

Compare the presentation of war in the poems 'dulce et decorum est' and 'icarus a...

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Compare the Presentation of War in the poems 'Dulce et Decorum est', by Wilfred Owen and 'Icarus Allsorts', by Roger McGough. Dulce et Decorum est was written by Wilfred Owen and Icarus Allsorts was written by Roger McGough. Dulce was written during WW1. Wilfred Owen wrote this poem while he was in a military hospital. In the poem Owen reveals the chilling truth about what WW1 was really like. Icarus was written in the tension of the Cold War. In the poem Roger McGough turns a very serious (fake) event into a joke. Dulce was written in 1917 and published in 1920.

It was written to show that Jessie Pope's poem 'Who's for the Game' was a whole pot of lies. Icarus Allsorts was written in 1964. It was written to get residents of planet Earth to understand how dangerous nuclear war is and how if it does happen we will all die. In this essay I will compare both poems and explain why some of the languages techniques help send a certain message out to readers. Also I will explain how war is presented in each poem. There is one main similarity in both Dulce and Icarus; this is that they are both strongly against war of any sort.

"The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est Pro patria mori." This quotation from Dulce is saying that the saying Dulce et Decorum est Pro patria is one big lie and that means it is NOT sweet and fitting to die for your country. "The general at the radar screen he should have got the sack but that wouldn't bring Three thousand million, seven hundred, and sixty-eight people back, would it?" This quotation from Icarus Allsorts is saying that one general getting sacked would not bring nearly the whole human race back. Also the use of the specific number makes you feel shocked about how many people would die.

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Another similarity is that both poems use similes to help reinforce their message about war. The message about war in Icarus is that if there is a nuclear war or a WW3 the whole or most of the human race would be wiped out. " The rich huddled outside of their fallout shelters like drunken carol singers. " This simile basically means that " the rich" are dead because if the rich are " huddled outside of their fallout shelters" this means they haven't got into the fallout shelters on time so they were outside when the nuclear bomb was dropped.

Also the rich are described as " drunken carol singers" this suggests they are on the floor dead in a heap. The message about war in Dulce is ironic (it is NOT sweet and fitting to die for your country. ) " His hanging face like a devils sick of sin", this simile means that the " hanging face" of this man/solder is so sick and disgusting it is worse then one of the devils punishments. This refers to the message about war as if you see sick and disgusting things in war it is obviously not sweet and fitting to die for your country.

Even though there are not many similarities in Dulce and Icarus there are many differences. First of all the tone and mood of both poems are completely different. The tone/mood in Icarus is humours " Civil defence volunteers with their tin hats in one hand and their heads in other. " This is black humour. A civil defence volunteer refers to civilians who have volunteered to defend their country in war. " With their tin hats in one hand and their heads in the other," means that the civil defence volunteers have had their heads blown of. We laugh at this even though it is serious.

When we read this now in 2012 where there is little threat of nuclear war we laugh at funny quotations about people's heads being blown off, but if you were reading this back in the time of the cold war it's black humour may have disturbed you. On the other hand Dulce has the opposite tone/mood. The tone/mood in Dulce is sad and negative. " In all my helpless dreams, before my helpless sight he plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning. " In this quotation Owen is referring to a dream he has had. Also he is describing what is happening in the dream- a man is drowning from gas.

He is also having this dream because the things he has seen in war are things that will stick in his head forever. This is sad and negative. In 2012 we have computers, radios, T. V. s etc. and can find out what the conditions were like in any war but back in 1917 when WW1 was going on the only way for a family member to know what their son/dad/nephew/grandson was seeing was through a poem and reading poems like Dulce would make them feel worried and sad. Another difference is the way both poems are written. Icarus is written like a news report.

Using a lack of punctuation does this. This stanza is an example of the lack of punctuation used in the poem. " From every corner of the earth bombs began to fly there were even missile jams no traffic lights in the sky in the time it takes to blow your nose the people fell, the mushrooms rose. " This lack of use of punctuation makes you read the poem fast this relates to how quick a nuclear bomb can drop and destroy. Also the lack of punctuation communicates the idea that all the events from the poem are occurring simultaneously as the bombs explode.

Dulce is written like a diary as it is written in the first person. " I saw him drowning" Also Dulce is written in the past tense but then in one stanza it changes to the present tense. " In all my helpless dreams, before my helpless sight, he plunges at me guttering, choking, drowning. " This stanza is in the present tense because Owen is reporting a dream he has had. Also the use of present tense signifies that the event still haunts him in the present day. In Dulce there is a use of onomatopoeia.

" If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs. " This affects the audience positioning as you can picture an image and hear the sound of somebody basically drowning in their body and this will make the audience feel disgusted. Also in 1920 anybody reading the poem would realise how disgusting and sickly war is. In Icarus there is a rhetorical question used in the last line of the poem. " The general at the radar screen he should of got the sack but that wouldn't bring three thousand million, seven hundred, and sixty eight people back, would it?"

This rhetorical question effects the audience positioning because there is lots of black humour used in the poem and this makes the serious subject of nuclear war a joke, but the rhetorical question at the end of the poem adds a serious note to it and makes you think hard and realise how serious the subject of nuclear war is. In my essay I have explained that the two poems have their similarities and differences Both poems have once main similarity which is that they are both strongly against war.

In my opinion I think that Icarus Allsorts was the most effective poem as it used black humour and not lots of big words and as a young person that is

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what I look for in poems, stories etc. Also the rhythm used in the poem was effective because it was not slow. Another reason I thought it was most effective was the rhetorical question used at the end of the poem. I liked this touch to the poem because it ended the poem on a serious note. Before I read Dulce I never really considered the implications of WW1 and how brave the soldiers had to be.

Also before I read Icarus Allsorts I never really considered how dangerous and threatening nuclear war was. This is because I didn't grow up with the threat nuclear war. Dulce et Decorum est has altered my attitude to WW1 by making me realise how sacrificing and brave the soldiers had to be to fight in it. Icarus Allsorts has altered my attitude to nuclear war by making me realise how many people would die if there were to be a nuclear war and how it would effect everybody not just poor people but also the rich people and even the monarchy.