

Andrew marvell's  
representation of tone  
and symbolism as  
explained in his  
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Andrew Marvell wrote "To His Coy Mistress" to persuade the speaker's mistress to quicken their relationship, while Annie Finch wrote "Coy Mistress" as a rebuttal to his persuasions. These poems contained contrasting ideas due mostly to the tone and imagery Marvell and Finch used. The ideas included satire, lust, bitterness, aggravation, passion, and affection.

Marvell creates a distinct tone for each stanza, satirically insincere, melancholically sincere, and passionate. These diverse tones are used to convince the Coy Mistress into obeying the speaker. The insincere, satiric tone is shown in the first stanza when Marvell stated "Two hundred (years) to adore each breast" (15) which is twice as long as the hundred years he remarked he would spend adoring her forehead and eyes. The point of his insincere, satiric tone is to flatter his Coy Mistress. The second stanza portrayed his melancholically sincere tone to address his death and decay that are approaching. He remarked "My echoing songs; then worms shall try" (27) providing an image of worms eating away his unfinished work. This emphasizes that death is coming soon, proving to his mistress that they should speed up their relationship to live a full life. He also justifies that they only have this life to love each other by saying "The grave's a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace." (31-32) showing human mortality, and how unrealistic it is to love after death. The last stanza exhibits a passionate tone that contains his true lust for the Coy Mistress. He stated "And while that willing soul transpires / At every pore with instant fires" (35-36) which shows that everytime they touch a fire arises proving his passion for the Mistress. This is intended to awaken his lover's hot-blooded

desire. All three of the tones used in the three stanzas of "To His Coy Mistress" create a seemingly justified argument towards the speaker's relationship with the Coy Mistress although there may be flaws in his arguments displayed in the poem "Coy Mistress" by Annie Finch.

Finch also used three different tones to prove her point even though her point strongly differed from Marvell's. She used tones such as bitterness, anger, and distant affection to portray that the speaker does not want to quicken her relationship with the speaker of "To His Coy Mistress". The first eight lines of "Coy Mistress" show Finch's bitter tone by ending various lines with a period in to emphasize a point "a Lady does not seize the day." (2). The period ends the line bitterly in an attempt to forbid the speaker of "To His Coy Mistress" from responding. A minimal amount of punctuation is used to create an aggravated tone along with short vowel sounds "were we not fond of numbered Time / and grateful to the vast and sweet / trials his days will make us meet:" (6-8) this gives off the idea that the speaker is spitting out words in one breath. The aggravated tone is followed by an affectionate tone, which is achieved while still remaining distant. She says "and Time, in turn, may sweeten Love" (13) addressing the speaker of "To His Coy Mistress" and informing him that if he gives her time, the lust may come so he need not be so impatient with her. The tones used provide ideas that contrast those of "To His Coy Mistress" such as time is fast and there's just enough time, and we can push love to move faster and love will come with time.

Marvell and Finch also use imagery to depict their contrasting ideas. Marvell begins with exotic imagery to tantalize the Mistress "Shouldst rubies find; I  
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by the tide" (6). The speaker is attempting to entice the Mistress with rubies near the ocean. He also uses dreary imagery to scare the Mistress " And your quaint honor turned to dust, / And into ashes all my lust" (29-30) which shows lifelessness and decomposition of their love if she does not quicken their relationship. The speaker draws the mistress in and scares her to keep her from leaving by using dark imagery.

Finch begins with imagery that displays a friendly interpretation of time " I trust that brief Time will unfold / our youth, before he makes us old." (3-4). This gives the speaker of " To His Coy Mistress" an image of Time displaying their youth so they may see there is time for their love to grow. She also includes imagery that is ironic " no skeleton can pen a verse" (10) so that the speaker of Marvell's poem realizes he is being condescending by writing about his desires instead of acting upon them. Even though it is obvious that a skeleton cannot write a poem, the speaker is taking a shot at the fact that the speaker of " To His Coy Mistress" spent his supposedly short amount of time writing verses. The imagery used by Finch shows the speaker of Marvell's poem that he needs to be patient and everything will work out while Marvell's imagery is used to draw in the Mistress.

Both authors used tone such as satirically insincere, melancholically sincere, passionate, bitter, aggravated, and distant affection. The tones create opposing ideas which may change the point of view of the addressees. They also used imagery to tantalize, scare, display Time as a friend, and show condescendence. Opposing ideas were created by the imagery as well as the tone. The call and response of these poems helped the similar literary

elements create different ideas as though Marvell was asking and Finch was refusing.