

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 2 ☒ Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒

Gender & Politics Question 5 ☒ Question 6 ☒ Question 7 ☒

THATCHERISM: Question 8 ☒

Churchill explores the ways in which gender and politics influenced women in the 1980s - a time where the UK had its first female Prime Minister in the form of Margaret Thatcher, the employment number of females rose and feminism became a controversial topic in her play 'Top Girls'. In this extract from Act 3, the protagonist Marlene - a ~~unlike her~~ career focused, 'modern' woman visits her sister Joyce - ^{an empowered} ~~a peer~~, lower class ~~woman~~ ^{character} who raises Marlene's daughter Angie, who too, like her aunt, has no foreseeable success in life to come, after six long years. Gradually, the sisters begin to argue about politics and the contrast between their lives. The argument becomes fuelled with anger and is fiery, vicious and reaches a climax which leads to tears and eventual dispersing into different rooms.



→ which is a flashback scene to a year ago,
In Act 3, Churchill uses the medium of Merlene to represent the 'modern' and 'New Women' who believe the "eighties are going to be stupendous", which may have caused primary audiences in the Royal Court Theatre laugh with irony as they and the contemporary audiences knew very well that was not the case for most of the population. The eighties were a period of economic difficulties paired with political unrest with miners' ~~trikes~~ strikes and the privatisation of nationally owned businesses which caused controversy throughout the country. Churchill's use of the adjective "stupendous" suggests all will be well and that success was what people aimed for which was achievable. The stark contrast between what Merlene proposes and the reality depicts to audiences of all time periods how the expectation of a better and brighter future was false and was used to dupe people to become politically active in support of Conservative



~~Theresa May~~ Margaret Thatcher and
against Labour:

Upon Molere's bold shipwreck, Churchill
employ psychonymic exchanges between
~~Molere~~^{her} and her sister Joyce to depict
Molere as selfish and self centered.
~~Joyce's presence~~ Churchill writes!

Joyce: Who for?

Molere: For me / I'm gang...

Joyce: Oh forgive. Yes.

The psychonymic exchange builds
up tension and heart amongst the
audience whilst ~~also~~ simultaneously
allowing audiences to be drawn in
and become emotionally engaged.

Churchill's use of the most sensitive
"For me" depicts the character of
Molere as despicable and unregarding
of other people and their plight -
especially of her ^{sister} ~~sister~~ as well as
her daughter. Churchill depicts
politics as a sensitive topic - especially
for females who are most likely to
be ignored and abandoned by the
political system as a result of what



Feminists would call 'Patriarchy' whereby society is in command by men who make the rules. Churchill's use of the pronoun 'me' depict Moreen as unmemorable and self centered and thus may be able to understand why Moreen did not raise her own daughter. Audiences may understand this to show Churchill suggesting women cannot be successful career women whilst also pursuing a healthy family life with children and ~~on~~ that one factor suffers as a result. Radical feminists would suggest the character of Moreen had the authority to choose what she wanted and thus should not be criticised.

Churchill depicts the ~~contrasting~~ ^{contradicting} political beliefs of the sisters convincingly at the climax of the argument end of the play whereby Moreen mimics the beliefs held by Joyce and ridicules her. Churchill strategically uses a rhetorical question to one "Butter



walking on the workers' faces?" to
mean Joyce^{most} believes the capitalist
society does not benefit all and that
those who achieve success do so as
a consequence of putting other people
down. Churchill presents Joyce as
an uneducated ~~woman~~^{character} with bleak
life chances but ^{as} someone who has
experience of inequality and knows
what it is like to be ~~in~~ in dire
financial ~~communication~~ circumstances.
Joyce earlier reveals how she
"works four jobs" and how she just
about "manages to make ends meet".
This is stark contrast between the
lifestyle Marlene enjoys whereby
she has even flown to America
and ironically, the very people Joyce
critiques includes her sister. In
Act Two, at the Top Gun
employment agency, there are various
interviews carried out by other
"high flying" women like Marlene
where candidates are interviewed,
logged down upon and criticised based
on looks. In the exchange between



Molere and candidate Jeane, Merlene remarks "they're looking for something glorie" which is a direct reference to the way Jeane dresses and her image though she does repulse him. Here, we can clearly understand as audience members - both primary and contemporary - that Molere has adopted the role of a male and a male aggressive announcing to come down upon other women in order to give herself a sense of success and accomplishment. This shows how in order for women to be successful, they have to be masculine and is a critique of modern feminism. Like her, Merlene, dumped her daughter and left to work and make a career and refused all parental responsibilities for Angie for sixteen years.

The critic Nightingale suggests "What use is female emancipation... if it ~~does not~~ transforms clever women into predators and does nothing



for the stupid, weak and helpless" which in my opinion, is the crux of the entire play as Churchill adopts socialism in her play to bring about social change in the way women perceive themselves in relation to not just men but other women too.

Churchill highlights how the involvement of females in politics is not sufficient if it brings about no social changes in attitude.

This is evident throughout the character of Marlene - be it the workplace or in her personal life, the need to help others or even to ensure they be comfortable does not regard her as necessary or important. This suggests true feminism is in that which helps women progress forward together and not leave ~~characters~~ ^{characters} like Joyce and Angie behind.

