

DRAMA

Lecture 4

William Shakespeare's Writing Style in *Hamlet*

Shakespeare is a literary genius for many reasons. One such reason is how every decision he makes is intentional. Whether through his choice of metaphors for a particular situation, infusing layers of meaning into individual words to reveal hidden truth or to take a stab at someone, or by choosing which writing style to use based on the topic and situation, his writing is unparalleled.

Figurative Language and Imagery

the words spoken by the actors hold significant responsibility for conveying the play's message. Everything is intentional in a Shakespearean drama; nothing is filler. Several examples of Hamlet's biting wit carry heavier meaning than a simple response to another character.

Sentence Structure

. Shakespeare intentionally reserved verse style for Hamlet's long, philosophical soliloquies about more serious matters, especially his "To Be or Not to Be" monologue. However, when the situation is intended to be comedic, Shakespeare changes the language to prose

Verse and prose are also indicators of the class-level of different characters; common people in the play would always speak in prose, while royalty would only speak in verse.

Conclusion

There is much to be learned from Shakespeare's multilayered, multidimensional use of language. So much so that many readers return to Shakespeare's works, such

as *Hamlet*, to read them multiple times over, often noticing things that had never caught their eyes before.

Lecture 5

The Roles of Women in Shakespeare's Plays

Looking at the types of female roles in Shakespeare demonstrates that women had less freedom than their male counterparts in Shakespeare's time. It's well known that women weren't allowed on the stage during Shakespeare's active years. All of his famous female roles like Desdemona and Juliette were in fact once played by men.

Shakespeare's Presentation of Women

His plays showed the difference in expectations between upper and lower class women of the time. High-born women are presented as “possessions” to be passed between fathers and husbands. In most cases, they are socially restricted and unable to explore the world around them without chaperones. Many of these women were coerced and controlled by the men in their lives.

Women in Power

They have questionable morals. For example, Gertrude in *Hamlet* marries her husband's murdering brother and Lady Macbeth coerces her husband into murder. These women show a lust for power that's often on par or surpassing that of the men around them. Lady Macbeth especially is seen as a conflict between masculine and feminine. She forgoes normal "feminine" traits like motherly compassion for more "masculine" ones like ambition, which leads to the ruin of her family.