

On the scarlet letter



**ASSIGN
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D. H. Lawrence's essay, "On the Scarlet Letter", voices his opinions on Hester. Due to Hester's adultery, he thinks of her as a "demon" and "the great nemesis of women". D. H. Lawrence takes his views and effectively communicates them with the use of literary devices; his views are supplemented by a sarcastic tone, a choppy syntax and the use of repetition.

D. H. Lawrence uses a sarcastic tone to form, and assert, two contrasting views, praise of Hester and criticism of Hester. For example, when he writes "Abel! Abel!" "Abel!" "Admirable!", he praises Hester, but he explicitly contradicts this praise by calling it a "farce". D. H. Lawrence's critical opinion of Hester is double sided; it criticizes both Hester and the praising opinion. His praising opinion is one sided; it only praises Hester, never does it explicitly contradict statements made by the other point of view. D. H. Lawrence gives one side to his praise for a purpose; it allows for easy recognition as sarcasm, and it strengthens his, real, critical opinion of Hester. His real opinions challenge contrasting ones weakening them, therefore, further enforcing his own.

To further distinguish between when he is being serious or sarcastic, D. H. Lawrence uses repetition. D. H. Lawrence multiple repeats his sarcastic point of views, but when he states his true beliefs, he makes no repetition. This contrast in repetition brings out the contrast in seriousness. Like in the quote used in the previous paragraph, "A. Adulteress! Abel! Abel! Abel! Abel! Admirable. It becomes a farce.", D. H. Lawrence repeats the word Abel, but the word farce is only used once. The variance in repetition creates an easily distinguishable difference between D. H. Lawrence's sarcastic and actual beliefs.

D. H. Lawrence uses a choppy syntax with short concise sentences throughout his essay. The choppy nature of his syntax reads over as if it is multiple people rapidly talking about Hester, instead of just D. H. Lawrence. This can create a feeling of agitation toward Hester in the reader, and if the reader is agitated with Hester they will take the same critical stance towards her that D. H. Lawrence has.

D. H. Lawrence is able to effectively use sarcasm, repetition, and choppy syntax to convey his opinion of Hester. This is because he uses them symbiotically; each device intensifies the effect of others. For example, D. H. Lawrence says: “ But the power of pure appearances is something to exult in. All America gives in to it. Look pure! To seduce a man. To have everybody know. To keep up appearances of purity. Pure! This is the great triumph of woman.”. The sarcastic tone of the quote begins his argument. Then the repetition of pure lowers the seriousness of that word, furthering the sarcasm. Finally, syntax comes in and intensifies them both by delivering this statement like like punches aimed at Hester. D. H. Lawrence’s essay would not have this total effect if he decided to leave out one of the three devices.