

Pearson Edexcel
Advanced GCE English Literature 6ET04
Unit 4 Coursework

The purpose of this pack is to provide centres with moderated exemplars of coursework from the June 2015 series.

Included in this pack:

- Assessments from June 2015
- Marked responses
- Centre and moderator comments

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UNIT 4 – COURSEWORK – REFLECTIONS IN LITERARY STUDIES

SCRIPT A:

(AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4) ONE EXTENDED STUDY: According to Linda Alcoff in her essay 'Cultural Feminism Versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory', a woman in society... 'is always the object, a conglomeration of attributes to be predicted and controlled. To what extent can this theory be applied to the presentation of women in feminist literature? Main text 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood, subsidiary texts 'The Bell Jar' by Sylvia Plath and 'The Yellow Wallpaper' by Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

(AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4) TWO SHORTER STUDIES:

Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies

According to Linda Alcoff in her essay *Cultural Feminism Versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory*, a woman in society '...is always the Object, a conglomeration of attributes to be predicted and controlled...'¹

To what extent can this theory be applied to the presentation of women in feminist literature? Main text 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood, subsidiary texts 'The Bell Jar' by Sylvia Plath and 'The Yellow Wallpaper' by Charlotte Perkins-Gilman.

Stein suggests that the preliminary and concluding material of, 'The Handmaid's Tale', namely Atwood's two dedications, three epigraphs and the pseudo-factual 'Historical Notes', act as a frame to Offred's narrative, much like the way in which, 'a frame around a painting tells us to read an enclosed space in a certain way, as an art object, an object re-presented'². As such Atwood makes Offred the object, defined by the patriarchal society in which she finds herself; a phenomenon also manifest in the female protagonists' struggles against expectations of feminine passivity in Plath's 'The Bell Jar' and Perkins-Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'. By examining these texts, it will be possible to explore the ways in which women are conveyed as strictly defined and controlled objects in literature and speculate as to the cultural and contextual influences on these authors.

In 'The Handmaid's Tale', female biology is a fundamental aspect in the underpinning and restriction of the female, stemming perhaps from the cultural phenomenon theorised by Adrienne Rich, whereby, 'patriarchal thought has limited female biology to its own narrow specifications'³. In 'The Handmaid's Tale' the feminine physicality dictates the female representation as an object of male sexual desire and gratification, an idea which reaches its climax in the scene at Jezebel's, in which women are dressed to

conceptual area study of
uses #03 critical theory to help define argument connect texts.

#01 research applied intricately to discussion

enhance the physical assets fetishistically valued by men, 'cut high up the thighs, low over the breasts... olden-days lingerie, shortie nightgowns, baby-doll pyjamas'⁴. Here, Atwood's use of asyndetic listing provides a fleeting glimpse of each figure, reducing them to solely their physical appearance, whilst such an abrupt syntax projects onto these women an impression of numbed intellect, further acting to streamline their identity into one that consists wholly of sexual attributes. Indeed, these women all serve as prostitutes to the Gileadean commanders, a device which holds a painful relevance to the 21st century

AO1 response largely text + techniques

AO1 link to context

Words: 310

¹ Alcoff, Linda., 1988. 'Cultural Feminism versus post-structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 13 p. 406

² Stein, Karen., 1996. 'Margaret Atwood's Modest Proposal: The Handmaid's Tale'. *Canadian Literature* 148 p.57

³ Adrienne, Rich cited in Alcoff, , Linda., 'Cultural Feminism versus post-structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory' p.409

⁴ Atwood, Margaret., 2005. *The Handmaid's Tale*, Great Britain: Vintage. p.246

reader, familiar as they are with a recent blight of sexual slavery, imposed by dissident military leaders in the Middle East⁵.

This portrayal of women as sexual commodities is echoed by Offred herself in the disintegration of her language in this scene. Base and crude words such as 'tits' suggest Offred's submission to a misogynistic attitude of female objectification. Indeed, Offred also succumbs through her role as mistress to a succession of men. Atwood constructs parallels between Offred's affair with Luke, the body of which is contemplated at the beginning, and her liaison with Nick at the novel's close to impress a kind of cyclicity upon its structure. The clandestine late night meetings, the illicit escape with a male protector, and the elaborate recollections of sexual encounters⁶ that both relationships share serve to emphasise the inevitability of female subjugation due to biology, an idea which reaches its climax when Offred sleeps with the Commander. Here, Offred's fabricated physical appearance, 'bad makeup, someone else's clothes'⁷ renders her an object constructed for the fulfilment of the commander's sexual pleasure. This is confirmed in the contradiction between Offred's lack of dialogue and the 'scream[ing]'⁸ of her internal monologue, which evidences the repression of her voice in the moment of sexual encounter. As such, she is deprived both of the ability to consent as an equal, and of the essential human right to expression.

AO1 close exam method by reading choice

AO1 holistic approach analysis to text structure of narrative

sophisticated development of argument

evaluates independently

As such, 'The Handmaid's Tale' supports Rich's assertion as to the 'radical implications' of female biology⁹, however such implications are sordid and negative, focusing on patriarchal exploitation of the female for sexual gratification as opposed to the reverence Rich suggests. This is confirmed in, 'The Bell Jar', in Plath's starkly depicted scene of Marco's attempted rape of Esther, wherein Marco's insistent repetition of the

evaluates critical theory referenced reinterprets conceptually

Words: 606

*AO1
with
influence*

The fundamentalist group Islamic State are reported to have been kidnapping young Yazidi women and selling them into sex slavery. An explicit link can be found between the novel and these events, as in both cases the infliction of female sexual submission originates from a fundamentalist patriarchy. As such, the novel is made all the more real to its 21st century readers, thus validating its stance as that of predictive fiction, and strengthening the parallels that can be found between the representation of women in literature, and their representation in society. Indeed, 'The Handmaid's Tale' is said to have been inspired by the female oppression Atwood witnessed on her trips to Afghanistan and Iran (Swale, Jill., 2002. 'Feminism and Politics in the Handmaid's Tale'. *The English Review* 13 p.37)

*AO1
reading
informed
response*

⁶ Such as Offred's lingering and explicit depiction of her moments of sexual intimacy with Nick, 'I want to see what can be seen... the lines of his body, the texture of his flesh, the glisten of sweat on his pelt' (Atwood, Margaret., 2005. *The Handmaid's Tale* Great Britain: Vintage p.281)

⁷ *The Handmaid's Tale* p.266

⁸ *The Handmaid's Tale* p.267

⁹ 'female biology - the diffuse, intense sensuality radiating out from clitoris, breasts, uterus, vagina; the lunar cycles of menstruation; the gestation and fruition of life which can take place in the female body has... radical implications'. Rich, Adrienne cited in Alcoff, Linda, 'Cultural Feminism versus post-structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory' p.409

Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies

*AO3
makes close
connections
between texts
with accuracy
AO1*

word, 'slut'¹⁰, like Offred's use of the word 'tits', communicates to the reader an exclusive focus on female promiscuity and sexuality. The derogatory implications of this word are made explicit in Plath's use of the word 'hissed' – allusive to the snake in the Garden of Eden – as a descriptor for his dialogue, thus associating female sexuality with evil on a biblical plane.

interprets + extends

However, feminist literature simultaneously depicts an antithetic view to sex, whereby female asexuality is deemed desirable and even obligatory. This is apparent in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' in the infantile endearments, such as, 'little girl'¹¹, that John bestows upon his wife which, through their incompatibility with the adult concept of sex, undermine the female protagonist's sexuality. This perhaps stems from the novel's 19th century context, whereby women were perceived as entirely non-sexual, an idea manifest in the 'Cult of Purity' which 'obliged women to remain virtuous and pure even in marriage'¹². Such imposition of purity upon the female is made more explicit in 'The Bell Jar', when Buddy reveals to Esther that he has lost his virginity, in the context of a prevailing expectation that Esther remain chaste¹³, a hypocritical attitude made universal through Plath's use of media-motif¹⁴. Upon reading an article entitled 'In Defence of Chastity', Esther reflects, 'I couldn't stand the idea of a woman having to have a single pure life, and a man being able to have a double life, one pure and one not'¹⁵.

confident use of critical + technical language

*AO1
makes
use of
contextual
reading*

*synthesises
info or
context to
show
understanding
influence
of context
on
method
technique*

As such, in both the texts and the cultures of which they are products, sexuality is an attribute that defines women. The dichotomy between the depiction of the female as a paragon of virtue, as in the 19th century

'Yellow Wallpaper', and an object of sexual gratification, in Atwood's 1985 text, suggests the shifting of these parameters over time, the latter being perhaps most explicit in Atwood's novel due to the 80s climate of increasing sexual liberation in which it was written.

*AO1
considers
context of
texts in
relation to
each other*

Words: 936

¹⁰ Plath, Sylvia., 2005. *The Bell Jar*, Faber and Faber Limited, p.105

¹¹ Perkins-Gilman, Charlotte., 2008, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Project Gutenberg. Retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1952/1952-h/1952-h.htm> (access 14th September 2014).

¹² Thomas, Deborah (2007) *The Changing Role of Womanhood: From True Woman to New Woman in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"*, American Literature Research and Analysis Website. Retrieved from <http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/wohlp/ara/gilman.htm> (access 9th December 2014)

¹³ 'he was the kind of person a girl should stay fine and clean for' (*The Bell Jar*, p.64). Esther reflects upon this expectation directly before Buddy reveals to her that he lost his virginity to a waitress the Summer before.

¹⁴ The novel as a whole is interspersed with various newspaper clippings, and even opens upon a consideration of current events in Esther's allusion to the impending execution of the Rosenbergs, 'the Summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs', an event which actually took place in June 1953. This motif is effective in portraying 50s popular thought and cultural expectation, which at this time endorsed female purity.

¹⁵ *The Bell Jar*, p.77

NOT research context employed

A02 + A03 considers a range of interpretive perspectives independent critical

Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies

From another perspective, 'The Handmaid's Tale' is perhaps the most traditional of all three texts¹⁶, advocating a return to conventional femininity, the cornerstone of which is motherhood. Stein suggests that, in light of declining birth rates, Gileadean babies have a 'commodity value'¹⁷, a concept applied by extension to the handmaids that mother them, as confirmed in Howell's deeming Offred a 'breeding machine serving the state'¹⁸. This contradicts Rich's proposal that 'Feminist vision will... come to view our physicality as a resource'¹⁹. In 'The Handmaid's Tale', it is men who exploit the female 'physicality' as a resource for the perpetuation of the male commanding class.

The resulting nature of fertility as a yardstick of individual value is evident in its being embedded within the novel. Stein, for example, suggests that even the foods the handmaids eat can be considered as 'representations of wombs and fertility'²⁰. This valid, albeit discrete, illumination of the relationship between fertility and symbolism can be extended in the concept that the novel in its entirety is a symbol for the menstrual cycle; the fragmented chapters being separated as they are into defined sections, among which the title 'Night' rhythmically occurs, a technique made all the more elemental by Atwood's use of archaised roman numerals. The value of motherhood is also evident in Atwood's religious imagery. When Offred encounters the pregnant Janine, for example, words such as 'martyr' 'hilltop' and 'saved'²¹, convey the reverential idolatry that Gileadean society bestows upon those who are fertile.

As such, maternity is perhaps the defining trait of Gileadean women, fundamental to others' perception of them, and to their sense of self-worth. It is arguable that Atwood exaggerates elements such as fertility within the novel due to its didactic stance as a form of predictive fiction which aims to inspire change.

A01 - closer interpretation of text + meaning through language

A02 form + genre content considered

However, 'The Bell Jar' also suggests the reduction of the female to the maternal role, despite its entirely different autobiographical genre. This is evident in Plath's fig tree allegory²², in which Esther's

Words: 1273

¹⁶ This was arguably inspired by a Western conservative revival when the novel was written in the 80s. Not only were far right politicians such as Reagan and Thatcher in power, but the 80s also witnessed the emergence of the New Right, thus a renewed support for traditional familial roles and a vehement opposition to abortion and homosexuality. It is this severe traditionalism that Atwood replicates and criticises in Gilead.

¹⁷ Stein, Karen., 'Margaret Atwood's Modest Proposal: The Handmaid's Tale'. p.65

¹⁸ Howells, Coral Ann., 2005 *Margaret Atwood*, Palgrave Macmillan, p.104

¹⁹ Rich, Adrienne, cited in Alcoff, Linda, 'Cultural Feminism versus post-structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory' p.409

²⁰ 'the foods the handmaids eat, symbolic representations of wombs and fertility (pears, eggs, chickens, bread described as baking in the oven)' Stein, Karen., 'Margaret Atwood's Modest Proposal: The Handmaid's Tale', p.66

²¹ *The Handmaid's Tale*, p. 36

²² 'I saw my life branching out before me like the green fig tree in the story... One fig was a husband and a happy home and children, and another fig was a famous poet and another fig was a brilliant professor, and another fig was Ee Gee, the amazing editor... I couldn't make up my mind which of the figs I would choose. I wanted each and every one of them, but choosing one meant losing all the rest' (*The Bell Jar*, p.73)

AO1
AO2
evidence o
wider
reading
+
research
applied.

inability to attain multiple fruits conveys, in a way perhaps more explicit than Atwood's use of embedded symbolism, her perception that motherhood is mutually exclusive to all other elements of the female identity. Indeed, motherhood is indirectly enforced by the novel's 50s context²³, in which both the contraceptive pill and abortion were unavailable to women, an idea substantiated in the 'baby boom' of the 1950s.

AO1
AO2
references
to contextual
influences
in analysis

Bonds suggests that Plath also uses the baby, deemed a symbol of the self in crisis by Jung, as a motif²⁴ to convey Esther's fear that, 'each of the various paths open to her will require that she dispense with, leave undeveloped, some important part of herself'²⁵. The use of the baby as a vehicle for this idea identifies explicitly with motherhood, aligning with the fig tree allegory to convey the strict restriction of the female to the maternal role.

AO1
AO2
elaborated
analysis

However, Bond's assertion that the baby carries entirely negative implications is contradicted at the novel's beginning, where Esther fleetingly alludes to her 'baby'²⁶. The measured narrative tone that envelops this reference, elicited by intimate parenthesis, 'later, when I was alright again, I bought them out'²⁷ and a considered, evaluative use of the past tense, 'for a long time afterwards I hid them away'²⁸ contributes to an effect of stability, pronounced in its contrast to the frenzied, breathless tone of Esther's descent into mental illness²⁹. As such, 'the baby' is not only contributory to Esther's recovery, but it is also a component of Esther as a complete woman of many and complex attributes, as this reference is born out of a testament to Esther's being a successful writer: the form of the novel itself. As

AO3
uses +
challenges
critical
perspective
to produce
an
alternative
reading

such, 'The Bell Jar' depicts motherhood as an element of the feminine, not its entirety.

AO2
draws
independent
conclusion

Words: 1571

²³ The novel is not only set in the 50s, but it is suggested that the Plath completed her first draft in 1957. This, in conjunction with the fact that the novel is firmly rooted in the biographical events of Plath's summer 1953, renders 'The Bell Jar' very much a product of its 1950s context.

²⁴ The image of the 'baby' is manifest at various points in the novel. For example, when Esther goes to the hospital with Buddy, she is bombarded with images of babies in 'big glass bottles' (*The Bell Jar*, p.59) and even the graphic image of a baby being born, 'through the split, shaven place between her legs' (*The Bell Jar* p.62) This motif reasserts itself at the very end of the novel when, in the final chapter, Esther contemplates that the person in the Bell Jar is 'blank and stopped as a dead baby' (*The Bell Jar*, p.227)

²⁵ Bonds, Diane S., 1990. 'The Separative Self in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*' Retrieved from <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/ssmith/separativeself.pdf> (access 27th September 2014), p.51

²⁶ 'Last week I cut the plastic fish off the sunglasses case for the baby to play with' (*The Bell Jar*, p.3)

²⁷ *The Bell Jar*, p.3

²⁸ *The Bell Jar*, p.3

²⁹ 'Cal hadn't wanted to swim, he had wanted to talk, and we were arguing about this play where a young man finds out he has a brain disease, on account of his father fooling around with unclean women, and in the end his brain, which has been softening all along, snaps completely, and his mother is debating whether to kill him or not' (*The Bell Jar*, p.148). Plath's liberal use of commas, resulting in an exceedingly long sentence structure, rapidly imparts a torrent of information upon the reader to convey Esther's increasing mental disintegration.

Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies

AO1
Sophisticated analysis of technical aspects
Hand 4

Atwood's rhetorical skill. Her use of anadiplosis and anaphora deftly impresses upon the reader the horror of the Gileadean institution of execution³⁹ and the connections she purposefully employs before guilefully casting aside⁴⁰ suggest a concealed narrative intent. This conflict between the innocent, victimized aspect of Offred and the powerful, purposeful aspect that manipulates the narrative embodies the struggle of an intelligent woman to realise self-expression in an oppressive environment.

AO1
relationships between author + character considered

This struggle is also experienced by the protagonist of 'The Yellow Wallpaper', whose hurried narrative tone⁴¹ permeates the text with a clandestine air suggestive of her writing's illicitness, as made explicit in the immediacy of the text's diary form, 'There comes John, and I must put this away,—he hates to have me write a word'⁴². This stifling of the female voice is an outcome of the repressive Victorian 'rest cure' whereby patients, the majority of whom were female, were prohibited from reading and writing. The text can be interpreted as a protest⁴³ against this treatment, shocking as it was to contemporary readers who perceived its vivid content and even its being - as a form of feminist expression - as a breach of the 19th century 'separate spheres' of gender⁴⁴. As such, 'The Yellow Wallpaper' illuminates the repression of female self-expression in both its protagonists' literary furtiveness, and in the defiant nature of the text, which throws into relief the oppressive male hegemony against which it protests.

AO1
context engaged in argument

Despite this depiction of women as controlled elements due to the limitation of their self-expression, defiance of patriarchal control is also evident in all three texts. Offred's mother, for example, is a staunch feminist. Her revolutionary acts - burning pornography, protesting for abortion - render her a product of the radical feminism of the 70s⁴⁵ with which contemporary readers of the 80s novel would have been

AO1
context stays intrinsic

familiar, thus injecting the novel with potent overtones of resistance and defiance rooted in reality. This

Words: 2208

³⁹ 'What they are hanging from is hooks. The hooks have been set into the brickwork of the wall for this purpose.' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.42). Atwood's use of anadiplosis here, for example, draws the reader's attention to the presence of the 'hooks', a barbaric instrument which reiterates the cruelty of Gileadean society

⁴⁰ 'The red of the smile is the same as the red of the tulips in Serena Joy's garden...neither thing makes a comment on the other' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.43). As such, Offred impresses a greater, interconnected importance upon the reader before dismissing it in a pretence of rhetorical inability

objective assessment

⁴¹ 'It creeps all over the house' 'It gets into my hair' (*The Yellow Wallpaper*). Perkins-Gilman's employment of very brief, simple sentences suggest that the narrator cannot spare the time to elaborate for fear of being discovered in the act of writing.

⁴² Perkins-Gilman, Charlotte., *The Yellow Wallpaper*

⁴³ 'The Yellow Wallpaper' is a protest novel in a literal sense too, in so far as Perkins-Gilman sent a copy of it to Silas Weir Mitchell, the creator of the rest cure, in order to demonstrate its destructiveness.

⁴⁴ This was the ideology by which women were bound to domesticity and denied the attribute of intelligence, something which was reserved exclusively for men. Indeed, in the 1880s, claims were made that female students - rebels against the boundaries of their sphere - were 'liable to anaemia, stunted growth... and even insanity' Forward, Stephanie., 1997. 'Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Yellow Wallpaper.' *The English Review* 7 p.34

⁴⁵ 'Offred's mother is one of the radical feminists who took a strong stand against the exploitation of women in the 1970s' Swale, Jill., 'Feminism and Politics in the Handmaid's Tale' p.40

AO1
independent reading extends student's own sense of contextual significance - the wider use of literature as a political tool

feminist mantle is sustained by Moira in the Gileadean era, most prominently in her homosexuality, which flagrantly defies dependence on, and subjugation to, the male. As such even her resignation to sexual slavery at Jezebel's later in the novel becomes subversive in her exploitation of the situation as a "Butch paradise"⁴⁶. However in 'The Bell Jar', Joan's homosexuality is yet more defiant as, when the book was first received in 1963, homosexuality was still widely illegal, a contemporary shock depicted by Plath in Esther's confused reaction to Joan's intimacy with Dee Dee⁴⁷. As such, Joan powerfully rebels against male control as a woman who 'can pursue a career and independent life without the benefit of man or marriage'⁴⁸. However, such rebellion is potentially lost on the modern reader, accustomed as they are to a growing acceptance of homosexuality.

AO3 find & connect text to develop argument

AO1 analyses impact on changing audience

Indeed, the defiance of figures such as Moira is undermined by a characterisation that essentially fulfils every facet of the radical feminist stereotype—homosexuality, resistance to authority and a kind of virility, as suggested by her masculine 'overalls' and assertive dialogue, "let's go for a beer"⁴⁹. The stereotyping of the female has an overarching presence in 'The Handmaid's Tale' in Atwood's careful stratification of women; ranging from 'unwomen' to 'econowives', 'handmaids' and commander's wives at the top of the female hierarchy, all of whom are explicitly identified by their respective clothing⁵⁰. This categorization is manifest in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' in Jennie's characterisation as 'the model woman'⁵¹; a personified fulfilment of the obedient housewifely traits of domesticity and submission; traits replicated in 'The Bell Jar' in the form of Buddy's mother, whose kitchen mat, as a domestic item 'flatten[ed] out underneath'⁵² her husbands' feet symbolises her position as an acquiescent domestic servant. Juxtaposed against this stereotype is the equally restrictive one of the successful and unappealing career woman, embodied by the 'terrible'⁵³ JayCee. These clichés evidence the streamlining of the female into specific attributes, the conglomeration of which constitutes the authors' chosen representation of the female in literature. This is exemplified in 'The Handmaid's Tale' through the merging of various exaggerated and stereotypical

nd. again

AO1 find & connect AO2 exemplified of technical features to support argument - or rhetorical language highly popular

Words: 2564

⁴⁶ "There's lots of women around. Butch paradise, you might call it" [Moira] *The Handmaid's Tale*, p.261,
⁴⁷ Upon finding Joan in bed with DeeDee, Esther reflects, 'Joan fascinated me. It was like observing a martian. Or a particularly warty toad' (*The Bell Jar*, p.209). Plath's use of simile, comparing Joan to a 'martian' and a 'toad', suggests the repulsion that Esther feels as a result of Joan's homosexuality, and the alienation from societal norms that Esther perceives Joan to experience as a result of this, as such illuminating the cultural unacceptability of homosexuality within the context of the novel.
⁴⁸ Bonds, Diane S., *The Separative Self in Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar*, p.58
⁴⁹ *The Handmaid's Tale*, p.47
⁵⁰ The commanders' wives are denoted by blue, whilst Offred and the entire Handmaid population are prescribed red clothing, 'Everything except the wings around my face is red' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.18) The econowives can be identified by 'striped dresses' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.54) and the unwomen by their 'grey' garments (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.264)
⁵¹ Forward, Stephanie., 1997. 'Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Yellow Wallpaper.' *The English Review* 7 p.36
⁵² *The Bell Jar*, p.80
⁵³ *The Bell Jar*, p.36

figures, such as Aunt Lydia and Moira, into Offred's discourse; achieved through Atwood's neglect of the speech marks that would traditionally differentiate other characters' dialogue from narrative thought, 'Idiot, says Moira'⁵⁴. In this way the various, strictly defined female attributes are melded together in a single, amalgamative narrative voice. ✓✓

102
critical
perspective
band 4

102
united
close
textual
analysis

These writers have chosen to present their female protagonists as amalgams; broken and fragmented figures embodied by the fractured structure of all three texts. Whilst Deer asserts Offred's 'integrity'⁵⁵, evidenced perhaps in the impenetrability of her anonymity⁵⁶, LeBihan's contradictory assertion as to 'The Handmaid's Tale's', 'problematic relationship with the concept of one single reality, one identity'⁵⁷ is more substantially supported by Atwood's conspicuous use of the word 'palimpsest' at the beginning of the novel, which resonates throughout in Atwood's employment of 'single words... like palimpsests'⁵⁸ such as 'compucount'⁵⁹. These neologisms, constructed from fragments of pre-existing words, are microcosmic representations of the fractured female. Such fragmentation, although typical of the novel's post-modernist style, it is also evident in Perkins-Gilman's Victorian work, which is constructed entirely from a series of increasingly brief phrases, 'How he does call and pound! / Now he's crying for an axe'⁶⁰. There is also a temporal fragmentation in both 'The Bell Jar' and 'The Handmaid's Tale' whereby both narratives transition between a more immediate present, and a distant past tense⁶¹ with the effect of disrupting the chronology of the narrative to communicate the disjointed nature of the female.

101
cohesive
controlled
fruity
express

This, the conglomerational essence of the female in literature, is perhaps most evident in her construction from both reality and fiction. All three novels possess autobiographical elements; the narrative of 'The Bell Jar' recounts Plath's summer of 1953 whilst Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, like her protagonist, suffered post-partum depression before undergoing the 'rest cure'. Although 'The Handmaid's Tale' is less explicitly

103
(connectedness
of texts
of emphasis)

Words: 2867

⁵⁴ *The Handmaid's Tale*, p.245

⁵⁵ Deer, Glenn., *Postmodern Canadian Fiction and the Rhetoric of Authority*

⁵⁶ This anonymity is founded in the fact that the female protagonist's pre-Gileadean name is never revealed to the reader

⁵⁷ LeBihan, Jill, cited in Stein, Karen., 1996. 'Margaret Atwood's Modest Proposal: The Handmaid's Tale'. *Canadian Literature* 148 p. 69

⁵⁸ Shead, Jackie., 2004. 'Multiple Reflections'. *The English Review* 15 p.18

⁵⁹ *The Handmaid's Tale*, p. 188

⁶⁰ Perkins Gilman, Charlotte, *The Yellow Wallpaper*

⁶¹ In *The Bell Jar*, for example Plath intersperses the events of 1953 with Esther's recollections of preceding events, 'I found out on the day we saw the baby born' (*The Bell Jar*, p.58). This disorientating effect of time dislocation is compounded by Plath's employment, at the novel's beginning, of a narrative that is even more immediate than Esther's Summer of 1953, as suggested by the distance Esther depicts between her life now and the events of that Summer, 'for a long time afterwards I hid them away' (*The Bell Jar*, p.3). Atwood achieves this effect in her constant juxtaposition of the present tense, 'now Janine is restless' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, pg.133) with the past tense, 'He was so momentary, so condensed' (*The Handmaid's Tale*, p.61)

autobiographical, Deer's comment that 'Offred's powerful narrative skill conflicts with the powerlessness, the innocence... [that] characterizes her'⁶² suggests not only, as previously considered, the struggle of a woman to realise self-expression in a patriarchal environment, but also the emergence of Atwood's powerful authorial rhetoric from behind the supposedly passive narrative tone of Offred. As such Atwood's Gilead is 'an amalgam of trends'⁶³, in way that transcends the mere conglomeration of past and present events that Swale suggests – it is constructed also from its author's being.

Clever assessment of
writer's relationship with
text – context + narrative
voice

To conclude, each of the three female writers considered uses various fictional constructs to present the woman as a controlled, passive and incoherent 'conglomeration of attributes'; fragmented by her construction from both reality and fiction, and consisting wholly of a series of different and at times contradictory characteristics, such as those of sensuality, purity and motherhood. Although overtones of rebellion against these constraints are evident in the controversial characterisation of various female

characters, such defiance has been eroded over time by the growing acceptance and even stereotypisation of the traits that make these women subversive. As such, both the contexts in which the texts were written – spanning from the 19th century to the 20th century - and those in which they are received, reinforce the enduring repression of the female in society; the devastating impact of which these writers act to highlight.

Conclusion ¹⁰¹ summarises the way, reception of these texts illuminate the theory under scrutiny.

Total Word Count: 3095

A01 Band 4 (C) - A highly informed and scholarly study. Confident + often sophisticated use of critical language and terminology, to refine and develop discussion and evaluate. Research on texts + contexts is intrinsic to the argument + fully synthesised.
 A02 Band 4 (C) - Extensive wider reading + very close textual analysis provides detailed and academic critical discussion of how structure, form and language create effects - critical + independent conclusions are drawn even in relation to the author's involvement with the narrative role of the central protagonist in the main text.
 A03 Band 4 (C) - Connections + comparisons are made through intellectual assimilation of pertinent critical sources - detailed + perceptive evaluation (also supported through own close textual examination) throughout the essay. Argument well developed through integrated approach.
 A04 Band 4 (C) - Contextual analysis is at the heart of this essay. Research is carefully synthesised to demonstrate a focused and mature understanding.

⁶² Deer, Glenn., *Postmodern Canadian Fiction and the Rhetoric of Authority*

⁶³ As suggested earlier, 'The Handmaid's Tale' finds parallels with current events, among which one can count sexual exploitation of females and the restoration of traditional right wing values (exemplified in the 'all-male Christian sect, the Promise Keepers'). Atwood also incorporates allusions to past events, such as the Islamic fundamentalist takeover in 1979, whereby, women 'had to don the veil, give up paid work and return to the home'. Swale, Jill., 'Feminism and Politics in the Handmaid's Tale', pp.37-39

Teacher's assessment and comments:

This is a highly academic and original study that far exceeds the standard expected of an A1 student.
 Wide ranging reading + research in evidence and a convincing response to a challenging topic.
 I declare that the student's activities have been kept under regular supervision and that, to the best of my knowledge, no assistance has been given apart from any which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment and has been identified and recorded.

Signature: 

Date: 20.4.15.

Centre Assessor's comments:

(This box may be used to show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria)

for full comments, please see the final page of the essay

SCRIPT A (annotated script) beginning “Stein suggests that the preliminary and concluding material of “The Handmaid’s Tale”, namely Atwood’s two dedications...”

Centre mark 80. Moderated mark 80.

Full and scholarly. Some moderators may feel footnotes have been overused, but this is forgivable. The centre is right when they say “contextual analysis is at the heart of this essay”. Superb links to our own times and, for example, “the cult of purity” in Victorian England.

SCRIPT B:

Explore the range of control mechanisms employed by totalitarian governments in "Nineteen Eighty-Four" and one other novel?

Totalitarianism is a political system in which the state holds total authority over the society and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life whenever necessary. The concept of totalitarianism was first developed in a positive sense in the 1920s by the Italian fascists. The concept became prominent in Western anti-communist political discourse during the Cold War time, which creates similarities between Nazi Germany and The leader of the Spanish conservative movement called the 'Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right,' which declared his view to, "give Spain a true unity, a new spirit, a totalitarian polity..." and "Democracy is not an end but a means to the conquest of the new state. When the time comes, either parliament submits or we will eliminate it."

These governments are very similar to the totalitarian governments in 'Nineteen Eighty Four' and also 'Blind Faith' where they use control mechanisms to create their own ideas of a society, as there ideas and policies are similar to those used in Nazi Germany and the Spanish Conservative movement and are shown in both novels to the extreme to control a whole population of people through manipulation and fear.

Sexual mechanisms are used by both governments in both 'Nineteen Eighty Four' and 'Blind Faith', to drive the public away from the real problem of the government. In Orwell's novel sexual control is enforced in Oceania by Big Brother and the Party which both disapprove of sexual feelings. Instead desires are met by an emotional bond between characters engaging in "hate week" where the public's frustration is vented. In 'Nineteen Eighty Four' sex is to be a clinical operation whereas in this modern age it is about two people becoming one. Big brother's chances of success in controlling people's sexual activity would have been shocking to a reader of today as in the novel they put in place the 'Junior Anti Sex League', which makes men like Winston become angry towards these women as he explains them early on as, "narrow scarlet sash... wound several times round the waist of her overalls." This shows Winston's frustration and almost hatred towards the women, when really he is attracted to the opposite sex. But through Big Brothers mechanisms he has become so paranoid that his feelings have been moulded and corrupted. However Big Brother can not stop peoples' instinct, but they try to, as we see in the diversion created in the terms of Hate Week. This relates to another of George Orwell's pieces called 'Shooting an Elephant' where he explains the crowds influence to shoot an elephant, "I did not hear the bang or feel the kick- one never does when a shot goes home- but I heard the devilish roar of glee that went up from the crowd." this relates to 'Nineteen Eighty Four' as how the a majority can influence a person to do whatever the crowd feel right, just how the Party have manipulated the majority to release their frustration on an external figure or figures.

AD4 - attempts to comment on intellectual influences

B2/B3 AD7 - relevant points developing a line of argument

In 'Blind Faith' sexual mechanisms are used in the complete opposite way as sex is allowed and promoted. A way that this is enforced is the use of breast enlargement which shows how the government want people to get aroused and focus on sex rather than the bigger political picture. It is enforced that much that women can be given, "honour enlargements" even if they refuse. This is seen as an honour in London whereas a reader of today it would be against the law to force women to have the procedure against their consent. However some cultures still do force their women to uphold certain traditions. This shows how corrupt the government has become and their quest to create an alternative focus to divert from the real issues of the government.

AD3 - relevant comparisons and comparisons

The government also uses the internet as a mechanism to invade privacy and increase sexual activity to make the people more concerned about sex, rather than the politics and the bigger picture. An example of this is Chantoria's breast feeding on the internet, "chantoria's joy sprang into view on the wall screen." This is such an intimate moment between mother and child and Chantoria must share this with the world to be socially accepted. This shows how the government and their followers have manipulated people to feel obliged to share such special and private experiences. In our society of today this is similar as nothing is a secret due to the media and social networking sites.

Both governments use external factors or bullying to control and manipulate their people. In 'Nineteen Eighty Four', the Government create a public enemy so people don't think of the politics of their own government. The government shift the blame to an external hate figure such as Goldstein. Subliminal messages are used to present Goldstein as a sheep which suggests he is a devil and has a high libido. The Government cleverly use words such as, "venomous," showing he is the enemy and also, "Jewish," which Orwell comments on. By doing this the reader would view Goldstein as a hero because in the time that the book was written Jews were killed (concentration camps) and were subjected to work and murdered. Therefore the reader would sympathise, however the population in the book have been subjected to similar conditions, but due to the manipulation of history they are clueless to how they should be treated. To stop the Party from getting the blame they have used Goldstein as a mechanism to create blame on him which again stops people from rebelling. *Hitler's Germany Policies* allowed him to control how people thought, just as in 'Nineteen Eighty Four'. The 'spin doctor' of the public' conscience, Dr Joseph Gobbles was head of Germany's Ministry of public enlightenment and propaganda. His masterful use of propaganda proved a crucial instrument for acquiring and maintaining power and for the implementation of their policies. It's clear to see that this is a method used in 'Nineteen Eighty Four' as, "he who controls the past controls the present," therefore the future also. By changing news scripts, media information and documents has allowed Oceania to implant its propaganda. Winston had worked for the Ministry of Truth which was responsible for any necessary falsification of

B2
AD1 - establish an argument

AD2 - effectiveness of language.

AD4

historical events. The word 'Truth' in the 'Ministry of Truth' should warn the characters that the 'Ministry' will serve its own truth as it does in the novel.

In 'Blind Faith' bullying is used by the Government to manipulate the focus onto a minority rather than the big issue, their Government, "Try not to look weirder than we have to." This shows how scared people such as Chantorria are due to people like Princess LoveBud who homes in on the weak individuals and humiliates people. This is showing how the Love has made people scared of authority figures as these figures (Princess LoveBud) represent power and punishment. Similar to Ken Kesey's novel "one flew over the cuckoo's nest," which shows how a nurse who McMurphy calls "Big Nurse" victimizes the men in the mental institute and therefore controls them completely. However McMurphy shows how one man can try to make a difference but he is still only one man and is a minority compared to the majority.

B3
AD3 -
relevant
literary
comparisons

Orwell uses the characters in 'Nineteen Eighty Four' to present indoctrination, which goes hand and hand with totalitarianism. He uses a lot of symbols to present indoctrination. One example is Room 101 which symbolises indoctrination but also rebellion. The party also uses "education" to de-educate the population, "who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." This statement gives us an insight on how organised they are and how much power they have over the characters in the novel. In 'Nineteen Eighty Four' the 'minitruer' is used to control the people, suiting their own purposes by changing and re-writing the past. By doing this the Party can develop complete control over the people without the characters noticing. Even if the characters did notice, the government have created a symbol of horror "room

101" so the people are in fear of rebelling. This also shows the levels of command and who is more dominant, similar to another novel of Orwell's, 'Animal Farm' where he conveys control and power through animals who feel they are better than others, "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS." This clearly relates to "Nineteen Eighty Four" as it implies how people giving commands mostly become the most dominant figures and control the majority.

AD3 -
relevant
literary
comparisons

Indoctrination is also essential as having an unintelligent population makes them vulnerable and easy to manipulate as they are too unintelligent to see what the Party is doing. By doing this the Government have complete and utter control over the population.

In both novels privacy and being alone is unacceptable, which shows the reader another control mechanism used by The Party and The Government. In 'Blind Faith' the Government have restrained people from being alone as it gives room to think, "isolation was not healthy," the government forbid this as it may allow people to consider rebellion. As a result members of society become

claustrophobic which highlights to the reader society's entrapment. This stops them from being an individual, as it removes their identity and individuality. To ensure obedience, society is reminded of the "wrath of the Love" which refers to the Flood; the government have attributed this natural disaster to the wrath of the love, rather than global warming. This shows how the government have used manipulation to intimidate people into order and to obey what 'the love' wants. Global warming has been manipulated by the Love to show that disobedience will be punished. This creates fear and conformity.

AO2 - establishes a line of argument

In Orwell's novel, the Party uses mechanisms such as the Thought Police and the ban on diary keeping to completely control the people. The Thought Police are used to create paranoia, "Thought crime does not entail death: thought crime is death." This mechanism is used to strike fear into the people in the novel to create obedience. Another mechanism used in 'Nineteen Eighty Four' is the ban on diary keeping which stops people from thinking and allows them to be influenced by the Party, as it stops people from writing their piece of history, as Winston tells us early on in the novel, "if you want to keep a secret, you must also keep it from yourself." This shows that no one is safe, and there isn't even enough privacy to think because people are made to believe that the Party will find out and will be punished, which in turn shows the control Big Brother has gained over the years.

Both of the governments in the two novels use technology as a means to control. In 'Blind Faith' technology is portrayed through communication screens and the internet to stop people from thinking. News is used to portray god and his rules to the population when in fact it is not god's rules it is their governments' demands, "in *Entertainment* news... personal demons... with the help of god," This shows how god is used as an authority figure for the people to fear rather than respect. This news was structured and put first before the, "News News," in other words the real news, this shows how the government has made gossip more important than the real news as a means to control the people on what to watch and listen to. This control mechanism helps the government to convey what they want and for the people to concentrate on one part of the news and not on the real news. The government have also used "god's sin" as a way to control, as we see when Trafford has a conversation and his point is rejected as Fiction is not approved of which shows the control that the government has, "You mean... fiction... Yes 1984 is a story about a society where," this shows us how the government have used god as an authority figure to allow their own input to be included which prevents rebellion.

AO2 - develops a line of argument

In 'Nineteen Eighty Four' the Party uses Newspeak as a beacon to control everyone and everything, "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? Has it ever occurred to you, Winston, that by the year 2050, at the very latest, not a single human being will be alive who could understand such a conversation as we are having now?... The whole climate of

thought will be different. In fact, there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking-not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness." This shows how the government has manipulated the people to control them and their future generations and will limit thought further and uneducated the population. Three years before Orwell formulated the concept of newspeak, he had explored in one of his most influential essays, Politics and the English Language (1946), the decay of language and the ways in which it might be checked... Our civilisation is dependant... Underneath this lies the half-conscious belief that language is a natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes. (Taken from George Orwell and Politics and the English Language). George Orwell uses the idea of language being condensed in 'Nineteen

AO2 - Examines the effectiveness of language

'Eighty Four' to show how using mechanisms such as Newspeak, a government can control the population, by manipulating the English Language over a period of time. Also how language can be forgotten/removed from peoples vocabulary over generations.

Another aspect of totalitarianism is the fact that, "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU," literally, the eyes move to follow you. This would give the impression of no privacy and would keep the characters always on guard. This therefore stops them from doing the things they wish and would make them feel cautious. This shows the control and obedience the characters give the government as they are always watching out, which also would make the characters paranoid not just from other people or the government but of themselves.

In both novels, Economical factors play a part in controlling the people. In 'Blind Faith' bad food is offered so people are too weak and unhealthy to rebel, "Defrosted two lasagnes and chilled a 3 litre bottle of Pepsi. And shared their meal over the video game table." Poor diet is featured in both novels which shows poor health which benefits the government as they are less likely to fight back as they are too weak or too fat to physically do anything. This also gives us insight into the crowded conditions in 'Blind Faith' where it is an overpopulated society, which benefits the Government as they can keep surveillance on them at all times. Poor health and the prohibition of vaccinations help ensure the problem of overpopulation, this increase poverty and illness. By the increase in death rates the people are too busy grieving or watching pod casts on grieving parents. As masses of grief limits people.

*B3
A03 - relevant comparisons between texts.*

This relates to 'Nineteen Eighty Four' as all living conditions are cramped and unclean. The people of Oceania live in a cold, dark world full of terror and restrictions. The party of Oceania controls not only the lives of the people through telescreens, spies, and Thought Police but also their reality, "when men are different from one another and do not live alone...to a time when truth exists and The instinctive feeling that the conditions you lived in were intolerable." This shows not just how the physical conditions are in Oceania but also the way people are forced to live, such as separately and not with a partner. This would be shocking to a modern reader of today as the conditions that the people are forced

to live in are ridiculous and unhealthy. These controlling mechanisms are used to manipulate and control order over the physical nature of the people but also to erase or adjust their emotions, so the Party can control the whole person. Therefore if they control the external and internal physicality's of the population, this leaves the people as an empty shell that the Party can control and manipulate how they see fit.

The mechanisms used in both 'Nineteen Eighty Four' and 'Blind Faith' were used to control and manipulate the population in the novels. The totalitarian governments in both novels are fully in control and through their mechanisms they have given the idea that they are for the people when evidently we see as readers that it is the complete opposite. We see this through the characters' journeys presented by both authors to show the methods of the governments and how power gives them complete control.

*B2/B3
A04 - factors that influence cultures over time*

In "Nineteen Eighty Four" Orwell would most likely have had a pessimistic view on totalitarian countries as the book was written just after the second world war so he had most likely a negative perspective. This is shown in his novel as Winston is left isolated and moulded into what the Party want and accept. This leaves the reader feeling unfulfilled on Winston's behalf, as shown by Ben Pimlott a critic who explains, "At the same time, totalitarianism was a stalking fear. Nazi Germany in the recent past, Russia and China in the present, framed the Western political consciousness. There was a sense of grimly staring into a crystal ball at a just-imaginable near-distance. "This shows that Orwell was inspired by the environment he had been living in and found it difficult to feel hopeful about the future.

A02 - examines effectiveness of structure

However Ben Elton may have a more optimistic view as he is not living through a totalitarian dictatorship. At the end of "Blind Faith" there is a sense of hope as even though Trafford dies, he is able to send his email to the world so his death wasn't for nothing. The use of the internet as a mechanism to control has now backfired as Trafford has used it to his benefit and advantage. If the internet had been present in the time of 'Nineteen Eighty Four' the outcome of Winston's fate may have been different.

AD1 -
AD2 -
AD3 -
AD4 -

80

AD4 - factors that influence awareness over time.

Teacher's assessment and comments:

The candidate writes a relevant response with some evidence of independent research and reading. The effectiveness of structure and language is partially examined. The response shows awareness of cultural and contextual influences.

Teacher's declaration:

SCRIPT B beginning "Totalitarianism is a political system in which the state holds total authority over the society..."

Centre mark 32. Moderated mark 30 (6+8+8+8)

Many slips and errors here: the elisions make nonsense of some quotations and Dr Joseph Gobbles on page 2 may cause some amusement. There is no real focus on any one text - "1984" is supposed to be a main text under consideration but the handling is superficial and examples are drawn from elsewhere in Orwell's work by skating over some of the essays. One may suspect not much actual reading has taken place - the tone of Ben Elton's delightful "Blind Faith" has not been recognised.

SCRIPT C:

'It gave me melancholy reflections to observe how much the race of human kind was degenerate among us' (Gulliver's Travels) Dystopian novels and social commentary

Context

The social context of the authors has clearly influenced elements of the novels. Margaret Atwood presents a society where women are heavily oppressed by men based on twisted 'traditional family values'. This is due to the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s of North America. North America is where Gilead is situated in the novel. Many women joined the 'radical feminism' movement to question society on women's sexuality, 'family values' and the oppression of women. This resulted in women's liberation in respect to subjects such as the right to choose abortion. In the novel, however, Atwood presents a world where this movement backfires, as women have been turned away from the ambition of becoming a radical feminist as it caused confusion and 'removed customary protection' presented to them in the pre-Gilead society. This opportunity gave rise to the society which is found in Gilead in the novel. Arguably, however, it is believed that the oppressive regime found in Gilead was because of 'the gap created by the shift from radical to cultural feminisms in the early 1980's',² which occurred in the 1980s. The shift created a gap because of the difference in the forms of feminism. Radical feminism focused on the equality of rights and opportunities whilst cultural feminism was more about the celebration of gender difference. In this gap, women would not know what to believe and in the confusion they would follow the regime which would make sense at the time and not change like the differences in feminism.

add more reading

A02

We as readers, learn of the feminist movement backfiring when Offred is being made to watch a documentary of 'Unwomen', which was a documentary of feminists holding a protest whilst grasping banners stating 'TAKE BACK THE NIGHT' and 'FREEDOM TO CHOOSE. EVERY BABY A WANTED BABY' which were prominent campaigns that feminists fought for. Atwood makes this documentary personal to Offred by showing her younger mother giving emphasis on her age by the repetition of 'young' and the descriptions of her, Atwood may have done this to point blame on Offred's mother's previous actions for the oppression that Offred feels at present. Here Atwood is suggesting that women at the time are blaming feminists, but they should be in fact blaming men because they are the people who are in control of this regime and are therefore oppressing women like Offred. Interestingly this part of the novel is presented in a narrative gap, which may be used as a device to obscure how the regime actually came into place, this is revealed by the mention of how 'men revile you' to which Offred's mind swiftly turns to the narrative gap which poses the idea to the reader

A02

A03

A02

that it is Offred's mother's fault for what has happened.

Context

The influences on George Orwell to write 1984 were slightly different from the influences of Margaret Atwood. 1984 was written just after the Second World War. The novel acted as a warning to its readers about what the future may be like if the events that happened in Orwell's lifetime kept happening. An example of these events is of countries such as Spain and Germany keeping an iron fist around their citizens. These countries would restrict their citizens by imposing little or no freedom, hunger, forced labour and mass execution. This mirrors what the 'The Party' imposed on the people of Oceania. We as readers see this illustrated when Winston is tortured severely for opposing the ideologies of The Party. O'Brien tortures Winston to the point Winston thinks he has 'some mortal injury was being done to him'. The extent, to which O'Brien tortures Winston,

¹Amanda Greenwood English review vol 20 No 2 Nov 2009

²IBID

Word Count: 642

symbolises the extent to which 'The Party' will go to change people so that they follow and believe in their regime.

The figure of 'Big Brother' depicted 'of a man about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features' gives suggestion of a figure who resembles that of Stalin or Hitler, here Orwell is proposing that 'The Party' which rule over Oceania also resembles the political parties which were found in Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union. Both Stalin and Hitler caused complete repression of human spirit. Stalin did this through building himself into a paternal type figure to the population of his country. 'The Party' correlates with the way in which Stalin controlled his people as Stalin made it policy that his people must show complete devotion to him or else they will be exiled or killed. We learn that this is the attitude of the 'The Party' when Winston speaks of being sent to 'a forced labour camp' for at least 'twenty-five years' for just writing a diary which holds his thoughts about the party. Stalin also eradicated any religious institutions which may become a threat as well as banning any books or music which opposed him. As well as this no one was allowed to speak anything negative of him, especially in regards to media, due to this any deaths or devastation caused by Stalin was never reported to the rest of the country. The correlation between Stalin's Russia and Orwell's party is striking. Orwell has done this to incite fear into his readers, as the comparisons show the potential for society to do this and the potential for it to happen again.

context

The rule of Hitler in Germany had similar influences on both 1984 and The Handmaid's Tale. This is due to how the youth of both novels are shown to resemble the Hitler youth, we learn this with Offred's comment of how 'the young ones are the most dangerous, the most fanatical...' which relates to the 'fanatical adulation' which was encouraged of the Hitler Youth movement. Orwell also creates the same effect with Parson's children 'in the blue shorts, grey shirts and red neckerchiefs which are the uniform of the Spies. The children's vicious demeanour towards Winston, with the boy shouting 'You're a traitor!' and 'I'll shoot you, I'll vaporise you,' also emphasises this effect. By creating the youth to be symbolic of that of the Hitler Youth, resembles how the children of each novel are able to devalue the family unit and corrupt it. This is more strongly shown in 1984 because of the direct correlation between the uniforms and the viciousness of the children in the novel and that of the Hitler youth. The vicious tone of the boy also depicts how 'The Party' are emotionally changing the children and brainwashing them to destroy the relationships which hold a family

context

links texts

1984

relearn

together. Despite this though, the linking with the Hitler youth in The Handmaid's Tale does create a sense of irony because of the utopian ideology of returning to 'traditional values' in the Republic of Gilead.

A totalitarian government would want to recruit the youth, so that from a young age children are indoctrinated to be completely faithful to the organisation that controls them. The advantages of this are that they would be so completely brainwashed they would turn against their parents if they were to disobey 'The Party'. The Hitler youth are an example of children who were known to be taught to be racist to any race other than the 'Aryan race', they were also used to severely interfere in any church movements which may oppose Hitler. Atwood and Orwell have used indoctrinated youth in their novels, to show how easy it is for children to be converted into something that is threatening, as at a young age, people are very impressionable and if not taught anything else, will have to potential to carry on the progression of the organisation.

In all three novels, there are prominent political influences. Swift's political influences on Gulliver's Travels creates more of a mockery of the politicians and party who were in power at the time the novel was written, the mockery of politicians is a recurrent theme throughout Gulliver's travels. The mockery can be seen when Gulliver visits Lilliput and witnesses the 'presentation of various orders to the King's favourites'. To win the Emperor's favour the candidates have to carry out the undignified task of jumps over a stick a number of times, and whoever performs with the most agility will win one of three fine silken threads, one being red, one blue and a third green. These threads hold a lot of symbolism as they resemble the order given to the King's favourites. Swift is specifically ridiculing one politician named Walpole who was bestowed the blue order of the garter in 1726. Walpole was a politician who was regarded as the first Prime minister of Great Britain. Swift may be ridiculing him due to Walpole being accused of venality and corruption in 1712 for which he was imprisoned in the Tower of London for six months. Swift uses the symbolism of the stick to show the lengths to which politicians such as Walpole will go to stay in favour of parliament or the King. A similar attack on Walpole was seen in Swift poem 'Verses On the Revival Of The Order Of The Bath' which was written during Walpole's administration, Swift's attack can be specifically seen in the lines 'And he who'll

Swifts

context

1702

literary context

leap over a stick for the King, is qualified best for a dog in a string'. The Order the Bath was resembled by the green ribbon which was handed out to the political candidates who won the kings favour.

The Handmaid's Tale was written shortly after the electing of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain. In this time there was a revival of the religious conservatives, in both Britain and America, who did not approve of the sexual revolution and criticised it greatly. This caused fear in feminists because they feared that the rise of these religious conservatives would cause a reversal of the 'rights' which they had gained and be replaced with the 'religious rights' of the conservatives. In her novel Atwood uses exaggeration to show the possible consequences of the sexual revolution being turned on its head by these religious conservatives. Examples of the severe consequences, is the severe oppression which was imposed on the women of Gilead, for example they were not allowed to read, we see this shown when Offred exclaims 'we aren't supposed to be reading' and also how the women react by women altering their intake of breath when they are able to read some of the signs in the Unwomen documentary. Atwood presents their altered intake of breath with the simile 'like wind over grass,' which Offred responds to by saying 'have we gotten away with something?'. The use of this simile by Atwood makes the women seem meek and fragile in their surprise, which also reflects on the way oppression has affected them so much they are unable to express themselves openly.

context

A02

(V)

A02/4

In 1984 the political influences relate also to the political parties who were found before and after the war, this includes Hitler's and especially Stalin's regimes. We as readers learn of this by the limitations which 'The Party' imposes on their people as discussed before. O'Brien even relates 'The Party' to the regimes of the past when conditioning Winston. However he states that the 'German Nazis and Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognise their own motives'. He does pick fault with them however by stating that they believed they 'had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free'. Whilst 'The Party' had acknowledged that 'no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it.' Orwell has done this to bring his readers to the realisation that there is a real possibility that if an organisation came into power and were similar to the Nazis or Stalin, there is a good chance they would be more advanced in their

methods and have the possibility to have complete control over a country or a number of countries, as they would eradicate faults which other dictatorships faced.

links texts

Both The Handmaid's Tale and Gulliver's Travels, presents different types of irony towards particular types of people. Firstly Atwood presents the reader with the irony that even through Offred's struggles to create and mould a reader who understands 'the place of a women's body' in society through her tapings, this will not happen in the future. This is due to the reaction of Pieixoto when he makes a sexual innuendo towards the female professor who introduced him: 'I am sure we all enjoyed our charming Arctic Char last night at dinner, and now we are enjoying an equally charming Arctic Chair. I used the word 'enjoy' in two distinct senses, precluding, of course the obsolete third (laughter)'. Due to the audience's reaction, it shows that even in the future, there will still be people who read for 'their pleasure in and exploitation of the female body'.³ Furthermore Atwood presents the reader with further belittling and contradiction of the feminist movement found in the novel and the 1960's and 1970's by Pieixoto describing Offred's tapings as his 'little chat' with the audience, this presents the idea of the irrelevance that is felt in regards to the feminist movement in future readers found in the historical notes.

A02

alternate readings

The way that Professor Pieixoto uses the word 'chair' in sexual context of the French word 'Chair' meaning flesh in regards to the enjoyment of the female professor, shows his linguistic control of the connection between words that he has, this contrasts when previously Offred toys with the word chair in her restrictive surroundings and thinks of the different meanings of the word: 'It can also mean the leader of a meeting. It can also mean a mode of execution' and then she concludes 'None of these facts has any connection with the others.' This represents her 'lack of control'.⁴ The contrast which is suggested here could be ironically interpreted that even though the Gileadian society has fallen, men still have control over women, even if it is seen as a more passive form of control. This irony can be seen bluntly illustrated in the way that a sexist man is analysing feminist ideas and has control over the way in which they can be interpreted.

A02/3

Swift uses destructive irony in his satire, Gulliver's Travels, this is shown when Gulliver travels to each of the different countries, and in each one 'Mankind cuts a sorry figure in all these strange countries' Swift presents this idea by a portrayal of human beings through the description of various kinds of inhabitants of the countries.⁵ A prominent example of this is when Gulliver visits

AO2/4

Brobdingnag and describes his country in a proud and slightly arrogant way to which the King retorts: 'I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives, to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.' This destructive irony comes to a head, when Gulliver visits the land of the Hounyhnhms, here he learns of the Yahoos which are monstrous destructive creatures, but yet they relate strongly the image of humans. The Yahoos, for this reason effect Gulliver severely as he learns what humans are really like, especially when compared to the docile noble Hounyhnhms. Evidence of this is shown when Gulliver returns home and sees his family to which he responds 'I must confess the sight of them filled me only with hatred, disgust and contempt'. Here Swift makes the reader contemplate what human nature really is like and if we do really resemble the 'digusting' Yahoos he describes. In both past and modern readers, this has evoked strong emotions and anger towards Swift as his novel devalues

³ Carol J. Singley, Susan Elizabeth Sweeney SUNY Press, 1993)

⁴ IBID

⁵ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/26386625/the-use-of-irony-in-gulliver-s-travels>

Word Count: 2681

AO2

what the basis of humanity is built on. Swift acknowledges this in Gulliver's letter to his cousin when he writes that his travel to the Hounyhnhms should not be omitted just because it would give 'offence'.

AO2

In 1984, Orwell uses various types of irony throughout the novel. For instance, the ministries dedicate themselves to the complete opposite of their title, the ministry of truth dedicates itself to destroying the truth. Here Orwell is referencing to Stalin who lied to his people to encourage them to follow him. However Orwell mainly uses irony to create a sense of helplessness caused by the oppression of people in Oceania. One illustration of this is the repetition in Winston's hope of the 'proles' rebelling which occurs regularly throughout the novel, his hopes are thwarted however by O'Brien saying 'it is all nonsense. The proletarians will never revolt'. O'Brien's reasoning for this is because the party keep the prole's needs satisfied and masks the truth of 'The Party'. We learn of their needs being satisfied by 'The Party' through various different ways, an example being the 'pornosec', which produces porn for them.

AO2

17/18
text

All three novels present a bleak outlook on life and humanity, proposing the idea it is forever doomed and will never be redeemed. The Handmaid's tale and 1984 do this through satirical warnings which are depicted by examples of what the future could be like. Gulliver's travel creates his bleak outlook on humanity differently; instead he uses satirical social commentary of humanity throughout his novel to propose the hopelessness of humanity to his reader. A summary of his thoughts are presented in the thoughts of the Brodingnag king 'I cannot but conclude that the Bulk of your Natives, to be the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the Surface of the Earth'

Teacher's assessment and comments:

Evaluate contextual factors. Make links between texts; examine authorial techniques.

SCRIPT C beginning "The social context of the authors has clearly influenced elements of the novels."

Centre mark 57. Moderated mark 55 (14+14+13+14)

A rather flat-footed essay. Yes, it gets historical context in, and there is awareness and understanding; links Swift and Atwood with their use of irony. AO3 not linked in a very perceptive way.

SCRIPT D:

(A01, A02, A03, A04)
ONE EXTENDED STUDY: COMPARE & CONTRAST AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHTS
EXPLORATION OF THEIR SOCIETIES. ARE THEIR ISSUES RELEVANT
or TO MODERN AUDIENCES?
 (A01, A02, A03, A04)
TWO SHORTER STUDIES:

Context

Society provides security. There is no doubt that the gathering of people living together creates a somewhat ordered community. Society is defined as 'The community of people living in a particular region and having shared customs, laws, and organisations'¹ meaning that an ordered community is achieved due to a 'shared' view on how life should be led. Nowadays, raising a family and becoming wealthy in a material sense, are 'customs' which the masses tend to follow. Having said this, our time may be more liberal than a post-World War Two America where these 'customs' were expectations. The 1950's was a prosperous time for America; fuelled by wartime savings and state supported businesses, consumer culture thrived. Encouraged by the economy and media, this new lifestyle contributed to a widespread conformity in America. American conformism meant fear was easily implanted within society, which was done by Joseph McCarthy during the Cold War. McCarthyism was the paranoid hunt for so-called-traitors which was extremely difficult on writers, many were considered communist sympathisers, and were unable to continue working; among them was Arthur Miller. ✓

Miller was profoundly influenced by personally witnessing his father's business failures instigated by the Great Depression. He projected his dissatisfaction of the American psyche through his works. His most famous and well-respected work, 'Death of a Salesman' explores how a social ethos such as the 'American Dream' can distort an individual's nature through its ideals, displaying that it stirs a desperation within them for what was perceived as, a perfect life. This was a view which writer Edward Albee also felt strongly about. Albee's childhood was a time of 'servants, tutors, riding lessons, winters in Miami,'² meaning he lived the American Dream 'yet he has never made any explicit comments about the happiness of his childhood'³ suggesting that Albee felt it was wrongly glorified; his writing scathingly attacks the American Dream. ✓ Moreover, his plays commonly revolve around the theme of illusion versus reality and in 'Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?' he explores how living under the illusion of the American Dream can destroy individual's lives through controlling their reality. This is also explored by Tennessee Williams in 'The Glass Menagerie' which presents that forcing values of the American Dream on an individual restricts personal freedom and spawns unhappiness. Nevertheless, Miller, Albee and Williams also portray hope in that, if a man can recognise the forces attempting to dictate his life he need not play the role of a victim of society. ✓

Context

Form

Research

All three plays may be considered tragedies, yet do not follow the traditional Aristotelian tragedy. Three writers from northern Europe revitalised tragedy, defining what it is today. Anton Chekhov, Henrik Ibsen, and August Strindberg developed a theatrical naturalism and expressionism which allowed for the common man to be the tragic hero; the regularity of their protagonists was mimicked through the use of realism. Miller and Albee exhibit how society moulds an individual's life and in doing so their works may be regarded as expressionist. I feel Miller and Albee were ahead of their time, in that they were able to observe the values of their society and identify its flaws. They portrayed society to be materialistic and superficial, something which Mathew Kelly

¹ Oxford Dictionaries
² Biographical sketch of Edward Albee
³ Biographical sketch of Edward Albee

feels has only developed in the modern day; 'Superficiality is the curse of the modern world'⁴ as people live their lives under the illusion that material gain brings happiness. All the plays criticise society and the American dream is directly attacked but how this is done differs. ✓

Form

Being American dramas, the plays thoroughly explore the American Dream. Through characterisation, each playwright exposes how this dream influences one to live up to social expectations. This relates to today's world where Barack Obama declares that 'the basic American promise is that if you work hard, you could do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college,'⁵ while inspirational to some, others may desire to pursue a different dream. In 'Death of a Salesman' Arthur Miller does not portray the American Dream as a shared one; different characters have different versions of the dream suggesting that Miller wanted to question: what is the American Dream? ✓

Very good so far

In 'Death of a Salesman' Miller utilises the character of Willy 'to set forth what happens when a man does not have a grip on the forces of life,' meaning that Willy did not follow his true nature, rather he followed a set of values which was distorted through the expectations of society. Willy is a skilled builder and though he regards it as an essential masculine quality, he favours the life of a salesman. A salesman lives by his ability to engage other people and make them believe in him; Willy's American Dream is becoming prosperous through charisma, 'the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead' displaying that Willy felt 'appearance' and popularity resulted in getting 'ahead.' ✓ Nevertheless, when he tries to use personality to ask his boss Howard for a raise, Miller shows the reader how foolish his belief is. Willy attempts to appeal to Howard's emotions, telling the tale of Dave Singleman: 'pick up a phone and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people? Do you know? When he died...hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral,' clearly depicting that Willy prizes the emotional appeal of being 'remembered' and 'loved'; social stature is what motivates him as he defines success in this way. Willy's nostalgia for the days when business involved 'respect, and comradeship, and gratitude' is lost on Howard; he fires Willy. Perhaps Howard symbolises how emotion and compassion have no place in the world of consumerism; similar to the modern day. ✓

Excellent analysis

Willy despises this aspect of consumer culture, 'I'm always in a race with the junkyard! I just finished paying for the car and it's on its last legs. The refrigerator consumes belts like a goddam maniac. They time those things.' The fact that 'they time those things' means Willy felt frustrated by the greed of others which has shrouded the compassion of the past. This problem is present on a national level, even today. It is not to say that a ruthless attitude cannot drive man to great things, like Willy's brother Ben, but it can drive a man to devastation-Willy was one of them; it was the greed of others that imprisoned him. This is shown by the developers who brought the shadows, his boss who fired him and his sons who reduced him to a failure. Perhaps if Willy did not shape his entire life around Charley's philosophy that 'The only thing you got in this world is

⁴ Matthew Kelly, Rediscover Catholicism: A Spiritual Guide to Living with Passion & Purpose

⁵ Barack Obama: State of the Union 2012

what you can sell,' and was true to himself, like Linda says: 'if he finds himself then you'll both be happier,' rather than worrying over the image he and his family were portraying to society, he might have realised that true success is measured in the ability to contribute positively to one's environment; success is not, as Willy perceives, measured by the number of acquaintances an individual has acquired or the money one has attained.

To Willy's older brother Ben, the American Dream is the ability to start with nothing and somehow make a fortune: 'William, when I walked into the jungle, I was seventeen. When I walked out I was twenty-one. And, by God, I was rich!' the fact he refers to the business world as a 'jungle' clearly portrays it to be a world of survival of the fittest. Therefore, Ben's character signifies that only a few people can achieve the 'rags to riches' version of the American Dream which Robert Fulton agrees with: 'the American dream of rags to riches is a dream for a reason - it is hard to achieve,'⁶ Miller proposes that one must be ruthless in order to achieve it.

critic

Throughout the play Willy's son Biff is on the road to self-discovery. Willy attempts to imbue his own twisted values and anxieties onto him, 'It's not what you say, it's how you say it-because personality always wins,' clearly presenting that appearance and image were Willy's criteria for

success. Perhaps, for Willy to feel successful, Biff had to succeed in following these criteria. He even made Biff feel guilty for not following it: 'What the hell am I doing, playing around with horses, twenty-eight dollars a week! I'm thirty-four years old. I oughta be makin' my future,' thus displaying the influence a father has on his son; Biff himself is confused about what his aspirations truly are. However during the funeral of his father, Biff realises that Willy had the wrong dream and pursuing a life of business, sales, and capitalism was what led to his downfall. Biff decides that he will not allow that to happen to himself and will follow his true dream which involves nature, the great outdoors, and working with his hands: 'There's nothing more inspiring or – beautiful than the sight of a mare and a new colt' turning away from Willy's dream. ✓

Similarly, in 'The Glass Menagerie' Williams portrays how imposing societal expectations on individuals can restrict their freedom. The character of Tom, who is a reflection of Williams, feels constrained by the expectations his mother Amanda so frantically forces upon him; 'But until that time you've got to look out for your sister,' and although he cares for his sister Laura it is not his duty to 'look out' for her; he is not her father and this role of provider has been forced upon him through society's expectation of men. Amanda is so dependent on this that she refers to Tom as a 'selfish dreamer' for wanting to follow his passion for writing, like George. Yet, unlike George, Tom escapes his life of limitation but finds guilt rather than liberty; no matter how far away he is Laura remains in his mind. Perhaps Williams is criticising the American Dream as Amanda's expectations for the success of her children are impossible. ✓

Form ✓ Family is a privilege that the characters of George and Martha in Albee's 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?' were not lucky enough to possess. George and Martha's names purposely represent George and Martha Washington which allow Albee to represent America as a whole through

⁶ Robert Fulton: www.searchquotes.com

Critique them. Albee utilises their characters to ironically mock the 'sitcom gleam' so many Americans desired to have. Albee does not even attempt to portray George and Martha as happy for trying to encapsulate the American Dream in their lives, 'YOU SATANIC BITCH!' or even as stable in any sense as they totally degrade one another declaring 'TOTAL WAR' on each other. Therefore, what Albee wants his audience to see is that at the heart of the superficial American Dream lies a whole lot of hate and nastiness, which Kenneth Lay supports: 'I've not only pursued the American dream, I've achieved it. I suppose we could say the last few years, I've also achieved the American nightmare' as he refers to the dream as a 'nightmare',⁷ much like the relationship George and Martha share. Although Martha has a mothering instinct without a child, she refers to herself as 'earth mother,' the fact they both feel the need to invent a son from thin air displays the magnitude of their desperation to possess the American Dream, which is unlike the modern day where there seems to be less worry in possessing a nuclear family. What is odd is that it is their imaginary son provided the most meaningful connection in their twisted relationship. Perhaps Albee is subtly suggesting that, as their son is a lie, so is the American Dream. The word 'dream' even hints to society that this perfect lifestyle is a dream, an illusion.

Response over time Albee also exploits the characters of Nick and Honey. They first appear so sweet and innocent; arguably perfect products of the American Dream. Nevertheless, as the play progresses the audience soon realises how corrupt their marriage is; Nick is only married to Honey as he believed her to be pregnant as well as her owning a lot of money. We see him cheat on her with Martha, solely to aid his status within the university-Nick's character is cold hearted; is Albee suggesting that this is how one gains success in terms of the American Dream? Miller certainly does through Ben. ✓

Language Albee shows how if individuals seek a life of success, in terms of the American dream, society left the individual vulnerable to failure. Disputably, George should reach success in writing, yet this is not his fate; 'And Daddy said...Look here, kid, you don't think for a second I'm going to let you publish this crap, do you?' with 'Daddy' undoubtedly devastating him, instigating a low self-esteem in George. It could be said that 'Daddy' is the embodiment of society's restriction over individualistic ideas, his use of 'kid' displays the authority that society had over George; he could not publish his novel as it was too eccentric. The fact Martha constantly seeks 'Daddy's' approval could hint that people within society are dependent on conformism and are fearful about what would happen if they were to live outside of the bounds of conformism, 'Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth'⁸ meaning John F Kennedy felt if you remain under the

subject
response
over
time

direction of who you conform to, you cannot flourish; Martha, a woman, has no job nor career prospects in somewhat patriarchal America. This proves to be less of a problem in the world of today where we see able women in high job roles. More to the point, Martha's father's control over both Martha and George symbolises society's grasp on individuals-George never fulfils his true ambitions, portraying expectations to restrict individuality. It is evident that Albee's opinion is

⁷ Kenneth Lay: Time World 2006

⁸ John F Kennedy- Address to the UN General Assembly, 1961

in direct opposition to what was considered mainstream; he has the capability of questioning his society, unlike the characters in his play who live in a distorted illusion just to hide from reality. ✓

Structure

The theme of truth versus illusion is associated within all of these domestic dramas, suggesting that American society felt the need to live lives of illusion rather than facing up to the harsh realities. In 'Death of a Salesman' Willy's mind suffers from a psychotic delusion. Miller wittily structures 'Death of a Salesman' to portray this delusion. The first act shows Willy full of dreams and aspirations; illusions. The second act brings truth and reckonings, presenting Willy's distorted view of success destroyed. Willy's interpolated scenes from the past gradually become confused with Willy's present. Switching time zones allows an audience to see how Willy lives an illusion. After being fired, Willy returns to a conversation with Ben when he decided not to go to Alaska, leading on to say 'I am building something with this firm,' the cruel irony being that everything he once commercially built has now been destroyed; he is a disrespected salesman yet he calls himself the 'New England man.' Nonetheless, his family still remains. For years, Willy has believed that both he and his boys, particularly Biff, will one day be great successes. Though Biff has done nothing with his life by the age of thirty-four, Willy tells others, and tries to make himself believe, that his son is doing 'big things out west.' Yet it is only who Biff ever realises he is 'a dime a dozen' and what his potential really is. 'Dozen' suggests he is a common man. He is the only member of the family to finally escape from the poisonous grasp of illusion, which means Miller portrays hope through him. ✓

Language

Similarly, 'Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?' questions the modern way of American life and that it surrenders to illusions rather than confronts reality. The creation of George and Martha's son symbolises their desperate need of illusion in a life whose reality is too difficult to deal with, 'Truth and illusion. Who knows the difference, eh, toots?' meaning illusion granted them an artificial happiness. The details that they use for the birth of their son are so complete that this illusion has moved into lunacy. A climactic event is the epiphany made by George that they cannot live in illusion any longer. This meant killing their 'son,' who has been a foundation of their marriage. This is suggested by the important metaphor of peeling off the skin, 'When you get down to bone, you haven't got all the way yet. There's something inside the bone...the marrow,' once one reaches the 'marrow' of things, there is nothing else to be explored. When he manages to bring Martha to face reality, he is doing it for a greater good. He realises that if they continue to live in this illusion, they will soon not be able to leave it, eventually bringing them to insanity. ✓

Language

The name Virginia Woolf in the title refers to the famous novelist. Virginia Woolf suffered an unbalanced mentality and committed suicide, probably because she could not face life as it was, similar to Willy. In the same way the main characters, George and Martha, resort to illusion as they cannot bear their reality. However, it is George who realises the danger of indulging in such extreme illusions and forces them both into reality. Therefore, this is a play about the shattering of illusions. Another example is when Martha realises that George is not as inadequate as she supposed him to be, when she is dissatisfied with Nick 'you're certainly a flop,' she acknowledges that no one can take George's place; he provides her with the physical and emotional comfort that she requires. At the end of the play, Martha is stripped of her fantasy of being a mother, 'Who's

afraid of Virginia Woolf.....I....am....George,' and admits for the first time that the reality scares her. ✓

Likewise, Williams uses 'The Glass Menagerie' to portray the shattering of illusion through symbolism. When Laura's glass unicorn loses a horn it symbolises the loss of illusion in Laura, Tom, and Amanda's lives. Laura breaks free from her attachment to her glass figurines. Tom decides to pursue his own dreams rather than living to please his mother. Amanda, as a result of both Laura and Tom's realisations is forced to catch up with the times and let go of the past. She is left to face the future with some trepidation. ✓

Critique

In essence, Miller, Albee and Williams have created masterpieces. They showed that it was not only rock and roll that could rebel against the expectations of society. They all mock consumerism for its lack of morality, as well as how it wrongly implants the idea that material gain brings happiness. Even nowadays John Powell agrees with this; he feels that 'to live fully, we must learn to use things and love people, and not love things and use people'⁹ meaning our society has become callous and values the wrong ideals. In this respect, our society has only excavated further down into the pits of the corporate world, a world in which Willy was immersed. In 'Death of Salesman,' Miller deliberately utilises the name of Loman to represent the everyday man. As the product Willy sells is never specified, audiences are free to imagine Willy as a seller of something linked to a career of their own; Miller then succeeds in connecting with the audience. This left audiences attempting to answer the question posed by Bob Marley who preached: 'Open your eyes, look within. Are you satisfied with the life you're living?'¹⁰ suggesting that expectations almost force you to live a life which is neither your own, or a life you would necessarily want to live and that true happiness lies 'within.' Albee also wanted society to know that living under the illusion of what was perceived as the perfect life is no substitute for reality; no happiness will be found in conforming to expectations. By following the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances,'¹¹ characters like Biff, George and even Tom, provide role models to how one may break the chains of limitation that are created by the expectations of society. ✓

This essay demonstrates a well thought through analysis of how the interests of society as presented in these plays can impact on the individual. The essay is well written and it shows evidence of a great deal of independent research and a well developed critical understanding of authors at work.

⁹ John Powell: www.goodreads.com

¹⁰ Bob Marley: www.brainyquote.com

¹¹ Mahatma Gandhi: www.brainyquote.com

Word Count: 3298

Teacher's assessment and comments: This essay demonstrates ability to incorporate independent research into his original and illuminating analysis of how society impacted on the individual in these American plays. His essay is fluent and his analysis is sophisticated.

Teacher's declaration: I declare that the student's activities have been kept under regular supervision and that, to the best of my knowledge, no assistance has been given apart from any which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment and has been identified and recorded.

Signature: 

Date: 1/11/11

Centre Assessor's comments: This is an engaging and impressive analysis of three American playwrights and their portrayal of American society. The cohesive and controlled arguments provide evidence of a well developed critical understanding of the three texts.

SCRIPT D beginning "Society provides security."

Centre mark 65. Moderated mark 61 (14+15+17+15)

Starts stolidly with the American Dream. "Critics" [!] says the centre on page 3 but it's a sociological rather than literary point. Not really aware of the plays as plays – no analysis of structure. This is very much a "society" essay.

SCRIPT E:

“He hath ever but slenderly known himself”.

Taking account of your wider critical reading around your texts and the contexts in which they were written, compare the way in which Shakespeare in King Lear, Edgar Allen Poe in the Black Cat and Iain Banks in The Wasp Factory present the relationship between madness and self-knowledge

“He hath ever but slenderly known himself”

Explore the relationship between madness and self-knowledge in King Lear, The Wasp Factory and The Black Cat

There has long been a correlation between insanity and the wisdom of heightened perception. That which society considers insanity can sometimes constitute wisdom and a keener perception. In King Lear (henceforth KL), madness and self-knowledge are intertwined; as Lear descends into madness, he also experiences an augmentation in his self-awareness. Certainly, the critic Rolf Soellner agrees, stating, “Lear’s descent into madness gives him a sense of the human condition.”¹ Similarly, in The Wasp Factory (henceforth TWF) and The Black Cat (henceforth TBC), madness and self-knowledge are symbiotically linked. For the protagonist of The Wasp Factory, at the beginning of the novel, as argued by the critic Berthold Schoene-Harwood, “Frank’s sense of self is warped, virtually beyond repair”². Therefore, Schoene-Harwood reasons that it is only through madness that Frank is able to achieve clarity, and truly recognise

himself. TBC, on the other hand, serves to counter these two texts, with the narrator claiming he is not mad. Here, perhaps, one could argue that this denial of his madness is an evasion of his guilt for killing his wife. John Cleman agrees; "the most convincing proof of his insanity seems to be the very mask of sanity he

¹ Shakespeare's Patterns of Self Knowledge- King Lear: Valuing the Self by Rolf Soellner p 287

² Dams Burst: Devolving Gender in Iain Banks's "The Wasp Factory" by Berthold Shoene Harwood

purports to wear."³ Here, his refusal to admit his madness prohibits him from achieving clarity, and also furthers reverts his lack of self-knowledge to the reader. *clear outline of a sophisticated argument*

As1 The structure of the play of King Lear is such that Lear does not fully achieve self-recognition until he has become fully mad. The play depicts Lear's gradual and impending descent into madness. However, there is a definite climactic point whereby Lear is both fully mad, and fully aware of his current position. *when?* Soellner states that Lear's "lack of self-knowledge is monumental" at the beginning of the play.⁴ Here, he is completely self-unaware, and has not yet entered the first stages of madness. He is so unaware of not only himself, but also others around him that he lets false declarations of love overpower *real ones*. He "disclaims all paternal care, propinquity and property of blood" of Cordelia. The semantic field of monetary bargaining and possession is used here, and therefore has connotations of financial relinquishment, and highlights the view of the time that a father owned his daughter. Thus, it is impossible for a father to disclaim what

As2 he owns without impoverishing himself. This is therefore an act of undermining the very construction of his identity. It also shows that he has completely misinterpreted the situation, and sees him start to shun any responsibility of not only that of a father, but also responsibility as a ruler. Lear's lack of self-knowledge is apparent here; he has ostracised the one daughter who actually loves him, and fails to *sp.* release *this*. Lear's lack of self-knowledge is apparent, but

interesting idea

loves him, and fails to ^{sp.}release ~~this~~. Lear's lack of self-knowledge is apparent, but

³ Irresistible Impulses: Edgar Allan Poe and the Insanity Defense by John Cleman
⁴ Shakespeare's Patterns of Self Knowledge- King Lear: Valuing the Self by Rolf Soellner p283

so too is the fact that he has not quite reached the pinnacle of his madness. Kent states; "see better Lear". The imperative ~~command~~ here shows that Lear is ^{AO2} already losing his kingly power, which is further heightened by his abandonment of "king" in addressing Lear creating a personal, more urgent [✓]tone. Furthermore, here, "seeing" has two layers of meaning; in this circumstance, his failing ^{Ad} eyesight, but is also a reference to Lear's failing perception of the situation at hand, one of which Lear increasingly has less control over as he descends into madness. ^{Ad well argued}

^{AO1} In both Lear and TBC, madness and self-knowledge are inter~~con~~connected. However, self-knowledge is not static, but rather, in this case, [✓]progressive. Their descent into madness doesn't yet constitute self-knowledge; for Lear, it is only when he has become fully mad that he is fully aware of [✓]himself. For the narrator ^{AO2} of TBC, however, the story starts in medias res and immediately the protagonist tries to refute the fact that he is mad. The narrator then states, "yet mad I am not". The "mask of sanity"⁵ worn by the narrator only serves to highlight his insanity, and his willful evasion of insanity suggests a lack of self-knowledge; he constructs his identity rather than recognizing it for what [✓]it is. The proleptic ^{AO2} structure of the story then sets the scene, which reflects the revelation of his deteriorating [✓]sanity. The protagonist is depicted as being full of "docility and ^{AO3} humanity of his disposition". Clemans argues that the narrator attributes the values of both "good and evil to the bestial"⁶, suggesting the enigmatic qualities

⁵ Irresistible Impulses: Edgar Allan Poe and the Insanity Defense by John Cleman
⁶ ibid

of the narrator's personality, and the "irrational innocence of compulsion"⁷,
 which coerces him into killing his wife. Although the reader deems the narrator's
 act of murder as irrational, the narrator cannot recognize it as such. The adamant
 belief of the narrator that he is not mad, even though the reader witnesses him
 acting completely irrationally highlights his willful lack of self-knowledge.
 Contrastingly to KL and TWF, the acts of madness that he commits do not lead
 him to self-knowledge, and does so as an active evasion rather than passive
 ignorance.

A01

A03
well
synthesized

The incoherence of identity and madness in interconnected in KL. Goneril states
 "tis the infirmity of his age yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself". This
 suggests that his old age has exacerbated Lear's instability of mind, and
 "infirmity" suggests grave illness whilst also being very condescending. The use

A01

A02

interesting
acknowledgement
& interpretation

of the word "ever" perhaps hints at Lear's past and suggests that he has always
 been this way, although it is unclear to the audience and subject to directorial
 decision whether it is heard as trustworthy or a manipulation. Here, Goneril
 blames Lear's lack of self knowledge on his age and that his 'infirmity' has
 exacerbated his madness. However, Soellner states "we cannot but accept
 Regan's judgment: he has ever but slenderly known himself"⁸. Here it is the
 audience who are able to recognize Lear's lack of perception, but not Lear.
 Goneril uses the words of a humanist rallying cry that demonstrated the relation

A02

A03

⁷ Irresistible Impulses: Edgar Allan Poe and the Insanity Defense by John Cleman
⁸ Dams Burst: Devolving Gender in Iain Banks's "The Wasp Factory" by Berthold
 Shoene Harwood

between 'erected wit' or intelligence and 'infected will'.⁹ In the Sam Mendes ^{A04} production of *Lear*, his infirmity had exacerbated his madness, he is portrayed as padding around in a hospital gown, without the ability to [?] move, thus suggesting that his madness has been exacerbated by his old age, therefore disagreeing with ^{A03} Soellner.¹⁰

At the beginning of TWF, Frank also displays the link between incoherence of identity and madness. Similarly to KL, Frank has not yet entered the arguably maddest stage. Frank is being dictated what to do by "the factory" but offers the reader no explanation as to what or who ^{A01 well mixed} it is. Moreover, Frank perceives that he is very self-knowledgeable, stating "I'm me and here's here." His explicit direction to the reader implies, suggesting at coherent self-knowledge and power, which then erodes as the reader discovers the incoherence and corruption of his identity. Frank's statement that "of course I was out killing things" seems to add to the ludicrous perception Frank has of himself, by treating ^{A02} the act of killing as if it were an everyday occurrence.

y link?

y link?

As *Lear* descends into madness, his increasing self-awareness becomes evident to the audience. *Lear* states "Does any here know me? Why this is not *Lear*." Although the lines are ambiguous, and the line is followed by a quick succession ^{A02} of questions, the definite statement "this is not *Lear*" shows clarity in *Lear* that

⁹ only by understanding the relation, in Sir Philip Sidney's words, between 'erected wit', or intelligence, and 'infected will', or the desires prompted by the senses, could human beings, sharing the nature of angels on the one hand, and beasts on the other, conduct their lives well

¹⁰ Sam Mendes' production of *King Lear* at the National Theatre 2014

the audience have not yet seen. Lear refers to himself in the third person, ^{As2} creating distance from himself, and is reduced to just Lear, rather than King Lear which denotes Lear's loss of power and his growing recognition of the gap between Lear's role as a king and his identity as a human being. After this statement, Lear utters the phrase "Who is it who can tell me who I am" This could reveal Lear's utter vulnerability, as it did in the Sam Mendes production for the National Theatre¹¹. However, in the Guildford Shakespeare Company production, Lear, played by Brian Blessed¹², was seen laughing the line, but more so in complete and utter confusion, rather than joviality. Both interpretations highlight Lear's complete instability of mind, and the question he asks cannot be answered. Additionally, he then exclaims "O Lear, Lear, Lear!" The triadic structure of the phrase and the use of the explanative give it a sense of desperation, as well as self-deprecation. Again, the reference to Lear in the third person highlights Lear's separation from himself and his loss of stable identity.

As4
excellent
analysis
interpretation
in performance
As2

In TWF, Frank is indifferent to his madness, which displays his lack of self-knowledge. Frank states that his murders were "just a stage I was going through". His casual dismissiveness of murder as being a "stage" already underlines to the reader the sheer lack of any human feeling, especially that of guilt or remorse that Frank is going through. Furthermore, the reader is able to see that it is not just a stage because Frank has just before told us that he has

¹¹ Taken from the guardian review of Sam Mendes' production of King Lear at the National Theatre in 2014
<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/24/king-lear-olivier-theatre-review>

¹² The Guildford Shakespeare Company production of King Lear 2015

already been out killing animals, and therefore the reader is able to see Frank's complete lack of perception. Frank's finite belief of the casualness and transitory state of the act of killing, even when the reader knows that it is not, displays Frank's lack of self-perception. Although arguably here, he is mad, and he also does not possess self-knowledge, as in King Lear, he has not reached the pinnacle of his madness yet, and it is only when he attains this state that he is truly aware of himself.

A01

A01

A03

well synthesised argument

The storm scene in Lear is arguably when he is the maddest, but also when he seems to fully recognise himself, thus demonstrating the link between madness and self-knowledge. The use of pathetic fallacy during the storm in Lear marks the climax in Lear's journey for self-knowledge. The stage directions of "storm and tempest" mark the culmination of his struggle as the internal conflict is reflected and exacerbated by the external wilderness. The storm here marks the break of things being held back, and Lear's collapse into madness. Perhaps the storm is so poignant because it marks Lear's freedom; once Lear has shunned all responsibility and has fully embraced not only his descent into madness but also his new, lowly position, he is finally able to recognise his true self, something that madness had induced. Lear's newly found self-knowledge, due to his suffering, or *mathos pathei*¹³, can be seen through him referencing himself as a "poor old man". This finally marks Lear's recognition for what he really is, and Lear has been stripped of any power, showing Lear's perception of what he is in

A02

compelling argument

A01

¹³ The Greek term derives from The Agamemnon of Aeschylus (written c. 458 BCE), and can be interpreted, or translated, as meaning *learning from adversary*, or *wisdom arises from (personal) suffering*; or *personal experience is the genesis of true learning*

his purest form. Lear further acknowledges this madness by stating "O fool, I shall go mad". In the 1971 production by Peter Brook¹⁴, Lear offers this as a threat, and rather than the old, vulnerable Lear seen in both the Sam Mendes and Guildford Shakespeare Company productions, the audience here is able to see a tyrannical Lear. However, in both instances, there is indeed a newly gained sense of self-recognition. If one were to use the Brooks' interpretation, Lear has now realised his power, and is using it to try and garner back some of his lost status.

A02

A04

A03

For the vulnerable Lear, it marks a moment of utter self-pity and acknowledgement that the inevitable will happen: Lear will go mad. Lear further highlights his increasing self-knowledge by stating that he is a “poor, infirm, weak and despised old man”. Here, Lear acknowledges his own weakness and then rallies against it, thus creating a sort of self-acceptance, one that has been induced by madness. Although this could be portrayed as the weak and vulnerable Lear of the storm, it could also be played as scornful and bitter, but either way, it shows that Lear is much more aware of people’s perceptions of him, a stark contrast to the beginning of the play. Here, the staging is reflective of the ever-disintegrating world around Lear. In the Guildford Shakespeare Company production, the beginning of the play was set with Lear in the centre of the stage, on an elevated throne, to reflect his elevated and central position. By the end of the play, the disintegration of the natural hierarchical order is evident; the bodies of the deceased characters remain on stage, and so it is clear to the audience the disintegration of madness.¹⁵

¹⁴ Taken from the 1971 film of King Lear, directed by Peter Brook

¹⁵ The Guildford Shakespeare Company production of King Lear 2015

The pinnacle of madness in TBC commences with the narrator’s irrational paranoia and absolute dread of “the beast”. Here, the reader starts to see the irrationality and lack of logic of the protagonist, but the protagonist does not, nor does he try and justify his fear in any particular way. This serves as a foil to the argument. IN TBC, when the narrator is truly mad, instead of realising this, he blames external forces. This makes the audience aware that the protagonist is deluded, but the protagonist himself lacks the perception to see it that way. When justifying his crimes, the narrator states that it was the cat that “exasperated me to madness”. In this instance, it could be said that the narrator is portraying the inevitability of madness, but here blames it on an external force rather than acknowledging his own, premeditated madness. Furthermore, rather than using madness as a catalyst for self-knowledge, the narrator is using madness as a refuge. By appealing to the Insanity Defense Law, the narrator

would perhaps not be found guilty of the murder of his wife and executed.¹⁶ Ironically, although the narrator is mad, he thinks that this is just pretense, thus showing his complete lack of self-knowledge.

A01 The partial restoration of Lear's power coincides with his newly found self-knowledge, with Lear stating "O, that way madness lies, let me shun that; no more of that". This marks the point of Lear's self-acceptance, with the assertive A02 phrase emphasised by the defiant full stop and the use of the word "no". Here, Lear is on a trajectory to madness he can now recognize but his newly found self-

¹⁶ The insanity defense law was introduced in 1843, the year that the black cat was published, and meant that if you were deemed to be mad, you would not be executed for murder

acceptance will help him to overcome it. Ironically, later on in the scene, the stage directions read "enter Lear mad and crowned with wild flowers". The A02 crown of flowers is an inverted real crown and helps to restore Lear's regality. A01 Yet flowers highlight the contrast between an unconscious king of nature in this scene and the angry tyrant the audience are subject to in the opening scene. Here, embracing madness has led to self-knowledge and now leads Lear to bettering himself, as he is able to rid himself of the constraints placed upon him as ruler and empathise with others. Contrastingly, in TBC, the narrator states A03 that he feels "no embarrassment whatsoever" once he has murdered his wife. This lack of emotion is a contrast to Lear who has gained all of this through his madness.

A01 Towards the end of KL, Lear ultimately has the most self-recognition, after the disruption and chaos that has previously been seen throughout the play. Indeed, Holly states the disruption of the natural order can "only be rectified by the reasoned will of an individual...to act authentically toward self-recognition and

A03 acceptance of Self¹⁷. Here, Holly is asserting that only through madness can one achieve clarity; it is only when we have nothing can we recognise who we truly are. Lear again asserts his authority, stating, "I am the king." Although ultimately, this marks Lear's utter confusion, as he is no longer the king, it marks a return to the strong, assertive king seen in the opening scenes. Furthermore, Lear is no longer separate from himself, and there is no more of the self-pitying and vulnerable Lear that the audience has seen previously. Juxtaposingly, this is the

A03 ¹⁷ King Lear: The Disguised and Deceived by Marcia Holly p172

moment where Lear both knows himself the most, and knows himself the least. He states that he is "a very foolish, fond old man". Here, he is at the height of his perception; he has spent a large proportion of the play trying to refute this fact, and he now accepts it. Through his madness, Lear has not only gained self-knowledge, but also self-acceptance. Likewise, in TWF, Frank states "I'm not Francis Leslie Cauldhame. I'm Frances Lesley Cauldhame." The definitive statement also highlights the slight difference between Frank the boy, and Frank the girl. It shows self-recognition and acceptance, which is further heightened by the statement "I am still me; I am the same person." Similarly to Lear, Frank feels that no change has been made, even though the reader may find the information that Frank is a girl to be of monumental importance. However, here, there is a blatant display of self-acceptance, something that Frank has only been able to achieve through embracing his madness, or, as Schoene-Harwood states, "what man is conditioned to regard with self-loathing may begin to initiate a process of genuine self-authentication."¹⁸ This complete parallel to Lear reinforces the link between self-knowledge and madness within the two texts. Sophisticated synthesis of

texts in the argument.

A01 Through madness, the characters are not only able to gain self-knowledge, but this is induced by the freedom from responsibility and constraints that madness apparently brings. For the protagonist in TBC, however, madness is used as an escape in order to avoid being hung¹⁹, and therefore it could be said that in TBC,

¹⁸ Dams Burst: Devolving Gender in Iain Banks's "The Wasp Factory" by Berthold Shoen Harwood

¹⁹ The insane were housed apart from criminals and, to some degree, treated with the compassion and care afforded the physically ill. Here, the narrator in TBC tries to garner a 'nicer' punishment by using insanity as a mask

madness is also used as a form of freedom, but in this case, does not constitute self-knowledge. For both King Lear and Frank, the suffering that they endure is somehow restorative and allows them to accept who they truly are. Although perhaps Lear is not in his "perfect mind", he is more perceptive than he has ever been, and his realisation of his newly found position in society leads him to eventually come to terms with his situation before his death.

SCRIPT E beginning "There has long been a correlation between insanity and the wisdom of heightened perception."

Centre mark 75 Moderated mark 70 (18+20+16+16)

This is a nice essay although it is a bit focused on Lear. The centre thought context the weakest point – otherwise "excellent." Very interesting on Brian Blessed's Lear in Guildford and a good point on page 2 about Lear disowning Cordelia and diminishing himself.

SCRIPT F:

Literature is a record of social fears. Explore in "Dracula", "The Turn of the Screw" and "Hamlet".

Word Count-615

*✓ A03
critic informs
argument*
Karin once opined that 'madness does not serve narrative so much as narrative serves madness'; Karin's key claim, that the theme of madness is one that is not intrinsically simple. Instead, madness, serves to highlight the fears of the time; consequently, it is a social construct rather than merely Gothic theme. Madness along with other social fears are explored in "Dracula", "Turn of the Screw" and "Hamlet". Despite being written over different time periods constant societal fear is a theme that features similarly but also in contrasted manner in all three texts. Hence, it could be argued that the Gothic literature in which these societal fears were explored is merely a record of these fears. *✓ A03 comp*

✓ A01 - argument
During the late Victorian era there were an increasing number of women gaining power. However the idea of women becoming powerful was a fear that is shown in the three texts. This can be shown by the opposition to the rising group of women identified as the New Woman, some calling them "a mythical, unnatural creature"¹. It could be argued that both, "Dracula" and "The Turn of the Screw" were a manifestation of this fear against women. In "Dracula" the three vampire women attack Harker; the descriptions of the vampires are highly sexualised. Harker has a "burning desire that they would kiss [him] with those red lips". The adjective burning, as well as the symbol 'red,' reflects the passion he feels but also conveys a sense of danger these women possess. The 'red lips' are a hallmark of their gothic beauty which Harker cannot resist, highlighting their power. The colour imagery created can be associated with sexual desire in this novel, but also with blood which adds a more sinister dimension to the women. Similarly, the ghost of Jessel in "The Turn of the Screw" is dangerous like the vampires. Teahan argues that there is a "tainted aura surrounding Jessel [which] reflects the new governess's awareness of the sexually suspect status of governesses in general." However Teahan could take into account that the descriptions of Jessel come from the governess. The 'tainted aura' that is described could merely be an artificial barrier created by the new governess in order to hide her own sexuality. The new governess sees Jessel as a figure of corruption, the first time she sees her is across from a lake. Perhaps the lake acts as a mirror and is a reflection of herself. Both governesses could be imposing the danger of corrupting the children and could be deemed as dangerous. Not only are the children in danger of being physically hurt by the ghost of Jessel but they are also in danger of being psychologically corrupted. The governess claims that "They know- it's too monstrous; they know". The repetition highlights the fear that the governess has of Jessel becoming powerful enough to corrupt the children and makes her seem hysteric. The only monosyllabic word is the adjective 'monstrous', this makes the reader concentrate on it and adds to the readers fear of Jessel. Once again this shows that women should be feared as they are compared to monsters. This could be compared to a text which contextually is much earlier and yet the societal fears seem similar, perhaps the eponymous Hamlet also fears women due to their power to corrupt. When Hamlet's mother remarried his father's murderer Hamlet's disgust at sex and female sexuality can be seen in his rejection of her and the rejection of his previous lover. He sees Ophelia "as a breeder of sinners". The word breeder almost dehumanises her and makes her seem like a simple mammal, perhaps Hamlet's disgust takes his views as far as to not believe that

*✓ A04 context
✓ A03 critic
✓ A01 indep*
✓ A02
✓ A02
✓ A03 comp
✓ A03 critic informs argument
✓ A02
✓ A02
✓ A02
✓ A02
✓ A03 comp
✓ A02

¹ The new woman was a term that described a woman who was pushing against the limits which society imposed on women.

women are human anymore. She also breeds "sinners"; Hamlet should fear women because they bring more bad people into the world that could bring potential harm to him. Contextually however, Gertrude's action of remarriage would not have shocked the audience; a woman would have needed the institution of marriage to survive. Nevertheless Hamlet focuses on his mother's sexuality; he presents a fearful view of female sexual activity. Hamlet compares his mother's sexual behaviour to an "unweeded garden". The garden could be a reference to the garden of Adam and Eve, showing the Hamlet knows that sex is a natural and perhaps essential part of life. But the adjective unweeded gives a negative connotation of thorn bushes which are not only dangerous and constricting but overgrown just like his mother's sexuality. Hence, all three literary works depict women as dangerous, and as a physical demonstration of the fears society had about women.

✓ A02
analysis
of features

✓ A01
applies
context
to arg.

✓ A01
terms
✓ A03
reading
inform
argument

✓ A02
analysis
of lexical
choices

✓ A01

✓ A02

✓ A02

✓ A03

✓ A01

✓ A03

✓ A01

✓ A03

✓ A01

✓ A03

✓ A01

✓ A03

✓ A02

✓ A03

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✓ A03

✓ A03

✓ A03

Both 'Hamlet' and 'Dracula' were written at a time of great social change, the reigning female monarchs in both contexts were coming to the end of their reigns, Elizabeth 1st had no heir and thus there was a period of uncertainty for the Elizabethan. 'Dracula' was written during the era known as the fin de siècle. Ledger and Luckhurst claim that the "fin de siècle enthusiasm for translating all problems into scientific terminology was the product." They are of the opinion that during times of social angst such as at the end of the century a greater importance is placed on being able to explain everything rationally. Perhaps Stoker has taken the legend of the vampire and used it to explore how societal fears do not really reflect the true picture. Although women are portrayed as dangerous it could be argued that women are in fact weak, the real societal fear explored may be a fear of emasculated men. In "Hamlet" the female characters depend on men. When Hamlet rejects Ophelia she dies. Ophelia is inferior to the male characters and it is suggested that the males are the ones who form her identity. It can be said that Ophelia serves no purpose in the play. A feminist reading of Hamlet has lead Lee Dewards to come to the conclusion that "Ophelia literally has no story without Hamlet".²This could show that women rely on men and when they fail to protect them they are vulnerable. In "The Turn of the Screw" the governess is to have no contact at all with the absent male figure. The only male character in the novel is the ghost of the gardener who causes the problems. One again the male has failed to make the women and children feel safe. This could lead to the conclusion that women are not feared because they are weak; they are simply reliant on men and need their help. However the presentation of Mina serves a contrast to that of Ophelia and the governess. It is true that Mina is attacked by Dracula; she asks "what have I done to deserve such a fate, I who have tried to walk in meekness...all my days." At first glance it seems as if Mina was truly horrified of Dracula and is a victim. But the word 'tried' suggests that she desires to step out of the role of the victim. I agree with Glover who says that Mina is "extremely hard to place". She does show signs of obedience to her husband and learns shorthand in order to "keep up with Jonathans studies" and so that she can help him. But this also shows that Mina is a strong woman and that the true fear is the fear of emasculated men. Contemporary critic, Spencer claims "that never in western society have gender roles been more rigid of distinct". Mina knows this and assigns herself to organise the notes of the men, therefore she takes an active role in destroying Dracula. Ledger claims that she "[inscribes] herself within the paradigm of ideal Victorian womanhood" and uses her

² Although Ophelia can be viewed as a plot device to retrieve Hamlet out of his mad act she can also serve the purpose of being a symbol of what women stand for. An Elizabethan audience may have simply viewed her as mad but a modern audience can use Ophelia to represent women throughout history. Ophelia's life is shaped by the men in the play; even on her death bed she talks about how "he is gone". Ophelia was not even able to reflect on her own life before her death but still talks about Hamlet.

2

"man's brain" to fit into a role which is neither the uneducated and powerless woman nor the feared New Woman. Instead she creates a modernised version of the angel in the house which is acceptable.³ Although Mina hints that she did indeed want Dracula to attack her, the men have still failed in their duty to protect her. One interesting point is that in all three novels men can also be seen as weak. Hamlet goes mad and is beside himself with grief. In 'Dracula' the merry band of men who are going to fight Dracula are depleted by blood transfusions, they also need four members to face one monster. And finally in 'The Turn of the Screw' the gardener is a ghost. Perhaps all three texts are in fact showing that society feared emasculated and feminine men and were blaming strong women like Mina. Perhaps the actions of men make women weak; if female characters had been allowed to work alongside the men then they would not have been open and vulnerable to attack. If Mina had been allowed to go with the merry band of men then Dracula would not have

✓ A01

✓ A03

attack. If Mina had been allowed to go with the merry band of men then Dracula would not have attacked her. Some women have been portrayed as weak and reliant on men such as Ophelia and the governess, but strong female characters such as Mina can highlight how emasculated men can weaken women and that women need not be feared.

Knowledge of features

On the other hand the texts show that despite this, women should be feared, all three texts present women going against maternal behaviour. Since the early 19th century the role of mother had been idealised, Victorian middle-class women had more involvement in bringing their children up than their predecessors and motherhood was seen as a confirmation of identity. However these texts show women to contrast to the Victorian ideology. In "Dracula" when Lucy becomes a vampire she feeds on a baby which she "flung to the ground, callous as a devil". The verb flung suggests carelessness and a swift angry motion. She is also likened to the devil, perhaps when women lose their maternal instincts they become pure evil which could be why women are feared. This is similar to the character of Lady Macbeth in "Macbeth". Lady Macbeth could be seen as one of Shakespeare's powerful female characters because she is manipulative and is able to get her husband to murder people. She is similar to Lucy as she said she would "pluck the toothless gums" and "dash out the brains" of her child.⁴ Hamlet's mother Gertrude however is a weak female character; she re-married her husband's murderer. It was not uncommon for Elizabethan women to re-marry in order to protect themselves. Women had very little chance of survival if they did not have a husband in Shakespearean times. Although Gertrude did what any other Elizabethan woman would do she is weak because she chose to marry the destroyer of both her own life and Hamlet's life. This is not mother like because a mother would want to protect her child, but Gertrude instead chooses to protect herself. Be it weak or strong, women die in Shakespearean tragedies, this could show the fear of women, especially women that go against maternalism. Lady Macbeth is perhaps one of the most un-motherly figures Shakespeare created and she ends up committing suicide. Similar to this Gertrude also fails to protect her son and ends up dying. She also taints his views

³ The Angel in the house was the popular idea in Victorian times about the ideal woman. Women were expected to be devoted and submissive to their husbands. Although Mina is devoted to Jonathan, she is not necessarily submissive. She takes care of him when he returns from Transylvania and also takes it upon herself to re-order his notes. In this sense she is a modernised version of the angel. She is able to care for him and play a part in destroying Dracula

⁴ Both Lucy and Lady Macbeth go against maternal instincts. The language used by Shakespeare is especially shocking, particularly as women were meant to be motherly and caring. Both Lucy and Lady Macbeth would fling their children to the floor, this could be them saying that they would fling their maternal aspects away from them. This could be another fear that the authors wish to present. Harsh words such as "dash" and "pluck" are onomatopoeic and further shock the reader. They make Lady Macbeth seem even more violent.

3

about women, he says "get thee to a nunnery" to Ophelia. This simply means that he wishes her to go to a whorehouse but it is his bad impressions of women caused by his mother that leads him to this conclusion. Perhaps Shakespeare is presenting a fear of women that go against maternal instincts and suggests that almost any woman is capable of doing so, even the loyal Ophelia. Women gaining sexual power and being un-maternal make society fear them.

Another fear pertinent to all three texts is the fear of foreigners or invasion. The three texts show that it is easy for foreigners to invade. The fear of invasion can be shown through Mina in Dracula. Mina "is one of God's women, fashioned by his own hand". The word "fashioned" suggest that she has been specially crafted by God.⁵ At one point Mina says that she "did not want to hinder him". The use of the word hinder suggests that she did not want him to stop; this makes the threat of Dracula even more powerful. If Mina who is the perfect woman in the novel desires Dracula then it would be easy for foreigners to invade. For the Victorian audience this fear would have been very apparent but a modern day audience may not fear foreigners because of increased globalisation.⁶ In "The Turn of the Screw" the invaders are the ghosts who appear to the children. The invaders are feared because they can be seen as the invaders who corrupt Miles. The child is expelled from school and it suggested that he picked up this behaviour from the "infamous" gardener, who has now died and become a ghost. To be infamous is to have a bad reputation; the Miles has had his

Appreh influence of contextual factors

To conclude these pieces of literature act as a record of social fears. Fears such as the fear of feminine sexuality, the fear of invasion and the fear of madness are constant societal fears that feature in literature over different time periods. Stoker, James and Shakespeare have explored societal fears with the outcome of their exploration resulting in a record of the fears.

✓ A01
Coherent + fluent.

⁸ The fact that a simile is used as opposed to a metaphor suggests that he has not fully made the transformation into a "beast" and suggests that he can still free himself from the clasps of Dracula.

✓ A02

Teacher's assessment and comments:

Critics are used to inform the argument in this essay, which is cohesive & fluently written. Comparisons between texts are insightful.

Centre Assessor's comments:

(This box may be used to show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria)

We felt that the comparisons were fluent, original and confident. The analysis was detailed with evaluation with a well developed critical understanding of text in context.

SCRIPT G beginning "Karin once opined that madness does not serve narrative as narrative serves madness"

Centre mark 73. Moderated mark 71 (19+16+19+17)

these texts? Is Dracula really on a level with Hamlet? Good critical backup. Though monstrous isn't monosyllabic and Quint wasn't a gardener.

Picture of Dorian Gray Oscar Wilde (1890)

something unusual

702
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uniformity despite the in this gives the This subtle foreshadowing seems to hint to the reader that tragedy that will ensue when Dorian Gray, eschewed and abhorred by his grandfather who raised him eventually meets Lord Henry, a corrupt aristocrat who lives for pleasure, devoid of a conscience. A man who seems ready to take him under his wing. However, although it seems like Lord Henry brings about the decline in Dorian Gray and brings about his monstrous nature, it can be argued that Lord Henry is only playing out his true nature: it is simply how he views life, finding a particular thing to take interest in, be it art, money, objects or people. And at the end, he discards these 'experiments' and admires himself for how he has altered them.

?

exp

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entw
B03
As a result of this it is impossible to determine, if not Lord Henry, who exactly was the catalyst for Dorian Gray's unravelling. Critic Jen Costa has a theory on that: "However, more than meeting Lord Henry, Dorian's fall was related directly to the creation of the picture and Basil's constant obsession with beauty. Lord Henry may have been the man to explain the temporality of beauty, but it was Basil that made Dorian feel its importance." There is certainly merit to this view as Basil himself claimed to have put too much of himself into the portrait. The book starts with him impressing upon Henry the extent of his worship of Dorian Gray. By creating the portrait and giving him a physical manifestation of the mortality of his beauty, Basil- albeit inadvertently- causes the innocent and hapless Dorian who "kept himself unspotted from the world" to fear the loss of his beauty and with it Basil's worship. To the reader, this shows that monstrosity in the inhabitants of the Victorian society was a multi-faceted beast, a subtle organic entity ingrained in the etiquette of social interaction. This then leads the reader to understand that the Victorian era itself was steeped in monstrosity, a behemoth of social class and standing, muddy with waters so treacherous to traverse that a social recluse and an innocent Adonis unwise to its ways end up leading each other astray. Tellingly, by letting Dorian ignore his own part in his downfall and blaming it wholly on Basil, Wilde implies to the reader that by the end, Dorian Gray himself is now a part of the collective monstrosity of Society. "I don't want to be at the mercy of my emotions. I want to use them, to enjoy them, and to dominate them." Says Dorian when confronted by Basil about his indifference over the death of Sybil Vane, completing his transformation from doe-eyed youngster to self-indulgent Victorian.

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context
and
Basil
subtle
argument
B03

B03

Another way in which monstrosity is explored is through ambiguity as to where monstrosity truly lies: the creature or the creator. "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity" declares Immanuel Kant (1784). If the exploits of Victor Frankenstein were to be regarded from this point of view, then his pursuit of knowledge throughout his education and the eventual fruits of his labour are to be lauded as it aids in the progress of humanity. This could then show that his relentless pursuit of knowledge outside the accepted norm. "All that had so long engaged my attention suddenly grew despicable...I at once gave up my former occupations...and entertained the greatest disdain for a would-be science, which could never even step within the threshold of real knowledge." This quote is one of many littered through the text that shapes to the reader Victor Frankenstein's determination to overturning the self-incurred immaturity outlined by Kant. Mary Shelley uses characterisation to draw for the audience an intellectually driven scientist, hungry for knowledge and aiming to further humanity's understanding of our world. To the reader, Victor has no propensity for monstrosity, only a desire to create life and advance his field, and in doing so advance society as a whole. Upon initial reading, it seems that the creature mirrors his creator in this. Despite being abandoned by Frankenstein, the creature takes it upon itself to learn "While I improved in speech, I also learned the science of letters, as it was taught to the stranger; and this opened before me a wide field for wonder and delight." Shelley's use of pronouns serves a dual purpose of making the creature seem more authentic to the reader, humanising it, him, while also enabling the reader to draw parallels between creation and creator. The creature's almost cloying eagerness to learn is clearly intended to vindicate Frankenstein's experiment: a metaphor for his

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analysis
for A02

question

P

Explore the representation of monstrosity in 'Frankenstein (or the Modern Prometheus)' Mary Shelley(1818), 'The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' Robert Louis Stevenson(1886) and 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' Oscar Wilde(1890)

2034 ✓ "emergence from his self-incurred immaturity." However this doesn't quite ring true with readers at the time. "but still the expression "Creator," applied to a mere human being, gives us the same sort of shock with the phrase, "the Man Almighty," and others of the same kind..." a Scottish Herald critic in 1818 ✓ carps. This shows us that readers at the time didn't buy into Kant's "self-incurred immaturity" theory or ✓ indeed Shelley's postulation of Victor as "The Modern Prometheus." Instead, to readers at the time, Frankenstein is a monster as he has violated the sacredness of religion and created an abomination. 206 ✓ Furthermore, the fact that his creation eventually brought about the death of those closest to him and, indirectly, Frankenstein himself was seen by readers as Holy vengeance on Frankenstein.

did not evidence

207 ✓ Another theme explored by Mary Shelley when shaping the reader's perception of monstrosity is that of knowledge-- chiefly knowledge in the wrong hands. In 'Frankenstein,' the acquisition of knowledge is twice reversed and shown to be, first abhorred and then lauded. Victor Frankenstein's pursuit of knowledge is not that of a man who seeks to use it as a means of helping others as his father and mother before him have done. "I was capable of a more intense application and was more deeply smitten with the thirst for knowledge." Shelley's use of the word "thirst" connotes to the reader an inherent selfishness in 'Frankenstein,' hoarding knowledge for his own purposes and reasons. He aimed to create a new species that "would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me." The repeated use of pronouns as a literary device throughout this chapter shows that 208 ✓ his sole reason even in creating these abominations was to pervert the knowledge he gained to receive 209 ✓ adulation. This is in sharp contrast to the Creature, even from its inception. Despite being rejected by its

210 ✓ creator almost immediately, its thoughts weren't bent towards revenge but towards the acquisition of knowledge. "I eagerly seized the prize and returned with it to my hovel...they consisted of 'Paradise Lost', 211 ✓ a volume of Plutarch's 'Lives', and the 'Sorrows of Werter'." This description of the assorted literary works as prizes brings into sharp relief the discrepancies in Victor's character and shows the reader that he is 212 ✓ naturally predisposed towards monstrosity. His Creature's use of "hovel," a dirty, squalid, rustic dwelling shows that it- he- is painfully aware that such great works of literature are to be revered. Thus the 213 ✓ attributes that would usually be linked associated with the creature, for example selfishness, are then foisted on Victor, marring then readers' perception of him especially as then Doctors were seen as 214 ✓ paragons of society and people to be trusted.

was

215 ✓ The same is even truer of Dr Jekyll. Where Victor Frankenstein was a chemist, Henry Jekyll was a medical doctor and therefore even more prominent in innocent citizen's lives. The first indication the reader gets of how far Jekyll has departed from his original calling is the revulsion and unaccountable hatred felt for him by a fellow member of his profession. "But the doctor's case was what struck me...Well, sir, he was 216 ✓ like the rest of us; every time he looked at my prisoner, I saw that Sawbones turn sick and white with desire to kill him." Jekyll has distorted the knowledge of medicine that he has attained to such an extent that other practitioners instantly feel an inexplicable hate for him, an almost subconscious awareness of the monstrosity Jekyll has wrought with tools of a healing profession. Such are the extent of Jekyll's (as 217 ✓ Hyde) crimes that when Stevenson showed the first draft of the work to his wife Fanny- detailing explicitly Hyde's evil-doings, her reaction was extreme enough to lead him to burn it in its entirety. This gives an 218 ✓ indication as to how then readers would have received the text: the realization that people who outwardly appear to be beneficial and instrumental to the smooth running of society can in fact have a side to them that is not as savory would have come as a severe shock to a society that was, not only steeped in the 219 ✓ Chain of Being- predisposed to accepting the educated and nobles as their betters- but totally unused to the notion of the split personality. The severity of Hyde's evil deeds might well have sparked an 220 ✓ insurgency that upset the Chain of Being. Perhaps surprisingly, this might resonate with modern readers. 221 ✓ Though these days readers are well versed on topics such as schizophrenia due to the ground breaking over time

was strange

Explore the representation of monstrosity in 'Frankenstein (or the Modern Prometheus)' Mary Shelley(1818), 'The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' Robert Louis Stevenson(1886) and 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' Oscar Wilde(1890)

A01. research of developmental psychologists like Freud, any instances where a prominent member of the public who has used their knowledge or their position in society is likely to shock the public, as evidenced in the case of Jimmy Savile who eventually turned out to be a pedophile, masking his wrongdoings with his job as a TV presenter. *704*

Good note

To a Marxist, monstrosity in 'Frankenstein' is a result of exploitation. "While oppressed citizens are fighting for their rights, slaves fight for their independence on the other side of the globe. In the novel, an educated scientist fashions a monster that goes out of control." This view mirrors events that occurred in Shelley's lifetime and influenced the characters of Victor and his creation. Dr. Frankenstein, the metaphor for capitalism, aims to create a species that "would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me." From this, it is clear that Frankenstein who had a positively bourgeois upbringing automatically assumed that any being to whom he had contributed something toward—in this case literally life—owed something to him and would accede to being exploited by him as it is their role prescribed by capitalists in Industrial Britain. Although predating Marx and Engels' 'the Communist Manifesto,' this blasé expectation by Frankenstein would have angered readers as they would have been experiencing the exploitation first hand, especially in Northern England, where coal workers were paid just enough to keep them alive and expected to work the quarry's, lowering life expectancy to 28. The reaction of a modern reader wouldn't be much different as nowadays readers are well versed in Marxist ideas. Despite the introduction of measures like the minimum wage amongst others, there is still evidence of aristocratic exploitation, which culminated in the recession in 2008, creating a new wave of anger towards capitalism. The Creature signifies the proletariat which might provide an explanation of why Shelley tried her utmost to make it less monstrous: her parents were abolitionists who saw the ruling class and nobles as oppressing the workers. Shelley used the monster to connote the revolution that would eventually result from capitalist exploitation. *yes*

But... I would have read it!

explicit

In conclusion, all three authors make use of various literary devices to present monstrosity while simultaneously commenting on the duality and universality of humanity. It is a testament to the endurance of their collective writing prowess that numerous film adaptations, theatre plays and books have spawned from 'Frankenstein,' 'Jekyll and Hyde,' and 'The Picture of Dorian Gray.' Furthermore, the themes that caused so much controversy at the time of their various publications—perhaps because of how close to home they hit—are still very much prevalent in our society now. One need not look too closely at the scandal that plagued the BBC in early 2013 to see Robert Louis Stevenson's ideas of the duality of man and how people in positions of power and influence, for example soap actor Kevin Webster, can abuse such power and show a whole different side to themselves. However, what makes the presentation of monstrosity in all three texts even more effective is the fact that more than a century after they were written, the ambiguity still remains and it is ultimately up to the reader to discern for themselves who the true monsters are.

V. Well concluded!

Teacher's assessment and comments:

I read his texts independently. He has written a well researched essay. Closer proof reading was needed to omit

Teacher's declaration: *unnecessary errors in explanation*
 I declare that the student's activities have been kept under regular supervision and that...

Centre Assessor's Comments:
 (This box may be used to show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria)

Some confident use of terminology, evidence of independent reading and research. Applies knowledge of his A02 work effectively across his texts. Independent reading of two texts and reference to other interpretations. (A03)

Synthesis/analysis of texts which influence audiences across time.

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