

King richard iii analysis



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As time progresses away from the Shakespearean era, the central values of Shakespeare's King Richard III are steadily losing touch with the modern audience. Throughout Al Pacino's modern remake of Looking for Richard, many modern cinematic techniques such as the specific use of colours, rearrangement of the original text as well as comparisons made in commentary are heavily included. It is through such cinematic techniques that the modern audience is able to comprehend not only the central values that were significant of that era but also understanding the value of the play itself.

Throughout King Richard III, the value of kingship is one that is explored greatly. The play's message about kingship is not only seen through Richard's deceptive schemes but it is also through the fall of his reign where his conscience begins to show, resulting in the destruction of his power. Not only is Richard's poor kingship seen through his own realization, but it is also seen through other character's perception of Richard's reign. Richard's poor kingship can be seen through Richmond's expression of Richard as 'A base foul stone made precious by the foil of England's chair, where he is falsely set.

In this quote, Richmond metaphorically describes Richard as nothing more but a worthless rock only made to appear like a gem because of the throne in which falsely claims. It is through this metaphoric description of Richard as a worthless rock that we are able to comprehend what little skills Richard possesses as a king. The highlighting of Richard's poor kingship not only helps us to comprehend his devious ways but also understand the importance of the value of kingship throughout one's reign. The value of

kingship is not only explored in King Richard III but is also explored in Looking for Richard.

Through such modern cinematic techniques to creatively reshape values, the modern audience is able to comprehend the importance of kingship that was needed in Richard's reign. Looking for Richard includes many titles in order to aid its modern viewers in understanding the plot of the story however, the use of a title is further enhanced in conveying the reign of Richard. Through the use of a dark background and amateur, child-like drawings of crowns to announce to reign of the new king, it foreshadows Richard's lack of skilled leadership, comparing it to the lack of technique displayed through the drawing of crowns in the title.

Through this comparison, the audience is able to understand his poor kingship that is heavily highlighted in Shakespeare's original play. Not only that, it foreshadows Richard's success as a king to which is a result of the lack of kingship that Richard possesses. This cinematic technique not only highlights the lack of skills of leadership Richard possesses as a king but like Shakespeare, it highlights the significant of the value of kingship in such a way that today's audience is able to comprehend.

In order to claim power to the throne, Richard uses much deceit and the misuse of power throughout the play, which highlights Richard's lack of integrity. It is through such devious and detailed schemes that the audience is able understand the importance of the value of integrity throughout one's life. One of the clear misuses of power can be seen in the scene of the innocent murder of the princes where Tyrrel expresses " The tyrannous and

blood act is done, the most arch deed of piteous massacre that ever yet this land was guilty of...within their alabaster innocent arms.

Their lips were four red roses on a stalk...A book of prayers on their pillow lay. " Through this quote, Tyrell describes the murder as the most ruthless in the country and pledges the innocence of the princes through their pure, white skin, red lips and uses religious imagery to describe their angelic innocence. The juxtaposition of the evil deed of their murder and the description of the innocence of the princes highlights the evil that has come out of the crime. This not only emphasises the lack of integrity Richard holds but his lack of this value also stresses the significance of the value of integrity throughout the play.

Integrity is not only heavily emphasised throughout King Richard III but it is also explored throughout Looking for Richard. Throughout this modern take of the Shakespeare play, Pacino steps out of the norm of many Shakespeare remakes, and rearranges the original script of the play. This is seen through after the death of the princes, where Richard states, " I am in so far in blood that sin will pluck on sin. " It is in this quote that we begin to see a hint of remorse as a result of Richard's devious schemes as he states that he has committed so many crimes, the sin has created a life of its own.

Originally, this quote was said before the death of the princes but the rearrangement of the script has allowed the innocent and evil murder of the princes to be emphasised, resulting in Richard's lack of integrity to be highlighted. The emphasis that has been placed in this flaw of Richard has also enabled us to understand that the value of integrity is one that is

significant in one's life, especially in one's reign. Richard's use of deception and duplicity not only highlights the value of integrity but also highlights the importance of trust.

As a result of Richard's constant use of deception in his scheming methods to claim the throne, many characters have had their trust misplaced which can be seen through such characters falling victim to such duplicity. An example of misplaced trust is through Hastings, who states, " I thank his grace, I know he loves me well. " The use of irony in this quote shows the deception being used on Hastings as we know that Richard plans to eliminate Hastings due to his strong opposing opinions on Richard being King. As a result of Hastings's naivety, his trust has been gravely misplaced.

Through signifying this misplaced trust, Shakespeare has heavily emphasised the importance of trust in one's life, especially where it should be placed. It is also in *Looking for Richard* that the value of trust is heavily explored through exploring Richard's duplicitous and deceiving schemes. One of the many cinematic techniques Pacino uses to creatively reshape the values explored in *King Richard III* is through the use of commentary by the actors in order to aid its modern viewers to understand the complexity that is *King Richard III*.

During the scene where Buckingham suggests Richard to be king, Kevin Spacey compares this scene to real-life politics, where politicians often lie to be elected. The use of a comparison through commentary in this scene is helpful in making the purpose of this scene more accessible to the audience by relating it to a situation, which is experience in modern society. Through

relating this situation to a modern situation, it enables us to comprehend that Richard needs to put on this false, Christian facade in order to gain public support and claim the throne, as a politician would do to be elected.

This enables the modern day audience to understand the misplacing of trust throughout the play as it has been in their own lives. The significance of misplaced trust allows the highlighting of the importance of the values of trust after seeing the consequences if trust and honesty is misplaced in someone such as Richard. Throughout King Richard III, central values such as kingship, integrity and trust are conveyed throughout events of the play, especially through the use of deception and duplicity in Richard's actions.

However, as time progresses, the modern audience are steadily losing comprehension in the values that are imbedded in many of Shakespeare's plays. It is through Al Pacino's modern remake of the play, Looking for Richard and his creative methods in reshaping and conveying the values that the modern audience is able to understand the significance of such values. Through cinematic techniques such as the use of colour, rearrangement of the script as well as comparisons in commentary that the modern audience is able to not only comprehend the significance of the values of the play but also the importance of the values in reality.