300 ways
to call a woman a whore
in Shakespearean England

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Calling a woman a whore is

- A way of keeping "troubling individuals grouped in their marginalised place and to insist that the place is a vulgar, degraded one from which they can never escape"

(Stanton 2000, 81)

Stanton (2000) looks at every instance in Shakespeare's plays for the lemma 'whore'

- Whore (45x)
- Whore's (2x)
- Whores (8x)
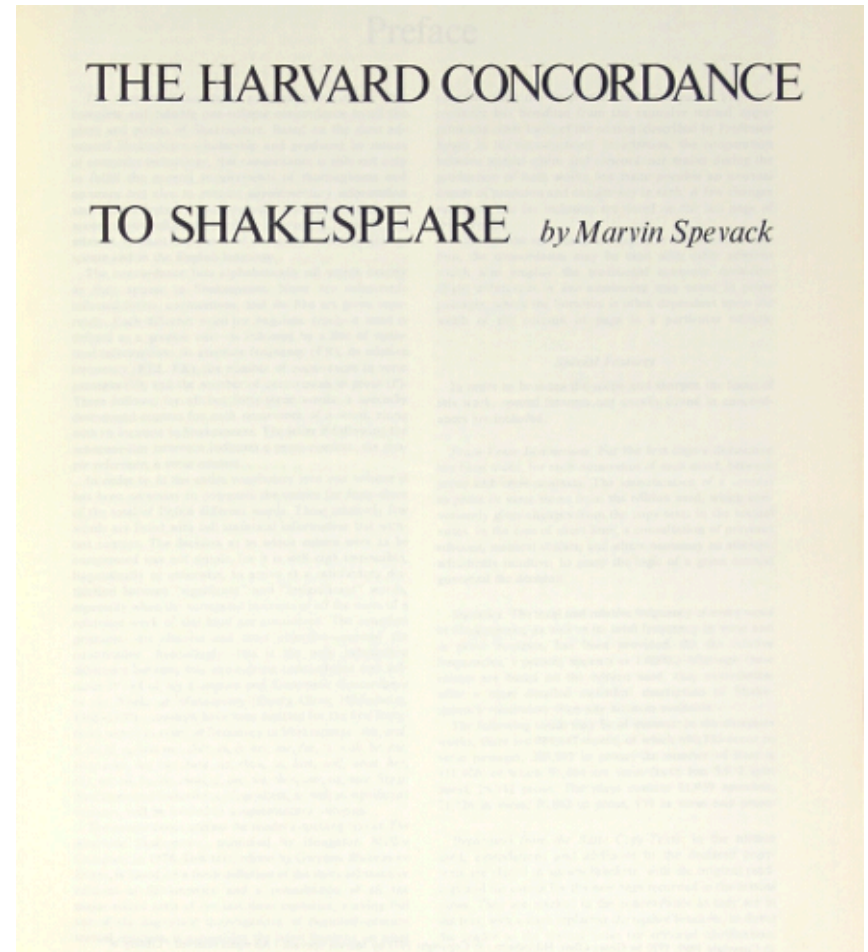- Whoreish (1x)
- Whoring (1x)
- Whored (1x)
- Bewhored (1x)

Across 16/36 plays she finds that:

- A form of the word 'whore' appears in…
  - all the tragedies except for *Julius Caesar* & *Coriolanus*
  - 3 history plays (1H4, 2H4, H5)
  - 5 comedies (M4M, MWofW, R&J, Tempest, Timon)
    - Of which 2 are classified as 'romances' and 2 are classified as 'problem plays'
    - Unless you include *Troilus and Cressida*…

Stanton (2000) finds the word 'whore' can be used across a huge range of licentious and sexually changed actions

So what?

- Stanton uses two ancient and antiquated pieces of technology called a 'concordance' and 'a dictionary'

- Take this approach, WIDEN

THE HARVARD CONCORDANCE
TO SHAKESPEARE *by Marvin Spevack*

Corpus Linguistics and 17th-Century Prostitution

Computational Linguistics
and History

Anthony McEnery
and
Helen Baker

3 Ways Women are Grotesque in Elizabethan England

1. Their mouths
2. Their chastity (or lack thereof, depending)
3. A lack of obedience towards social enclosure

(Stallybrass 1986, 126)

Agency and social power

- Rebellious behaviour "jeopardized the communal order for men and women alike" (Hodgdon 2010, 51)
- A woman who is in some way transgressive is therefore still passively still bringing shame upon her owner

"Loves Captivity and Liberty: / Or, The two various united Lovers. / Set forth in a Ditty, to invite / All Lovers to the same delight" ESTC R180331 Pepys Ballads 4.5, 1674 -1679

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Methods

1. Get a list of words associated with 'whore' from the Historical Thesaurus of the OED

2. Make a list of rules to use for text-tagging with Ubiquity

3. Measure frequency/ies in Shakespeare's plays

Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary

http://historicalthesaurus.gla.ac.uk

http://www.oed.com/thesaurus/ (£)

The external world Go

- The universe
- The earth
- The living world
- Sensation
- Matter
- Abstract properties
- Relative properties
- The supernatural

The mind Go

- Mental capacity
- Emotion or feeling
- Philosophy
- Aesthetics
- The will
- Refusal or denial
- Having or possession
- Language

Society Go

- The community
- Inhabiting or dwelling
- Armed hostility
- Authority
- Morality
- Education
- Religion
- Communication
- Travel
- Occupation
- Leisure

1. the external world > abstract properties > action or operation > endeavour > attempt [verb (transitive)] > strive for or after > something false or unworthy ► whore (1913)

2. the mind > the will > will, wish, or inclination > desire > aspiration or ambition > aspire [verb (intransitive)] > pursue something false or unworthy ► whore (1913)

3. society > morality > moral evil > moral or spiritual degeneration > [noun] > corruption > corrupt community ► whore (1382)

4. society > morality > moral evil > lack of principle or integrity > [noun] > lack of scruple > unscrupulous or unprincipled person ► whore (1633)

5. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > [noun] > sexual indulgence > unchaste behaviour of woman > unchaste or loose woman ► whore (c1275)

6. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > [verb (intransitive)] > associate with loose woman ► whore (1583)

7. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > unchaste [verb (transitive)] > ► whore (1681)   View thesaurus

8. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > loss of chastity > deprive of chastity [verb (transitive)] > a woman > bring to condition of whore ► whore (1604)

9. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > prostitution > [noun] > a prostitute ► whore (a1100)

10. society > morality > moral evil > licentiousness > unchastity > prostitution > [verb (intransitive)] > practise prostitution ► whore (1583)

society > morality > moral
evil > licentiousness > unchastity

There are 10 available subcategories relevant to issues of unchastity

— [noun]
— [adjective]
— [adverb]
— [verb (intransitive)]
— unchaste [verb (transitive)]
— [phrase]
— lasciviousness or lust
— loss of chastity
— fornication, adultery, or incest
— prostitution

Historical terms for whores: by the numbers

- 1,497 phrases or individual lexemes for 'whores' or the action of being whorish

- Narrow to those in use during Shakespeare's life (in use between 1564-1616)

  – E.g. *adultery* (1st cited by OED in 1405) still in use between 1564-1616

  ------> to 304 words

Five Ways of Talking about Whores in Shakespearean England

1. The state of being unchaste or a whore; ways of describing one who is unchaste or whorish or associates with individuals who are whores
2. Sexual desire and the indulgence of lust
3. Dishonour and negativity attached to sexual deviance (real or imagined)
4. The loss of virginity/fornication
5. Violence

The state of being unchaste or a whore (a sample)

- bitchery, brothel, brothels, brothelly, common stale, commoners, commoner, community, crushabell, crushabells, cunts, cunt, curtal, curtals, customers, customer, doll-commoner, doll-commons, doll-common, drivelling, forwhore, hackster, hacksters, hackney, harlot, harlots, harloting, harloting, harlotise, harlotised, harlotises, harlotize, harlotized, harlotizes, harlotry, harlotry, hell-mouths, hell-mouth, hiren, hirens, incontinence, incontinency, incontinent, jumblers, jumbler, keep a woman, land-frigate, light-heels, lighted-tailed, loose in the hilts, loose-legged, loose-tailed, mermaid, mermaids, miss, molls, moll, night-worm, night-worms, occupant, pagans, pagan, paphians, paphian, polecats, polecat, prostitutes, prostitute, prostituted, prostitution, public commoners, walk-street, wench out, wench, wenched, wenchel, wenchels, wenches, wenching, whore-lust, whore-lusts, whore-man, whore-men, whore, whoredom, whoreishness, whorekeeper, whorekeepers, whoremaser, whoremonger, whoremongering, whores, whoring, whorish, whorishly, whorishness, whory, ETC

Sexual desire and the indulgence of lust (all)

- By-lusting, cockish, cockishness, cocky, concuspiscential, covet, coveting, covetous, effeminate, flesh-lusts, flesh-lust, hot-backed, lascivient, lascivious, lascivity, lecher, lechers, lecherer, lecherhead, lecherness, lecherous, lecherous, lechery, libidinosity, libidious, libidiousness, liburical, lickering, lickerous, lickerousness, lickster, lubric, lubricity, lubricous, lust-breathed, lust, lusting, luster, lustful, lustfulness, lustihead, lustiness, lustiness, lusting, lustly, lustre, lusty laurence, lusty lawrence, luxe, luxur, luxurious, luxuriousness, luxurity, luxury, man-wood, rampant, ruttish, salacity, saltness, saucy, to go to sault, venerial, venerian, venerian, venerious, veneriousness, venerist

Dishonour and negativity attached to sexual deviance (real or imagined) (All)

- a fate worse than death, adulter, adulterate, adulterated, adulterer, adulterers, adulterise, adulterize, adulterous, adulterousness, attempt, attempter, behorn, byhore, bywhore, cornute cornuted, cornutes, cornuto, corruption, cuckally, cuckold-maker, cuckold, cuckoldry, cuckolds, cuckoldy, cuckquean, cuckqueans, defiler, dishonor, dishonored, dishonour, dishonoured, forked, foul, fulyie, horn-mad, horn-maker, horn, horned, horner, horning, hornity, ram-head, ruin, shame, spouse-break, spouse-breaking, to give horns to, unconstant, unfaithful, vitiate, vitiating, vitiation, wedlock-break, wedlock-breaking, worse than death

Loss of Virginity/Fornication (all)

- bawding, bawdry, constupration, defile, defloration, deflourish, deflower, deflowerer, deflowering, defouling, depucel, depucelate, dettorate, devirginisation, devirginization, devrginate, dismaiden, mackerelage, maintainer, panderage, pandering, panderirms

Violence (all)

- rape, raped, raping, rapter, rapture, ravener, ravishment, ravishment, stupration, tup, unmaiden, unmaidening, violation, violation, violator, abuse, abuser

http://vep.cs.wisc.edu/ubiq/

Ubiqu+lty 1.2 changelog

A Visualizing English Print application from the University of Wisconsin–Madison

Ubiqu+lty generates **statistics**[6] and **web-based tagged text views**[7]

for your **text/s**[1], using **the DocuScope dictionary**[2] or **your own rules**[3].

Upload Files

Text File/s or ZIP Archive/s - max job size: 50mb [1]

[Choose Files] No file chosen

Rules type

- ○ Use DocuScope dictionary[2]

  [Version 3.21 (6/26/2012)   ⇕]

- ○ Use own rules file (check the FAQ for how to format the CSV).[3]
- ☐ Break texts into fixed-size chunks[4]
- ☐ Text defect statistics in csv (TCP pipeline files only)[11]
- ☐ Enable blacklist[5]
- ☐ Generate n-gram csv
- ☐ Generate rule metadata csv
- ☑ Generate token csv representation (for use with SerendipSlim)[12]

Your Email Address *(You will receive an email when your documents are finished.)*

3. How do I specify my own rules?

If you don't want to use the DocuScope dictionaries, Ubiqu+Ity allows you to create your own simple rules. Rules are declared in a CSV file that looks like this:

- Column 1: **Whitespace-Separated Words and Punctuation**
- Column 2: **The Rule's Name**

Ubiqu+Ity will look for exact instances of the rules that are specified. Column headings (i.e. `Words, Rule` on the first line of the CSV file) are *optional*, but recommended.

Here's an example:

```
Words, Rule
I have a question, GenericQuestionQuery
Have you had, PresentPerfectQuery
Stand ho, ExclamatoryStatement
```

In the future, we will allow users to create more complex, hierarchical rule structures.
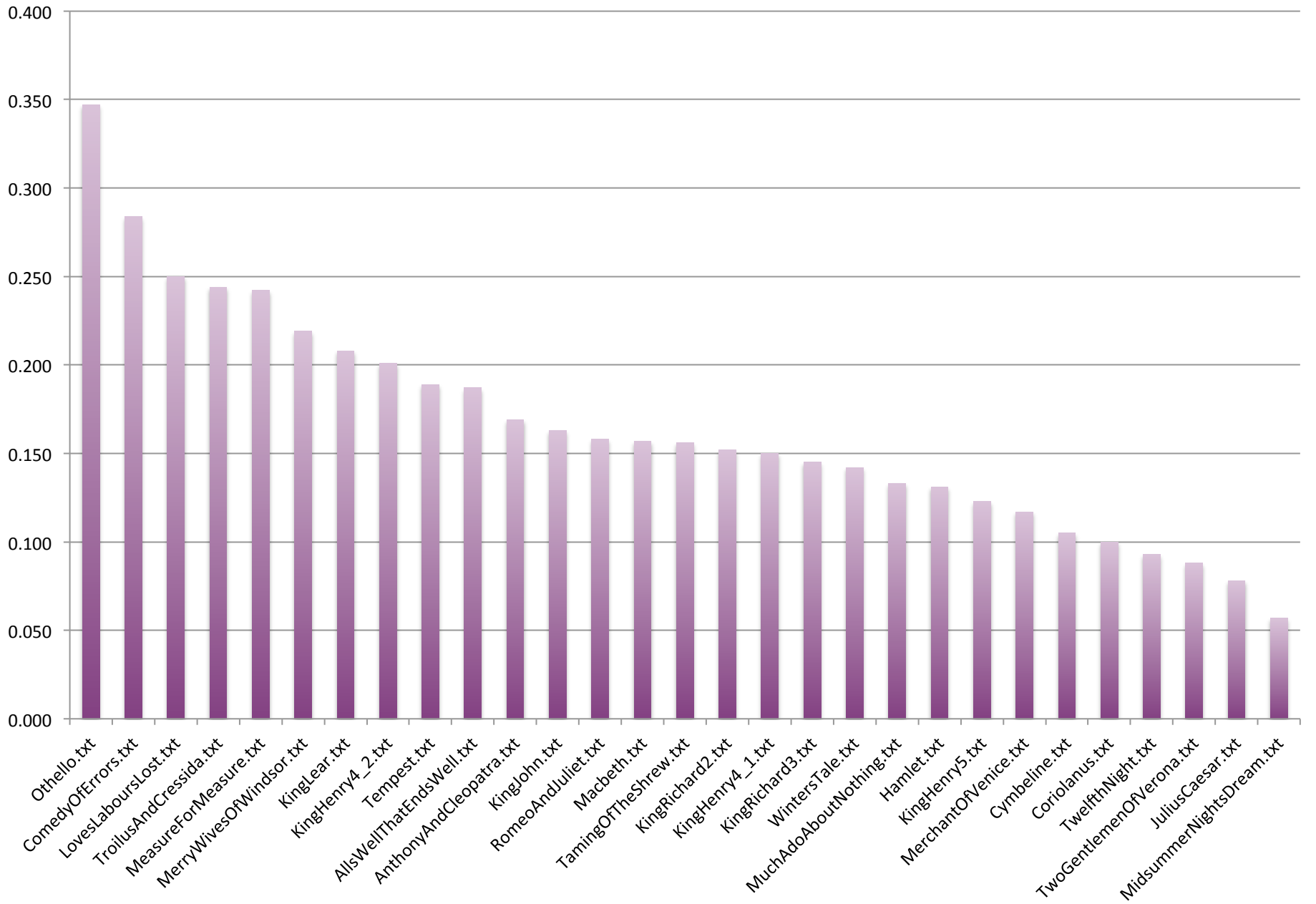
Words	Rule
Barber's chai	Whore
Bitchery	Whore
Brothel	Whore
Brothels	Whore
Brothelly	Whore
Common sta	Whore
Commoners	Whore
Commoner	Whore
Community	Whore
Crushabell	Whore
Crushabells	Whore
Cunts	Whore
Cunt	Whore
Curtal	Whore
Curtals	Whore
Customers	Whore
Customer	Whore
Doll-commor	Whore
Doll-commor	Whore
Doll-commor	Whore
Drivelling	Whore
Forwhore	Whore
Hackster	Whore
Hacksters	Whore
Hackney	Whore
Harlot	Whore
Harlots	Whore
Harloting	Whore
Harloting	Whore
Harlotise	Whore
Harlotised	Whore
Harlotises	Whore

Apply these rules to

- Folger Digital Texts edition of Shakespeare's plays (Mowat, Werstine, Poston, and Niles 2014)

- But in plain text format:

  - http://graphics.cs.wisc.edu/WP/vep/vep-shakespeare-collection/

Wells and Taylor 1987, p 111-134

- Authorship problems:
  - *Henry VI parts 1-3*
  - *Titus Andronicus*
  - *As You Like It*
  - *Timon of Athens*
  - *Henry VIII*
  - Macbeth

- **EMILIA Hath she forsook so many noble matches,**
  Her father and her country and her friends,
  To be called "whore"? Would it not make one
  weep?
  DESDEMONA It is my wretched fortune.
  IAGO Beshrew him for 't! How comes this trick upon him?
  DESDEMONA Nay, heaven doth know.
  EMILIA I will be hanged if some eternal villain,
  Some busy and insinuating rogue,
  Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
  Have not devised this slander. I will be hanged else.
  IAGO Fie, there is no such man. It is impossible.
  DESDEMONA If any such there be, heaven pardon him.
  EMILIA A halter pardon him, and hell gnaw his bones!
  Why should he call her "whore"? Who keeps her
  company?
  What place? What time? What form? What
  likelihood?
  The Moor's abused by some most villainous knave,
  Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.
  O heaven, that such companions thou 'dst unfold,
  And put in every honest hand a whip
  To lash the rascals naked through the world,
  Even from the east to th' west!

(Othello 4.2.146-169)

- PETRUCCIO They shall go forward, Kate, at thy command. --
Obey the bride, you that attend on her.
Go to the feast, revel and domineer,
Carouse full measure to her maidenhead,
Be mad and merry, or go hang yourselves.
But for my bonny Kate, she must with me.
Nay, look not big, nor stamp, nor stare, nor fret;
I will be master of what is mine own.
She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.
And here she stands, touch her whoever dare.
I'll bring mine action on the proudest he
That stops my way in Padua. -- Grumio,
Draw forth thy weapon. We are beset with thieves.
Rescue thy mistress if thou be a man! --
Fear not, sweet wench, they shall not touch thee,
Kate.
I'll buckler thee against a million.

(*Taming of the Shrew* 3.2.228-246)

- HERMIA O me! You juggler, you cankerblossom,
You thief of love! What, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?
HELENA Fine, in faith.
Have you no modesty, no **maiden shame**,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

A Midsummer Night's Dream (3.2.299-303)

- FALSTAFF Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits. I will awe him with my cudgel; it shall hang like a meteor o'er the **cuckold's horns**. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style. Thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night.

(*Merry Wives of Windsor* 2.2.285-293)

- DIOMEDES Both alike.
  He merits well to have her that doth seek her,
  Not making any scruple of her soilure,
  With such a hell of pain and world of charge;
  And you as well to keep her that defend her,
  Not palating the taste of her **dishonor**,
  With such a costly loss of wealth and friends.
  He, like a puling **cuckold**, would drink up
  The lees and dregs of a flat tamèd piece;
  You, like a **lecher**, out of **whorish** loins
  Are pleased to breed out your inheritors.
  Both merits poised, each weighs nor less nor
  more;
  But he as he, the heavier for a **whore**.

  (*Troilus and Cressida* 4.4.60-72)

- PROSPERO Thou most lying slave, Whom stripes may move, not kindness, I have used thee, filth as thou art, with humane care, and lodged thee in mine own cell, till thou didst seek to **violate** the **honor** of my child.

(Tempest 1.2.412-417)

Conclusions

- Discourses of slander can be used against women, especially their corporeal and social autonomy
- Stanton (2000) shows that the accusation of whorishness can be applied to any number of circumstances, and present different power structures throughout

Conclusions

- I have shown wider view of how the concept of a lack of chastity functions in Shakespeare's England.
  - 5 unique categories of whorishness covering a variety of contexts

Conclusions

- Structures surrounding womanhood affect both men and women:
  - women can cast accusations of impurity at each other
  - masculine pride is used to establish social dominance through the exchange of feminine sexuality.

Conclusions

- Women perform the acceptable presentation of gender not just for the men of Elizabethan England but also to retain social stability

Thank you!