

How falstaffs character was portrayed and what role he played in henry iv

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Sir John Falstaff was initially called Old Castle, but the name was disputed by the family of the historical John Oldcastle who were unhappy about the use of their relative's name. Shakespeare changed the name to Sir John Falstaff.

Sir John Falstaff is one of the major characters in the play Henry IV. His character has attracted much attention from scholars in the literary world. He is described as elderly, fleshy, lazy, double-dealing, defamed and Prince Hal's partner in fraud. In addition to all the negative portrayal of his character, he is the most accepted character of Shakespeare's comedian characters. Being a knight, he was expected to act in a particular accepted way, but his behavior totally conflicts with the ideals of knighthood. He has a larger than life cast, steals, and disregards honor. (Bladen, 40) He is a representation of defiance and confusion and influences the prince to rebel against his father.

He plays the role of a father figure, as he is believed to have loved prince Hal very much despite the prince blaming him for acting like a clown on the battlefield and abandoning him. He refers to the prince as 'sweet wag' while playing verbal games with him. (Shakespeare, XXV)

He is a grandstander and abusive as he labels his foot soldiers as "food for gun powder". (Shakespeare, XXVI) He mocks adoration and honor because he is a lover of life. He is humorous as he provides most of the comedy in the play.

Having created that much attention in the literary world, He has managed to dominate and become the central cast such that it appears that the play revolves around him.

References

Bladen, Victoria. *William Shakespeares Henry Iv: Text Guide*. St Kilda, Vic: Insight Publications, 2011. Print.

Shakespeare, William, and Roma Gill. *Henry Iv, Part I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.