

Section II

(b) Owen

Dear Mr. Gtanzariti and fellow students,

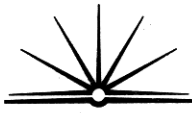
Today I am here to give a speech on Wilfred Owen and his poetry.

Wilfred Owen's poetry focuses on the pity of war. The other allied concerns are the waste of lives in war and the politics behind them. He conveys his message to the audience even more effectively by providing valuable insights into religious life and man's morality. ^{He is} portraying to the audience that war is not necessarily heroic and it should not be glorified.

Here is a ^{very significant} quotation from his poem

Anthem for Doomed Youth,

"The dull demented choir of wailing
shells;



and bugles calling them from sad
shires". This quotation's meaning will be
explained throughout the poem.

The poem - Anthem for Doomed
Youth is a sonnet which aversively
compresses Owen's decisive criticism of
the waste of lives of young men in World
War I. ~~How~~ Owen also explores the
reactions of the friends and relatives
left behind and feels sympathy for their
grief and helplessness.

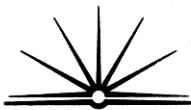
The title ~~is~~ which seems to be
promising an "anthem" is deliberately
~~not~~ ironic as an anthem is a
Christian song of praise. Owen is
therefore saying that there is nothing to
celebrate in his subject. The use of
the very negative adjective "doomed"
contrasts with the positive expectations



associated with an anthem. ~~The~~
~~sample~~ The fact that it is youth
that is doomed completes the
tragic implications of the title.

The sonnet opens with a devastating
line:

"What passing bells for those who
die as cattle?" This shows how
inhuman the ~~was~~ ^{laughter of the young men in war} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~that~~ any
idea of ~~the~~ ^{their} ~~human~~ humanity is
stripped from them ~~and~~ as they
"die as cattle". The opening line
is a rhetorical question, as the dignity
of the passing bell has itself passed
away. The artistic constraints such
as the rhetorical question, reference
to an ancient custom - "passing bells",
~~and~~ ^{and} simile - "as cattle" and the
even iambic ~~with~~ ~~rhythms~~ of the



line increases the power and universality of the poem. Thus retaining the subjectivity of the poem.

~~The ocean~~ Owen maintains this religious reference further by replacing "prayers" and "bells" with "bugles" and "shells". This emphasises that there are no prayers sung for the dead, instead there is the sound made by the weapons of destruction. ~~Instead~~

The alliteration in "lifter rapid lattle" and onomatopoeia in "stuttering" awfully recreate the sounds of the war. Onomatopoeia is present again in "wailing and shells" to involve the audience by allowing them to visualise the

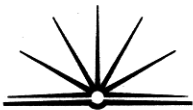


battle.

In reference to the "radhives", Owen is presenting his character as a typical English shopkeeper and ~~who~~ ^{who} ~~is~~ a member of the united, English countryside town.

In those days, the members of the community were known by everyone and their loss grieved. But this soldier did not get that farewell. "Tolling" is precisely the right word here as ~~the~~ "bugles" last part is usually a sign of farewell. But Owen simply hears it as a plaintive and an unanswerable call to return.

There are no "choirs" sung to put these dead ones' souls to rest, instead there is the noise made by "hell".



Then Owen questions who will pray for the souls of these left ones as he says, "What candles may be held to speed them all?"

He replies to her as he says that these dead ones will not be utterly forgotten but their liturgy will not be a formal rite with candles.

Instead the spiritual commemoration of these left ones will be seen in the weeping and pale brows of their friends and relatives. And at each dawn dusk "a drawing down of blinds". Here again he refers to an old English custom as drawing down of blinds was ^{a tradition} done in the house of mourning.

Owen reemphasizes his point of the loss and waste of lives in war



by using the words "boys" and "girls". He is again saying that

it is youth that is being doomed. The reference to "tenderness of patient minds" says that these will say longer than the "outsider" on the battlefield.

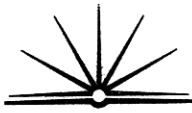
Dunen uses a tight structure and economical language to represent the unnaturally shortened life spans of the soldiers. The most remarkable

feature of this poem is its combination of bitterness and poignancy. He evokes a ^{sense of} horror of war through use of "Hell" and "hell" but he also has a

sympathetic view of the clothes left behind. He understands their loss and grief. These two themes beautifully complement each other.

Through this poem, Dunen has proved that war is not heroic.

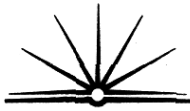
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Another poem that quite clearly communicates the horror of war is "Dulce et decorum est". This poem captures the vile experiences of gassing suffered by many soldiers in action during war.

The title is ironic and is a reference to Horace, an ancient Roman poet, who asserts that it is a "noble and glorious deed to die for one's country". Owen ~~rejects~~ ^{displays} rejects this as he ~~con~~ ^{represents} through this poem the ^{repugnance of war} ~~waste of lives and human~~ tragedy. He clarifies it as a myth evident in the quotation, "Pro patria mori" meaning it is an "old lie".



This poem opens in vividness with soldiers' as they are ~~described~~ ^{imagined} as an epitome of masculinity but this fiction is completely ~~undercut~~ undercut by the use of two similes:

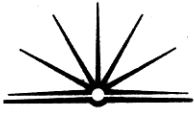
"Double, bent like old beggars" ^{under rocks} and
"Coughing like hogs".

~~This shows that the soldiers are~~
^{described as being} prematurely aged, ~~was~~ physically decrepit and mentally numb.

This is evident in the quotation,

"All ~~blind, all~~ went lame,
all blind, deaf even to the hoofs
of the Hudd, five-nines that
dropped slowly behind."

~~Their~~ ~~law~~ They are so
Hudd that are not properly
prepared for the attack,
"Gaa! Gaa! Quick, boys!"



The exclamation marks and capitalization is used to alert the audience about the sense of fear.

One soldier does not put his "helmet" on in time and is therefore injured. The onomatopoeia of "guttering" & "choking", "drowning" "~~he plunged at me,~~ shows the ~~choking~~ horror of the incident and invokes empathy from the audience.

The ^{profuse} use of similes in "floundering like a man in lurch..." recreates the scene and appeals to audience's senses to encourage empathy again. The use of descriptive language such as "writting", "mothering" cut out any romanticism related to war.

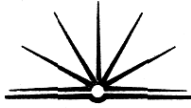
The afflicted soldier's pain has not ended yet as Owen



says, "blood came gurgling out of both corrupted lungs". This is very horrible vivid image. The soldiers don't even have time to show compassion as the injured soldier is "flung" into the wagon.

The final stanza involved the audience as the pronoun changes from "I" to "we" and ^{also} ^{he refers} to audience as "my friend". This is done in order to have the audience's sympathies and to reject the old lie.

Owen points out that anyone "ardent for some desperate glory" will be ~~to~~ sorely disappointed. The fact that he attributes this wish to "children"



shows how naive and childish
he considers it. The emotional
language used in the poem deeply
touches the audience.

Therefore it can be concluded that
war is not necessarily heroic and
it should ~~be~~ not be glorified. It is
not nostalgic and sentimental
but filled with hopelessness
and despair.

Thank You!