

Conceptualizing Notions of Rape and the Implications on Early Modern England in
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As Mieke Bal states, 'Rape cannot be visualized because the experience is, physically as well as psychologically, *inner*. Rape takes place inside' (qtd. in Pallotti, 2013: 212). Recreating sexual assault in literature proves especially difficult due to its graphic nature and its interiority. In order to convey the impact of rape and the act itself, writers must pay special attention to their use of rhetorical and literary devices. William Shakespeare authored several poems and plays centering on rape, including: *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Venus and Adonis*. *The Rape of Lucrece* proves most notable for its focus on the rapist's musings and the victim's lament. The poem follows Rome's change from an empire to a republic through the rape of Collatine's wife, Lucrece the Chaste, by the current Prince of Rome, Tarquin. Shakespeare successfully illustrates the dehumanization of Lucrece, and subsequently women of the period, by using conceptual metaphors to combat the difficulties associated with representing sexual assault in literature.

Conceptual metaphors came into focus twenty-five years ago as several linguists, philosophers, and psychologists began to embrace the possibility that metaphor was fundamental to language, thought, and experience (Tendahl & Gibbs Jr., 2008: 1825). The experts believe, 'metaphor is...a specific mental mapping and a form of neural coactivation that influences...how people think, reason, and imagine everyday life' (Tendahl & Gibbs Jr., 2008: 1825). Essentially, conceptual metaphors:

Reflect underlying conceptual mappings in which people metaphorically
conceptualize vague, abstract domains of knowledge (e.g. time...ideas, emotions,

concepts of understanding) in terms of more specific, familiar, and concrete knowledge (e.g. embodied experiences). (Tendahl & Gibbs Jr., 2008: 1825)

Conceptual metaphors are identified by their abstract domain knowledge (A) and their concrete knowledge (B). Linguists write the terms as an A IS B formula in all capital letters. For example, TIME IS MONEY and LOVE IS A JOURNEY. In order to derive the exact crossover points between the abstract and the concrete, researchers use charts to diagram the mental mappings. Each mapping is inherently the author's and is not definitive. Experts believe that these mappings span cultures and generations.

McGlone (2007) explains more about the importance of conceptual metaphors in the article "What is the Explanatory Value of a Conceptual Metaphor?" He breaks down the conceptual metaphor and how it functions:

First, it is presumed to play a *representational* role by structuring our understanding of love. This claim derives from the rhetoric of 'cognitive economy'...according to which the mind borrows the semantic structure of simple concepts to organize aspects of complex concepts that might be too computationally expensive to represent in a stand-alone fashion. Second, LOVE IS A JOURNEY is hypothesized to play a *process* role in that it mediates our use and understanding of certain metaphoric expressions pertaining to love.

(McGlone, 2007: 111)

This illustrates how Shakespeare's metaphors alter the reader's understanding of desire and rape. While he uses different conceptual metaphors, they function in a similar manner to reshape the reader's views.

McGlone (2007) also touches on other aspects of conceptual metaphors, such as schemas. He explains,

Again, the metaphor's hypothesized process role appears to be economical from a cognitive standpoint, in that (a) metaphoric meanings may be retrieved from memory rather than constructed, and (b) the meanings of several metaphoric expressions (*dead end*, *spinning our wheels*, etc.) may be generated from a single semantic structure (the LOVE IS A JOURNEY schema). (McGlone, 2007: 111)

Schemas are mental constructions of particular events, actions, places, etc. McGlone is alluding to the idea that the conceptual metaphors trigger schemas that deal with aspects of the source, or target, and phrases within that schema. This notion draws more on the idea of scripts within schemas, which are expected lines of communication. McGlone (2007) suggests that much like the expected questions and responses for ordering food, there are expected phrases that coordinate with different conceptual metaphors. This allows for Shakespeare to use certain phrases and certain images that trigger the metaphor without exclusively stating it.

For *The Rape of Lucrece*, in particular, linguists have mapped the use of LOVE IS WAR and RAPE IS WAR within the poem. In Daniel Koketso's 2015 article "Battering Ram, Ivory Wall – Phallic Symbols and Aggression in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*," he argues that Shakespeare uses symbolism to illustrate the repulsiveness of the phallic aggression and the power dynamics at work in the poem. Shakespeare expresses his disapproval while still maintaining the mores of English Society (Koketso, 2015: 143). Through his examination of symbolism, Koketso (2015) also analyzes the conceptual metaphors RAPE IS WAR and REVOLUTION IS WAR. Koketso (2015)

finds, ‘the use of military metaphor [acts] as a vehicle to probe the unsavoury experience of rape. The main line of Shakespearean thought in this work appears consistently to be couched in “rape is war,” ancillary to which is the maxim “revolution is war” (144). He traces each of the phallic symbols through the poem and also through Shakespeare’s previous works, from *Macbeth* to the sonnets. In each of his examples, Koketso (2015) explains how they work to illustrate Shakespeare’s disapproval of rape while steering away from any graphic details that may offend the values of the time (153).

While these conceptual metaphors help to create a better understanding of the rape and Tarquin’s motivations, they are not the only structural metaphors at work in *The Rape of Lucrece*. Several metaphors come together to create the image of rape within the poem. Another prominent conceptual metaphor that seems to have been overlooked by most scholars is TO DESIRE IS TO HUNT. This conceptual metaphor overarches other metaphors, such as: A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL and DESIRE IS APPETITE. Through this combination of metaphors and the overarching conceptual metaphor, Shakespeare is able to illustrate the primal nature of rape and the dehumanization of the victim.

Women were frequently dehumanized and objectified throughout history. In the Middle Ages, the time period prior to Shakespeare’s, rape was viewed as a crime against male property. The punishment had to fit the type of relationship that the victim had with her male owner (husband, father, Christ, etc.). For instance, Bracton, a major legal authority of the Middle Ages, claimed that those who raped a virgin should have their member, their eyes, and their testicles removed. If women who were not virgins were raped, then a less severe punishment would suffice (Baines, 1998: 70-1). After Bracton’s

declaration, two statutes, Westminster I (1275) and Westminster II (1285), were written (Baines, 1998: 70). These statutes reiterated the notion that rape was a crime against men and men's property. Rape also encompassed abduction and elopement, as well as defloration (Baines, 1998: 72). In order to escape punishment and skirt the judicial system, rapists married their victims. This solution also allowed the victims to save their honor, as they were then considered undesirable to other suitors (Baines, 1998: 72).

Baines (1998) continues on to explain the issues with consent during this time period. Consent became more relevant after the statutes of 1555 and 1597, when rape and abduction were treated separately (Baines, 1998: 72). In separating the two crimes, women's will gained greater emphasis. This distinction brought female consent into the legal eye, but it also brought to light female sexuality, a taboo subject at the time. Due to the stigma surrounding female sexuality and autonomy, this view of rape and consent remain buried under societal standards (Pallotti, 2013: 217). Rape served to maintain the patriarchy by dehumanizing women.

A common argument against non-consensual sex during this time was that if a rape victim conceived a child, then the conception proved that she consented to the sexual acts (Baines, 1998: 73). Another argument against consent comes from *Genesis*, which states that women's desires shall be subject to their husbands'. This statement led legal experts to disregard the notion of consent, as women were classified as either married or to be married, and thus their desires were subject to their husband (Baines, 1998: 75). Both Baines (1998) and Pallotti (2013) speak to the lamentation process that must occur directly after a woman is raped in order for it to be considered non-consensual. Bracton believes that the raped woman "must go at once and while the deed

is newly done, with the hue and cry, to the neighbouring townships and there show the injury done her to men of good repute, the blood and her clothing stained with blood, and her torn garments. And in the same way she ought to go to the reeve of the hundred, the king's serjeant, the coroners and the sheriff" (qtd. in Baines, 1998: 76). Many victims refused to report their crimes due to this heinous lamentation process. For obvious reasons, rape victims shied away from showing their freshly bloodied genitals to 'reputable men.' This extreme expectation in order to prove a lack of consent may be why rape victims often failed to see their rapists convicted.

In Donatella Pallotti's (2013) reinforces Barbara Baines (1998) findings that rape was rarely charged or considered in terms of a crime against a person. Pallotti (2013) finds that rape in Early Modern England 'constituted less than one percent of all indictments' (p. 211). While it was thought to be a serious crime, 'the records...show that most of the small proportion of men charged with rape were found "not guilty," reprieved, described as "at large," or released without trial' (Pallotti, 2013: 211). It was considered an act against another man's property. This notion came from, "'constructs of female sexuality and consent derived from a complex body of theological, medical, and philosophical texts, both medieval and classical'" (qtd. in Pallotti, 2013: 215). More specifically, this view of rape came from medieval law, which considered rape, 'in terms of power relations among men' (Pallotti, 2013: 215). Women during this period were seen as the property of either their husbands or their fathers, depending on their marital status. This gender hierarchy came from and was reinforced through the Old Testament, which provided legal and social authority during this time (Pallotti, 2013: 216). Pallotti states, 'Rape law reflects, and contributes to strengthen, the gender hierarchy; by emphasizing

the property concerns, it diminishes the relevance of female consent: it protects male interests before women's rights' (2013: 216). Pallotti touches on the main agenda of objectification; diminishing the importance of women and women's rights in order to maintain the status quo.

The Rape of Lucrece holds several conceptual metaphors in various forms that work to enhance the representation of rape in the piece and the effects of the act on the victim. The conceptual metaphors of DESIRE IS HUNTING and A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL run throughout the poem and create a carnal impression of rape. In order to best analyze the narrative poem, I will divide my analysis of the text into three sections: before the rape (Tarquin's point of view), the rape, and after the rape (Lucrece's point of view).

Before the Rape

In the beginning of the evening, Tarquin strategically seeks out Lucrece while her husband is away at war. Previously, Collatine, Lucrece's husband, bragged about the chastity of his wife, and so, Tarquin began to covet her. He says that he brings news of her husband and watches as her cheeks dance between white and red. Shakespeare describes Lucrece's naiveté in this scene as, 'This earthly saint adored by this devil...Birds never limed no secret bushes fear. So, guiltless, she securely gives good cheer...' (Shakespeare, 2016: 85,88-89). There is a note in these lines for 'limed' to be read as 'trapped' (Shakespeare, 2016: 88). This is the first stanza where DESIRE IS HUNTING arises, as Lucrece becomes the innocent bird that fails to recognize the predator beside her. Continuing with this metaphor, Shakespeare states, 'She touched no unknown baits, nor feared no hooks,/Nor could she moralize his wanton sight' (2016:

103-104). With the use of ‘baits’ and ‘hooks,’ Shakespeare evokes the imagery of fishing and reinforces the overall metaphor DESIRE IS HUNTING, as Lucrece remains unaware of Tarquin’s intentions.

As the evening dwindles into night, Tarquin, alone in his room, begins to crave Lucrece. Shakespeare writes, ‘Now stole upon the time of dead night, . . . No noise but owls’ and wolves’ death-boding cries./Now serves the season that they may surprise/The silly lambs’ (2016: 162, 165-67). The reference to ‘owls’ and wolves’ death-boding cries’ reflects Tarquin’s inner pining and the secondary conceptual metaphor A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL (Shakespeare, 2016: 165). This line is the first reference to Tarquin as a predatory animal, furthering the overall metaphor. The lines, ‘Now serves the season that they may surprise/The silly lambs,’ foreshadow the rape of Lucrece, as the night becomes hunting season (Shakespeare, 2016: 166-67). Lucrece, again, takes the form of a meek prey (Shakespeare, 2016: 167).

Shortly after night sets in, Tarquin begins his inner debate. He knows the consequences of his actions, but he cannot deny the insatiable need within him. Tarquin claims, ‘Why hunt I then for color or excuse?’ (Shakespeare, 2016: 267). The use of hunt here serves two meanings. This reinforces the hunting language of the conceptual metaphor, and it also shows Tarquin’s overwhelming sense of lust for his prey. After Tarquin commits himself to the act, Shakespeare writes, ‘So from himself impiety hath wrought/That for his prey to pray he doth begin,/As if the heavens should countenance his sin’ (2016: 341-43). There are two notes with the first line: ‘from’ means ‘unlike’ and ‘wrought’ means ‘made from’ (Shakespeare, 2016: 341). The direct reference to Lucrece as Tarquin’s prey exemplifies the conceptual metaphor DESIRE IS HUNTING. As the

overarching metaphor builds, the reader comes to view the two characters as less than human, especially Lucrece. While Tarquin's sense of humanity and morality wrestles within him, the reader glimpses into a disturbed man. Lucrece's descriptions rest solely on her innocence, beauty, and loyalty, ultimately dehumanizing her in this section of the text. The reader comes to view Lucrece as prey and a sexual conquest, which effectively shows the patriarchal view of women in Early Modern England.

The Rape

Once Tarquin commits to the act, the process of rape commences. As he opens his chamber doors, Shakespeare proclaims:

The dove sleeps fast that this night-owl will catch.

Thus treason works ere traitors be espied.

Who sees the lurking serpent steps aside,

But she, sound sleeping, fearing no such thing,

Lies at the mercy of his mortal sting. (2016: 360-64).

Again, 'dove' symbolizes Lucrece, unsuspecting and vulnerable, while 'this night-owl' serves as metaphor for Tarquin (Shakespeare, 2016: 360). His animal reference changes into a snake directly after this line. He becomes more dangerous as he approaches her chambers. Shakespeare foreshadows the effect of the rape on Lucrece as Tarquin's 'mortal sting' (Shakespeare, 2016: 364). The readers glean that Lucrece will meet death at some point during or after the incident. The sub-metaphor of A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL appears once more, but it is driven by the metaphor DESIRE IS HUNTING. The two appear together in order to enhance the savagery of the crime and the ramifications of the assault on Lucrece.

As Tarquin continues to his sleeping suitor, Shakespeare describes him as stalking wickedly into her chamber (2016: 365). The image of stalking draws from nature, as predatory animals usually stalk their prey before attacking. In addition, hunters also stalk before attempting to kill, adding to the overall connection between hunting and advancing sexual desires. While she sleeps, he takes inventory of her beauty, which serves to increase his desires and affirm his resolve. Shakespeare describes the scene as:

As the grim lion fawneth o'er his prey,
Sharp hunger by the conquest satisfied,
So o'er this sleeping soul doth Tarquin stay,

His rage of lust by gazing qualified. (2016: 421-24)

Tarquin's animal symbol changes from a snake to a lion, becoming more dangerous and emphasizing his size and power compared to hers. 'Fawneth' in this context refers to showing delight, which reinforces the metaphor. His prey is before him, and he holds the ability to satiate his hunger. There is a heavy presence of the metaphor A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL, as Shakespeare directly mentions Tarquin's lust amid the animal imagery. As Tarquin's desires overwhelm him, Lucrece awakens to Tarquin's touch. She startles, 'like a new-killed bird she trembling lies' (Shakespeare, 2016: 457). Lucrece is constantly referred to as a bird, which serves to emphasize the size difference between the two characters and the overall power dynamic between the two. Tarquin towers over her, and in order to be a good hostess, she cannot necessarily refuse him. He also tells her that he will ruin her reputation for chastity and embarrass her husband if she does not comply with the rape. During this threat, Tarquin shows his blade in order to scare Lucrece. Shakespeare writes:

This said, he shakes aloft his Roman blade,
 Which like a falcon tow'ring in the skies
 Coucheth the fowl below his wings' shade,
 Whose crooked beak threats, if he mount he dies.
 So under his insulting falchion lies

Harmless Lucretia, marking what he tells

With trembling fear, as fowl fear falcons' bells. (2016: 505-511)

The notes that accompany this stanza provide more evidence of the metaphor at work. The term 'croucheth the fowl' means 'makes the prey crouch,' which reinforces the idea of animals hunting. Also, the first he in 'if he mount he dies' refers to the fowl, which again foreshadows Lucrece's fate. In addition, the bells in the last line come from the bells that hunting falcons wore on their legs. All of these small notes come together to paint an even more vivid picture of the rape. Readers at the time would understand this language and the references, which would work to make the metaphors DESIRE IS HUNTING and A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL, as well as the representation of the rape, more accessible.

Tarquin relishes in the moments before he assaults her. He taunts her and revels in her squirming. The poem reads:

Like a white hind under the gripe's claws,

Pleads in a wilderness where are no laws

To the rough beast that knows no gentle right,

Nor aught obeys but his foul appetite. (2016: 543-46)

The term 'white hind' means doe, which again refers to Lucrece. The 'gripe' stands for a griffin, and these lines illustrate Tarquin's animalistic nature as his 'foul appetite' overcomes any sense of reason. The term also touches on the fleeting conceptual metaphor SEX IS EATING. His desire for it, his appetite, is akin to his actual feelings of hunger. In addition, all of the animal imagery serves to dehumanize both characters, yet it holds a more drastic effect on Lucrece. She takes the form of animals that were typically hunted at the time: birds and doe. This animal imagery touches on the notion of male superiority in that women were merely objects for the taking.

Lucrece pleads with Tarquin to stop, but she is not successful. Tarquin merely allows her to speak because he enjoys her terror. Shakespeare states, 'Yet, foul night-waking cat, he doth but dally/While in his holdfast foot the weak mouse panteth;/Her sad behavior feeds his vulture folly' (2016: 554-56). Tarquin shifts from a bird of prey to a barn cat playing with its food. He savors her pleas and the knowledge that he will soon devour her. The animal symbolism reinforces both conceptual metaphors: A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL and DESIRE IS HUNTING. As Lucrece attempts to reason with Tarquin, she also uses hunting metaphors. She says, 'He is no woodsman that doth bend his bow/To strike a poor unseasonable doe' (Shakespeare, 2016: 580-81). While Lucrece still compares herself to a disadvantaged animal, Tarquin becomes a woodsman. This change from predator to huntsman foregrounds the overarching conceptual metaphor of DESIRE IS HUNTING. While all other comparisons used a predatory animal for Tarquin, it merely emphasized the hunt and the power dynamic between the two characters. In using a woodsman, Lucrece plainly states the major conceptual metaphor at work.

Once Tarquin grows weary of her chatter, he commits the assault. Rape can be extremely hard for writers to represent in their work, and Shakespeare proves to be no exception to this. He uses several metaphors in the few stanzas where the assault is conveyed. He uses several conceptual metaphors as well, such as: RAPE IS WAR, DESIRE IS HUNTING, and A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL. The carnal nature of the rape comes mostly from the DESIRE IS HUNTING metaphor, which pulls on the underlying conceptual metaphor of A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL. By using these metaphors, Shakespeare is able to show the horror and trauma of rape to his fellow men, as well as illustrate the dehumanization of the victim. He states, ‘The wolf hath seized his prey, the poor lamb cries,/Till with her own white fleece her voice controlled,/Entombs her outcry in her lips’ sweet fold’ (Shakespeare, 2016: 677-79). The notes for these lines state that ‘white fleece’ is a metaphor for Lucrece’s bedclothes and these bedclothes overpowered her voice (Shakespeare, 2016: 678). There is also a note stating that ‘sweet fold’ could refer to a crevice or, more likely, a sheep pen, which would fit the metaphor. In this scene, Tarquin is finally seizing Lucrece in order to rape her. The metaphor of DESIRE IS HUNTING and the sub-metaphor of A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL allow Shakespeare to comment on rape by showing the horror of men’s primal passions. By using animal imagery, Shakespeare can show more gore without offending his readers’ sensibilities. He can also emphasize the crime as a crime against women where they feel true pain and terror. This, in a way, asserts their humanity, as objects do not feel, and thus women must be treated as the humans that they are. The hunting metaphors work to dehumanize the women, as they are seen in early modern society. Shakespeare takes the common view of women and rape and critiques it. He uses

vivid imagery and evokes heavy emotions to manipulate the way this crime and its victims are received by society.

After the Rape

After the rape ends, Tarquin's satiated appetite wanes, allowing him to fully comprehend the consequences of his actions. Shakespeare describes this as:

Look as the full-fed hound or gorged hawk,
Unapt for tender smell or speedy flight,
Make slow pursuit, or altogether balk
The prey wherein by nature they delight,
So surfeit-taking Tarquin fares this night:

His taste delicious, in digestion souring,

Devours his will that lived by foul devouring. (2016: 694-700)

Tarquin's satisfaction comes across as a 'full-fed hound or gorged hawk,' both of which were used as hunting assistants by woodsmen of the time (Shakespeare, 2016: 694). The use of hunting animals in the animal imagery enhances the overall metaphor of DESIRE IS HUNTING. As Tarquin's desire fades, the animal/hunting imagery fades as well. In the last third of the poem, hunting and animal imagery are sparse, which cues the reader that the metaphor is over and reality is setting in. The end of the metaphor forces readers to confront the pain of a woman who was previously discounted as less than human. In this last third, readers must confront their own perceptions of society, women, and rape.

Tarquin makes his exit quickly after the assault ends. Shakespeare writes, 'He like a thievish dog creeps sadly thence;/She like a wearied lamb lies panting there' (2016: 736-37). The 'thievish dog' reiterates the metaphor A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN

ANIMAL, but it also allows for Shakespeare to show that Tarquin knows he has committed a crime. He creeps out of the room feeling guilty, as Lucrece lies panting. Shortly after Tarquin leaves, Lucrece begins her lament. Rape victims of the time were expected to openly lament the crime so as to banish any ideas of their consent. Lucrece laments not only for her poisoned body, but also for her husband's reputation. She states, 'The adder hisses where the sweet birds sing: ... Thou sets the wolf where he the lamb may get;' (Shakespeare, 2016: 871,878). These both demonstrate Lucrece's understanding of the sexual assault as a predator attacking an unsuspecting prey, which reinforces the overarching metaphor of DESIRE IS HUNTING and the underlying metaphor of A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL. By placing these metaphors in Lucrece's lament, Shakespeare continues representing rape through these conceptual metaphors and allows Lucrece to understand the crime committed against her in the same way as the reader. In her final words to her husband, she admits that a 'creature' crept into their bed, maintaining the two intertwined metaphors of A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL and DESIRE IS HUNTING (Shakespeare, 2016: 1627). Lucrece provides her final lament to her husband and his men, and then she commits suicide.

Mappings

The mappings below show some of the cross over for the conceptual metaphors DESIRE IS HUNTING and A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL.

Mapping: DESIRE IS HUNTING

Source: Hunting	Target: Desire
Prey	Object of desire (Lucrece)
Predator	Desirer (Tarquin)
Stalking prey	Stalking object of desire
Feeling Satiated after a kill	Feeling satiated after intercourse/fulfilling desire
Hunt to satisfy hunger	Hunt to satisfy sexual needs

Assault on prey

Sexual assault on object of desire

Mapping: A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL

Source: An animal

Lacks a conscience

Seeks sex for procreation

Strives to fulfill basic needs for living

Incapable of thought

Motivated by primal instincts (sex)

Target: A lustful person

Refuses to acknowledge their conscience

Seeks sex for pleasure

Strives to fulfill their desires

Incapable of thinking rationally

Motivated by primal instincts (sex)

Implications

While the tale of Lucrece dates back centuries, Shakespeare chooses to focus on ‘the potentially violent consequences of this rhetorical exchange; and the precise texture of a woman’s reaction to such violence’ (Enterline, 2000: 156). In doing so, he uses hunting and animalistic conceptual metaphors to illustrate and emphasize the dehumanization of women during this period. His critique of the trope ‘verges less in the direction of satire, more in the direction of an ethical inquiry into this tradition’s potentially violent consequences’ (Enterline, 2000: 156). Through Shakespeare’s use of multiple conceptual metaphors, the severity of rape and its life-altering ramifications on both the victim and the rapist become apparent. Audiences from a myriad of backgrounds and classes would be able to fully access the graphic nature of rape, without viewing the text as scandalous or a spectacle.

Shakespeare also emphasizes the lack of concern for a woman’s consent. By transforming Lucrece into weaker animals and continuing the hunting metaphors within her plea for mercy, he illustrates how meaningless consent is within Early Modern society. Clearly, she did not desire to be with Tarquin, nor would her husband desire that for her, but her consent means nothing until she commits suicide to truly lament the crime. Readers would be able to witness a woman refusing consent, and yet still being

ravished by a man in power, in order to understand that women are not always at fault. He depicted an extremely chaste character, one that could not be seen as “asking for it.” He couples her chastity with her refusal and forces readers to view men and rape differently. In order for Lucrece to truly show that she did not consent to the sexual act, she felt compelled to commit suicide.

Lucrece’s suicide presents a neat conclusion for an otherwise complicated tale. Scholars argue that Lucrece’s suicide simply reinforces the patriarchal standards of the time in that outspoken, self-aware women were not allowed in society, nor could they survive within it. While her death seems to represent a less woman-centered approach, one must remember that Shakespeare cannot simply abandon the mores of his society, especially not with such a historical trope. In order for his critique to function, he must keep the major plot elements the same. His nuances are what forces readers to reevaluate their perception of rape and women. Not only does it satisfy his audiences, but also in committing suicide, Lucrece is able to act on her agency. She is able to ‘[bring] the poem to a close with a collective—“publication”—that of her bleeding body—in which both message and address are well suited to the cultural norms of the homosocial tradition. A new social order may be founded on the strength of such a message’ (Enterline, 2000: 159-60). Lucrece’s suicide presents her only means of creating change, while still staying true to her sense of honor and loyalty.

While Shakespeare forces readers to reevaluate their position on women, he also paints men as primal rapists. Due to the taboo surrounding rape, Shakespeare uses conceptual metaphors to represent the crime. Through these metaphors, readers view the seemingly instinctual nature of men to rape. While the war-based conceptual metaphors

emphasize strategy and destruction of women, the hunting metaphors draw on the power hierarchy between the genders and the pure, instinctual emotions associated with the crime: terror, lust. Along with the animal imagery, the metaphors show the savagery of rape and shed light on an otherwise witness-less act. These carnal depictions of rape allow Shakespeare to criticize society's view of rape as a crime against property and not against a person.

Shakespeare uses this poem to advocate for women's rights and the criminality behind rape in Early Modern England. While it is difficult to chart whether his poem had any effect on societal standards or the prosecution of rapes, his piece can affect how we view rape and our societal standards of rape victims. Centuries have passed, and the need for strong lamentation, along with the lack of follow through by justice departments, remains. His poem forces his current readers to reflect on their own views of rape, as well as their country's views. Ideally, the work would spur readers to advocate for victims and demand reform, if needed. Yet, in such a tumultuous time, a bit of self-reflection would suffice.

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