

Explore how Williams portrays men in this play?

Tennessee Williams has portrayed men in various manners in *A Streetcar Named Desire* from extremely dominating and overpowering Stanley to caring and sensitive Mitch. This clever portrayal of men also helps deliver the social context of during the time the play was written; the consideration of women as 'objects' and men's overpowering personality. *A Streetcar Named Desire* explores men; their violent and aggressive behaviour constantly trying to gain dominance and so forms an extremely crucial part of this novel helping reader to understand their fluctuating emotions.

Stanley is presented as a tremendously assertive and domineering character throughout this play and perhaps reflects the nature of men during the time. This is mirrored in his speech that state: 'Every man is a king! And I am the king around here, so don't forget it!'. The repetition of 'king' represents he's trying to re-establish his authority which portrays he's perhaps making an attempt to just reiterate that he's the boss. Moreover, the exclamation marks further puts special emphasises on his aggressive tone and helps readers visualize and feel the forceful attitude. Alternatively, the idea of the 'king' also connotes being the king of the jungle which further implicates that it's his territory and it is unrightful to argue with men, him in particular.

Furthermore Stanley is also presented as a character with primitive qualities throughout this play. This is reflected through Blanche's speech: 'He acts like an animal, has an animal's habits! Eats like one moves like one, talk like one!'. The constant repetition of the word 'animal' emphasises his animalistic behaviour and attitude, illustrating that he hasn't evolved into a refined human-being. The listing further highlights his never ending animalistic qualities and the exclamation mark creates fascination for the readers to his unusual and abnormal characteristics. In addition his animalistic personality is described as 'Animal joy in his being is implicit in all his movements and attitudes'. The intellectual use of the phrase 'animal joy' describes him with the typical animal: eat and have sex. Also the use of 'in all his movement and attitudes' also describes him as very territorial and sexual, just like animals.

However Tennessee Williams has also portrayed an unusual personality of men: submissive, obedient and caring Mitch. This is conveyed in his dialogue when he expresses: 'I gotta sick mother. She don't go sleep until I come in at night'. This phrase clearly denotes that he's not as manly as others but he's extremely sensitive as the phrase suggests. This allows the readers to sympathize with his

feelings and also indicates how men's personality varies in this play; there's a matter of sincerity and sombreness in his tone unlike the other men on the table playing poker.

This obedient and passive personality soon changes after Blanche's lies which left a deep impression on Mitch as he was directly affected by the web of deception. ▲ And his attitude soon changes as he states: 'You're not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother'. The fact that Williams uses the phrase 'not clean enough' portrays similar qualities to that of Stanley. It creates an intense feeling in Blanche's heart as she didn't mean 'to lie from heart', helping readers to change their perspective on Mitch because perhaps he wasn't able to understand that it may have been circumstances that lead Blanche to lie about her true age and 'hotel flamingo'. This allows the readers to feel tremendously sympathetic towards Blanche.

▲ Streetcar Named Desire revolves around the overpowering behaviour of men, perhaps reflecting the social context during the time. Stanley is character in the play represented as sexually orientated, forceful and controlling. In general; this novel has presented various different personalities of men however they change knowing truth like Mitch. Tennessee Williams has throughout this play represented various characteristics of men and how they can change, being unable to understand others feelings especially women.