

Larsen

- I. Rhetorical analysis answers the question: "**What does this play ask an audience to believe?**"
- II. Rhetorical analysis explores the value structure of the play in an effort to illuminate the play's point of view toward the segment of experience it engages.
 - A. The **value structure** of the play is a product of the perceived attitudes of the main characters toward the leading motifs of the world of the play. To reveal the value structure of the play, the analyst:
 1. First determines by means of thematic analysis the leading motifs of the play.
 2. Then the analyst surveys the attitudes of main characters toward the leading motifs of the play:
 - a. at the beginning of the play
 - b. at the middle the play
 - c. at the end of the play.
 3. The analyst then synthesizes these observations in a statement about what the characters believe in and how, if at all, those beliefs appear to change in the course of the play.
 - B. The **point of view** or attitude, of a play is the product of three qualities observable in the playscript:
 1. The **mode of reality** (realistic/abstract) in the created world of the play.
 2. The comic or serious tone of the play.
 - a. In general, a **comic** tone prevails when the play **ridicules** human nature and human action.
 - b. In general, a **serious** tone prevails when the play **exalts** human nature and human action.
 3. The mood of acceptance or rejection that pervades the world of the play.

Assignment

For the assigned play, determine the value structure of the play, then the point of view of the play. End with a short summary paragraph about your findings.