
The War Between Male And Female Characters And How They Were Portrayed in Literature

Introduction

General Statement: Literature Often reflects the time period its taken place or based of off. This allows for those taken in the chosen literature to understand how life was in a different time.

Overview of Main Points: In Hamlet Agamemnon and The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock women are depicted as weak and dependant of men. As the stories progressed specific female characters take on bigger role and show strength and resilience towards the oppression of men.

Thesis Statement: Through the years literature has evolved and been a positive force for social change by evolving the roles women play.

Body of Essay

Main Point 1: Claim (Argument)

In ancient times women were seen as lesser people compared to men. This misconception was so bad it even invaded the theater, as men were often used to portray women in plays. Sadly this misconception of women still exist in some parts of the world but not to the degree as it was depicted in Agamemnon. By Exploring Hamlet, Agamemnon and The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock it becomes evident how things like plays are impacted by cultural norms.

Evidence (Quotations, Paraphrases, Examples)

- In the story, Agamemnon the character Cassandra is a great example of a female being the “weaker” sex.
- In The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock male roles are depicted as weaker and are showed to have no masculinity. On the other hand, females are depicted as strong and courageous
- In Purflock the male characters didn't poses masculinity they in fact were deprived of it.

The female characters on the other hand female were depicted and strong and independent.

Significance/Elaboration

Cassandra one of the lead female characters of Agamemnon was portrayed as a weak female and was not highly regarded by male characters of the story. In Purflock males were not seen as strong leaders as they were deprived of their masculinity. This means purflock went against the grain when it comes to cultural norms.

Transition Sentence The views and opinions of women have certainly changed since ancient

times and the literature pieces I will be covering certainly prove that point, as this paper progress you will have a better picture of just how women were portrayed.

Main Point 2: Claim (Argument) -

To understand the evolution of women in literature you first must become educated and understand the antipathy and distrust that was directed towards women in literature.

Evidence (Quotations, Paraphrases, Examples)

- In the play, Agamemnon traditional view was perfectly depicted between men and women. The chorus made repetitive statements towards women which were rather distasteful such as "In just this way the mighty Zeus who guards hospitality sends Atreus' sons against Alexandros, because of a woman with many husbands" (60-62)
- Hamlet's negative feelings in regards to his mother specifically her choices and in general his often negative statements towards women "Frailty, thy name is woman!" (Act I, scene ii)
- Prufrock's rare outburst towards women when he felt they were chatting about a topic he felt was superficial "talking of Michelangelo" (14).

Significance/Elaboration

In the play Agamemnon the predominantly negative view of women by men was perfectly portrayed. It gave the reader/ viewer a better understanding of the divide that existed. Hamlet had tension with his mother fueled by her decision to marry his uncle. Hamlet often had negative and demeaning things to say about women, an example is when he referred to women as "Frailty" which is him describing women as weak. Finally Prufrock's rarely showed his negative views of women often choosing to keep them to himself but there was one instance where he had an outburst referring to a conversation between women as "talking of Michelangelo"

Transition Sentence To understand the subtle hints of prejudice and negative behaviors towards women in these plays you must understand the environment and culture of which these plays are portraying. As those cultures and environmental factors are often portrayed in plays.

Main Point 3: Claim (Argument) -

These three plays depict well how the world perceived women and the defiance towards them, it achieved this by the way women characters were portrayed in the stories and how they interacted with their male counterparts.

Evidence (Quotations, Paraphrases, Examples)

- Agamemnon is a perfect play which depicts defiance towards its female characters, for example, Clytemnestra's show of displeasure towards the play's chorus which speaks badly of her "Now you're insulting my intelligence, as if I were a youngster, just a child". (Lines 1-354)

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- In Agamemnon, Gertrude was told not drink from the glass which contained poison intended for Hamlet, but he drank it anyway as a show of defiance seeing as it was a female who was advising him not to do so.
 - In prufrock the male role is emaculated while females show indifference leadership and strenght

Significance/Elaboration

Agamemnon perfectly depicted defiance towards female characters, this is evident from the plays chorus which often gave displeasure to chemestra as it didn't speak fondly of her. Another sign of defiance was Gertrudes choice not to listen to a female character who advised him not to drink from a poisoned glass. This shows how men in Agamemnon saw females as being significantly lesser than them and that they would go to any means to prove that... unfortunately in this case it was not the right choice on Gertrude's part.

Transition Sentence In Agamemnon and Purlock There was a change in the tide as in the begins the male characters were portrayed as strong and above women but as the story progressed female characters began to gain more strength and independence. Males, on the other hand, their "male strength" and prestige began to lessen.

Main Point 4: Claim (Argument) -

Lastly, the view of male characters and how they're depicted has slowly changed over time from strong & courageous to the indecisive and the weak

Evidence (Quotations, Paraphrases, Examples)

- In Agamemnon, Clytemnestra traps Agamemnon in a recurring dialogue with tempting dialogue like " Yield; of thy grace permit me to prevail!" (1094) Clytemnestra had a big influence on Agamemnon as his act of hubris was as a result of her influence.
- Prufrock's realization that the "mermaids singing, each to each. / I do not think that they will sing to me" (124-125) This show how he feels women are indifferent to him, this also gives women a stereotypical persona of being obedient to men and passive.
- In Comparison, Hamlet does not show the same aggression as Agamemnon and nowhere near the prestigious reputation; Hamlet ultimately is portrayed as indecisive

Significance/Elaboration

In agamemnon Clytemnestra slowly chipped away at Agamemnon with recording dialogue. This as a result had a influence on Agamemnon, ultimately causing him to commit a act of hubris. In "The lovesong of prufrock" prufrock himself realized how the female characters were indifferent to him which ultimately depicts women as obedient and having a passive nature. Finally the two main protagonist of Hamlet and Agamemnon were in compasion very different Agamemnon was a warrior always ready for battle. Along with that Agamemnon had a very prestigious reputation something Hamlet didn't have. Hamlet was portrayed as much weaker and indecisive.

Transition Sentence A ongoing decline of characters and their stature was evident in

Agamemnon and in prufrock gradually becoming weaker as a male character.

CONCLUSION

Opening Sequence: In Conclusion the war between male and female characters and how they were portrayed in literature and plays changed over time

Thesis restated: Through the years literature has evolved and been a positive force for social change by evolving the roles women play.

Evidence (Quotations, Paraphrases, Examples)

- In Agamemnon, Clytemnestra traps Agamemnon in a recurring dialogue with tempting dialogue like " Yield; of thy grace permit me to prevail!" (1094) Clytemnestra had a big influence on Agamemnon as his act of hubris was as a result of her influence.
- In Comparison, Hamlet does not show the same aggression as Agamemnon and nowhere near the prestigious reputation; Hamlet ultimately is portrayed as indecisive
- Though, If Hamlet is a weaker man compared to Agamemnon, then Prufrock - in quoting Hamlet shows emasculation " even "Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be; / Am an attendant lords / Almost, at times, the Fool" (111-112, 119).

Final Sentence: In conclusion, it is evident that the literature directly depicts the culture of the world that it is based on, this allows those views in future times to understand how life was before.