

Hello students, welcome to this module

in the paper for British Poetry

in drama 17th and 18th centuries.

As part of this module we are going

to look at the main themes and

characters of Aphra Behn's play the Rover.

I hope you have looked at the module

that discussed the Act-wise summary of.

I'm going to be your facilitator

for this module Dr. Akshata Bhat.

From Dhempe College of Arts and Science

I will introduce you to the play

briefly first and then discuss its major

characters as well as the major themes.

Hopefully by the end of this module,

you'll be in a position to critically

evaluate the major characters of the play

and also trace and explore its nodal themes.

As you are aware this play.

Is a restoration comedy and

has been written by Aphra Behn.

The features and thematic elements are reflective of the Restoration era of England at that time under the reign of Charles the 2nd and the head honest culture that he brought along from France, where he was exiled.

Now let us look at some of the major characters of the play.

The first character that I speak of is Wilmore.

Wilmore is the titular Rover of the play, not only because of his journeys on the sea as the Rover, but also because of his rowing.

It also is a representation of his sexual promiscuity.

He's a classic rake, a stock character of restoration comedy known to entice women through lust only to betray them later.

And leave a long trail of

broken hearts in his wake.

Wilmore's liberty is criticised

in the play evidently,

and the hypocrisies are exposed.

However,

they are not justly condemned

or punished in the play.

Wilmore still emerges as a prominent

protagonist and he still gets

whatever he desires without his

actions being punished at all.

Modern audiences therefore often.

Troubled by the despicability

of this character,

who makes light of hideous crimes

like rape and engages in explicit

promiscuous behavior without feeling

any sense of remorse for the same.

The next character Helena is a

noblewoman destined to be a nun.

She is a classic protagonist of

restoration comedy, whose witty,
independent, intellectual,
and engages in intelligent banters.
She questions the norms of society,
as is evident in the very
first scene with Don Pedro.

These norms of society which force
women to follow the dictates of
the male members of the family
rather than their own desires,
are questioned by Helena.

However, interestingly,
she doesn't condemn Wilmore
behavior either.

Rather she lays out plans to trick
him into wedding vows by using his
promiscuous tendencies to her advantage.

Therefore,

I leave you with a question by
the end of this play when Helena
manages to get married to Wilmore,

largely by Crook.

Do you see Helena as an empowered character?

Do you see that her growth as a character

Was stunted,

do you see that the potentiality

of her character was not explored

and it could have been used to

voice the prejudices against

women at that point of time?

Do you see her therefore,

as an emancipated empowered character

who defies not paid through's

wishes and follows her heart,

or simply as a flat character

who falls victim and pray to

the prejudices of her times?

The next character that I

speak of is Belvile.

Belvile is the banished English

Cavalier is known to be a brave fighter

and the only noble man in the play who

doesn't engage in any explicit lust.

Full behavior due to his.

Unwavering love for Florida.

His love story with Florida is the main plot of the play and leads to other plots.

His love story with Florida as the main plot of the play and leads to other subplots and unions.

He fights for honor and love and fights with integrity. However, despite his own honesty and sincerity, he doesn't condemn the debauched behavior of his fellow Cavaliers at times.

He even encourages it.

In fact, he also defends Bill Maher's behavior several times.

Florida is a noblewoman destined to marry suitors, chosen by the male members of her family, Darwin.

Sensual by her father and her Antonio,

avored by her brother.

Although she comes across

as submissive at first,

she does display quiet strength and

determination in her love towards Belleville.

She is the worst victim of the

Cavaliers debauchery blunt Frederick,

as well as Bill Moore.

However,

it is shocking to see her forgive

them readily in the aftermath of what

they were supposed to do with her.

That is, attempt to rape her.

Therefore,

her character has also extracted

complex responses from modern audience.

What do you think?

Is she an empowered character

or a silenced character?

Or do you see her as?

The 4th character.

The next character, Angelica,
is a former mistress of a
Spanish general.

She's a courtesan in the play.

She occupies a lower status in
society than the noblewomen Florida,
Helena and Balaria.

However, she leads an independent life,
and she is actually the only
character who comes close to
punishing Wilmer for his misdeeds.

I'll beat out of jealousy

in a sense of betrayal,

but she does not condone it.

She condemns it to the very.

And she evidently Pines for true love,

and is a representation of a cross

section of women that Afro Ben wanted

to bring to the stage of English comedy.

The next character Valeria is

actually a very under critiqued

and underrepresented character,

but she happens to be my favorite.

She's the cousin of Florida and

Helena who plays a major role

in the resolution of the plot.

She is smart.

She has a good presence of mind.

She's quick witted and she is completely

compassionate towards the cause of love.

She's romantically united with Frederick,

which I must confess,

seems a little forced.

There's barely any visible development

of their relationship through the.

And it almost seems as though because

of the other unions happening,

Frederick and Valeria have

been yoked together.

The last major character that I

discussed is don't pay through.

He's a Spanish nobleman occupying

a higher stratum of society,

and by virtue of that he is

aware of his privileges and

deploys them to his advantage.

He imposes his wishes on his sister,

and rather than giving it,

giving them a chance to speak and express

themselves or take their life decisions.

He imposes his own decisions on them.

He wears a facade of nobility,

but like the other characters.

Indulges in lewd and debauched behavior

is a representation of the hypocrisy

of the upper class during restoration

while trying to protect the honor

of the women of their own class.

They belittle and even outrage

the honor of the women from the

lower classes as depicted in Dom

Pedro's behavior in the last scene.

I now come to the major themes of the play.

I begin by commenting upon the
dark side of restoration hedonism,
as depicted in the play.

As mentioned to you before the
Restoration era marked the return
of Charles the 2nd to the throne
of England during the Interregnum
Charles II was exiled in France.

He was not despondent or dejected in exile.

In fact, he had the time of his life,
and he also assimilated a lot of
French culture and love for theater and
brought that along with him when he
was restored to the throne of England,
he brought in a culture of rivalry.

Ed and ISM and merrymaking.

And there was a positive feature to
this as well as it brought about
a lot of improvements towards the
development of theater and drama.

Because Charles II loved entertainment.

In fact, he was the one who recognized
the potential in Africa and gave
her an opportunity.

The comedy written during this time,
which was Charles,
her second favorite,
represented the upper class and specifically
their rivalry and moral frivolity.

However, they were dark undertones
to this headon ISM as well,
which African manages to expose
in this play but does not really
go on to condemn or punish them?

There are two attempts of rape
and multiple instances of abuse.

However, they are gravity and obnoxious.

Nature is taken with a pinch of salt,
and it almost seems as though this
hidden ISM is celebrated rather than.

Punished.

The second theme that is a light to

the first is the treatment of women

during this time across sections.

This was the time when women had started

acting in theater in place and had

started actively coming onto this stage.

Therefore you can imagine

when characters like Florinda,

Helena, Valeria, Angelica,

played by strong female leads were

portrayed onto the English stage.

It must have been a water shedding landmark.

Event, however,

there are some problems here as well.

Florida, Helena and Valeria are

represented as women belonging to

the upper class and by default are

considered to be honorable women.

The problem is that Angelica,

lucetta, and mereta,

who are represented as women coming

from the so-called lower classes,

are considered to be dishonorable by default,

which means that men,

both from the upper and lower class

are given the social sanction

to mistreat these women.

The women from the upper classes

assert their freedom of choice

and try to voice their opinion.

But the question remains in light

of the force precarious unions

that happen in the play.

As to whether these women can in

fact be considered empowered?

Or are they simply again conforming to

the prevalent prejudices of the time?

In general,

all these women are bound by the

stereotypes and hierarchies that

existed in the restoration period.

The next theme is of prevailing

gender and class stereotypes

connected with the second theme.

Hierarchical structures were deeply

entrenched in the restoration time.

In fact,

when the scene economic scene of

the English community enhanced,

it was largely beneficial to the upper

class communities in the Restoration era.

The landlords,

the aristocrats,

and the nobility,

it barely penetrated to the lower masses.

During Child's II's reign as well,

women from the lower class were

considered to be dishonorable.

They were mistreated and they were

objectified women from the upper

classes had their own share of problems.

They were governed by decisions taken

largely from the male members of

their family and barely had any freedom.

They were simply moved from one set
of domination into another paradigm
of domination by someone else.

The men,
neither from upper nor lower classes,
were held accountable for their actions,
particularly from there for
their promiscuity,
which was largely celebrated by everybody.

The loveless dichotomy is again connected to
the theme of the darker side of head onism.

Throughout the play, the character
struggle with the loveless toccata me,
which is representative of the
times in which they lived.

The lines blur between love and lust,
although the two are neatly defined.

True love is represented,
perhaps only in the relationship
between Florida and Belleview.

Biltmore's relationship with Helena,

as well as with Angelica

are purely based on lust.

And deceit Angelica professes to be an

upholder of lust, but interestingly,

she is the one who ultimately

falls in true love with film,

or only to be left heartbroken later.

The last thing that I'm going

to look into is wit,

intrigue and banter.

Wit, intrigue and banter service,

stylistic features of the play

more than their thematic elements,

but their interwoven against

the backdrop of carnival,

the characters of the play deploy with

intrigue and banter again a quintessential

feature of restoration comedy.

All these elements contribute towards

the thickening of the plot of the play.

The banters between Wilmore

and Helena on love, lust,
constancy,
and inconstancy,
frivolity and human nature are particularly
witty and also serve some Nuggets of wisdom.

They disguise that the characters
go into do to the carnival,
lead to a lot of confusions,
revelations that heighten tensions
and bring out the true nature of the
characters before everything is resolved.

The play is problematic because it is
considered to have a happy ending in the
marital unions of its lead characters.

However, modern audience asks several
questions about the happiness or
the happy ending of this play,
as it leaves several problematic
questions unanswered.

Particularly the outwardly obnoxious
behaviors of its lead male protagonists.

Please do think and

deliberate over these issues.

Thank you for watching this video.