

How does arthur miller use techniques to show eddie's changing essay



' A View from the Bridge' is a 19th Century play, written by Arthur Miller. It is a tragic play about love, passion, lust and deceit. The play focuses on one man: Eddie Carbone. He lives with his niece, Catherine and wife, Beatrice. As the play develops, we see his changing personality due to the arrival of his wife's cousins and an inevitable tragedy takes place. This essay aims to demonstrate Eddie's changing relationships with other characters through language, staging and stage directions.

This play is a reflection of Arthur Miller's own life and experiences. He used to work on the docks of Brooklyn. At that time, many migrants from Italy were coming to America in search of work. Many were illegal, and giving them away to the police would be a betrayal to the Italian Community. Which is why, betrayal is an important theme of the play. Arthur Miller used the culture of the Sicilians and his own experience to write the play, ' A View from the Bridge'.

When we are first introduced to the characters of Eddie and Catherine, we are shown how intimate and secure their relationship seems on the surface. The introductory dialogue between the two characters is ' Hi Eddie!' (Eddie is pleased and therefore shy about it) Our first instinct is that they love each other. The exclamation mark shows the excitement and that Catherine is very happy to see Eddie. Moreover the stage directions reveal that Eddie is also pleased to see her, however does not want to make it observable and therefore shy about it.

However, even though Eddie has a strong plutonic bond with his niece, he finds it difficult to show her how he feels. When he first speaks to her,

saying, 'Where you goin' all dressed up?' he meant it as an advice suggesting that she is dressed inappropriately and should consider wearing something else. Although, it comes out more like a scolding remark, questioning her actions and the choices that she has made. Since the beginning of the play, Catherine is strongly irritated by the way Eddie speaks to her, no matter how well he means. Catherine and Eddie also flirt with each other. (running her hands over her skirt) 'I just got it. You like it?' This displays that Catherine cares about Eddie's opinion and at the same time is sort of seducing him by the stage directions. By running her hands over her skirt she is making the point even more obvious.

Nevertheless, Eddie flirts back as well, he calls her 'beautiful'. 'beautiful' suggests Eddie might have sexual feelings for Catherine. Eddie is also over protective and concerned about her. Eddie questions her clothing choice and mentions her 'walkin' wavy'. Again, even though he is trying to look out for her the best advice he can for her own good, the manner by which he speaks it is insulting, and therefore causes Catherine's self-assurance and confidence to destroy. Then Catherine replies 'What do you want me to do?' (almost in tears) This act of crying proves to us how weak and vulnerable she is. Catherine is also always buzzing around Eddie and carries out wife-like actions. She tells him 'I'll get you a beer, all right?' The language used is very interesting because it is not a question; she somehow knows that he needs a beer. This again exemplifies the level of understanding they have between each other.

When Catherine gives Eddie the news about her getting a job, Eddie is not happy. Even, still she keeps Eddie's opinion in mind. Eddie says 'she'll be
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with a lotto plumbers and sailors up and down the street?' This demonstrates Eddie is again overprotective and thinks the longshoremen and sailors will take advantage of her. This also conveys that he does not want her to grow her up and shows the control and influence he has on Catherine's life. He also refers to Catherine as 'the Madonna type'. The word 'madonna' implicates virginity, purity and that Eddie worships her. Catherine is a female subservient. He finally gives in for letting her have job when Beatrice confronts him, 'are you goin' to keep her in the house forever?' This time Eddie is defenceless and thus lets her take the job. Even though Eddie was initially against her decision he is proud of Catherine. (He is affected by her, but smiles his emotions away) This explains Eddie is proud how she has grown up but at the same time wants to still treat her as a child.

A key turning point in Eddie's and Catherine's relationship is the arrival of Beatrice's cousins: Marco and Rodolfo. When Rodolfo is introduced, Catherine's initial comments are about his looks, (wondrously) 'How come he's so dark and you're so light, Rodolfo?' The language shows her interest in Rodolfo's looks, furthermore the staging directions shows that she is very excited. Next (they laugh as Eddie enters.) The staging directions shows how quickly their relationship is bonding, however Eddie notices this and is jealous by the fact that Catherine is paying more attention to Rodolfo. As an upshot of this he deliberately changes the topic, 'How's the coffee doin'?' This question is totally of the topic, he does this to drive Catherine away from Rodolfo.

Following that scene Eddie feels further need to embarrass Catherine and assert his power on her in front of Rodolfo and Marco. He disapproves
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Catherine wearing high heels and says ' Do me a favour, will you? Go ahead.'

This illustrates the disrespectful manner in which Eddie speaks to her, again it can be argued as being over protective or not having respect for Catherine. It also shows us that Eddie doesn't want other males looking at Catherine and this is also a sign of Eddie's incestuous feelings towards his niece due to his blatant portrayal of jealousy. As a result Catherine is (embarrassed now, angered, Catherine goes out) The staging directions explains how powerless Catherine is, that she can not even defend herself. Even though, Catherine is enraged by his comments and extremely embarrassed, she somehow manages to find it in her heart to forgive him. This illustrates the strength of their relationship and their mutual understanding.

However, Eddie mocks Catherine further by telling Marco ' All actresses they want to be around here' This means he is mocking Catherine's feelings and treating her as a child. Eddie does all of this to show he that he is the boss.

Eddie is very suspicious of Rodolfo; this is because he sees his love for Catherine. ' you like sugar?' ' Yes! I like sugar very much!' The language shows Rodolfo is excited because of the use of the exclamation marks. This also displays how Catherine has started to take more care of Rodolfo, than Eddie as she generally takes care of Eddie. We can see Eddie's concealed suspicion and exasperation in the stage directions (watching as she pours a spoonful of sugar into his cup, his face puffed with trouble) By using the noun puff, Arthur Miller emphasises on the sudden change in their relationship.

Later in the scene, we see that Rodolfo and Catherine have gone out for a movie. Eddie can not stand Catherine going alone with Rodolfo, thus waits for them coming back home. Eddie inquires about their movie, ' Brooklyn Paramount?' His mocking remark is to indicate the standard of Rodolfo. Interestingly, the stage directions of Catherine's reply (with an edge of anger, embarrassed before Rodolfo) reveal how Catherine is more afraid of Rodolfo's judgement of her, than Eddie's. Following that conversation, Eddie has become impatient and expresses his dirty and twisted feelings towards his niece. He is extremely jealous of their relationship, and as a result he says ' Rodolfo. Go inside, will you?' This is a sign of Eddie's desperation of needing Catherine alone. (his patience waning) The stage direction further extends my point on Eddie's need of having Catherine alone. The adjective waning represents Eddie's desperation. After his attempt failed, he begins to mock Rodolfo by (smiling unwillingly) and (smiles at his own naïveté) This proves his is also mocking his own origin just to get Catherine.

Finally, when Rodolfo leaves Eddie's feelings for his niece start to pour out. At the moment, Catherine and Rodolfo's relationship has been developing and on the other hand Catherine's and Eddie's relationship has been deteriorating. Eddie begins to talk to Catherine in a sexual way. (enveloping her with his eyes) This stage direction verifies Eddie's lust and sexual desires because of his sexual action. Furthermore Eddie feels parted from Catherine and is made clear when he says ' I don't see you no more. I come home and you're runnin' around someplace' The language implies he wants Catherine to herself. However, we can see he has lost complete authority over Catherine, (looking down) ' Yeah'. The stage directions display how suddenly

Catherine has switched positions with Eddie in terms of power, now she is in control because 'looking down' means Eddie is looking up to her. In addition, the simile (He looks at her like a lost boy) This again suggest he has lost his influence over her, because the adjective 'lost' proves his distant relationship as he is puzzled.

Eddie does everything to alter Catherine's view on Rodolfo, (turns away) 'He don't bless me, Katie' By making it a fact, he thinks he will be able to convince Catherine, however he fails. The stage direction reveals Eddie is not saying the truth, and as a result he can't face Catherine. Eddie does not stop to state false facts, 'He don't respect me' Again this portrays he is willing to go to any extent to get Catherine back.

Presently, we can observe how Catherine is liberating herself from Eddie. She gathers courage and confidence and confronts Eddie, by questioning him, 'Why?' he does not approve Rodolfo. Now, we can see Catherine has grown from a young naïve girl into a mature independent woman.

Eddie further tries to prove to her niece that 'he's only bowin' to his passport.' On the contrary, Catherine defends Rodolfo by saying 'I don't think so'. She is very frustrated by the fact that Eddie does not trust Rodolfo, makes her depressed. (sobbing) 'I don't believe it and I wish to hell you'd stop it!' The stage direction displays her frustration over the argument. Additionally, the exclamation mark shows the graveness of the matter and how she just wants Eddie to accept Rodolfo without a feud. Arthur Miller then exemplifies Eddie's loss of control through stage directions. (makes an

awkward gesture of eroded command) The word 'eroded' shows how he is losing Catherine slowly, in a painful way.

The next scene, when Beatrice has a talk with Catherine, she talks to her about her behavior around Eddie. Beatrice tells Catherine that she has grown up, and has to begin acting like an independent woman, 'you're not a baby any more' This expresses Beatrice concern for Catherine and herself, as Catherine is affecting her relationship with Eddie. Although, Catherine deep down her heart still has some feelings for Eddie. (trying to rationalize a buried impulse) The stage directions illustrates that she has an ignored feeling because it is 'buried'.

Besides, Beatrice offers Catherine advice on how to behave. 'You still walk around in front of him in your slip-' This again confirms the suspicions she has over Catherine. The language is also very assertive, suggesting the urgency of Catherine to change herself. At the end of conversation, we can see Catherine is still uncomfortable with the whole talk. (sensing now an imperious demand, turns with some fear) The word 'imperious' suggests everything is being forced, and the word 'demand' complies our doubts. Hence, Catherine is a part of this against her will.

Initially, we were presented with Eddie as a caring, a bit strict husband and a protective uncle to Catherine. He wished for the well being for his family, and protected them. In other respects, the arrival of Rodolfo lead Eddie to distant his relationship with Beatrice and compelled him to make his relationship with Catherine more intimate. Finally, the other characters of the play are discussing Eddie's true desires and incestuous instincts towards his niece.

However, when Eddie understands his lust for his niece, this changes his motives.

Next, Eddie goes to meet a lawyer, Alfieri. He seeks his help, to find out if there is anything he could do to Rodolfo that could break his relationship with Catherine. We can see how Eddie does not wish to lose Catherine, and Alfieri appreciates it. The conversation consists of mixed opinions and feelings of both of the characters. Firstly, we can see the jealousy Eddie has over Rodolfo. 'when I think of that guy layin' his hands on her' This implies he can not stand him because he will be having sexual actions with his niece.

Secondly, we can notice the fear Eddie has for Catherine. 'what about if the only reason for it is to get his papers?' This was a serious matter in the 1930s, as it was accounted as a crime. During the Great Depression, many illegal migrants came into America in search for work and prosperity.

Nevertheless, if they were identified by the police, they would have to be deported back to their native country. Alternatively, if the migrant managed to marry a US citizen, they would have the right to stay in the US, officially. Hence in this case, Rodolfo wants to marry Catherine and Eddie believes he is only doing this act in order to become a citizen of America.

Eddie feels very ashamed and humiliated of Rodolfo; he makes his view on Rodolfo very clear to Alfieri. He repeatedly says 'he ain't right' This conveys he describes Rodolfo as a homosexual, who's sole motive is only to get the official papers for his citizenship. He also dislikes Rodolfo's appearance, 'just hope that's his regular hair that is all' He disapproves of his hair colour, because back in the 1930s it was not very masculine to get your hair

coloured. Eddie also refers to him as a 'punk'. Despite this, Alfieri advises him to let go of her, and confronts Eddie. 'She can't marry you, can she?' This question is asked by Alfieri to test Eddie's true motives. His response, (furiously) 'What're you talkin' about, marry me!' His stage directions display how outraged Eddie must be, the language also implies he has gone mad with fury. However, Eddie knows, even though it was inappropriate of Alfieri to ask him that, he was being honest.

The following scene highlights the escalating tension between Eddie and the other characters. (holding back a voice full of anger) 'If he's here to work, then he should work' The stage directions reveal his aggression towards Rodolfo and the language conveys he is tired of Rodolfo's childish behavior. Catherine on the other hand knows why he is quarrelling with Rodolfo and as a result she is again infuriated. (flushed with revolt) 'You wanna dance, Rodolfo?' The stage direction clearly expresses her humiliation and to seek vengeance she dances with Rodolfo. Hence (Eddie turns his head away) Eddie acts in this manner to hide his frustration.

In Act Two, we can observe Eddie's and Catherine's relationship deteriorating and the trouble it is causing Catherine. Initially, Rodolfo and Catherine are alone in the flat. Catherine ponders on talk she had with Eddie. 'No, I mean live there - you and me.' This conveys Catherine is assuring the fact that Rodolfo is not after her citizenship. He does not comply with Catherine, thus proving Eddie wrong. She finally says (quietly) 'I'm afraid of Eddie here' She finally confesses that she is frightened of Eddie because she knows Eddie's true feelings for her. Also, she knows that Eddie is jealous of

Rodolfo because Catherine is in love with him, however does not make this knowledge explicit to Rodolfo.

When Rodolfo asks her ' Why are you so afraid of him?', she replies (near tears) ' I don't know'. The fact that she is in ' near tears' illustrates she still has respect for Eddie, moreover she leaves the question unanswered. She expresses her grief and pain for Eddie and their relationship before the arrival of Rodolfo. ' You think it's so easy to turn around and say to a man he's nothin' to you no more?' and then breaks into tears again. This accentuates the pain in their relationship. Eddie has been like a father to Catherine since her mother died; he brought her up and provided her with food and shelter. Although, it is very hard for Catherine because she knows their relationship they shared has been wrecked because of Eddie's lust.

Eddie comes home drunk and not in his senses. He identifies Rodolfo and Catherine in a bedroom, alone. Suddenly and for no apparent reason he tells Rodolfo to leave the house. Likewise, Catherine is (trembling with fear) and decides to go with Rodolfo. ' I think I can't stay here no more.' (She frees her arm) She does this for the blatant reason, moreover Arthur Miller has used the stage directions to show us the changing relationship between both of them. ' frees' suggests now Eddie has lost complete power and Catherine is now independent. Although, Eddie still refuses and takes radical actions towards Catherine, while he is drunk.

He decides to kiss Catherine, (draws her to him, and as she strives to free herself he kisses her on the mouth) This conveys how desperate he is, to have her back. Unexpectedly, he then kisses Rodolfo, (suddenly kisses him)

The purpose of this action was to prove that Rodolfo is not a man and again exemplifies Eddie's desperation to get her back. (Eddie stands there with tears rolling down his face as he laughs mockingly at Rodolfo) The stage directions reveal he is in a sense guilty of his cheap behavior, and on the other hand proud of having Rodolfo at his mercy.

The kiss does not leave their relationship in ruins, but his final act of calling the Immigration Bureau, sealed his fate with Catherine. Eddie feels by turning Rodolfo in, he will be gone out his life, and he will get Catherine back. However, it leads to very drastic consequences. When Catherine realizes that Eddie has called the Immigration Bureau, she ends their relationship. She has hate, anger and disgust for Eddie now. Catherine finally releases her true feelings, ' he bites people when they sleep' She speaks very rudely and her actions are justifiable. Catherine is horrified and has decided not to have anything linked with Eddie in the future. The simple act of calling the bureau brought an end to their always doomed relationship.

Initially, when Catherine invited Eddie for her wedding, ' I'm gonna get married, Eddie' Despite all of Eddie's unjustifiable actions she still has the courtesy to come and invite Eddie. After the invite he feels guilty, but his realization is too late. Finally during the fight, when Eddie gets stabbed, Catherine says ' Eddie, I never meant to do nothing bad to you' This displays her true feelings she used to have, and also illustrates the love and care for him. In addition, it also proves how submissive Catherine is, which has been noticed since the beginning of their relationship.

Marco is Beatrice's cousin and is an illegal immigrant from Sicily. Initially, he is described as very simple, polite, responsible, strong and an ideal man.

Marco and Eddie are very respectful to each other, the moment Marco steps in his house. '(suspicious, tender, and quiet-voiced) ' Thank you' says Marco. The stage directions tell us that he is not very comfortable, but is very kind as he says ' thank you'. Eddie in return gives him a warm welcome. ' You're welcome, Marco' (Exits into bedroom with their bags) This shows Eddie is very polite towards Marco, and is very helpful because he takes their bags in the room. Marco in the first scene, repeatedly says ' Thank, you' which shows his gratitude for Eddie.

Eddie is very interested in Marco as he sees his masculinity in Marco and he sees he is a practical and responsible man. It could be said Marco was a symbol of the Omerta. (more to address Marco only) ' On the average a whole year?' Eddie is very focused on Marco, as the stage directions prove that, this is because he sees Rodolfo as unpractical and irresponsible man. Marco is very thankful and hence (his eyes are showing tears) This simple act of almost crying reveals the extremity of his gratitude.

Next, Marco calls Eddie, ' Eduardo'. This is Eddie's name in the Italian form of respect.

Again, this exemplifies his respect for Eddie. (He goes to Eddie, offering his hand) Arthur Miller, in this case uses the stage directions to illustrate the level of understanding and high opinion they have between each other. They shake hands implying their relationship is good and faithful. Marco in a very short span of time achieves respect and honour from Eddie. Furthermore,

Eddie is proud of having Marco. ' That older one, boy, he's a regular bull' This represents Marco is a respectable, honourable and strong man, exemplifying his masculinity. As a result, Eddie is honoured to have Marco.

In spite of this, Eddie and Marco's relationship begins to alter drastically. Suspicion and doubt is generated in their relationship. (laughing) ' I mean, you know-they count the kids and there's a couple extra than when they left?' Eddie's stage directions displays he is in a manner, mocking Marco. He is also doubting Marco's and his wife's relationship. This is when; tension escalates between Eddie and Marco.

Afterwards, Marco challenges Eddie's power and masculinity by lifting the (chair over his head) This is a significant turning point of their relationship, as he is threatening Eddie to leave his brother alone. (chair raised like a weapon over Eddie's head) This metaphor demonstrates how Marco is at the top, in terms of power. This also displays the tension being built between Eddie and Marco. Arthur Miller further increases the tension, (he transforms what might appear like a glare of warning into a smile of triumph) Now, we can clearly see Marco's feeling, which is anger. In addition, their expressions, (Marco is face to face with Eddie) confirms their relationship has changed from respect for each other to suddenly hatred. Presently, we can observe how Eddie and Marco's relationship has been transformed due to Eddie's obsession of having control of everything.

When Marco discovers Eddie has called the Immigration Bureau, we know their relationship has been ended. (Marco spits into Eddie's face) This action conveys Marco's rage and anger for the betrayal. Thus he accuses him in

front of the whole community, ' I accuse that one'. The purpose for this is that Eddie gets defamed on his own turf. Lastly, the inevitable tragedy strikes and Marco kills Eddie, (He dies in her arms) Eddie was the reason for his self-destruction.

Eddie's and Beatrice's relationship is challenged throughout the play.

Initially, we see in the play, Eddie is very dismissive towards Beatrice. (She sees Eddie, smiles at him. He looks away) The stage directions tells us that Beatrice loves Eddie, however he ignores her.

Beatrice seems to know Catherine is the problem in her relationship with Eddie. (She is angering) ' I don't understand you; she's seventeen years old, you gonna keep her in the house' The word ' angering' suggests this has been an ongoing crisis and the language implies how desperate she is, that Eddie lets go of her. Beatrice also feels she is not being treated well, ' When will I be a wife again, Eddie?'. She is asking him for sex, which she has not got and wants to feel like a wife, instead of a stranger.

When Beatrice finds out that Eddie called the Immigration Bureau, initially she is shocked. ' My God, what did you do?' This indicates she did not expect Eddie to stoop so low, in order to gain Catherine. Despite all this, she remains very loyal to Eddie. ' Whatever happened we all done it, and don't you ever forget it, Catherine' Beatrice decides to stay with Eddie because she truly loves him.

Beatrice can not stand Eddie's obsession with Catherine and finally says, ' You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her' She finally exposes the reality because it is affecting her in a myriad of ways. Lastly, <https://assignbuster.com/how-does-arthur-miller-use-techniques-to-show-eddies-changing-essay/>

during the scene where Eddie dies, his final words are for Beatrice, ' My B.!' (He dies in her arms) At least, Eddie realised his mistake and thus calls for Beatrice in order to gain forgiveness, but unfortunately it is too late.

Throughout the play, we see Eddie deteriorate his relationship as a husband, as an uncle and also as a human being. We realise what type of person he really is when he finds out that his niece is in love with another man and he gradually loses all sagacious control over his thoughts, words and actions. His wife may be the first person to notice how obvious his incestuous feelings have become, but it is not long before Marco, Rodolfo and unfortunately Catherine notice them too. The four major events that happen after this group realisation (the destruction of Catherine and Eddie's relationship, the kisses from Eddie to Catherine and Rodolfo, the barging in of the immigration officers and the climactic death of Eddie) are all caused by Eddie's irritated actions and inappropriate feelings.

The relationship between Eddie and Catherine was always doomed to end in tragedy, because from the first instance we see them speak together, there is clearly some resistance and frustration between the two. This resistance is made a lot more prominent as the story develops, and by comparing the monstrous creature the Eddie has turned into at the end of the play to the once innocent and protective person that Eddie once was at the beginning, it is easy to see how much difference simple emotions such as jealousy, lust, passion, hate and anger can do to a man and to those around him who he loves.