

Gender roles in shakespeare's 'twelfth night' assignment

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Throughout the passage taken from Shakespearean 'Twelfth Night' several themes both in correspondence and disparate from the often comedic tone of the play are prevalent. An interesting dynamic is immediately displayed in the passage through the relationship and dialogue between major and minor character. Viola, a predominant and strong character in the play, is engaging in dialogue with Antonio who although when analysed has complexity, is seemingly a minor character.

This brings about the theme of power relationships and specifically gender within the comedic realm represented intricately in this passage. Viola carries an element of intrinsic power throughout the passage, evident in the stage direction 'offers Antonio money'. It may be seen that at the time of publishing, possession of means and value were majority reserved for males in the female subservient Elizabethan period. This is correspondent with a form of comedic absurdity, the ability to act as the opposite gender and toy with the idea of masculinity and femininity.

This reflects back upon Viola's androgyny and non-gender binary throughout the rest of the text and is successfully represented in the chosen extract. The act of her offering money to Antonio whilst in a female state may be encompassing and reflecting her time as Cesario, whereby she had power in a time of patriarchy. This gender fluidity frees Viola from the restraints of gendered labels and is further reinforced when Viola articulates 'I hate ingratitude more in a man' this negation may be viewed as commonly attributed to men in a time of female demure attitude.

This also provides however, a contradictory dynamic as she refers to Antonio as 'sir' as a marker of respect, showing in this particular time and space she is removing herself from any indication of being a man and is acting from a very much female perspective, indicating she moves freely between genders to suit her situation. This statement on her part of all the things she detests from males may also be viewed as comedic by the audience as they hold an awareness of Viola as a cross-dresser. Antonio antagonistically clings onto the idea of inherent masculinity, adopting a sense of fear when this is compromised 'Lest that it make me unsound a man'.

However from the very beginning of the text he is taking on a role subservient and lesser to Viola in his request to 'entreat of some offbeat money' In this instance a male is requesting means from a female, inverting the typical roles and challenging gender stereotypes. This gender dynamic rings true in a theatrical sense when the play is physically performed. Historically gender neutrality within casting was and continues to be commonplace within the theatrical dynamic, mirroring the dismissal of Gender roles in 'Twelfth Night' Eleanor the act 01 he commonplace specific gender roles within the afore mentioned passage performance on stage.

Viola is able to play about with the female interchangeability, at times in the passage acting in euphemism claiming 'my having is much' and at others exhibiting emotion and a sense of prowess 'I'll make division of my implying that she is in the powerful decision making stand a feminine smokescreen to mask her true personality through claiming 'lean and low ability This may be seen as manipulative masking herself as truly meek and feminine.

This particular intricate relationship between actor and audience, Viola's knowledge of her true capabilities and witty persona. Both in the physical and theatrical sense is also laid out appearing in its immediacy in the first line of the text. The scene opens with the Second Officer saying 'Come, sir, lead me to the end of the passage' 'Come, sir, I pray you go' When he performs would mean Antonio leaves the stage and Viola is left as the central character if only for a short time. This once again reinforces the power battle displayed within the extract.

The use of irony enforces the dramatic and tragic element of the extract. 'C' kindness' and 'misery' all evoke a sense of tragedy intertwined with a comedic realm. Tragedy is also particularly prevalent in Antonio's possible my deserts to you Can lack persuasion? Do not let This represents how within the realm of theatrics, a character's ironic lines can evoke diversity in response from the audience. This parameterized talk of misery would create an emotive sympathy, whilst for others, hilarity would ensue.

The extract represents how Shakespearean genius for comedy also lies in tragedy, evoking a cornucopia of reactions from the audience. This is performed in a physical sense. The line 'Oh heavens the Antonio particularly represents this. This outcry of a drama viewed as comedic in a theatrical dynamic evoking laughter pragmatically representing the tragedy felt by Antonio and his frustration at the hectic communication with Viola in this

Antonio, at the end of the passage is once again asked to a further subservient position to Viola, reinforcing the status character, with Viola much more prevalent than that of Antonio. The length of utterances in the extract of each character are significant providing a substantial scope for interaction and thus intra

how communication between Viola and Antonio develops conversation to transcending into a more dramatic and in the final instance of her speech in the extract.