

An occurrence at owl creek bridge analysis



“ An Occurrence on Owl Creek Bridge” was written by Ambrose Beirce. The story was written between 1861 and 1865, during the Civil War. With this information it is easy to determine that this story was written as a Realistic text. Realism is a combination of literary technique used to create the text. In Realism, everything is real, meaning it only focuses on the cold, hard truths of life. Realism is very detailed, and everything in the story, for example, events, places, and characters are common place. I believe Realism could be the cruelest form of writing because of the way it focuses on the mind and its reaction and its abnormalities.

The psychological part of Realism could be the cruelest part of this form of writing because it pulls emotions from the reader, giving us false hope. The smallest details are explained to demonstrate how Farquar’s mind is reacting as he nears his inescapable doom. The detail put into the description as he waits causes us to feel the anxiety. He so deeply describes the watch ticking so that we may understand how time has now seemed to have come to a standstill. Explaining every finite detail makes the reader imagine the story as if he or she were the character.

The inclusion of the out-of-body experience allows the reader to imagine the that he/she is the character looking down at himself/herself going through the various stages of capture, possible escape and inevitable death. In the beginning we “ see” Farquar, the main character, about to be hung for an unknown crime. The scene is described as the man standing and waiting for his death. He is surrounded by soldiers that are only there because it is part of their job. Here, we can see clear Realism, because the author describes the soldiers as simply blockading each of the bridge.

“ It did not appear to be the duty of these two men to know what was occurring at the center of the bridge... ” (page 493) it is plain to see how the uncaring the soldiers are. This is a prime example of Realism because it displays the truth within the human race. We, as humans, normally ask questions about an event, because our duty is to do what we are told. The truth of the world and man is that when it comes to duty, we do not ask questions. As we go on, Farquar begins to become anxious with this sudden burst of emotion. His sudden anxiety makes his senses become sharper. He is aware of every sound, smell and touch.

This intense description of heightened senses causes us to feel the same sense of his emotions. As the convict waits impatiently, he starts to hear a “ sharp, distinct, metallic percussion like the stroke of a blacksmith’s hammer upon the anvil. ” The text describes Farquar’s watch and how it is ticking. This detailed description of his watch is another point in Realism, because in Realism every last detail is explained in a matter of fact way just so the reader can understand the psychological happenings in Farquar mind as he falls to his death. Part II begins in the beginning? the scene is described as a plain house, with an average family resting on the front porch.

This display of plainness is another point to Realism, because everything in this format is very plain and unextraordinary. Soon after the small description, our main character is visited by a fellow southerner who tells him about the location of some Union soldiers. Though this passage besides the plain diction and the matter-of-fact tone have any real hints of Realism, it is still a very well developed part of the story. Lastly, in part III, the author displays the idea of Romanticism, which is an idealized form of writing.

<https://assignbuster.com/an-occurrence-at-owl-creek-bridge-analysis/>

Though Romanticism isn't as detailed as Realism, it intensely demonstrates what people want in life. In this case, Farquar is having desperate thoughts of escaping his death. The events that follow his drop from the bridge are intensely magnified in emotion and detailed, hinting at Romanticism. This raw display of emotion in the text causes us to react because it's so powerful. When we continue reading, one cannot help but notice how impossible his escape is turning out. Thinking logically, no man can dodge that many bullets firing at him simultaneously.

Naturally, he magically escapes. He then happily returns home to his wife, but as he begins to enter his home, all goes dark. The "happy ending" here is a key part in Romanticism, because that is what Romanticism based around. When the scene turns black, we are then brought back to the bridge where Farquar is swinging back and forth by the neck, slamming the audience back to cold, hard reality. This is the malicious part of Realism, and it is also the theme the author stitched through the story. The theme being that individual doesn't make much of a difference.

When you die, no one will care, life will go on without one individual's life. We will not be given a second thought, because in the mind of a Realist you are dead and gone, and there is nothing you can do about it. This story is a perfect example of what Realism is supposed to be like. It includes in depth detail about the finite objects. No person, place or object extraordinary; they are exactly the opposite. Finally, we come to what makes Realism, and that is harsh show-casing the terrible truth we do not wish to see. Death waits for no one, and that is what we fear the most.