

Jimmy porter essay sample



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There are many different things that make Jimmy Porter so fascinating to both the audience and his acquaintances. Jimmy's character comes across in many different ways through the play, each one individual as his situation changes. Jimmy can come across as being a selfless romantic who loves his dear wife, Alison, but the next minute he will be slinging verbal harm her way and we realise that there is indeed, many different sides to the character of Jimmy Porter. From the first impressions that the audience gets of Jimmy, he is shown as being arrogant and misunderstanding.

The first scene shows Jimmy, Alison and Cliff in their small one bed-roomed flat. Jimmy and Cliff are reading the newspapers together. From the language that Jimmy uses, we get the idea that he is obsessive with class and state of wealth as he picks on Cliff by saying he is peasant like and stupid, he also taunts his own wife, Alison for having wealthy parents and well off upbringing. " You are ignorant. You're just a peasant," Jimmy ridicules Cliff. Proof that Jimmy is class obsessed is that he refers to the broadsheets as " the posh ones. "

The play itself, " Look Back in Anger" was filmed to show people the mood of the time, Jimmy's mood - the temperamental angry, but romantic young man. A lot of people at the time may have desired his personality, as he has sharpness and a wit, but can also be so selfless and romantic when he feels like it. As Alison Quotes " Jimmy has got his own sort of private morality, as you know" This quote from act 1 instantly lets the audience know that Jimmy has obviously an individual and completely unique personality, he lives by his own rules, this is why he is so fascinating.

The audience cannot understand why Alison stays together with Jimmy, they are shocked and appalled by the way he lashes out at her, her parents, friends and the upper class when they don't deserve it, they are like helpless victims of his uncontrollable anger. " Here it is. I quote: Pusillanimous, adjective. Wanting of firmness of mind, of small courage, having a little mind, mean spirited, cowardly, timid of mind. From the Latin pusillus, very little, and animus, the mind. That's my wife! " This quote from act 1 shows that Jimmy shows no remorse when he verbally attacks his wife.

It seems so unreal, how a married couple can survive together when the husband treats the wife as his enemy. Jimmy also taunts Cliff one of his few, if not only friends. He makes himself feel superior by teasing him because he cannot read, but at the same time, this causes Cliff to develop an inferiority complex. Jimmy gets his kicks out of clever insults and arguments. He uses long speeches, obviously pre-prepared to prove his points, however when he does not have a sentence or witty retort planned, Jimmy is lost for words and stumbles through his sentences.

These short sentences expose the loving side of Jimmy, as they are sometimes quite sensitive and very much unlike the character that Jimmy plays through the rest of the play. Alison and Cliff become tired of Jimmy's arguments, so they give up on taking up their side of the argument at hand and humour him, letting him win his arguments, just to make him feel better of himself, so he has the last say also making himself feel much more superior to his flatmates. " What are you, welsh trash? Jimmy provokes Cliff.

“ Nothing, that’s what I am,” Cliff does not even try to defend himself, this is because he knows that Jimmy would never let him win. Jimmy’s past is captivating to the play’s audience. The way he describes himself as being the only one who cared when his father was dying is really quite touching and suggests a reason as to why Jimmy acts like he does. “ I knew more about love... betrayal... and death, when I was ten years old than you will probably ever know all your life. ”

When Jimmy takes Alison into his arms and apologises to her, he shows a true loving personality that maybe he could have sustained all the time if this event had not been so mind blowing, or had never even happened, I believe this to be the main reason John Osborne had for making Jimmy’s character so unpredictable. Jimmy seems to think that Alison and Cliff are holding him back in the world; after all he is stuck in a rut running a small sweet store even after graduating at University, he knows that he is not reaching his full potential.

He mocks them “ Lets pretend that we are human beings. ” You can tell through Jimmy’s comments that he likes to make fun of Alison and Cliff’s intelligence, but what stops him from making a better living? Insecurity. Maybe he is so angry because he has tried so hard but seemingly not got anywhere in life, maybe the fact is, that he is just an unpleasant human being. Jimmy obviously has a huge vocabulary, however it is such a shame that most of the complex words and sentences that he says are either hurtful or offensive and are only used when he is attacking somebody.

He uses words and sentences like daggers trying to stab someone with them right through their heart, wounding their self-esteem. For example in Act 1 Jimmy uses long words to get at Alison, calling his own wife sycophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous. Jimmy changes the subjects that he is arguing about so often that it is no wonder that his flatmates cannot keep up with him, this is what makes him so impossible to answer back.

Jimmy is able to use similes and metaphors often during the play, this suggests that not only is he intelligent but also has been educated to a high level, as the average person living at that time would not be able to use such a complex level of speech. He uses these metaphors and similes to give the audience some humour, as although it may be offhand and offensive to another character in the play, it could easily make the audience laugh because of the picture that Jimmy is able to put into their heads so clearly.

This not only shows that Jimmy has an amazing mind but can also make connections between issues that are not obviously related. For example, Jimmy mocks Alison's father " Poor old Daddy - just one of those sturdy old plants left over from the Edwardian Wilderness that can't understand why the sun isn't shining anymore. " Interpreted, this shows Jimmy's view of Alison's father as an old plant that cannot understand change. There are some traits of Jimmy's that I admire. For one, he is not afraid to speak his mind, which makes him a truly honest and trustworthy character.

He is always on top of the situation and has a very strong sense of mind; sticking passionately to what he has set out to do and not letting anybody get in his way. We know that Jimmy is loving and caring on the inside, he has

a wife and cared for his father when he was dying, however it seems that he has trouble trying to show this on his exterior. This loving side of his character is exposed rarely through the play, either when he talks about his father or in conversation with Alison and Helena.