

Compare and contrast poems

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



The Underlying Truth about War War—sometimes portrayed frivolously—may be more than the human expects it to be. It is filled with gruesome and intolerable scenes that may not even be appropriate to discuss. Wilson Owen, in transforming the mainstream ideas, branches out and discusses the horrific side of war that people would not expect. In “Anthem for Doomed Youth” and “*dulce et decorum est*,” Wilson Owen strategically manipulates diction to illustrate the theme of the reality of war, and in doing this, sheds a light on the dreadful impact that war has.

Wilson utilizes strong connotations of words in both of his poems. In “Anthem for Doomed Youth” the title says a lot about its content. The title itself has significant use of assonance. The expression is intended to be drawn out, and set a depressing mood which parallels to the subject of war itself. The title also indicates that this is a national thing, everyone is a part of it: “Anthem”. The word signifies a national anthem, where everybody joins in and takes pride from it. The poem does not parallel that the soldiers took pride to fight in the war.

The word anthem connotes a sacred song or song of praise; which alludes to church where anthems are sometimes heard, and where funerals take place. This then shows that the poem in itself is an anthem as well. Wilson then goes on to further question the “passing-bells for these who die as cattle” (1). The use of the word cattle suggests a mass amount or a collection of people in a group. It also implies that the men in the war were treated like cattle, basically dehumanizing them as people. “*Dulce et decorum est*” also has words with connotative meanings.

The repetition of blood implies the dangers that are on the battlefield. Owen writes, "...blood shot" / " the blood came gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs" (6, 21-22). The blood paints a gruesome picture of life in the war. The first four words of the second stanza, " Gas! Gas! Quick, boys" are disjointed, fractured and monosyllabic (9). This connotes a feeling of panic and terror. The use of such verbs like " flound'ring" adds a sense of helplessness and inability. Owen is trying to illustrate the simple truth to the audience; war does not make men, it breaks them.

The strong connotation of words lends way for imagery to unfold. In " Anthem for Doomed Youth," Wilfred Owen tells that " only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle can patter out their hasty orisons" (3-4). The poet starts to reveal the realism of war through alliteration. As readers, one can visualize the sounds of the rifles as clearly as Owen intended us to. The rifles emphasize that the opposing troops did not take pity on the individuals they are trying to kill. In " dulce et decorum est," Owen uses imagery by writing, " His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;" (line 20).

In this part of the poem, Owen talks about his " fallen" friend. Here, we see how graphic his friend looked, thus confirming the fact of the gruesome nature of war. Sickening language is used to invoke the shocking image of a man literally drowning in his own blood as the blood came " gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs" (22). This grotesque language is used to express the distasteful nature of the war. In his two poems, Owen highlights the fact that war is not all that it is chalked up to be.

He does this by using strong connotative language which in turn reveals the imagery to the readers. In doing this, he wants the readers to get even a bird's eye view of what he had to deal with every day. Certain phrases that the poet uses reflect Owen's own disgust of the war. It shows the anger that he has about how the press illustrates the war to mislead people. The descriptions that he gives show the darkness of war that he bore witness to; therefore recreating the images and showing the destruction of purity through war.