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11/13/18
Sandbox Essay Feminist Theory

Sandbox Essay: Feminist Theory

Goblin Market delineates power dynamics and how they work when it comes to Feminist Theory in the text. The goblins, all male, represent the patriarchy in the sense that their presence is dominant. Laura and Lizzie aren't supposed to interact with the goblins, and this adds to the power that they possess. Part of the power is in the fruit, as it signifies a sexual connotation, an example of this is in the line, "We must not look at goblin men, we must not buy their fruits: who knows upon what soil they fed their hungry thirsty roots." The line depicts that the goblins are no good, and that they must be resisted. The nature in gender inequality is depicted because of the contrast between the goblins and the girls. The goblins are considered tricksters, and have an upper hand over the girls, and the girls are naïve and impressionable. *Goblin Market* focuses on the inequality between men and women, and the nature of both genders, and depicts the stereotypes between them.

In terms of oppression and gender, one could argue that both the girls and the goblins are oppressed. The girls are oppressed because they are considered weak and innocent and the goblins are oppressed because they feed off others and are dependent on their power to lure in others for their innocence and youth. One could also look at the standard of beauty as a form of oppression as hair is used for barter. Lizzie purchases the fruit from the goblins and this transaction could signify the loss of virginity, which plays on the ideal that a youthful woman has to give up something for an exchange is a definite and prominent factory of the patriarchy. There's a contrast between the goblins and the girls in the sense that the girls have to have beauty and youth, but the goblins are ugly, using their smarts, wits, and trickery to get what they want. There isn't the same type of standard placed on the goblins as the girls, because the goblins are a predator and that is their power.

Gender norms are reinforced as Lizzie and Laura are expected to submit and succumb to the goblins. There's a sense of control that the goblins hold over the girls and they use the girl's naivety to get what they want. Laura and Lizza play into the stereotype of the good girl v. the bad girl. The good girl is depicted as the smart one, the one that doesn't take any risks, and the one that applies logic and reason to a situation. The bad girl is depicted as the one that goes against the grain, does the opposite of what she is told, and doesn't care about the outcome. Laura warns Lizzie about taking the fruit from the goblins, and instead of heeding the warning, Lizzie takes the fruit anyways.

The attempt to subvert the patriarchy could be with subliminal messages throughout the poem. The fruit signifies something precious and could embody the power that women have over men. The fruit when opened also could signify women as they look like feminine parts. The fact that the goblins hold the fruit so dear even though they benefit from the patriarchy is ironic because the very thing they are selling is considered the thing they are against. In conclusion, *Goblin Market* takes feminist theory and magnifies it, depicting the issues in society while maintaining a magical fantasy world. The text compares and contrasts to how it is in favor of feminism and how it is not.