

# Shakespearean comedy essay sample

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In the Shakespearean comedy “ The Taming of the Shrew”, William Shakespeare cleverly uses the techniques; Satire, Caricatures, Wit and Irony to create humour. “ The Simpsons” & “ The Big Bang Theory” are television shows that also engage the audiences with the same comedic techniques. The comedic technique satire is used in comedies to make fun and criticize the stupidity and weakness of individuals. In the Shakespeare’s comedy ‘ The Taming of the Shrew’, satire was used to criticize unfair social customs and unfortunate people. The technique satire was often exaggerated to engage the audience with humour. An example of satire being used in the comedy ‘ The Taming of the Shrew’ is when a sleeping drunk man that went by the name of Christopher Sly is found by a nobleman. The nobleman decides to play a trick on Christopher Sly and persuade him into thinking that he is a nobleman by taking him to his home and orders his servants to treat Sly like a nobleman. With that, the servants dressed him in the best clothes and directed him to the best bedroom.

The servants were also ordered to pretend that Sly was a great Lord that had awakened after 15 years of sleep due to being very sick. Shakespeare created humour by creating false realities and the techniques such as; irony, mistaken identity and ridiculous situations. The two main characters that produced the humour of the play were Petruchio and Katherina. Katherina shows harsh language and offend those around her, thus why she is described as a shrew. An episode of The Simpsons satirizes parents who want to push their children into achieving success in athletics and gaining good sportsmanship. Bart (the son of Homer) is an advanced star player in the hockey team while his sister Lisa (daughter of Homer) is the star goalie

on the opposing team. Bart & Lisa are seen as rival siblings in the series. But the mother, Marge, attempts to cheer on for her children and soften the competitive atmosphere by convincing them, " We love you both! You're not in competition with each other!". Homer then walks in and kills the moment by telling the children, " Hey! Your coach just called. This Friday, Bart's team will be playing against Bart's team. You're in direct competition. And don't go easy on each other because your siblings. I want to see you both fighting for your parents' love." The writers exaggerated Homer's quote by opposing Marge's contradiction in order to create humour.

Marge symbolises the " good" parent, as in all episodes and Homer symbolises the " bad" parent with extreme satire. Another comedic technique that was used in ' The Taming of the Shrew' was caricatures. This technique is often used to exaggerate the appearance and representation of someone where their characteristic features are over exaggerated to produce a more comedic effect to engage the audience. In the Shakespearean comedy, this technique was filled with farcical exaggeration that contained exaggerated, unrealistic situations to provoke laughter. An example of the technique caricatures being used in the comedy is Katherine over exaggerated her characteristics by saying harsh language to those around her, often causing offence. " Iwis it is not halfway to her heart. But if it were, doubt not her care should be. To comb your noodle with a three-legged stool, and paint your face and use you like a tool." This quote said by Katherine exaggerates her offensive character by saying harsh things that creates the technique caricatures in the comedy.

In the modern day comedy 'The Simpsons', Homer Simpson's character was exaggerated as an ignorant American father that isn't reliable in terms of taking care of his own children, he's half drunk in most episodes, he's fat & lazy, he's not very smart and he hates going to work. In most of the episodes Homer is seen choking Bart as a punishment of doing something wrong. Homer is clearly over exaggerating his role of being a parent that scolds and punishes their children when they've done wrong doings. Wit is another comedic device that is also used in 'The Taming of the Shrew'. Wit creates laughter through intelligent humour from the characters with the ability to perceive unexpected contrasts and express them cleverly. In the comedy 'The Taming of the Shrew' wit is used when Petruchio and Katherina argue over the time. Scene 3 of Act 4 – Katherina: I dare assure you, sir, tis almost two, and twill be supper-time ere you come there. Petruchio: It shall be seven ere I go to horse. Look what I speak, or do, or think to do, you are still crossing it.

This quote was used cleverly to create cheeky remarks by the characters, often in the form of sarcasm or simply contradicting another character in a way which is humorous to an audience. In 'The Simpsons' wit is used when Homer and Marge were watching television and the TV host says: "Tomorrow, on 'Rock Bottom', he's a foreigner who takes videos of you when you least suspect it. He's 'Rowdy Roddy Peeper.'" Homer comments, "Oh, that man is sick." Marge says, "Groundskeeper Willie saved you, Homer." Homer replies, "But listen to the music, he's evil!" Marge replied, "Hasn't this experience taught you that you can't always believe everything that you hear?" Homer answers respectively, "Marge, my friend, I haven't learned a

thing.” This quote over exaggerates Homer’s point of view and reaction. Homer’s stupidity is over exaggerated and he’s clearly showing how some viewers can be very gullible and unintelligent.

Therefore, the writers displayed how some “ news” shows will do anything to attract viewers. Irony was another comedic technique that was used in ‘ The Taming of the Shrew’. Irony is when someone says/writes something but it is actually the exact opposite. Irony is used in ‘ The Taming of the Shrew’ is when Petruchio first meets Katherina and he inspects and describes Katherina’s physical features as if she were an animal or a slave. Act 3 of Scene 2 - Petruchio: “ I will be master of what is mine own. She is my goods, my chattels, she is my house. My household stuff, my field, my barn, my horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.” In other words, Petruchio is saying that Katherina would become his everything if she marries him. In the television show “ The Big Bang Theory” irony is used when Sheldon and Leonard argue about their jobs. Therefore, the comedic techniques; Satire, Caricatures, Wit and Irony were cleverly used in the Shakespearean comedy “ The Taming of the Shrew”, the television shows “ The Simpsons” and “ The Big Bang Theory” to create humour and engage audiences.