

Wilfred owen and jessie pope



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Over eight and a half million men died in World War 1 with just under thirty million other casualties. At the start of the war, in 1914, people were excited to fight the Germans and get back before Christmas.

The war lasted longer than expected so propaganda was used to try and recruit men. Jessie Pope's poem "Who's for the Game" tries to get men to join the war comparing it to a game. The war was very brutal and gory. Men died and were left to rot away on the battlefields. Wilfred Owen, a WW1 soldier, experienced the bloodshed battlefields and the muddy, dirty trenches.

Through his experiences Owen wrote the two poems "Dulce et Decorum est" and "Anthem for Doomed Youth" at the Craiglockhart hospital in Edinburgh, Scotland where he was recovering from shellshock. Owen's poems describe the pain and suffering the soldiers faced in the trenches while Jessie Pope's poem is completely the opposite. Her poems talk about the supposed fun in the war. In this piece of coursework I will be comparing the poets poems and will see how the poets views on the war differ. The 'Great War' occurred from June 1914 to November 1918 and saw millions of lives lost.

The time before was the building of empires between the main countries: Britain, Germany and France. Germany wanted to gain more territory and the death of the Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand sparked the alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. Jessie Pope, a journalist for the Daily Mail, was a pro-war propagandist and wrote, "Who's for the Game" trying to

persuade people to join the war. She had a biased view because she never knew the reality.

Jessie Pope was born in 1870 in Leicester, and married a man called Edward Lenton, who was a retired bank manager. She then died at the age of 60, in Devon. Pope was a journalist during the war and didn't see the whole picture of the war. Wilfred Owen was a soldier in the war and experienced the full horror of it, having to be sent back to Britain for treatment on shellshock. Pasionate Owen was educated until his family couldn't afford to- just before university. He went over to teach English in France and when war broke out he returned to England.

Determined to fight for his country, Owen volunteered for the Army and after training he became an officer. A huge shell burst near him at the Hindenburg Line, where Owen was based, and made him have shell-shock. Owen had the experience of the war so his poems were about real experiences. The war was not fun day out. Jessie Pope's view was wrong as the war had just started and she hadn't experienced the constant sound of shells and bullets flying around you and mud waist deep. Wilfred Owen writes about this as he knows what happened in the war.

Jessie Pope's poem "Who's for the Game" was featured in the Daily Mail to try and get young men to join the army to fight the Germans. This was propaganda, trying to convince the public that the war was fun, relating it to a game. The title itself shows that Pope relates it to a game. She is saying who is up for the fight for their country. Pope then says "come along lads"

which shows she is directly talking to an audience to get them to join the war.

She uses slang and the theme Sport to do this. She also refers to England as a woman who is struggling to survive. This is proved when Pope says “Your country is up to her neck in a fight” showing that she is neck-tied and cannot cope much longer without help. Pope finishes this line by writing, “and she’s looking and calling for you”.

A soldier would read this and then think that the country needed him or she would lose. She talks about war being a bit of fun in the poem, that war is just a game for heroes. In the poem Pope says “Who wants a turn to himself in the show” meaning who wants the lead in the show- who wants to be a hero. Pope then goes on saying that anyone who doesn’t help Britain will have a “seat in the stand” and be too scared. Here she is mocking people who refuse to go. The reason she uses sport as a theme to encourage people, is because sport is well played and enjoyed by many young lads, and Jessie Pope was aiming to get this age of men recruited.

She expresses the opinion of war being a game in many ways, by comparing it to different sports. She shows that being in the war and doing the job is like tackling and gripping a person during rugby – “Who’ll grip and tackle the job unafraid”. She uses a rhyming scheme, which makes the poem seem more energetic, and more enthusiastic. It makes the poem more appealing, as it is also like a nursery rhyme as it has a certain tune to it. In the poem *Anthem for a Doomed Youth*, written by Wilfred Owen, Wilfred shows that war is seen as death.

It is about his view and beliefs on war, and how realistic it is. He uses the Victorian funeral as a structure for his poem. A Victorian funeral is split up into different groups, and each stage occurs in this order: The ringing of the bells, the saying of prayers, the sound of the choir, the lighting of the candles, the covering of the palls, the giving of the flowers and the drawing down of the blinds. For the ringing of the bells, he uses the lines “ What passing – bells for those who die as cattle? ” This shows that the bells are guns, and bullets being fired from them as bells.

And gives you a thought of people being massacred by these bullets like cattle do. The way he expresses the saying of prayers, is by using the lines, “ No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells”. This part shows that there is no prayer for the soldiers, and prayers will not help them out. It gives a lot of emotion into the poem, as you may feel that soldiers give up at his point. He uses the sound of the choir with a metaphor, by using the lines: “ The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells”. This shows that the choirs that normally occur at a funeral are just bullets being fired out by guns.

What candles may be held to speed them all? Not in the hands of boys but in their eyes” is the part of the poem showing the lighting of the candle. This shows that there candle in the boys eyes are tears, and that the children of the soldiers are crying, and sad at the absence of there father. When showing the covering of the palls, he uses the line: “ The pallor of girls brows shall be their pall” This shows that the daughters of the soldiers, are covering there eyes in despair, waiting for there fathers to return home from the war. And continues this when describing the giving of the flowers by using the lines, “ Their flowers the Tenderness of patient minds” this show

the children are waiting and patiently waiting for their fathers to return home. Finally, for the drawing of the blinds, Wilfred Owen writes, “ And each slow dusk a drawing – down of blinds” this gives you the picture of the sun going down at dawn, revealing it shows death. The whole poem shows the battlefield of war being the funeral, and that there is a great chance your last minutes will be there.

And you have made your mark on that place. This Poem is different to who’s for the game, because it takes a more serious approach to war, and shows the true reality of war. My final poem I am looking at from Wilfred Owen is Dulce et Decorum est. Dulce et Decorum est stand for It is good and appropriate to die for one’s country. Owen talks about a sudden gas attack on the way back to camp.

The soldiers put their gas masks on and watch one of their friends die, drowning on his own fluids in his lungs. He describes the death being slow and dreadful – “ as under the green sea, I saw him drowning” Here he describes the gas as a green sea, and the man drowning in it. The Poem uses great use of short sentences, to build up the tension in the story and show how serious war is. An example of this is “ Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! ” here it shows that attacks can come at a surprise during the war, and that even a trek to find base can cause a lot of problems.

He uses a lot of similes in the poem, to give the reader a rough idea of what the situation is. Bent double, like old beggars under sacks, knocked – kneed, coughing like hags” here you picture a small group of soldiers walking along, tired and ill, but they had no choice as they had to keep moving. This makes

the reader seriously concerned about the difficulties of the war, how serious and how dangerous war was. Wilfred believed that people like Pope gave war a false statement, making it out that it's good, when he has experienced the reality of war and feels very different. This is why the poem is aimed at Jessie Pope. Owen believes that it is not so noble to fight for the country by finishing off the poem with the sentence, "To children ardent for some desperate glory, the old lie: Dulce et decorum est" his saying that for young men who wish to join the war for glory and to be a hero that Pope said they would be if they joined, that the statement sweet prayer is for country death, is a false statement.

He also states war as being hell, with lines like "His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin" He refers the death of his friend, to hell and the devil. This poem is much different to Pope's who's for the game, and anthem for the doomed youth, because Wilfred describes an event that occurred to him and his group and gives a realistic view on war. Showing the great disasters and problems occurred during war. Jessie Pope's views are very different to Wilfred Owen's views because Owen encountered it, Pope didn't. Pope wasn't allowed to go to the front and fight because she was a woman and women were not allowed to fight then.

Because of this Pope couldn't have experienced how bad the war was. People in Britain thought the war was fun because propaganda was used to cover up all the death. Pope uses simple imagery, language and content to appeal to working class males because most of them didn't have a lot of education and they wanted it to be quick and mind grabbing. Owen used the opposite because he wanted to go into a lot of depth about the harshness of

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the war. He didn't want a couple of lines, Owen wanted hard hitting paragraphs to show how it really was in the trenches. If I read Owen's poetry before Pope's poetry before deciding to go to war I would refuse to go because there was so much death and gore shown in the poems written by Wilfred Owen.