

Feminism and Gender Equality in the Plays of William Shakespeare

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Abstract

Shakespeare's brave women come in a wide range of representations and forms. Shakespeare's female characters exhibit remarkable understanding, essentialness, and a strong sense of personal autonomy within the exhibition of female characters. These critics have viewed Shakespeare as a womankind's champion due to certain traits. As a trailblazer who explicitly departed from flat, stereotypical depictions of women fundamental to his rivals and previous manufacturers. In contrast, some journalists observe that even Shakespeare's most uplifting portrayals of women have negative aspects that balance them out qualities. William Shakespeare was an Elizabethan scholar who wrote across. One of his pieces was reliant on the era's populace. Elizabethan times were an era in which women were shown as being weaker than men. The analysis hinges on a careful reading of Shakespeare's actual tragic plays—Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, and King Lear—in the context of deconstructive feminism. The investigation's main theory holds that women are portrayed and presented in Shakespeare's tragic plays as inferior and negative stereotypes, and that these works have strengthened and perpetuated the notion that society is centered around men.

Key Words: Shakespeare, tragic, female, characters etc.

Generally speaking, women's emancipation is defined as the support of women's rights based on gender equality. Humanism downplays the unusual and emphasizes success and everyday joys. It emphasizes having a discernible attitude toward nature and life. Humanist reasoning views man as a whole, not as a class of man or woman based on their sexual orientation. Renaissance was a period of growth and progress in Western Europe, spanning from the fourteenth to the late seventeenth century. It was a revival of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, emphasizing the individual. It witnessed the discovery of new landmasses, the decline of feudalism, the invention of the printing press, and other events.

When she first arose, she was an iron-willed figure ready to "[pluck] my nipple from [my

child's] boneless gums, and [dash] the brains out, had I so sworn as you Have done to this" (I. vii). However, later on, she was seen to be under the influence of blame-related nightmares. How could such a firm character change?

The well-known explanation that "women's allegiance to men from their own [background] always supersedes their allegiance to women from different classes" (Tyson 97) explains why maltreatment of women isn't more commonly regarded as persecution of particular ethnic or religious groups. Women are also isolated from one another in these groups, despite the fact that certain social and economic factors divide people from different walks of life. Since females lack quality in size, they remain solitary, which prevents them from making important advancements.

In Hamlet, there are just two female characters. These two characters are presented from a male-centric and masculine perspective. Hamlet's beloved Ophelia is a kind sister to her brother and a good girl to her father. She continues to embody what Marilyn French (1982) refers to as the "in-law" aspect of ladylike behavior; in this sense, a lady is associated with the divine.

Ophelia completely obeys her father and her sibling, even when it means sacrificing her own feelings. Laertes demonstrates the dual standard that was common for people in the sixteenth century. Respect for a guy is not questioned if he pursues interests outside of marriage. In any event, Ophelia will lose the respect of this coalition. She delivers her statement to Laertes.

I am hither to your daughter. But here's
my husband, And so

Much duty as my show'd to you,
preferring you before her father, So much
I challenge that I may profess

Her words display her bravery, independence, and rebellious spirit. It is her love of Othello that gives her courage and character. Othello kills her by strangulation because he believes she betrayed him. She attempts an audacious death in an attempt to prove her integrity and cleanliness. Here, we see the savagery of the male-centric framework, which hinders the female.

Hamlet the King's wife Gertrude is portrayed as a stereotypically bad woman. These feminine traits are referred to as the criminal aspect of the female by French (1982). These female figures have a connection to sexuality and dimness. They

are bitches and prostitutes.

Soon after her better half's death, she marries King Hamlet's troublemaker, Claudius, once more. Her guidance is what has led Prince Hamlet to consider submitting his suicide. At her better half's memorial service, she grieved like Niobe, but a few days later, she was married. She is shown as a cunning and disloyal female character. She disregards her loving spouse's memory and quickly and revoltingly marries Claudius, infringing on his rights.

In fact, Hamlet, the king, believes that her mother belongs to his father. In fact, even the omnipotent Hamlet believes that her mother belongs to his father. He continues to act like any other typical male, supporting the leadership of a society that is dominated by men. He imagines a broad, general condemnation of women. The right of Gertrude to remarry is not recognized.

Her mother is viewed by Hamlet as the most repulsive woman in the world—a damned smiling reprobate. There is nowhere else where a guy gets such titles and marks for being married again after the death of his partner. This is just one of the two metrics that a man-centered society upholds and reinforces.

It is also possible to argue, as Othello does, that the catastrophe results from devotion to man-centric ideas and assumptions. In her argument that "men's misconceptions of ladies and ladies' failure to shield themselves from society's origination of them," as Gayle Greene puts it, are the source of Othello's deplorable qualities. Definitely Othello's male traits of domination, hostility, and expertise are not

comparable to Desdemona's particularly feminized traits of non-involvement, non-abrasiveness, and obedience. Once Othello, filled with jealousy, has beaten and verbally abused Desdemona, she declares to Iago, "I am a child to reprimanding." Protected by a system that views women as the inferior, subservient sex, Desdemona is ill-prepared to deal with this hostility and helpless to stop Othello. In this way, Desdemona retreats within moral behavior in to escape from the real world.

Othello attempts to defend himself from intentional killing at the play's conclusion by claiming that he did nothing "in malignance" and that he was simply a man "that cherished not admirably but rather too well." This conversation demonstrates the ambiguous status of affection among a populace drowning in stereotypes. Othello's extravagant, "indiscreet" passion for Desdemona stems from his belief that she embodies the epitome of femininity and his secret fear that she is a prostitute who has been accepted by society. Similar to Hamlet, who instructs Ophelia to "go to a convent" in order to guarantee her modesty and eliminate his fear of the lady's infidelity, Othello too desires to erase Desdemona's sexuality and capacity for betrayal. He claims that his decision to kill her is to keep her from a further transgression

"Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men". (V.iii.6)

Shakespeare's play King Lear is a notable failure. In King Lear, there are three female characters: Cordelia, Regan, and Goneril. They're all young girls from King Lear. Cordelia is shown as a devout young woman and virtuous woman. She is shown as a figure who embraces man- controlled

society and male-centric traits in letter and spirit, despite her righteousness and dedication. She cannot make decisions on her marriage. Her fortunes are marred by her lack of affability. She departs her father's regal mansion with little resistance. Under the protection of her parent King Lear, she returns to England.

Regan and Goneril are portrayed as monsters. They are greedy, narrow-minded, liars, and fakers.

They are disloyal to no one and have corrupt ethics. In fact, Cordelia—who is obviously a relatively perfect little girl with all the best qualities—is the one who is somewhat to blame for the destruction of everything. The play begins with the old King giving his little girls his kingdom and his expertise. Before turning over their respective regions to his small ladies, he asks them to show their father how much they love him. As the eldest, Goneril is the first to comply. Goneril, the cunning, pretentious, and deceitful one, declares that she loves her father beyond everything else, including life, freedom, and vision.

When Cordelia is banished by their father for saying nothing, she shows no compassion for her or says anything nice to her, making the elderly loving father guilty in the process. Instead, she hurts her even more by declaring that, in her opinion, Cordelia asked for her current state of powerlessness and any potential cruel treatment from her spouse in the future. Instead of being grateful and obligated to her father, as she had promised in her previous discourse, Goneril is portrayed as cruel and ungrateful. She brings up his immaturity, impulsivity, foolishness, and terrible personality (I—I - 290).

She believes that her father's age and irascible years have exacerbated the deficiencies. She currently detects in him, rather than just the long-standing engrafted ailment. It's she who suggests to her sister that they form a united front against their father, King Lear. She treats her guardian King Lear extremely rudely, carelessly, and ungenerously after receiving her 33% of the realm. She is criticizing the lord for the lack of discipline among his knights, who are rumored to be fighting and carping every minute. She refers to her knights as debosh'd and cluttered.

.. She holds the knights responsible for her father's damage to the propriety and priority established by the class framework. She so offends her father that he leaves her regal home and goes to reside with Regan, her other young child. Regan also reveals who she really is by declaring 'Her father was portrayed as being pliable and unaware of his own greatness, capable of erratic behavior' (I—ii— 300). Goneril is so self-centered that she finds fault in every instance of her dad, who she had previously valued more than life, freedom, and sight. She finds out 'Her nights were insane, and King Lear's behavior was unacceptable. She exhorts her hirelings to treat the King rudely. Goneril claims that the King isn't just an outdated, inert trick' (I—iii—20).

Crossdressing, in which a man dresses as a

woman or a woman dress as a male, occurs in several of Shakespeare's plays. Overall, Shakespeare's known thirty-eight plays have disguises related to sexual orientation in about one-fifth of them. The fact that young male actors performed female roles during the Elizabethan era undoubtedly enhanced the impact of this sexual confusion. Shakespeare's fascination with cross-dressing remains a mystery, but two general theories seem to be emerging: Shakespeare might have found amusement in the comic element of a man dressing as a woman or vice versa.

Shakespeare was the 16th-century equivalent of a women's activist, even though the absurdity of the situation cannot be ignored. This is supported by the fact that many of Shakespeare's female heroes are strong, astute, and skillful women who defy expectations.

In summary, Shakespeare did not claim to be a feminist in the modern sense, but his concerns about women reveal his objective assessment of the roles played by women worldwide. Shakespeare paid close attention to women's morality and qualities. He was also aware of the hardship they went through since they don't fight these indecencies head-on; instead, they speak out about their pain and disapproval of them. Shakespeare has empathy for women because of his humanistic approach.

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