

The Changeling: Conversion and Desire
A Workshop at Ryerson University
March 2 2017

“Conversion and Desire” was a collaboration of the School of Performance at Ryerson University, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, and the Early Modern Conversions Project, headquartered at McGill University. It grew from an exchange between then Stratford Festival Director of Education Andrea Gammon and Conversions Director Paul Yachnin. The Festival and the Conversions Project had been partners since the start of the Conversions Project in 2013. Gammon and Yachnin’s idea was to branch out from the work together in Stratford by taking the partnership work to Toronto. They chose Middleton and Rowley’s play, *The Changeling*, because it was on the Festival program for 2017, because it is a great and strange play in its own right, and because it would be a challenging play for a project on conversion, especially since it seems more about what the lead female character Beatrice-Joanna calls “giddy turning” than about conversion as it is usually understood, say by St. Augustine, which is as a turning toward a higher order of being that changes the person who has turned and changes the world itself by revealing the deep truths about the world.

Gammon and Yachnin also wanted to expand the artistic-scholarly collaboration between the Festival and the Project, so they came up with the idea of a full-day workshop including actors and scholars, all of it focused on *The Changeling*.

They had the great good fortune to connect with Peggy Shannon, Chair of the School of Performance at Ryerson. She graciously agreed to host the workshop at Ryerson, to take part in the planning, and to recruit some of her students into the workshop.

Early in 2017, Andrea Gammon was replaced at the Festival by Edward Duranyi. He then joined in the planning process.

The planners brought together actors from the Stratford company, student actors from Ryerson, scholars (both faculty and PhD students) from the Conversions Project and from York University and the University of Toronto. Tony Dawson and Paul Yachnin prepared the script of key scenes from *The Changeling*.

At the workshop itself, the participants worked theatrically and literarily around the series of key scenes. They developed their abilities to cross the boundaries between theatrical practice and scholarship. By their collaboration, they began to deepen their understanding of Middleton and Rowley’s play. They worked to develop an enacted, embodied understanding, a kind of grasp of a dramatic text that mixes together literary-historical study and performance as research.

Of course, they asked questions about conversion. What does the play have to say about “the crisis of conversion” in early modernity? What could the participants say about the relationship in the play between “giddy turning” and conversion? Is conversion a cogent way to think about the art of acting? (It certainly was in Middleton’s time, especially in a bad way, as in the antitheatricalist charge that theatre could degrade and pervert both the players and the playgoers.) And what might this old play have to say to people in the 21st century about love, desire, and transformation?

At the end of the full-day workshop, and after a break for dinner, they opened the doors of the Studio Theatre at Ryerson and welcomed an audience of approximately fifty students, faculty, and members of the public to a workshop performance. The evening featured performances of the chosen scenes from *The Changeling*. Between scenes, the researchers presented brief, engaging observations and investigations.

The workshop included a number of intersecting tasks: editorial work to prepare the text for the performance; scene study; character study; blocking of the scenes; performing (and doing and redoing the scenes differently in dialogue with the members of the workshop); historical and literary study; thinking about and performing modes of conversion; scholarly presenting to a mixed, mostly non-academic audience; record-keeping; and interviewing. Peggy Shannon was a light-handed and assured director of the scenes. The members of the workshop worked well together across what might have seemed like difficult-to-cross boundaries between how they would normally have approached a text like *The Changeling*. Lauren Eriks Cline and Joseph Gamble kept notes on the day's work and conducted interviews with the actors and the scholars. Their record of the workshop, which follows this introduction, illustrates well what the participants learned from each other and how well open-minded and adventurous artists and scholars are able to work together toward new understandings, born of minds and bodies, of challenging theatrical texts.

Members of the workshop

From the Stratford Festival

Brad Hodder, playing Alsemero
Ruby Joy, playing Beatrice-Joanna
Robert King, playing Vermandero
Tyrone Savage, playing De Flores

The student actors

Katherine Cappellacci, playing Diaphanta
Ariana Marquis, playing Isabella
Alexander Zonjic, playing Jasperino
Sebastian Biasucci, playing Lollo
Daniel Krmpotic, playing Antonio
Jonathan Gordon, playing Piraquo

Researchers

Heidi Craig (PhD student, University of Toronto)
Anthony Dawson (Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia)
Noam Lior (PhD student, University of Toronto)
Elizabeth Pentland (Associate Professor, York University)
Marjorie Rubright (Associate Professor, University of Toronto)
Stephen Wittek (Conversions Project Manager; Assistant Professor, Carnegie Mellon University)

And

Lauren Eriks Cline (PhD student, University of Michigan), workshop archivist

Joseph Gamble (PhD student, University of Michigan), workshop archivist

Liza Giffen (Director of Archives, Stratford Festival), archivist consultant

Hannah MacMillan, (Performance Studies student, Ryerson University), stage manager

Peggy Shannon (Chair, Ryerson School of Performance), co-organizer and scene director

Paul Yachnin (Conversions Project Director and Professor, McGill University), co-organizer and master of ceremonies

Changeling Workshop Interview Transcriptions

Lauren Eriks Cline

Interview with Scholars: Heidi, Marjorie, Liz, and Noam

Q: As scholars, what do you discover about a play by working with actors?

Heidi: One example was in the way that Ruby played Beatrice, her interaction with De Flores two totally different ways. Which I would sort of read it one way – in my mind I would see, oh this has to be read one way: she’s clearly acting. She’s clearly not interested in De Flores. But when you do it two different ways, you see the different levels of “is she trying to convince herself?” . . . She’s obviously trying to convince De Flores, but maybe she’s trying to convince herself or to convince the audience. Playing it two different ways you got all these sort of different tones of who she might actually be. There’s the metatheatrical part, but also Beatrice playing her own role. So really it just makes it more alive with possibilities. When you go to a theatre, they have to play it one way. When you have actors there, you can say “play it this way, play it that way.” It’s really exciting.

Marjorie: To Heidi’s point, I was really struck by how different De Flores was [according to] her choices. She had played the piece one way, and he seemed extremely comical – like we were all kind of in stitches about him. And then she changes what she’s doing, and his part – the funny kind of went away about him, the darkness kind of emerged. We tell our students in a classroom about the dialectic between the parts and all of this, but when we see that – your own body isn’t laughing suddenly at the same lines, in the same context, with the same actor. I thought that was for me an “a ha” moment.

Liz: Yeah there are always levels of discovery too. When I’m reading a play for my students, I’m listening for the language and I’m listening for the cues that the language gives me about how the characters are interacting. I’m looking for wordplay. I’m looking for intonations and things. But I’m always projecting outward a possible reading this way or a possible reading that way, and reading it over and over again you begin to develop multiple readings and you can point out to your students, “well it could be played this way,” or “it could be played this way,” and “what would happen if we read it this way?” But actors bring something completely different to it, because you’re not just projecting your own reading onto it, you’re faced with someone’s else’s reading of it, which is again sort of informed by another set of assumptions about the text, or a different way of reading again, so it adds a layer of complexity for me, like “no that’s the way I see it, but I kind of like what I see, and it’s different.” If you’re stuck at two ways of reading a scene, you realize there are like five or six or even more possibilities that you haven’t begun to see yet or hear.

Noam: I find when I’m reading a play or even when I’m working on it as a director or a dramaturge, my conception has to be fairly abstract, and it doesn’t get down to specific choices until I see and hear what actors are doing and start thinking about how much I want to either reinforce the choice that they made – or the fact that they made a choice makes me aware of opposite, alternative choices. That specificity wouldn’t have occurred to me when I was reading or preparing.

Liz: The other thing that’s really hard to read into a text is gesture. That’s where actors come in. When they’re embodying the text, they make choices about what to do with their hands, how to position their bodies, what moments they’re going to move, what props they’re going to bring in to use and when. And those kinds of decisions are really hard to see in the text without a sense of what

it means to embody those parts. So that's been a revelation: watching the actors move, when they touch each other, how they touch each other, that sort of thing.

Q: How has the concept of conversion opened something for you in the play today? Or have the interactions between scholars and artists helped you rethink conversion?

Marjorie: I'm thinking about this. For me it's not really a play – the scenes we've picked are not about a religious conversion. It's about conversions of orientation, conversions of motivation, and I'm watching it very much through a kind of gendered dynamic. So I'm thinking about when the lover becomes the whore, when she becomes a potential wife – language of turning.

Liz: And language of exchange. "I would not exchange this man for another man," yet she is more than willing to. Her father wouldn't, but she would.

Marjorie: Yeah, yeah that's right. That's right.

Heidi: Yeah I noticed the language of turning, when she had the first one where she says, you know, "I changed my saint and I'm turning from Alonso to Alsemero," but then you have the language of – De Flores actually uses the language of turning. He says, "you're turning to me now," so she converts herself and then he sort of converts her. So there's different ways of converting and you're not necessarily always in control of the way you're turning, which is interesting.

Liz: And there's changes of face. I mean literally, "what happened to your face?" she says, "You look different to me now." And the way that desire changes the way someone looks in your eyes: "My father will begin to look at him differently through the screen of my love, or in the brilliance of my love." So she sees him differently. She presents a different face to him, from loathing to desire or love, to try to get him to do what she wants. He then shows a side of himself and reveals something different. So there are a lot of changes of face, conversion of the way we see and the way we perceive and the way we read other people in this play.

Marjorie: Yeah. This time, which is – now what? – our third time through? I don't know why I'm lingering on this now, but what I'm lingering on is that mathematical equation that he does about her availability, which is kind of calculation of her conversion: "if it's one, then it's ten, then it's a thousand, then it's the army. And I find my way in this way." I would take a moment to think about that as: should we be suspicious about that kind of arithmetic, that kind of calculation that gets you to that logic? So there seem to be other modes of thinking here about conversion that are also in the air in the moment. Are we supposed to be skeptical about mathematics? Appreciative of mathematics? Who gets to be part of an equation that makes sense? And who gets to be part of an equation where violence is the end? Right? Woman.

Heidi: I was thinking about that scene and that arithmetic language in terms of the religious conversion aspect, where it seems like he's saying "if you're not steadfast to your first husband, then you'll have sex with 10,000 people." And thinking about that as "if you're not steadfast to your own religion, which should be that one true thing you're pointing toward, you'll be so susceptible to anything." And thinking about that sort of religious question for Catholicism and Protestantism in England, where if you're turning away from the faith, then you're very suspicious. And you may have sex with 10,000 people, I don't know.

But thinking about how working with the actors changes my thinking about this play, it seems like Vermandero and Alsemero are in a different play. They see each other. Right away they have this connection, saying, “oh you’re the son of my good friend.” They’re both so happy. You can see right at the beginning it might seem almost like it’s a comedy. He actually is the true lover. He is the right match. You know, somehow they get rid of the first fiancé. But Beatrice’s father and Alsemero are actually in a different kind of play. And they’re very cheerful until the end, so that’s its own sort of turn.

Noam: It’s literally “tragedy = comedy + time,” right? He’s five days late for the romantic comedy that would have been his life, and instead he’s in hell on earth.

Liz: There’s also a desire to convert desire, like physical desire or love, into a religious feeling. In that opening, in Alsemero’s first speech, he sees her in a temple, and he wants to read that as an omen. And there’s an element of idolatry there that he’s trying really hard to suppress: I should be worshipping my god, but I’ve seen her twice, and I can’t stop looking at her. That’s the desire that really animates him in that opening speech, but he wants to read it as a holy desire, as a godly one, and there’s something deeply problematic in that. This is going to be about the way we want to read things or the way we want to interpret things. And that’s desire: converting the way we see things.

Heidi: I wanted to know what you thought about the opening question, “what omen yet follows of that?” So what is the answer to that?

Liz: “None but imaginary,” which is, “I’m making this shit up.” [laughter] “I know I’m making it up. I know I’m saying what I want it to be. It’s all in my head, and I know it’s all in my head.”

Joey: That’s how desire works.

Liz: Right? So it’s a brilliant moment.

Noam: There’s also the counterpoint to what we’re talking about, [which] is constancy. There’s a sort of standard model (I sort adapted this from Neil Gaiman) that I use when I teach tragedy, where the model for tragedy is: a person, generally a man, is given the choice [to] change or die. And if they choose change, it’s going to be a comedy. If people are unwilling or unable to change in the face of a changing world, that’s the kind of basis of the Christian martyr narrative. Even in the kind of political landscape that we have now, there’s a weird respect for people who maintain their integrity in idiotic beliefs in the face of actual evidence. Whereas we distrust people who change their mind, even if it’s for the best, smartest, noblest reasons. And what this plays does in some fun ways is [that] all the people who are resistant to change are morons. They are resistant to change because they literally can’t see what’s going on.

Interview with Actors: Alexandre

Q: What do you discover about a play by working with scholars?

Alex: I just wrote an essay about the text/performance split, and I was just mentioning that it’s really interesting to see, at a face-value level, all the information that you guys bring that inform the choices that go on with performance of [the text], but then acknowledging that some of those

choices, once you see them performed, don't play a certain way, or are so dependent on the choices of another actor that we might not even talk about their dialogue. So just to see how well they work in tandem, but how split they can be when they're not discussed equally. So someone can be playing a choice with the dialogue that we think plays fantastically, as actors, but then if we really look at what the text is saying from a historical point of view, from a scholarly point of view, we realize it's not serving the greater message – it's not serving the play, or as a whole. That I think is fascinating. So I feel like here, right now, we're playing a sleuth detective game, where we're winding down between, "that was really cool, and we all laughed when you did that...but should we be laughing right now? Because five seconds ago we discovered x, y, z." And we would not have looked into that. We would have just played that. So I'm really enjoying that.

Q: Is there something that particularly draws you to *The Changeling* as a play?

Alex: I had not heard too much about it before we all started doing it, so what's drawing me to it is how I'm learning so much about it so rapidly right now. [...] But also I'm really just enjoying finding the nuance of characters. Like De Flores: was this as serious, were people laughing in the audience way back when they were watching *The Changeling* for the first time? Or are we now just finding humor in this, because we do understand that it's so tragic, but so grotesque. These guys are going to walk out with stab wounds all over them at the peak of the climax at the end. But yet we still really enjoy these characters so much.

And then also this subservient/dominant relationship that we see. In our modern scope, it's really interesting to see that these are very conventional relationships. Because we've left, by and large, a really religious view of marriage and relationships. But it's interesting to see [that] we view [these things] as pretty conventional under[neath] this strict religious rigor, and the Catholicism of the time, [there's] a sort of colloquial dysfunction. So suddenly the stakes are at 10. And we just kind of chuckle and identify and say, "oh, yeah, they're screwed up."

Lauren: I noticed the same thing that you mentioned: that the first time we went through the De Flores scene, I was laughing at everything Tyrone was doing, because it was really funny. But then when you play it again a totally different, and it works on you a totally different way. And I was saying to Joey that that's one of the things that's difficult about [studying spectators]. You might have a text, and you might want to hypothesize that an audience would react in a certain way, but you see here that you can't predict, because the same scene can hit so many different ways and work different ways. It might be working historically, as you say, but it's not working for people in the audience.

Alex: Or we just miss a mark. It's something I'm really enjoying, as I do in classroom work, where you try to find the clues that they've left for you. So what has Middleton left for us? Why don't we know that the father has just entered the scene yet? But he is here, and suddenly he has one line, even though he's probably been here for about ten minutes. How does that affect it? And if we just play that one line for the one line, we lose the weight of the situation that he's given us. He hasn't mentioned [it] in the stage directions – and it could be an editor thing as well – but we don't have the knowledge of the things around the text that you have, so it's great to investigate that further. I really love these kinds of discussions that we have about, "how did he enter into the scene?" Because we know we're in the peak of some drama, but we don't understand how that guy got there. Or what room is he throwing them in? That I really enjoy. Because I feel like we're really articulating something that then affects the choice in a really accurate way.

Changeling Workshop Interview Transcriptions
Joseph Gamble

Interview with Ryerson Actor Sebastian Biassuci

Joey: What do you discover about a play by working with scholars like this?

Sebastian: This has been my first experience having this kind of, especially with a large group of scholars present in the room. But I think what's been really exciting for us is something that one of our professors really instills in us as our four-year process has gone on is the actor is a researcher and sort of a detective and that's always how I've looked at it. And so, you get cast, and there's just so much research that needs to be done before stepping inside the rehearsal process, at least that's what in the four years my process has become. It's like, go out and do the research so you've got the baseline. So that stuffs all figured out: you know the world, you know the time, you know about the playwright, you know that stuff. So you don't have to worry about that, you can just be in the scenes. So, that stuff you have to do on your own. It's going through Google Scholar and it's going through the databases and finding that on your own. And that's a bit daunting. So having this opportunity where it's face-to-face, and having that knowledge right there inside another human's brain, so there can be a back-and-forth discussion is invaluable. That would be the ideal for me in every single process. Because that work does need to be done. What a better way to do it than having a discussion, having people who are invested in the material themselves and we're passionate about putting it on and the scholars are passionate about the piece itself. It's so ideal.

Lauren: Do you have a sense of what kinds of things are most useful or helpful for you to learn about the play or about the characters? When you're going into your own research process or when you're listening to a discussion like this: what are the most helpful pieces of information? What do you feel like you need to have in your toolset to get into your character?

Sebastian: I think especially when working with heightened texts like we're doing today, it's just about, on a simple level: what are they saying? What is being communicated? Because, I mean, you can get the sense, but having, for example, some of the metaphors and the imagery, and the historical allusions that are entrenched in the script, just having someone right away who can say "Oh, this is what this is." It just colors it and makes it so much deeper. Just understanding what is being communicated between the characters, so that then there's a relationship, and that goes deeper. And I guess, especially learning about this idea of conversion, these kind of theories of this is what the playwright was setting out to do, this is what the plays of this time were doing, or the goals of them, or what this character is showing an audience: it's good to know, okay, what is my function within the story, what is that character's function and purpose, you kind of have to go then, when you're playing it, leave that. But you do that work, so that when you walk on stage you can actually just drop it and you're there in the rehearsal process, in the early stages. What are we saying to each other? Why are we saying it?

Joey: Do you find that "conversion" has been useful throughout the day for thinking about this play or for thinking about your character? Has it opened up something about the play for you?

Sebastian: Yes, because it's not presently in my actor vocabulary. This is actually something new for me to think about and consider when working. So it's a theory that hasn't been part of our

vocabulary, so that's been exciting in and of itself to hear this kind of language of changes. We talk about "the shift," so I think we have probably the same understanding but just a different vocabulary, so that's been interesting. That's huge: especially in a play that's like this love square, it's unique in terms of the stuff I've seen, where it starts off with a lover character, then shifts to another, then shifts again. So that's been, for this play, that discussion needs to happen because of all the shifts. And *why*? What's making those shifts? Is it internal? Is it the world at large? Nature? Fate, destiny? Or just the relationships with each other, how De Flores can change Beatrice, and vice versa? Is there a change? Is it actually a change? Or was it there? I think conversion will go into my actor tool box, for communicating that language.

Interview with Ryerson Actor Ariana Marquis

Joey: What do you discover by a play by working with scholars like this?

Ariana: Oh my gosh, the entire thing! I find that, when you do a first read of something—because we didn't get this play too long ago—so I didn't read it thoroughly or do my research. So it's just having extra brains: there's only so much you can figure out with your own brain and your own life. With theatre, it's always nice to have more knowledge from other people so you can see "Oh, yeah, that does make sense!" So, it's either they're going to be teaching you new things, or just making you realize or further what you've already started. So it's extremely helpful, and opening, especially when you're trying to develop a character or find reasons or justifications—those are always hard, I find, as an actor to find justifications for things.

Joey: Do you find that that's particularly true with older plays like this? That it's more useful to have scholars for older plays rather than if you were doing something new?

Ariana: Absolutely. Because scholars, they know the most about this language and about the history, so it's—what *is* this language? Oh, this sounds so intellectual—oh, it's a dirty joke? Oh, I didn't know that. So, especially with this language, it's extremely important because things aren't just right there for you. Even though, Shakespeare's language and this language is more practical than you think it is. Just because it's written differently than you're used to. So, yeah, it's extremely helpful to have scholars around for this language.

Joey: Do you find that the concept of conversion has helped you think about this play or about your character at all today?

Ariana: Yeah, this play is perfect for thinking about conversion. Like we were talking about: *can* you change? That's extremely relevant here.

Lauren: Do you feel like there are other ways of thinking about change or transformation that are maybe more commonly circulated in acting training? What have been, in your training, the languages or concepts used to talk about a sort of transformation that happens in a character, or a shift that happens in mood? Are there other words used to describe that?

Ariana: I'm not sure if this gets at your question, but the "given circumstances," whatever happens, whatever life presents you and how someone reacts based on themselves, their surroundings, other people, their icons that they look up to: that will inform them to continue en route to who they are becoming. With life, you change, but *are* you changing? Or is it just how you're reacting to things and it's been you all along?

Lauren: That gets at that internal/external question that we've been taking up at the Conversions project. When we change, does that start from inside us, or is it something that's forced on us by external circumstances? And it seems like there might be different acting choices that you would make, or acting styles, depending on whether you read change as largely driven by who you are, or something that's happening to you.

Ariana: Yeah. It's like if you were doing a character and maybe having a tough time with a scene and one day you're just able to sob, maybe you're faking it, but it's a fake-it-till-you-make-it kind of thing, and then you're able to do it again and again and again because you've experienced it. So that's an interesting approach to teaching yourself how. You were able to access something you already had. Lauren: Just on that note, I thought it was really interesting how, as we've progressed through these different readings, I think Paul put it at one point, he said "The way you performed that scene got you to a point where you were able to kneel there." The idea that, like you're saying, *getting* yourself there—

Ariana: It's evolution!

Lauren: right. Doing things differently so you slowly sort of open up different possibility. It's getting yourself into an experience, which I think is really fascinating, as a way of thinking about how change happens, not just in our literary sense of how a character is changing, but how the actual embodiment of that character changes.

Ariana: Right, when you fully commit to something, what change can happen?

Interview with Stratford Actor Ruby Joy

Joey: What do you discover about a play by working with scholars like this?

Ruby: I've worked on plays like this with scholars previously, and it usually starts at the beginning of the tablework part of the rehearsal process. And I find it really useful, mostly because, there are reverberations in the text that the scholars may have a deeper understanding of, because they've devoted their life to the studying of this particular genre or that play. Whereas I can do my actor research, but may not have access to files or text that the scholars would have. And so there's a really deep—it rounds out the holistic approach to the play.

Lauren: I'm just imagining, thinking about actors who might have a different kind of approach to backstory, how much backstory you invent for a character, versus actors who say everything I need to know is in the text: do you feel like, or have a sense, that actors might have a different process in terms of how much they feel that that scholarly context is interesting and useful in a performance?

Ruby: For sure. Some actors *love* sitting around the table. They could sit there for weeks, because you're talking about all these things in minutiae. And then there are other actors who think "Just get me on my feet, because I'll learn about what the characters want by playing with the other people." And I, you know, I guess speaking to my own practice, I'd say that I really like diving into the scholastic pool of the play, and then when I come out from under it, it's part of the triathlon. It's not a swimming competition: it's a triathlon. It's a thing that I have to go through, that I will draw strength and training from, but it's not the be-all-end-all. So there will be things that I'll slip off half

way through the process because it was a good thing to keep in mind, but it's actually keeping me from playing the scene. And there'll be things that I pick up halfway through that I realize "oh my god, I totally forgot about that thing we talked about in the first week." It's actually a really useful addition to get what I want from this scene.

Joey: Do you think that the concept of conversion brings something to your understanding of this play or the way that you would perform Beatrice?

Ruby: Oh, for sure. I think, it makes it real. That's what I particularly like about the scholarly discussions is that, you know, again, to someone who was raised outside religion, that conversion is theoretical. At this stage in history, it would have been *deeply* practical, I mean *deeply*. Like: wives, mothers, sisters, brothers. Hidden faith, open faith. It would have been something that could potentially mean life or death, loss of friends, loss of family, Traitor's Gate. And Francis Howard: so there's also the inclusion of class in that discussion, with conversion. Can you change your fate by changing your class? If we're bringing that to the Francis Howard discussion, did their class, or favor perhaps is a better way of putting it, save them from a fate that their peers had to suffer? Which is a human thing, but is it also a divinity thing? Is it also a deity? I don't know. But I think, in terms of Beatrice-Joanna, the question of that "Outside the room" that we talked about, I think it is super useful. Because the practical desires that she has are in dialogue with the question of conversion. So, again, it may not be the central argument that she has—she's like, yeah, I have a thing over there that I'll have to end up dealing with, that my understanding of the world is bouncing off of.

Joey: Is there something in particular that draws you to *The Changeling*?

Ruby: That it's messy. I like messy. I think it's really useful. I think it is great, in an odd way, like the ending of *Measure for Measure*, where Isabella does not answer. That's *great*. That's messy. Because it forces, or invites, perhaps, an audience and creative collaborators, to show themselves. And I think this play is constantly asking its characters and the audience to show themselves. Even in decisions like De Flores stabbing himself within the closet, or without the closet, where does he stab himself? And how does movement change the meaning of the play? And what are your personal prejudices towards or against, your personal experiences with, some of the things that happen in this play? And that's really cool. So, yeah, messy!

Lauren: We were talking earlier about your asides, about Beatrice's asides. Joey noticed that in the scene, the seduction scene with De Flores, a lot of the asides seem to be directed toward cultivating sympathy from the audience, turning toward the audience and asking them to side with her and see her argument, and then you talked about some of the lines that should be asides but aren't, and then there's the aside that gets interrupted as if it's on-stage dialogue. So, it seems like there's something in the messiness of that technique where Beatrice—that asides don't work in quite the way that we expect them too, and that that's part of what invites us into a particular enigmatic relationship with her character.

Ruby: Totally. I completely agree. And I think it also creates culpability for the audience: I'm asking you to see, I'm asking you to witness. You are witnessing, but I realize you're witnessing. That's equally important, because traditionally, no one in the audience would get up and stop the performance. And that's culpability, right? You are *letting* Beatrice go down that road and you are *letting* De Flores do what they do to each other. Because that's what you're paying to see! But that's what you've *paid* to see.

Lauren: It's another contractual obligation. You've entered into a contract: you've paid for the ticket and now you're sort of in this relationship.

Ruby: I don't have the asides in front of me, but it's—*how could this happen?*—the audience is implicated in that.

Notes by Lauren Eriks Cline and Joseph Gamble

Changeling Workshop

Joseph Gamble

This workshop, held at Ryerson University, was essentially a full-day seminar that brought together undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and professional actors around several key scenes from *The Changeling*. With the actors' performances serving as the key texts of the day, we collaboratively worked through the world of this play: its themes; its language; its tensions; its gender, sexual, class, and religious politics. The back-and-forth between actor and scholar was highly productive, as it shifted the sorts of questions each would bring to the text: scholars began to think in terms of characters' intentions, and actors began to think in terms of a wider historical context. Paul began the day by calling this a "sharing exercise," and it was precisely that. From my vantage point, each group came away from the experience fully enriched by the other group's understanding of the play. What follows is a sort of "minutes" of our proceedings, a transcription—sometimes verbatim—of the questions that were raised and the issues that were discussed, both throughout the day, and in the Q&A after the performance.

Morning Workshop

Paul calls this a "sharing exercise." A blend of working through and performance.

Paul really sets the stage with a story about murder, sex, and executions (Francis Howard).

Paul: "the play will not bend over and say 'Yes, I'm about conversion.'"

Before we began, there was a brief discussion about the process of cutting/selecting the scenes for our workshop. Several scenes from the main plot jumped out immediately. "We have to have something about the madhouse." Tony: "The emphasis is on the madness of the proceedings."

SSHRC was duly thanked.

We begin with 1.1

Stephen asks "Do people really change?" He notes that Middleton wants us to wonder if people really can change—that this play raises this question even in the beginning scene, re: Beatrice. Is it really love at first sight, he asks. Or is it just a way for her to get out of the marriage that her father has arranged? He notes that Beatrice dropping her glove is a reference to Francis Howard. One of the things that this Middleton suggests is "Sexual attraction and disgust are not necessarily mutually exclusive."

Ruby notes that we don't get to see Beatrice say goodbye to De Flores at the end of the play. She suggests that Beatrice is in love *with* love. She notes that thinking about programs like AA might be useful for thinking about whether people can change in this play because: "You're always practicing, you're never cured."

Marjorie points us toward the deeply rooted gender trope of women as changeable things in the line: "I find a giddy turning in me." She notes that she started thinking about changeability and *orientation*. "Are our desires oriented?" "Maybe one of the challenges today will be to think about how to play with and pull apart from something like that conventional stereotype."

Ruby notes: "I'm more interested in *how* does she make that change? What are the actions?" She points us toward tropes of the sea, sailing, and wind. "There's a lot of forgiveness given to the ocean," but for women there are consequences.

Brad: "So much of this play is about people wanting to have sex with other people." "Against all this lust, there is this moment of two people falling in love at first sight."

Peggy notes that this is one thing that's dramatically interesting in the play, that comparison between lust and love.

Noam says "For me, the question is—it's granted that people change all the time, so the question for me is which changes matter?" There are early modern tropes that deeply gender this, he notes.

Brad notes that the play isn't called *Changelings*, despite the fact that multiple people change.

Heidi notes that in order to change, you have to have options. But, interestingly, Alsemero's first metaphor is of Eden, where there were no choices.

The researchers and Brad work through some meanings of the Eden metaphor, of having a virtuous sexuality that would lead back to "man's first creation" before the fall. Noam notes that this would be the *end* of change, if we were really able to achieve it.

Peggy invites the researchers to offer acting notes to the actors.

Liz brings us to the imagery of the citadels. "How much are we actually being admitted to their secret parts, and how much is this just for show?"

Stephen reminds us that the characters in the play are sexy Catholics. The fact that this play opens in a Catholic church adds to the irony of this "pure moment of Edenic identity."

Marjorie thinks with the actors about how to enliven the imagination through the sexual punning.

Noam asks: What does De Flores *look* like? Since the language describing him changes throughout the play. Is the disgust toward him about his appearance? Paul says: "He's a hard man." Paul: "It's not just the way De Flores looks, it's the way he looks *at you*."

Scene 2.2

The actors and the researchers seem to be more in conversation at this point, asking questions back and forth about the words "violent" and "service."

Paul suggests that the meaning of "service" across the play deepens as De Flores and Beatrice become closer.

Paul and Tyrone each work through the idea of where the tone of the scene shifts toward darkness.

Ruby suggests that we work through beat work, and work through the shifts slowly.

Robert suggests that De Flores is a pure character, that his intentions don't change.

Paul reminds us that Beatrice holds off on giving De Flores the task until she's sure she has him.

Stephen suggests that De Flores's development across this scene is related to his growing sexual fervor.

Heidi asks about how good Beatrice is at dissimulating in front of De Flores. Ruby thinks through how she can mediate between acting for De Flores and acting for the audience, since they are in on it.

Ruby and Tyrone run through a short section of the scene again, trying out Beatrice as a "bad" actor and then a "good" actor.

Stephen suggests that both tones are "hot." Marjorie notes that the difference in tone changes our understanding of De Flores.

Marjorie then points out that Beatrice's answer to the question "What if I were a man?" is very different than other women in early modern drama—like, for instance, Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Stephen asks if this is the scene where Beatrice's orientation toward De Flores shifts closer toward sexual attraction.

Ruby notes that this is a game of "Kiss or Kill?"

Paul notes that there is a "common property" fantasy that De Flores has, but that De Flores also wants Beatrice specifically. "What do you want in this scene?" Paul asks. Peggy suggests that De Flores is proving himself to Beatrice. Tyrone suggests that he wants to *serve* her.

Noam quips, “De Flores, for me, is a dude who lives on the internet a lot.” He notes that there is a psychological shift between the action and the aside. He suggests that Beatrice might become a better liar across the scene.

Liz notes that this scene builds a power struggle, that neither Beatrice nor De Flores know exactly what they are capable of. She points out that “to such, gold tastes like angel’s food” is a metaphor of conversion, and that there is a conversion of power happening throughout this scene.

Noam asks whether or not De Flores would pause after Beatrice gives him Piracquo’s name.

Stephen asks how we can see De Flores’s capability of murder this early on in the play.

The discussion turns to the relationship between Alsemero and Diaphanta early on in the scene.

The actors then read the scene through a second time.

Peggy suggests that this time, we were allowed to think and engage with the characters, rather than having them *tell* us what the scene is about. Peggy: “I believed now for the first time that De Flores would kill at the end.”

Paul notes that, when De Flores kneels, conversion happens through his body, rather than just psychically.

Brad asks about De Flores’s line: “I am too loud.” Are there stakes there, he asks? Paul notes that this is a very dangerous space to be living in, that it’s hard to tell when things are public or private.

Noam notes that Beatrice’s response to Alsemero’s offer to duel Piracquo would be emasculating: she doesn’t believe he could win!

Lauren notes that we started with the question “Is Beatrice in love with love?” and now we’ve reached “No, she’s in love with loathing.” Alsemero’s romantic offer isn’t enough for her: she’s more interested in opposing her loathing.

Brad notes that Alsemero seems to be in the wrong play: he’s a perfect romantic figure, but the play isn’t interested in going in that direction.

Liz, Brad, and Ruby think through Beatrice’s shift from wanting Alsemero to not being interested in him.

Lunch Break

3.4

Liz notes that there is a radical shift in this scene around conscience for De Flores. He thinks he wouldn’t be guilty if *he* had hired someone to kill someone, but that Beatrice *is* guilty because she got him to kill someone.

Stephen asks about the severed finger. “What is De Flores actually thinking here?”

Brad and Lauren note that this scene reflects the previous scene. “It’s possible that De Flores thinks that he’s bringing an erotic into the room when he brings the finger.”

Tyrone and Liz think through the power relations in this scene, how De Flores brings Beatrice down to his level. Liz: “It’s, you’re not better than me.”

Paul: “There’s a kind of recovery of the moral language in this play.” He points to “charity” and the way that De Flores demands that Beatrice *feel*, rather than think through, her position.

Peggy suggests that we put space between Tyrone and Ruby in order to give the scene some breath.

Tony emphasizes the importance of the final speech, its “tender language.”

Marjorie: “I felt like this whole scene was begging for touch, a very hostile touch.”

Paul notes that Beatrice turns around the Edenic imagery of the opening scene, comparing De Flores to Satan. He also notes that De Flores picks up the “rise” language Beatrice had used in the last scene.

Liz notes that De Flores demands that Beatrice learn to love him. And that there’s two ways to read the panting, that it’s fear, both that he wants it to be her desire. “Desire makes you read things the way you want to read them.”

The actors then reread the scene.

Peggy suggests that De Flores stand behind Beatrice at the end of the scene, which gives a whole new tone to the performance.

Ruby notes that Beatrice *decides* not to call out when De Flores overpowers her. “Whatever is outside the room has to be worse than what’s inside it.”

Paul points out that Valencia refers to Alsemero.

Brad brings us to the language of Beatrice being cursed “in the womb.”

4.3

We discussed the logistics of staging the mad house.

Paul turns us toward the characters of Lollo, Isabella, and Antonio.

Tony notes how Isabella is confined in the madhouse. Arianna suggests that Isabella is trying to test whether Antonio really loves her, or if he is just attracted to her.

Stephen suggests that perhaps Isabella is playful, that she isn’t just a virtuous woman.

5.3

There was a long discussion of Alsemero’s intentions in the last scene, why he would send in De Flores to Beatrice.

Noam suggests that this is a Hail Mary plea for mercy.

The actors worked through the stakes and shifting of power in this “frenetic” final scene.

Stephen asks “How big of a deal is it that her dad’s here with her?”

Paul suggests that we’re rehearsing any audience’s reaction to this play. “Beatrice is an enigmatic figure, and De Flores defies damnation. It makes sense to say that she wants to apologize.”

Ruby notes how intimate the murder is in the closet.

Marjorie: “For Alsemero, this is a conversion scene. He’s trying to convert what he thinks of his wife.” “This is the turning and turning and turning of conversion.”

Brad: “He’s been building toward full Leontes for a while.”

Peggy returns us to the refrain of “Catch the last couple in hell.” She suggests a way to make it build for the audience.

Lauren suggests that we’ve discovered throughout the day that there’s a much more complex, layered, and unresolvable tension in De Flores’s desires for Beatrice; that Beatrice has this desire for a love that she can purify, but it’s always caught up in being in opposition to things that she loathes; and Alsemero needs the story of marriage in order for him to feel okay about his desire: not only has his wife found a way to enjoy sexual pleasure outside of marriage, but he hasn’t even been able to have pleasure within marriage, because of the bedtrick.

Q&A After the Performance

Paul: “Conversion is an aspiration toward change that sticks.”

Tyrone suggests that characters don’t change. Katherine suggests that this is a play about adaptation, rather than change.

Brad: by the end of the play, Middleton is telling us that no change is good.

Liza asks about the potential for reading Calvinism in the play.

An audience member suggests (re: Brad’s assertion) that there’s a good conversion in the subplot.

An audience member asks how we can stage the mad scenes now given the fact that perceptions of mental illness have changed since the 17th century.

An audience member asks about the permeability of spaces—“Beatrice-Joanna is a permeable body in the way that her space is permeable.”

Liz notes that it’s De Flores, the *servant*, who gets to travel these private spaces. He has intimate access.

An audience member asks about the performance history of the play.

An audience member asks about service and the status of De Flores—what kind of servant is he? Tony responds that he’s a gentleman servant.

Changeling Workshop (March 2, 2017)

Lauren Eriks Cline

Central themes of discussion

- Fate/predestination (being cursed in the womb) vs. free will (being “the deed’s creature”)
- Loving vs./and loathing
- Desire to purify sexual desire through religious language around marriage
- The gender of “turning”
- Class conflict/movement across classes

Introduction

- Two tasks: sharing exercise (mine deeply into the play) and performance
- Paul provides historical context: sex/murder/scandal, negotiations with Spain, embedded in the “crisis of conversion” in early modern England, but a play that “resists” Paul’s obsession
- Peggy asks Paul to talk about how he and Tony made the script (scene choice)
 - Tony: two major scenes immediately presented themselves (two big scenes); first scene sets everything in motion/is the hardest scene; have to have a madhouse scene/metaphor of insanity (the cut allow the madhouse scenes to slide into the last scene in a way they don’t in the full play); emphasis on madness and how it reflects on the main plot
 - Paul: It does mean we’ve left things out

First scene

- Stephen: Do people really change? Is it possible for someone to really change? (Middleton wants us to ask this question)
 - In the first scene, is it love at first sight? Or is it a way to get out of a marriage that’s been prearranged for her?
 - Middleton: sexual attraction and disgust are not necessarily mutually exclusive
 - Ruby: This is something we talked about last night; it’s interesting to Ruby for her to be fully in love with both/to be in love with love; but the choice is there to make her disinterested in her fiancé; as far as change, Ruby is interested in thinking about programs like AA that use language of practice rather than cure (“you are the deed’s creature”)
 - Marjorie: “change my saint/giddy turning”: the trope of the giddy turning woman; changeability and orientation (Jasperino: “you know not where you are”); are desires oriented?; how can we pull Beatrice away from the conventional stereotypes?
 - Ruby: How does she make the change (what actions?); notes the presence of sailing/sea metaphors
 - Brad: A lot of discussions of who wants to have sex with whom, but the play starts with love too; Alsemero changes too from stoic to lover
 - Peggy: The love b/w Alsemero-Beatrice contrasts with other more lusty relationships

- Paul: Alsemero is a virtuous man and virtuous men want to explain themselves in holy terms; how much of the attraction is physical, being justified in other terms?
 - Ruby: The centrality of sight to love; seeing/being seen
 - Noam: it's granted that people change all the time; which changes matter? What stories do we tell ourselves about which changes matter and which don't? These stories are gendered. In a culture, what changes do we see as mattering? Does that change b/w the early modern period and now?
 - Brad: who is the changeling? We're set up to think it's Alsemero, but then other candidates emerge; title is still singular
 - Heidi: In order to be able to change, you have to have options; but the first metaphor Alsemero reaches for is Eden, which implies a predestined mate; but we are sexually postlapsarian, because Alsemero is here too late
 - Tony: Alsemero feels sexual desire but wants to make it holy; one way to make it holy is through marriage
 - Paul: claim that you can overcome original sin through holy marriage
 - Tony: he's justifying himself
 - Noam: in many plays, when the right people get married, change ends
- Peggy asks the scholars to suggest different possible interpretations for actors to play
 - Liz: focus on the imagery of the citadel (parallel to the characters showing one thing, feeling another; parallel to conversion debates about outward vs. inward change)
 - Stephen: you are dangerous, stylish, sexy Catholics; the spectacle of the play's opening in a Catholic church (complicates the pure moment of Edenic epiphany)
 - Marjorie: allow the level of sexual punning to come alive
 - Noam: what does De Flores look like? The language used to describe him changes a lot in the course of the play – does something in the performance or the makeup change?
 - Paul: he's hard man (born a gentleman, but he's had a hard life, which is why he's in service); he's never going to be a soft man, but he does develop a kind of love for Beatrice; Beatrice does not like the way De Flores looks at her...this as more key than the way he looks?
 - Stephen: how much does De Flores's scarring matter to him?
 - Paul: asks De Flores to catch Beatrice's eye in a way that makes her uncomfortable
- Replay the scene

Break (when we come back, actors have rearranged to put Stratford main cast in the center, servants on right, madhouse on left)

Scene Two

- Ruby: notes the repetition of the word "violent"
- Tony: notes the words service and serve running through the scene; class service and serving each other sexually
 - Tyrone: De Flores understands that in service nothing is free
 - Tony: De Flores is teaching Beatrice a new language
 - Paul: service as a contractual relationship; an ethical relationship; service to God; our sense of what "service" includes gets more complicated as the play goes on

- Paul: asks about Tyrone bringing out the comedy in De Flores; is there a point where there's a turn toward darkness?
 - Tyrone: his words and thoughts are clear enough that he doesn't need to drop the hammer on her; there's no need to thrash or get loud
 - Peggy: what if it's not about comedy/not comedy but instead: De Flores needs to make Beatrice believe that he's really in her service
 - Robert: De Flores's character is pure, almost clownlike in his fidelity to his own purposes
 - Paul: Beatrice holds off giving De Flores the task until she's sure of him
- Peggy: Beatrice is in a hurry to get the deal done and get away from him once he's agreed
- Stephen: De Flores's development in the scene is linked to his growing sexual excitement
- Heidi: Is Beatrice as good of an actor as you are?
 - Paul: how much does Beatrice convince herself in the scene?
 - Ruby suggests playing the scene both ways
- We play the scene both ways
- Joey: we can track sexual knowledge through the characters; De Flores has a fantasy life; when Beatrice plays the scene more convincingly, she seems more sexually experienced (is virginity something she uses to delay the marriage; or is she really working through something about her sexuality?); do Alsemero and Beatrice come into the world with a sexual past/sexual knowledge?
 - Tyrone: maybe Beatrice is using the signifiers of sexuality without totally knowing what they mean; that gives her something to learn later/somewhere to go
- Marjorie: the comedy changes if Beatrice is more knowing (we don't laugh at De Flores as much)
 - Asks about the "what if I were a man" question; Beatrice says she would use that power to oppose her loathings; what if she is discovering that answer for the first time in this scene
- Tony: draws attention to the "rid myself of two inveterate loathings at the same time"; she's getting a sense of an attraction that she wants to close down
- Paul: people are explaining to themselves/to others the chaotic feelings that arise; De Flores has a common property fantasy (Beatrice will become a whore and I can have her) but also a fantasy about her being his private/personal property; is he looking for confirmation that she's a whore or confirmation that she has a particular feeling for him?
 - Peggy: does De Flores need/want to prove something to her? (more about relationship than ownership?)
 - Tyrone: how does he want her? He's about power, but he wants to be on bottom. He wants to serve.
 - Noam: De Flores is a dude who lives on the Internet a lot; how much does he want to hide his desire from Beatrice/how much can he?
 - Difference b/w modern and early modern dramaturgy: we expect multiple levels in the same performance; in early modern dramaturgy. the two levels are in main lines and asides; what if she gets better as she goes on...is she changing or getting better at acting?
 - Liz: the scene builds a power struggle; shifting in power; "gold as angel's food" as a metaphor of false conversion; both characters figuring out what kind of power they have over each other

- Noam/Stephen: is it news to De Flores that Beatrice wants him to kill her fiancé? Or has he seen it coming?
 - Tony: He definitely knows
 - Paul/Tony: the lines they exchange about it are very erotic/intimate, a kind of love making
- Stephen: is Diaphanta already getting wise to what's going on between Beatrice and Alsemero?
 - Paul: does Alsemero know what's going to happen at the meeting?
- We need to be prepared for De Flores's murder of Beatrice later
- We read the scene through again, choosing door number two (she acts well)
- Conversion in the head vs. conversion in action
 - Paul: Ruby enabled herself to kneel in this second reading
 - Noam: Protestant vs. Catholic sense of conversion as external/internal
- Brad asks whether De Flores is actually afraid of being overheard
 - Paul: this is a citadel, which is a dangerous space
- Noam: Alsemero's offer to do it outright with a duel is rejected; he would be hurt by her rejection of his offer (that's emasculating)
- Brad: Is Alsemero in the wrong play?
 - Stephen: he's allergic to aphrodisiacs; he's not experienced in sex
- Tony and Ruby draw attention to the dynamics between Peraquo and De Flores, with De Flores showing Peraquo around the castle

(Actors rearrange again, with Stratford actors in the middle, and the student actors playing the madhouse scene now separated on either side)

Third Scene

- Liz: there's a shift in the way that conscience functions for De Flores; he says his conscience would have been clear if he had paid someone else to do the murder, but then he claims that Beatrice (who paid him to do the murder) is as guilty as he is
 - Paul: it's a feature of Middleton's dramaturgy that characters are intelligent but can be "absolute moral idiots"; they often can't understand the morality they're summoning forth
 - Noam: the stakes for De Flores revolve around whether he and Beatrice are the same; he can't let Beatrice be different/apart
 - Stephen: what is De Flores thinking during the finger business?; is he like a cat who brought you a dead mouse, or is he playing her deliberately/trying to psych her out?
 - Tyrone: De Flores issues a plea in this scene ("we're perfect for each other")
 - Liz: there's also a class dynamic ("you're not better than me")
- Paul: there's a recovery of/return to the moral language of the play (appeal to "charity"; "justice invites your blood to understand me")
- Peggy: suggests that Tyrone and Beatrice are physically too close together; we need to pull the scene out and give it more space
- Tony: we should push a little bit more toward the tender language at the end
 - Ruby: Beatrice is being educated in murder and sex
 - Paul: Beatrice is recalling the scene of the fall; characterizes De Flores as Satan/the viper; picking up the word "rise"

- Paul: to what degree is this a rape scene?
 - Stephen: the coercion makes it rape to a modern audience no matter how you play it
 - Tyrone: he wants her to say yes; Liz: he wants the power and has a fantasy that she will learn to love it
 - Ruby: a lot depends on how she pants
 - Liz: fear or desire?; *Othello* in the air at this time...in that play Brabantio reads Desdemona's desire as fear; here it's possible that De Flores reads Beatrice's fear as desire
 - Noam: the sub/dom dynamic: the power of the sub is to give or withhold signals that the dom is succeeding; being aware or not aware of what the other person wants is part of the power play in these scenes
- Marjorie: This scene begs for hostile touch
- We read the scene again
 - Peggy asks Ruby to kneel facing forward, Tyrone to stand behind her
- Noam: turtle is a vicious joke, b/c turtles mate for love/for life; also a reference to Song of Songs
- Ruby: Beatrice doesn't call for anyone, because what's outside the room is also dangerous; or are her own feelings about De Flores just so complicated at this point that she can't discern danger properly?
- Brad: "was my creation in the womb so cursed?" → feels like it should be an aside, but it's not; fate vs. free will (the "deed's creature")

Scene Four

- Interesting division with the questions being asked "for the scholars/for the smart people"; questions often get asked across the divide in the room, rather than from actor to actor or from scholar to scholar
 - Division of knowledge/assumed knowledge?
- Peggy: how mad should the actors be acting?
- Paul suggests doing some character work: Middleton is creating parallels b/w main plot and subplot
- Paul asks Arianna why she thinks Isabella is doing what she's doing
 - Arianna: Isabella is very smart; she's outfooling/outsmarting
 - Tony: she's been confined to this space; she's a prisoner
 - Stephen: standard reading of her is that she's set up as a comparison with Beatrice-Joanna (good girl, bad girl); this seems too easy; in Middleton there's usually no human purity; maybe she sees this as an opportunity to play/be a little rebellious
- Peggy asks Sebastian and Daniel about the tension between the men
- We read the scene again

Scene Five

- Peggy recommends opening up the scene; it's hard to hear the language when the actors are so close together; asks the Stratford actors to move forward
- Brad: does Alsemero know that De Flores will kill Beatrice when he sends him into the closet with her?

- Why does he want them to have sex again near him? Is he mad? Is he acting irrationally?
 - Does De Flores get the last laugh?
- Stephen: De Flores ends the play with “I got what I wanted; I don’t care”; Beatrice ends with a line of contrition; why?
 - Noam: a Hail Mary prayer for mercy; dramatic convention about dying penitent or non-repentant; now are Beatrice and De Flores going to different places?
- Joey: Alsemero decides to be a pander; that means he’s implicated in the going-to-hell thing; a power play b/w Alsemero and De Flores
 - Brad: and Alsemero is also realizing he never consummated his marriage
- Stephen: how does it affect the scene that dad is here?
- Paul: in our discussion here we are rehearsing how an audience of the play would respond; there’s a range of possibilities, but the play does not seem directed toward her salvation but rather toward her relationship to the men around her; Beatrice’s end seems deliberately enigmatic
 - She is not given a moment of self-recognition; that is pretty extraordinary in tragedies
- Ruby asks about the “token”
 - Paul: it includes the finger
 - Tony: it includes the wound De Flores has just given himself, the wounds he’s given her, sexual wounds
 - De Flores is trying to link their fates/their destinations
- Tyrone asks whether Alsemero physically drags De Flores into the closet
- Marjorie: the scene is a conversion scene for Alsemero; he’s trying to change how he feels about his wife/make himself see her as a whore rather than a wife; but it turns back on him
 - Stephen: the confirmation of her guilt is sudden, but Alsemero has been stewing over this possibility for a while
- Peggy suggests a change to the “catch all” line so that it has gravitas/does not sound hokey; she arranges an accumulation of voices and levels: first one actor standing on a chair, then four actors at different levels, then six actors on different levels
- We read through the scene again