the students to think very concretely about how we approach literature from other times and cultures. As she asked her class,

“Do we try to read as if we were like the author, and a part of his culture? ... Or do we read from our positions as late-twentieth-century women and try to reconcile our worldview with the one being presented in the *Metamorphoses*?”¹²

By engaging our students in the double-voiced process of understanding the ancient lens and critiquing it from the modern, we can ultimately help students understand that, as Kahn suggests, “meaning isn’t hidden in a text, lying there unchanging and waiting to be discovered. Rather it is created between the reader and the text.”¹³ We can help students understand their role in responding to the thoughts of the ancients, encouraging students to think about why we still find these old texts useful in a very different world.

The rape in *Eunuchus* is particularly troubling for both an ancient and modern audience, but for very different reasons. When students are encouraged to consider this text with a double vision, they are better able to recognize the tensions between ancient and modern thinking. For example, an ancient master might focus on the rape of the slave girl as an issue of property damage. An ancient father might be worried about how the rape would impact the possibility of a good marriage for his daughter.¹⁴ Students, thinking from their own perspectives, always find it troubling that the girl is compelled to marry her rapist, focusing on the psychological consequences of rape for the victim.

The rape in *Eunuchus* is so troubling that it also causes problems for anyone wishing to stage the play for a modern audience, forcing students think about how to treat such topics in the plays they will adapt and perform in class. Niall Slater has suggested three ways of presenting Terence's plays for a modern audience. One approach is to accentuate characters who express their disapproval of the aspects of the play that a modern audience might find troubling. For example, as Slater notes, Paul Godfrey's 1996 adaptation of *Hecyra* in London has the *adulescens* Pamphilus express joy in his newly discovered fatherhood at the same time the *meretrix* Bacchis says, "You're a rapist!"¹⁵ But, as Slater argues, "the problem with this strategy is that Terence disappears and is replaced by what the adapter thinks of Terence."¹⁶ Another option is to have the actors step aside and comment on the action of the play, but this method ultimately serves to denounce the action on stage as foreign to modern sensibilities. Instead, Slater suggests that we write new prologues for Terence's plays in order to condition the audience to embrace the notion that "they *play* a role which may entail the assumption of a persona and even a set of values which are not inherently their own."¹⁷ I would suggest another way to play on the tension between ancient and modern attitudes towards the rape, an opportunity offered by the staging of the play.

I begin by showing my class parts of a recording of Mary-Kay Gamel's 2003 production of *Eunuchus*. Watching the recording, students see the characters come to life on stage, and they have an opportunity to think about how the staging can influence audience responses. When the tall and boyish Chaerea emerges from Thais' house, having just raped Pamphila, he dances about the stage singing, "Man, I'm hip," to the tune of Devo's "Whip It" before telling his friend Antipho about his "adventures" inside. [Video 1] Since it is not yet clear what he has done, the music induces the audience to view the world through Chaerea's "joyful" eyes. In response to the recording, one student was surprised at how much she enjoyed Chaerea's discussion of his scheme and how he got the costume. Instead of focusing on what he was saying, the student was drawn in by the actor's commitment to Chaerea's delight in telling his friend what just happened.

This identification with stage characters is particularly powerful in *Eunuchus*, one of whose leading characters is an unabashed rapist. A student from my class asked, "Is [Chaerea's discussion of the rape] disturbing because it is disturbing, or is it disturbing because I in the audience am coming to understand how the character understands their world and the joy of the problem for the character?" While I would certainly not condone Chaerea's actions, there is value in students being able to understand his mindset and the cultural assumptions that inform his joy in the harm he has done to Pamphila.¹⁸

When I show students the recording, I ask them to view the scenes both from their own perspectives and from those of the ancient audience members from Richlin's exercise. We split the discussion itself, starting with reactions from the ancient audience, so that students first take the play on its own terms before critiquing it from their modern viewpoint. My aim is to encourage them not to privilege one perspective over the other, but rather to understand the tension between the two.

This approach electrifies the discussion of the end of Gamel's production, where ancient and modern perspectives collide. The men exit for a party, congratulating themselves on the arrangements that they have made about the women, and a male slave looks briefly back to Thais' house. The audience can see

into the house, where on the second floor the women stand in various postures of grief and annoyance. [Video 2] Reflecting on this choice, Gamel notes, “it seemed amply clear to those working on our production that Terence was offering audiences a critical perspective.”¹⁹ The audience is presented with a choice about whether to focus on the joy of the men or the realization that their joy is not shared by all involved. Discussing this scene from both perspectives, ancient and modern, enables a more nuanced consideration of Terence’s parting message.

When students focus on the ancient audience, they tend to view the ending through the lens of the joyous men. A freeborn girl has been discovered by her family, has been saved from being wronged in a life of prostitution, and has found a husband. The young lover Phaedria gets to enjoy his beloved Thais even more thanks to the deal brokered with his father, and the soldier is allowed to think he is being loved while really being used for his money. The happy ending words of the text find their emotional counterpart in the students’ understanding of the production.

Viewing the play from a modern perspective, a few of my students suggested that Gamel’s conclusion highlighted an internal tension they felt between their sympathy with the men’s exuberance and their dissatisfaction with male hegemony. This frustration was aggravated by the fact that some students saw in Thais a symbol of female empowerment, deftly toying with her various lovers in order to advance Pamphila’s lot in life – the kind of woman who, if she were in a Plautus play, might determine her own fate.²⁰ For these students, Gamel’s ending reinforced James’ sense of the Terentian play as a space where free males exert the privilege to use the non-free and non-male for their own ends. One student suggested that Terence’s ending says that women can play all the games they want, but the “freedom” to do so is limited by men’s power to end those games whenever they choose. At the beginning of *Eunuchus*, Phaedria may have agreed to Thais’ request that he lie low so she could cheat the soldier (179–188), but he does so simply out of fondness for Thais. At the end of the play, Phaedria can broker an agreement to share Thais with the soldier without requiring her consent.

This simple exercise of having students watch a recorded performance of an ancient play through double vision puts them in a better position to critique their own culture. The students have to think outside of themselves first, understanding an alien viewpoint on its own terms. Having done so, they can think more critically about their own gut reactions to the ancient material, knowing that different responses are possible. It is precisely through this double-visioned process that we can best encourage our students to challenge attitudes that perpetuate problematic aspects of our own world, such as rape culture.

Discussions in response to a recording tend to be more vibrant than those arising from texts alone. Teachers are often unsure of how many student really read the material assigned, while presentation of a performance guarantees at least some exposure to the play. But this approach still leaves students as somewhat passive partners in responding to an ancient text, whether from their own perspective or from that of an ancient audience member.

In-class performances shift the dynamics, making students active creators of a response to the text. With limited time for the Roman-comedy unit, I had my students develop 15–20-minute condensed versions of three Plautine plays, *Pseudolus*, *Casina*, and *Truculentus*. Each group had about 6 students, sufficient to cover the major characters with doubling only on minor roles. The students were not asked to memorize the scenes, but they were expected to have practiced them enough to be able bring the appropriate emotional tone to the characters and incorporate some basic movement. One group performed in each class session, leaving approximately 30 minutes for discussion.

As students begin to condense these plays, they must determine their essential message, choosing which moments to cut and to keep. Having viewed and discussed Gamel’s production of *Eunuchus* equips them with both verbal and visual choices for tackling tricky issues such as rape or slave torture.

In condensing a play, students must also work as the Roman playwrights did, deciding how to adapt material for a new audience.²¹ For example, the *Truculentus* group felt that the trickery of the *meretrix* Phronesium was essential in highlighting the emphasis on powerful females. As a result, they cut both of the scenes featuring the eponymous slave (256–321 and 669–698) as distractions from the central point of the play.²² In the class discussions and short reflection assignment following the performances, it became clear that the students had internalized the experience of the Roman playwright. They wrote that this condensation process made them think much more about the deliberate choices of the Roman playwrights in how to entertain their audiences. In silent reading, students may have asked themselves simply whether they found the comedies funny or not, but in rewriting them in shortened form, they were forced to consider how an audience influences authorial choice.²³

Acting out the condensed versions pushes students to examine the text even more closely. Bringing the characters to life, students must think about how they would interact, imagining the tones of a master and subordinates in dialogue, in contrast with a slave's tone in asides to the audience (e.g., Artotrogus in the opening of *Miles* [1–78]).

In a Latin-language course, the use of performance, though usually beyond the scope of the syllabus, could also draw students' attention to the precise language of Roman comedy and the challenges of translation.²⁴ Serena Witzke stresses the importance of context in translating such words as *meretrix* and *scortum*, since (pace some recent scholars) both terms can be used of free and enslaved women. The key difference is politeness: *scortum* is used pejoratively and *meretrix* more neutrally or affectionately.²⁵ Witzke ultimately argues against simple one-to-one translation (*scortum* = whore) in favor of a more nuanced approach that takes into consideration issues such as the differing experiences of free and enslaved women in sex-work, the perspective of the character using the terms, and the cultural baggage of the English equivalents (e.g., the glamorized image of pimps in such modern-culture genres as hip-hop).²⁶

While Witzke is focused primarily on translations intended for use in courses that will not make use of performance, her observations are equally useful for students trying to embody words on the stage. For example, the *amans* Diniarchus in *Truculentus* opens the play with a monologue punctuated with several references to *scorta* (22–94). When the brothel slave Astaphium steps onto the stage, she delivers an alternative perspective (though there is no indication that she overheard Diniarchus) about the greediness of young men who go down to the *scorta* and take what they can while one of them loads up his *amica* with kisses (98–111). Though it is easy to imagine the appropriate tone for the young lover's angry tirade about the *scorta* he perceives as ruining him, the brothel slave's use of the term requires greater sensitivity from the actor. Presumably, the brothel slave refers to herself and her housemates as *scorta* as a way to channel the young men's mindset, but she herself would presumably not think of herself as simply a piece of flesh. The actor must find a vocal technique for indicating that *scortum* is the lovers' term for her as she shifts the terms of the debate to the atrocities committed by the lovers cheating the woman they should be treating well, their *amica*. Whether the translation uses one or several words to translate *scortum*, students performing the scene must process how best to express the characters' intentions in using the term.

I also remind my students that there is more to the performance than mere speech. For example, body posture asserts dominance or subservience, and shifts in power dynamics can be reinforced by changes in the actor's stance.²⁷ In *Casina*, the husband Lysidamus might seek to assert his triumph over his wife Cleostrata in the famous sortition scene (353–423) by making himself as tall as possible so as to loom over his wife. At the end of the play, when he must come out from his "wedding" to *Casina* and admit that his wife has cheated him by replacing the nubile *Casina* with the male slave Chalinus (969 ff.), the postures could be reversed to reinforce the change in power. Now Cleostrata stands tall as her husband hunches

slightly in defeat, perhaps hinting at the social shame of having his desire exposed.²⁸

Similarly, body shapes of actors contribute to the dynamics between characters. In *Casina*, having a shorter actor playing Lysidamus can underscore the eventual dominance of a taller Cleostrata. But height need not produce a static effect. In my most recent “Roman Perspectives” class, the group performing *Pseudolus* had their shortest member play the pimp Ballio. As she barked orders to the various slaves and prostitutes (133–239), weathered the torrent of verbal abuse from Pseudolus and his young master, who towered over her (357–375), and schemed with the young man’s father (1065–1102), the other actors reacted in ways that clearly revealed her power. The potentially unnerving power of this pimp was heightened by the subservient postures of bodies we might normally expect to be dominant.²⁹

Reflections on the performances, both on students’ own work as well as that of their classmates, have proven the most beneficial part of this process. I start the reflection process with immediate discussion of the in-class performances. I ask the students to view the condensed versions of the plays through the lens of the ancient Roman audience from Richlin’s activities. I push them to articulate what they think that audience would find funny and why. We also explore what might trouble the audience. For example, freed people who now owns slaves might watch scenes of slave trickery and find themselves torn between sympathies for a resistant slave and for a slave owner. Interacting with the plays (whether visually or textually) is no longer about whether the student finds an ancient drama rip-roaringly hilarious, but rather about how audience experiences influence the meaning of a performance. This simple exercise develops the empathy that allows people of differing mindsets to engage in productive discussion of such polarizing topics as rape culture.³⁰

In addition to class discussions, I require the students to write a short reflection about their own experience of condensing and performing the plays. Before this exercise, students focused their writing about a play on whether they thought it was funny. Now they engage in a more dynamic consideration of Roman comedies’ multiple facets. As one student commented, “Through viewing *Casina* both as myself and as a Roman senator, I was able to see Plautus’ true craftsmanship. The Roman senator, *thermpolium* owner, slaves and a twenty-first century girl were all able to find comedy in the same show.” She went on to note how each might find humor in the show, whether in a far-fetched scenario of a Greek man being duped by his wife or in the spectacle of a “powerless” female tricking a powerful male.

Through the Roman-audience exercise, even something as seemingly uniform as women tricking men can become more nuanced. Reflecting on the trickery of the *meretrix* Phronesium and her *ancilla* Astaphium in *Truculentus*, one student noted that both the wife of the *thermpolium* owner and their slave might find it funny. The wife might appreciate the power these two women exercise over the men of any background, but the slave might especially appreciate the brothel slave Astaphium’s trickery while also admiring the space this slave has for action independent of her master. In imagining different roles for themselves (as undergraduates may not always do), students are encouraged to think more about the social and power dynamics activated in Roman comedy. They become more nuanced viewers and readers when given a concrete way to transcend their limited perspectives.³¹

Prerecorded or live performance demands consideration of the dynamics between a play and its audience. Viewers engage in the process of untangling how a text makes meaning through its engagement with the cultural values of its recipients. Through the double-visioned approach, they are also able to identify the blind spots of a culture different from their own, forcing themselves to think about why something like a rape victim marrying her rapist “just makes sense” within the context of a play. Through the challenges posed by another culture, they may also come to see the blind spots of their own. If they find a moment funny, they are encouraged to ask whether their reaction is similar to that of someone in the ancient audience. If a joke falls flat, students can gauge how cultural difference spoils a certain kind of joke. Ultimately, this pedagogical approach enables students to engage with ancient plays

in richer and, ideally, more personally meaningful ways.

notes

¹ Gamel (2013), 466.

² The arguments we make about Roman comedy are inextricably tied to our assumptions about the audience. Compare Richlin's (2014) approach to the Platine audience with Fontaine's (2010). See Marshall (2006), especially 16–82, for a discussion of the logistics of the performance of Roman comedy. For my own students' sense of the needed general background, I have used Moore (2012), a volume in the Cambridge Greece and Rome: Texts and Contexts series well suited to my class of undergraduates, the vast majority of whom have enrolled to complete a general-education requirement. The insights of Goldberg (1998) concerning the use of temple steps for seating are clearly supported by the interpretations of both of Marshall and Moore.

³ Richlin (2013).

⁴ We can identify rape as a feature of Menander's *Epitrepontes*, *Georgos*, *Heros*, *Hiereia*, *Kitharistes*, *Perinthia*, *Phasma*, *Plokion*, and *Samia* as well as at least three others where we cannot identify the play the rape belongs to. Perhaps more surprising is that *Georgos* and *Heros* feature daughters who are the product of rape who are themselves raped. See Webster (1974) and Rosivach (1998) for more discussion on rape in Menander.

⁵ In *Hecyra* Pamphilus, while recounting the discovery that his wife, with whom he had not yet had intercourse, has given birth during his absence, informs the audience about the rape through the pleading words of the mother. The audience does not at this stage know that it is Pamphilus who raped the woman.

⁶ James (2013), 192. See Witzke (2015), especially 17–18, for a useful discussion of how scholarship on Roman comedy typically replicates this focus on the male-citizen perspective of the plays.

⁷ Krebs et al. (2007).

⁸ Kahn (2004), James (2014), and Thakur (2014).

⁹ Thakur (2014), 155.

¹⁰ James (2014) presents her class with a carefully worded statement. It reads as follows, "Rape is a very sensitive subject, and we will discuss carefully, with respect for each other, the ways in which our materials depict it ... In class, I expect everybody to treat these materials with great care and to be sensitive to each other. Nobody will ever be forced to talk about rape, either in class or outside of class ... we must deal with it in this class, but we'll do so with respect and sensitivity." (178)

¹¹ James (2014), 179.

¹² Kahn (2004), 438.

¹³ Kahn (2004), 448.

¹⁴ The prostitute *Thais* raises this concern on stage. In discussing the rape with *Chaerea*, she explicitly frets that she no longer feels she can return the girl to her family (867–871).

¹⁵ Slater (1999), 8.

¹⁶ Slater (1999), 18.

¹⁷ Slater (1999), 19.

¹⁸ See Video Clip 1.

¹⁹ Though we did not watch the clip where Thais' slave confronts Chaerea's slave confidant about the rape, students would be in a better place to understand his dismissal of the charge precisely because it took place in a brothel (Eun. 960-961).

²⁰ See Video Clip 2

²¹ Gamel (2013), 479.

²² One could easily compare the ending of Eunuchus with Plautus' Truculentus, where the meretrix Phronesium tells the soldier he will have to wait his turn to be with her while she works to get money out of the rival country boy.

²³ I intentionally leave some ambiguity about whether the students are producing a scene for a modern or ancient audience. This ambiguity enriches the discussions that follow the in-class performances, requiring students to think about the performance both from the ancient and modern audience's perspectives.

²⁴ Scholars of course have also debated the role of Truculentus who seems fairly extraneous to the essential core of the plot. For Grimal (1970), the perceived inconsistency of Truculentus' initial violent opposition to Phronesium's house and his later willingness to *scortum ducere* (678) can be attributed to Plautus' adaptation of a well-constructed Menandrian original into an unbelievably violent satire (*une satire incroyablement violente*, 95). For Konstan (1983), the potential inconsistency in his opposition to the house of Phronesium, followed by his eagerness to enter, it is parallel to the changes we see in Diniarchus and Stratophanes as they play moves from a tale of rivals into a triad of lovers drawn in by Phronesium's charm.

²⁵ In a course on ancient drama with more time for thinking about this process, a teacher could utilize this condensation process in varying ways. Students could be asked to condense the play with a free, adult, slave-owning audience in mind, then for a more mixed audience of women and slaves, and finally for a modern audience (however the students would conceive it). Discussions and/or written reflections about how audience shaped the various condensations would help students remember the importance of audience in the theatrical project.

²⁶ See Moodie (2015) for a fuller discussion of translating Roman comedy for modern audiences. Moodie draws from the insights of contributors to Hall and Harrop (2010) on performance of Greek drama.

²⁷ See Adams (1983) for a fuller discussion.

²⁸ Witzke (2015). Witzke does note the deficiency of only having the text to teach students Roman comedy. "The viewing experience may be very different. Performance, as the NEH Summer Institute for Roman Comedy (<http://nehsummer2012romancomedy.web.unc.edu>) has demonstrated, can significantly affect how the play is viewed. Performance allows for visual markers of status and experience that are not present in text alone. When we have only text to rely on, we lose action, gesture, tone, and other audio-visual cues that teach us how to respond to what we are seeing. Thus we must seek to approximate through translation with text markers (like enslaved versus free women engaged in sex labor) what may have been clear to viewers without explanation."

²⁹ See Marshall (2006), especially the discussion of status (170–174). Actors' postures can also serve to focus audience attention.

³⁰ Marshall (2015) provides a useful overview of attitudes towards masters' lust for their domestic slaves. Marshall notes that master–slave sex was “a transgressive act that both undermined familia and ought to be kept hidden at least from citizen women. Sex with one's slaves, though legally permitted, was not without any consequence, and clearly provoked some sense of shame and desire for secrecy.” (126)

³¹ For more on staging power in *Pseudolus*, see Bungard (2015).

³² I appreciate the advice of one of the anonymous reviewers who reminds me of Martha Nussbaum's (2010) arguments for the importance of empathy as part of a democratic education.

³³ Such expansion of perspective is especially important at schools like my own, where the student body is overwhelmingly between the ages of 18 and 22, white, and upper–middle class. I would argue that it becomes even more important when a school is actively seeking to diversify its student body, providing students with greater capacities for thinking inclusively and not rejecting lived experiences that they themselves do not share.

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