

Sonnet cxxx by
william shakespeare
and to his coy
mistress by andrew
marvell comp...



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“ Sonnet CXXX” by William Shakespeare was written to send a message to poets, telling them that sonnets do not have to be unrealistic; Shakespeare also mocks traditional Elizabethan sonnets. The occasion is that Shakespeare believes in real love and not falsely comparing women to god-like creatures.

The sonnet was written in the Renaissance era. The sonnet is not traditional to other sonnets of this era because he turns traditional sonnets on their head by saying “ no such roses see I in her cheeks”. The only traditional element of the poem is that it has the structure of a traditional sonnet.

Shakespeare’s poem has the traditional backbone of a sonnet of fourteen lines and ten syllables per lines.

The sonnet follows an “ abab” rhyming scheme with rhyming couplets at the end to stand out. Shakespeare has done this to draw attention to his sonnet; sonnets in the Elizabethan era were very popular with people so it had a much bigger fan base so by using this writing technique to mock a traditional sonnet will become controversial and bring publicity. In this poem

Shakespeare deals with the theme of love for example Shakespeare uses juxtaposition to show those traditional sonnets are unrealistic. Juxtaposition is also used to give a sense of reality instead of “ golden threads”

Shakespeare uses “ Black wires” this effect is used to give the real image as well as shock the reader. The sonnet also follows Iambic Pentameter so people can read and build up an argument.

Shakespeare’s poetic devices are cleverly used like negative description “ Coral is far more red than her lips red” this negative description shows traditional poems would hail the beauty of a women. The imagery of the

poem has iconic symbols of love as well as a semantic field of nature for instance " Sun, Roses, Coral and Nature" these words have been introduced to accentuate the realistic beauty of the dark mysterious women and also by describing her hair as " black wires" might mean that she is from overseas so her hair would be coarse. Shakespeare uses lexis to show his love by using words like " rare", " pleasing" and " heaven". I will now be looking at " To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell; Marvell is a metaphysical poet who writes about physical and spiritual attributes.

The poem was written in 17th Century therefore the language and vocabulary will be different for example " Thy, Coyness and Strife". This poem is about a writer being rejected by the woman he loves. The theme of the poem is love and how physical pleasure should be enjoyed due to times passing too quickly. This introduces the theme of transience for example " Time winged chariot hurrying near" this is personified to tell us that time is always chasing us and how quickly it goes by. For poetic device, Marvell uses hyperbole " but thirty thousand to the rest".

Marvell uses this to show how much in love he is in. Marvell builds his arguments by saying " If, So and But" by using this method he puts doubts in the lover's mind for example " And you should, if you please, refuse" also uses rhyming couplets to give the poem a better tone. The tone of the poem is very tongue in cheek; this is used to tease the mistress. Marvell uses words like " worms", " dust" and " ashes" to show decomposition and death this mainly establishes veracity of death than enjoying life itself. This makes the tone sincere and dark which creates pity for the woman.

The imagery of the poem is very striking, Marvell shocks the reader by saying “ worms shall try that, that long persevered virginity”, this means that if she does not fill the man’s desires the worms will take her preserved virginity when she is dead. Marvell says this to convince the mistress to change her mind; this is shocking because it talks about the lust of a man who is persuading and pressurising the woman into sexual activity. Harsh imagery is also implied especially in the third verse, “ Than languish in his chapt-slow power”. In this section I will be closely comparing the subject, themes and style of “ Sonnet CXXX” by William Shakespeare and “ To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell.

The subject of the two poems is mainly about the experience of love. The common elements of the poem are mainly the humour and reality of love. The style of the two poems is that they both have rhyming couplets but do not follow the same structure of lines and verses. The tones of the poems are completely different; Marvell poem is very tongue in cheek unlike Shakespeare’s negative sonnet. When the imagery of the two poems are compared with love they are similar for example “ Nor would I at lower rate”, “ I think my love as rare”. In comparison when compared with death and decaying “ The grave’s a fine and private place”.

My personal opinion of “ Sonnet CXXX” by William Shakespeare is that it is very unique as it shows how a real person will feel if they were in love. It also shows real characteristics of people and not comparing humans as god-like creatures. My opinion of “ To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell is a very humorous in certain lines and verses especially “ Two hundred to adore each breast”; the humour in the poem makes the reader to find out what is going

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to happen next. Marvell brings an element of surprise especially to the female readers " Then worms shall try that long persevered virginity" this is a surprise because it is unexpected. The main reasons why I prefer " To his coy mistress" are that Marvell uses a vast assortment of poetic devices to express the writer's thoughts, feelings and emotions. The imagery which I particularly enjoyed was the personification of time in Marvell's poem like " Time's winged chariot" it gives the poem a certain degree of urgency.

Also the harsh imagery gave the poem a clearer, vivid picture. In " Sonnet CXXX" by William Shakespeare, the uses of iconic symbols of love are strong and unique " And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare". The poem which I personally prefer is " To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell. I chose this poem because it tells the unexpected and as I said above it shocks the reader, also bringing humour, in my opinion that's what " Sonnet CXXX" failed to do. But on the other hand " Sonnet CXXX" is a very unique and untraditional sonnet with it is own style which is hard to duplicate.

With regards " To His Coy Mistress" you can understand the passion and commitment of the writer in the first and second verses like " Two hundred to adore each breast". We understand how he feels because Marvell writes as if he is desperate for his lovers' affection.