

Analyse and compare persuasive content of the two poems

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These two poems are basic examples of a poet attempting to use his skill with words to persuade someone to perform an action; in “ To His Coy Mistress”, Marvell is attempting to persuade a lady to have sex with him, and in “ To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time”, Herrick is trying to inspire an imaginary (I hope) group of harem girls into mental motivation, so their ‘ physical’ motivation will be at it’s peak once the customer has paid his fee. This essay will analyse how the poets’ use of language and content manage to make the reader believe that, if they were this person being plied, then they would be convinced of his frankness and honesty. The poems will be compared, and a conclusion shall be drawn at the end which will state my opinion concerning which poem is better at communicating the author’s intent to persuade. The titles of the poems require an analysis at first; the word ‘ coy’ is a word which suggests emotive, quietly reserved, quaint and effectively coquette. This actually adds a touch of humour to the poem, because it forms an image in the reader’s imagination of this desperate man chatting up this Lady (requires a capital L) who has such high-class manners, breeding and dignity, which is the base situation of a great deal of sketches in today’s sitcoms! The other word, ‘ mistress’, in today’s world of nymphomaniacs is a term suggested for a lady who has sex with a married man, ‘ no - strings attached’ as they say.

This makes the reader want t move on from the title, because anyone who chats up a manor-born dignified woman just for sex must be worth hearing about. The second poem, “ To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time” has a much less dignified title; the beginning to the virgins hints that the ‘ manager’ does not even know the names of the girls he hires; to him they

are just his 'craftsman's tools', objects with which he scrapes a living. So, from the beginning, 'To His Coy and Mistress' is much more personal, and being personal in persuasive writing is a useful skill, because it makes the reader feel that this person knows them, and therefore he/she knows what is best for this reader. They don't know this, because if they thought about it then they would realize that what they were feeling is all just so much marsh gas, but in poetry, to see what the poet is saying, they try to feel the emotion locked within the words. Andrew Marvell knows this as well as I do, so he uses such personal language to aid his persuasive argument in the pursuit of his 'carnal desire'! As for content; Marvell uses flattery as his main method to convince, whereas Herrick conveys a sense of urgency in his verses: Gather ye rosebuds while ye may, Old Time is still a-flying The entire poem is based on this 'speedy' delivery, but this verse is more prominent than most, because he talks about the final destination ((tm)) of us all, death.

It is sick that this harem owner uses this image as a method to urge the women to do their 'work', because it suggests that they should have sex as much as possible while still alive, but one can just picture him thinking; 'And if I turn a profit at the same time, who'll care?' Which makes him look like some sort of chauvinist. The structure of his poem also makes him appear a little bit too keen, the verses maybe in iambic tetrameter (as is 'To His Coy Mistress', but they are short and almost appear to be limericks upon first glance. The poem is also the shorter of the two, and this adds to the implication that what this man wanted his speech to be was not a rousing torrent of inspiration, but just a few choice words thrown together to make <https://assignbuster.com/analyse-and-compare-persuasive-content-of-the-two-poems/>

these poor women think he cared.'To His Coy Mistress' is much more lengthy, personal and flattering all at once, and the poem does Andrew Marvell credit. Note that it is all in one long verse, much like a love - letter, and makes the reader think that this man trying to entice his lover has really taken time to think of something meaningful to say to this lady. He uses sexual imagery to try to entice her; Now, therefore, while the youthful hueSits on thy skin like morning dewHe uses the image of skin as sexy.

He also makes crude but flattering remarks and shows her that she is, in a way, in control of the situation: And you should, if you please, refuseTill the conversion of the JewsOf course, conversion of the Jews is synonymous with ' never going to happen', so what Marvell is referring to is that if she does not want to have sex, she should always refuse. There is an incredibly long quotation lasting between lines 13 and 19, where the poet claims that absurd amounts of time should be used to just admire her, which is so over-the-top but it shows just how desperate this character is. Marvell also uses slight urgency (But at my back I always here/Time's winged chariot hurrying near) but he uses it as self-pity; he doesn't insult her as Herrick does in his character by basically implying that ' they're not getting any younger'. He does slightly imply this, but he says it in a way which won't hurt her feelings: Thy beauty shall no more be found; Nor, in thy marble vault, shall soundMy echoing song: then worms shall tryThat long - deserved virginity: And your quaint honour turn to dust; And into ashes all my lust. This quotation has a lot of meaning; it says that she should use her beauty while she still can, and uses mild horror to push her over the edge.

The language of this poem is much more insightful than Herrick's, because it uses words that relate to emotion, passion, and sex of course; coyness, our long love's day, love should grow, adore each breast, would I love at lower rate, beauty, virginity, sweetness, languish, pleasures. 'To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time' uses haste rather than provocative verse to convince, but fails to persuade. Perhaps this was Herrick's intention; to display 'how not to do it'? He succeeded in that aspect, but fails in the light of an essay analysing ability how to persuade! Words such as a-flying, gather ye rosebuds, will be dying, a-getting, race be run, age, spent, former, use your time, lost but once and tarry all convey ideas of haste, speed, aging and the sad fate of us all. If this is meant to inspire them to have sex, I think that the ladies would probably have a long think and do something worthwhile instead. Perhaps THAT was Herrick's intention; to inspire them to greater things? In such an aspect, he succeeded with flying colours! So, to conclude, I believe that 'To His Coy Mistress' was far more persuasive than 'To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time' because it uses all well-known tricks for persuasion; being personal, being realistic but not hurtful concerning the state one would like to change, even using mild humour (The grave's a fine and private place/But none, I think, do there embrace). Herrick's poem fails miserably to bring on the desire to 'fornicate', using haste too readily and basically telling the ladies that they are getting closer to death all the time, so they should spend their time having sex.

Even as I write this, I realize that such an argument does not even make sense, but perhaps Herrick's intention was to encourage the harem girls to greater dreams than where the next 'quicky' is coming from. 'To His Coy
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Mistress' is a masterpiece of persuasion, and is something anyone needing to convince someone of Marvell's choice of topic should aspire to!