

Much ado about  
nothing



**ASSIGN  
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In this essay the ideas I will be exploring is the contrasts between a character and how they change throughout the book and the contrasts between different sets of characters. The main protagonists in ' Much Ado About Nothing' are Claudio, Don John and Benedick and the main protagonists in animal farm are Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer. Animal farm was written during the Russian Revolution and therefore each of the animals represents a different character from the revolution; for example Napoleon represents Stalin. Animal farm had to be written in this way as if the real names were used then the author would be killed.

When Shakespeare wrote his play ' Much Ado About Nothing' he could write about anything he wanted to as there were no laws against authors and he wrote about a love story and within the main story of the book there was another love story which was most unexpected. In both novels language is used in a very effective way to show contrast for example in Shakespeare's play once Benedick is tricked into believing that Beatrice loves him he then goes and speaks to her and they end up having a little argument. The main theme in Much Ado About Nothing is love turning into hate then back to love and hate turning into love both end with love but they start in different ways. In Much Ado About Nothing the structure Shakespeare has done is very clever as everything is very close-quarters, there are only four places in which the characters are: inside Leonato's house, outside Leonato's house, in the orchard and in the chapel all of which are located in Messina. In animal farm it isn't too different as most of what happens in in the farm but there are little bits in other farms.

The first contrast point in this essay is between Napoleon and Snowball. Napoleon represents Stalin and Snowball represents Trotsky. These two characters are seeking the same thing once the Old Major dies power. In chapter 2 Snowball and Napoleon are linked Snowball is the clever one and in the book snowball makes plans to build a windmill which when Napoleon sees it, it seems as if Napoleon has been put in the shade and that everyone prefers Snowball but Napoleon urinates on it and then walks away. In the book Snowball energetically promotes the revolution and teaches the animals new skills, whilst Napoleon is with his pack of dogs in the barn and doesn't participate in what all the other animals in the farm do.

Snowball is the one that cares about the well-being of all the animals but when Napoleon says that the pigs must have all the apples he supports him. Snowball is the one of the two that is the braver one in the battle and Snowball is the one that comes up with the strategy for the battle. As Snowball is the one working hard on the farm and making sure the animals are doing their job well he doesn't realise that Napoleon has used the time to gain power or what Napoleon was doing with the dogs. Once Napoleon is ready he uses his dogs to attack Snowball and then Snowball is nearly killed and decides to flee from the farm, Napoleon uses this to his advantage later on in the book when he starts blaming everything on Snowball whenever something on the farm goes wrong. Overall Snowball is presented by Orwell as a Trotsky-like idealist who is outmanoeuvred by his calculating and utterly ruthless rival, Napoleon. Napoleon is a typical dictator throughout the book.

Once Napoleon gained power he started attacking all the messages Old Major tried to portray to all the other animals. Napoleon very quickly takes

control of all the food supply as he knows this way if the animals want to be fed they would have to listen to him. The first action Napoleon takes once he gets power is expelling Snowball and takes the puppies into his own control. Napoleon doesn't participate in the battle of the Cowshed unlike Snowball who had a main role and he devised the strategy for the battle as-well-as taking part in it and getting hurt but later on in the book Napoleon rewrites history to portray himself as the heroic leader he wasn't. Without Squealer, Napoleon would be one of the most useless leaders as he didn't know how to convince the animals or how to get them onto his side. Squealer was the one doing all the convincing and he was pacifying the animals and he was helping Napoleon to disguise his rise to power.

Unlike Snowball, Napoleon was cruel and you see the levels of his cruelty when he sends Boxer off to be killed in return for a box of alcohol. As the story continues Napoleon's selfishness levels steadily increase or he just stops caring about hiding his selfishness. Towards the end of the story, he has taken over nearly Jones's entire house but the reason this is one of the worst things he did was because he was now betraying the revolution and all the animals on the farm. Napoleon blames Snowball for his own mistakes and creates an atmosphere of hysteria in which all the animals will confess to the most ludicrous crimes even if they didn't commit them or if they could have gotten away with them.

Napoleon's increasing preoccupation with his position and status demonstrates that he uses the revolution for his own gain. The seven commandments throughout the book are rewritten to suit Napoleon's aims.

He announces his intentions to the animals. Who are terrified into silent agreement, when it is clear that his plans have already been made.

He keeps himself away from the other animals and lives in luxury – dining from jones crockery sets, eating sugar and drinking alcohol – and stages elaborate ceremonies in his own honour. He even has his portrait painted by Squealer. It is possible to argue that napoleon never subscribed to the ideas expressed in Old Major’s dream. Right from the beginning of the novel, Orwell contrasts Napoleon with Snowball. They are two pigs with one similarity, they both want power over the farm. The difference is they both want it for different reasons and they both try to get it in completely different ways.

They are both very important pigs and without them the farm would be very different but they both hate each other and want to get power but have completely different strategies in which to achieve power. It says in the book “ He is a fierce looking boar with a reputation for getting his own way” this suggests that Napoleon is ambitious; this quote also foreshadows the brutal way in which he will seize power. On the other hand the book says this about Snowball: “ Snowball was ... quicker in speech and more inventive” this shows me that Snowball is seen as charismatic and a brilliant think and communicator who would and should surely win the battle for the leader. Snowball was clever and we see this throughout the book, this point is proven when we see that in the book is says “ He formed the Egg Production Committee..., the Clean Tail League..., the Wild Comrades Re-education Committee” this emphasises how Snowball cared for all the animals and it

shows again that if there were to be a fair election for leader then Snowball would probably win it.

The quote also goes to show how Snowball was dedicated to spreading Old Majors' revolutionary ideas and teaching the animals to run the farm themselves but the comic nature of his committees suggests that his approach is theoretical and impractical and this is when the first signs of failure for Snowball start. Snowball and Napoleon were both power hungry but to get their ways they went in completely opposite ways, Snowball was getting on the side of all the animals on the farm and caring for them and trying to do the best for not only the farm but all the animals on the farm, whilst Napoleon decided to go the more violent way and making the animals believe things that were all incorrect just so he could benefit from it and he would lead all the animals by force and exploiting the weaknesses and fears of the other animals. Snowball threatens Napoleon for power throughout most of the book until Napoleon decides to get his dogs to chase Snowball off the farm in the scariest way possible. After Snowball is apparently a traitor to the farm as he 'fled', Squealer was appointed the second in command for Napoleon and he was given this role as he could convince the animals very easily and he would always get them convinced that what they saw wasn't true and the most common word he would use was 'comrade' which would always make the animals easier to convince as he made it sound as if they were all together and what happened, happened for the good of all the animals or to stop animals from thinking that Napoleon was doing something wrong. In the winter as Snowball was absent from the farm then there wasn't anyone left who had much of a brain, so when the winter came there wasn't

as much food as there would usually be and this was starting to be a problem so Squealer went it to the chickens and told them that all their eggs had to be handed in so there would be food for the rest of the animals on the farm and so they would be able to survive the winter. In 'Animal Farm' language is used to represent contrast by changing the way the animal is portrayed and making the animal sound really bad when really, they are quite good.

Squealer has the skill of manipulating and persuading all the animals on the farm; he manages to persuade the chickens to hand over their eggs, to let the pigs have special privileges like an extra hour sleep and extra food and when Boxer was taken away to the slaughter house he convinced them that it was the vets new van but he didn't have time to remove the logo of the slaughter house. If Squealer went out to address the animals and the animals didn't like what they were hearing then they could have gotten angry and started rebelling but this was good for Napoleon as this meant he wouldn't get hated by all the animals but they would start hating Squealer instead, not only this but Napoleon wasn't very good and convincing the animals. In the case of the chickens, Napoleon doesn't use force but makes it sound so essential that if the chickens disagree he would use violence to get the eggs of the chickens. The way Napoleon and Snowball talk is completely different to each other, Snowball uses a more friendly tone and always says 'comrades' so this make the animals think that he is on their side but Napoleon always comes across as more arrogant, when he is present.

Even though they talk so differently from each other their knowledge is much greater than the other animals and we can tell this because the pigs,

Napoleon and Snowball can all read and write but when they asked the other animals to try and read the commandments they found it difficult and Snowball set up a school for them to learn how to read and write. Napoleon shows irony when he says that there will be a 'spontaneous demonstration', this is irony as demonstrations take a long time to plan and they are never spontaneous. Animal isn't only a story about a farmyard but it shows how all power corrupts which are an example of fable. One of Orwell's main concerns was the way in which language could be used to manipulate and mislead people. The pigs – mainly Squealer – use manipulative language to control the farm and to make sure that everything that happens on the farm is not threatening towards any of the pigs – mainly Snowball, Squealer and Napoleon. They use rhetorical questions for example the animals are repetitively asked "Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back!" this was said a lot when the pigs wanted to get something extra like food.

Squealer uses statistics in his speeches for example he says that it is scientifically proven that pigs brain work better when they eat specific foods. Orwell uses subversion to change the meaning of words to make them mean the opposite, he took the word 'equality' and made it mean the opposite, 'all animals are equal but some are more equal than others. The Old Major's maxim 'Whatever goes upon two legs, is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.

'This was changed for the less intelligent animals to 'Four Legs good, two legs bad' as it would be much easier to adapt to and they would know it much quicker than if they were doing the longer maxim that Old Major said.



The main contrast in ' Much Ado About Nothing' is between Don John and Don Pedro, Don John was the bad brother out of the two and Don Pedro was the good brother out of the two but they had completely different thoughts. Don Pedro was a prince and he was always trying to encourage love and if there was a problem he would try to solve it but if it wasn't to do with him he would back the decision made by the person who it concerned. This is proven when Claudio finds out that Hero is allegedly woos someone else; Don Pedro offers to help sanction Claudio's vengeance by helping to disgrace her at the wedding ceremony. After Hero was disgraced Don Pedro said he would leave Messina the same day with Claudio, this is a sign of loyalty to the people that were close to him.

Don Pedro kept his role as prince by being honest, fair and loyal to everyone from his evil brother to people who deserved to get care like this, for example; Claudio and Benedick. We can tell that Don Pedro is good right from the beginning of the play as it says " bestowed much honour" which proves that he is a good person. He is grand and never subordinate. He was absolutely sure that he will be able to be the ' match maker' for Claudio and Hero, which he succeeds to do in the end. Don Pedro truly believes in true love and tries to get Benedick to believe the same thing; the plan he had was risky but paid out.

He tricked Benedick into believing that Beatrice was in love with him and simultaneously, at the other end of the house, Beatrice was tricked into believing that Benedick was in love with her. In the end he successfully conspires to bring them together. After he has tricked Benedick into believing that Beatrice loves him, he shows a sense of humour by teasing

him with gentle and playful energy afterwards. He displays more of himself when he teases Dogberry without malice by saying: “ First I ask thee what they have done; thirdly I ask thee what their offence is...” and Don Pedro purposely mixes up the numbers. Once he and Claudio realise that Don John set it all up they go to what is apparently Hero’s tomb and say that they will do anything to make up for what they had done.

Don John is the complete opposite of Don Pedro. Don John is portrayed as a melodramatic villain, a stereotypical bastard serving a thematic and narrative function. His repetitious opening line being “ I thank you, I am not of many words, but I thank you”, in response to gracious words of welcome and reconciliation, is ludicrously overblown and vacuous. His overuse of first person singular indicates his egocentricity.

He insists that first person malice is honesty or truth to the base of the selfishness within everyone: “ I cannot hide what I am”, “ Let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me” and “ I am a plain dealing villain”. He rails against Claudio’s promotion, “ that young start-up”, at his expense, which supplies him with motive. Although he causes Claudio distress at the masked ball by hinting that Don Pedro has taken Hero for himself, Borachio is architect of the scheme to disgrace Hero. Don John’s lack of ingenuity and initiative makes him baser and less admirable. His language is stiff and over elaborate. His use of balance, antithesis and alliteration would be courtly like Leonato’s, except that his constant subject is himself and prime example of this is: “ I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man’s jests: eat when I have stomach... laugh When I am merry, and claw no man in his humour”.

Whereas the logical structure implies intelligence and control, it is too rigid for wit and mean in its imagery to be aphoristic. Though cowardly, underhand and ineffectual, he has a shrewd understanding of the court. When he does make insinuations about Hero, he plays upon tensions in the court about honour and status which makes his friendships fragile. The language in Much Ado About Nothing presents contrast by showing personalities of certain characters change throughout the book. Beatrice and Benedick, upon whose quick, apparently spontaneous repartee the comedy depends.

The characters in the romantic plot, principally Hero and Claudio, are apt to declaim in verse, which underlines, by contrast, the artificiality of their attitudes. In the first scene, for example, the dialogue, even of the messenger and Leonato, is in prose until Claudio is left alone with Don Pedro to confess his love. His choice of words – “ thronging soft and delicate desires” – becomes more elevated by contrast with Benedick’s former down to earth mockery, “ Would you buy her, that you enquire after her? ” However affecting Claudio’s thoughts the formality of the verse hints at the underlying illusion. Claudio and Hero do not have many speeches in which they speak their mind. Claudio attacks Hero by saying, “ You are more intemperate in your blood than Venus or those pampered animals that rage in savage sensuality”.

Shakespeare creates a harsh oxymoron by contrasting “ savage” and “ sensuality” creating a dynamic contrast of polar opposites. The unsympathetic word “ savage” with the passionate word “ sensuality” startles the reader. At the same time, Claudio uses harsh diction and strong

assonance to accentuate his anger. His attack is vicious and stings and, for once, Don Pedro is not speaking for him.

The overall message both writers are trying to give the audience a sense of how personalities change very easily. In animal farm contrast is shown between all the pigs and the other animals on the farm, the pigs are clever and literate but the other animals aren't clever and are illiterate. We see this when the commandments are originally written they are short therefore making it simple for the animals to remember what the commandments were. The way Squealer talks to the other animals is very patronising and he is making it subtle enough so that the other animals don't realise it. It is very obvious that by the end of the book everything had gone back to the same as it was before farmer Jones was kicked out of his own farm. It also shows how Napoleon had little influence on what happened on the farm as the animals were still working hard and their opinions were never acknowledged.

In Much Ado About Nothing there are similar ways in which contrast is presented, there is a lot of bold characters that stand out much more than the rest and there are parts where a lot of persuasive language is used. The main difference between the novel and the play is the message they try to send out.