Pedagogy and Parenting
in English Drama, 1560-1610

Flogging Schoolmasters and Cockering Mothers

Ursula A. Potter

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Department of English
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Abstract

In this thesis I examine the representation of parents and schoolmasters and the conflicts between them in vernacular drama in Reformation England. This was a period of growth in public schooling and a time when numerous treatises on education and childrearing were in circulation in England. Prevailing pedagogical theory privileged the schoolmaster’s authority over that of the parents, and set paternal authority over that of the mother. It sought to limit maternal power to the domestic sphere and the infant years, yet the drama examined here suggests that mothers, not fathers, were usually the parent in control of their children’s education. The conflicts inherent in these oppositions are played out in drama dealing with schooling and childrearing; each of the works examined here participates in and contributes to public debate over school education and parenting practices in early modern England.

The thesis conducts a close textual and contextual analysis of the representation of schoolmasters and parents and of parent-school relations in seven English plays. A variety of dramatic genres is represented: public drama (Love’s Labour’s Lost, Patient Grissill, The Winter’s Tale), school drama (Nice Wanton, July and Julian, The Disobedient Child), and private royal entertainment (The Lady of May). The plays are explicated in terms of the Tudor school culture and the negotiation of authority between fathers, mothers and schoolmasters. The thesis draws extensively on sixteenth-century school dialogues and vulgaria and on education treatises, which were available in English in Tudor England, in particular the writings of Erasmus, Vives, Ascham, Mulcaster, Elyot, Brinsley and Becon. School records provide information on school conditions and curricula, the duties and qualities of schoolmasters and the role of schools in civic and public performances. The thesis addresses issues of gender, childrearing, public education and parental and pedagogical authority in the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.
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Note on texts

Titles of Latin texts follow the standard modern scholarly form as used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. 1996. Titles of texts in English follow the form given in the edition cited. For books published before 1800, publishers are not given, and place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

Primary pedagogical works

The following works are cited parenthetically within the text:

Cited as

Roger Ascham

*The Scholemaster* (1570)

Thomas Becon

*A New Catechism set forth Dialogue-wise in Familiar Talk between the Father and the Son* (1547-53)

John Brinsley

*Ludus Literarius or The Grammar Schoole* (1612)

Maturin Corderius

*Pueriles Confabulatiunculae* (1617)

Sir Thomas Elyot

*The Book named The Governor* (1531)

Desiderius Erasmus

*Colloquia familiae* (1519)
(The Colloquies)

*De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis declamatio* (1529)
(A Declamation on the Subject of Early Liberal Education for Children)

*De ratione studii ac legendi interpretandique auctores* (1512)
(On the Method of Study)

*De recta latini graecique sermonis pronuntiatione dialogus* (1528)
(The Right Way of Speaking Latin and Greek: A Dialogue)
William Hormon

Vulgaria (1519)

Richard Mulcaster

Positions Concerning the Training Up of Children (1581)

The First Part of the Elementarie which entreateth chefelie of the right writing of our English tung (1582)

Marcellus Palingenius

The Zodiake of Life (c.1531-1535)

John Stanbridge, Robert Whittinton

Vulgaria Stanbrigiana (1508)
Vulgaria Roberti Whitintoni Lichfeldiensiis (c.1520)

Juan Luis Vives

De institutione christianae feminae (1523)
(The Instruction of a Christian Woman)

De Officio Mariti (1529)
(On the Duty of Husbands)

De tradendis disciplinis (1531)
(Transmission of Knowledge)

Linguae Latinae Exercitatio (1539)
(School Dialogues)
School records and histories cited

Bon Record: Records and Reminiscences of Aberdeen Grammar School from the earliest times by many writers

Almondbury and its Ancient School being the History of King James's Grammar School, Almondbury

The Free Grammar School of Bristol, and the Thorns, its Founders

Calendar of the Manuscripts belonging to the King's School Bruton 1297-1826

An Early History of Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

Imps of Promise: A History of the King's School Canterbury

Tudor Foundation. A Sketch of the History of Richard Pate's Foundation in Cheltenham

Chigwell School

The King's School Ely: A collection of Documents relating to the History of the School and its Scholars

The King's School, Gloucester

A History of the King's School, Grantham ... 660 years of a Grammar School

The Royal Grammar School, Guildford

Kirkwall Grammar School: From Sang School to Comprehensive

Lanark Grammar School (1183-1983)
A. D. Robertson and Thomas Harvey. N.p.: Strathclyde Regional Council, 1983.

Country Grammar School: A History of Ludlow Grammar School through eight centuries against its Local Background.
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