



Week 10 – Notes

- I. William Shakespeare
 - a. 1564 – 1616
 - b. Sonnets
 - c. Petrarchan Tradition
 - d. Rhyme Scheme
 - e. Problem Plays: Somewhere between tragedy and Comedy
- II. Petrarch
 - a. Italian sonnet-writer.
 - b. 14 line sonnets with specific rhyme scheme.
 - c. Wyatt, Spencer → Brought sonnets from Italy to England.
- III. Rhyme Scheme / Sonnets
 - a. ABAB CDCD EFEF GG
 - b. Three quatrains and ending couplet.
 - c. The quatrains ask a question or pose a problem.
 - d. Couplet provides answer or *twist*. Generally more honesty in couplet.
 - e. 154 Sonnets
 - f. ~126 (128?) dedicated to the beauty of a young man. Remainder to beauty of dark lady.
 - g. Shakespeare sexuality? Still debated.
 - h. Most sonnets published in 1609.
- IV. Shakespearian Tragedy
 - a. Traits
 - i. 1 Person (Hero) Details the suffering of his or her life, ending in death.
 - ii. Suffering – Extraordinary! Not “What a bad Thursday.” Beyond the endurance of most people.
 - iii. A hero of high station. Doesn’t happen to just anyone. Wheel of fortune (on the wheel, going from top to bottom) – puts “falling down” in greater relief, more exaggerated.
 - iv. Leads to pity and compassion. Glad it’s not us.
 - v. The caprice of fortune / fate (whimsical). Eg: If something had happened a moment earlier, character would live.
 - vi. Accident.
 - vii. Tragic flaw of the Hero. Something that leads to the tragic events. Essential quality of character. (Hamlet would not be himself without his flaw.
 - viii. Effects of the Tragedy → Hallucinations, insanity.
 - ix. Supernatural presence of some sort.
 - x. Hero generally good; but now always.
 - xi. Human kind’s glory is affirmed (not destroyed as might be expected).