

How does Owen convey negative feelings in the send-off

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How does Owen convey negative feelings in The Send-Off? In this poem Wilfred Owen conveys negative feelings with his clever use of language that can be interpreted in many ways. This poem actually conveys a message that war is not as glorious and honourable as it is always portrayed as. Even the title, The 'send-off' could mean two things. Firstly, it could mean that the soldiers were being sent off to war. However, it could also mean that the soldiers were being "sent off" to their deaths. This emphasizes the fact that war actually is not what it is portrayed to be.

It is not glorious and honourable to fight in war but the people and soldiers going through it suffer greatly and most do not survive. In "The Send-Off", Owen conveys his feelings about the war and the young soldiers going off to die. You can tell he has a very pessimistic attitude to the likelihood of the soldiers surviving. You can see this from his frequent references to death, for example "Their breasts were stuck all stuck with wreath and spray." which could refer to how the dead are garlanded with wreaths of flowers before their burial. Line six, says, "Dull porters watched them / and a casual tramp / stood staring hard. The train station porters stand back, watching and listening to the soldiers as they wait for the train with no emotion at all, it is as if it is just one of those regular things in life that one gets on with, without much interest as it is such a common event. In line 3, Owen uses the oxymoron, "grimly gay", this gives the impression that the soldiers know what is going to happen to them and they are scared, but they put on a brave face anyway so as not to upset their families, each-other and also, if they don't admit their fear to themselves, then maybe it will go away.

Owen uses similes such as “so secretly like wrongs hushed up” show the conspiracy of the war kept from the soldiers for assurance that men would continue to join. Repetition of “a few, a few, too few” emphasises and shows the reader that many soldiers would not return from war. It continues by suggesting that the small amount of soldiers returning from war would not be greeted by celebration but by silence and still villages. The use of imagery “white flowers” shows two meanings, flowers for celebrating and white for mourning.

In giving the flowers to the departing soldier, the women who thought they were supporting the soldiers were actually garlanding them for death. To conclude, the use of language; similes, repetition, imagery and so on all channel feelings of negativity within the poem. Although not directly pessimistic it is relatively easy to spot the depressing nature of the poem but nonetheless Owen displays obvious negativity towards the state of how no one showed feelings towards the soldiers fate and how it was so hushed up.