

behind the arras”, this is used as a dramatic device of concealment and secrecy. Showing how Cariola symbolizes concealment as a whole. However, it could also foreshadow the unveiling of the wax figures later in the play, which implies that concealment ultimately leads to tragedy.

On the other hand, in *Streetcar*, Blanche uses the curtains to conceal Blanche’s femininity from the male world. You could argue that “[the portieres]” acts as a metaphorical divide between the male and female world. Blanche closes the portieres, which suggests that she is concealing her true femininity from the men. However, “[Mitch...continues through the portieres]”, due to the fact that Mitch repeatedly continues through these, shows that he has more of a feminine nature and is more sympathetic to women. The division of the rooms could represent the gender divide and the gender divide in 1940s America. Both of the women are of upper class (Blanche and Stella), who had descended from former plantation owners. Whereas, the men are of working class. Tapp argues that the use of the curtains “dramatizes the battle between the sexes”.

Both plays consist of the growing tension between the class’s, (Bosola and Stanley) are retaliate against the upper classes. From a Marxist perspective, class divisions can be seen as the source of tragedy for the upper classes. In the *Duchess of Malfi*, the characters are put into a great chain of being, and there are constant reminders of hierarchy and how things should always be in a “fixed order”. “it is fitting for a soldier to arise to be a prince, but not necessary for a prince descend to a captain”, Castruchio suggests that Antonio should learn his place in society, which also indicates that he is trying to keep people in their place and the hierarchy should be in a “fixed order”. Following this, “that realm is never long quiet where the ruler is a soldier”, Castruchio threatens Antonio, warning him that warmongering and ‘action’ leads to disorder in the state. Later in Act 1, when the Duchess confesses her love to Antonio, she says “Raise yourself, or if you please my hand to help you; so, when the Duchess marries Antonio, she can’t have him down there physically or in rank. Therefore, she offers her hand so that he can be at the same level as her (using the love she has for him to put him there). In this case, we can see that Castruchio is protecting the great chain of being by warning Antonio to not step out of line however, the Duchess asks Antonio to rise to be by her side in marriage and in rank.

However, in *Streetcar* the class divisions lies with the tensions between Blanche and Stanley, which is symbolic for the wider tensions in America. After the civil war and the world wars, there was increasing conflict between the Old American (based on slavery and aristocracy) and the modern age (based on industrialism and the working class). Blanche calls Stanley a “Polack”, this frequent use of a derogatory term for Stanley’s Polish ethnicity throughout the play. This implies that she thinks of him to be stupid. The ignorance to the “[easy intermingling of races]”, is depicted in the first scene of the play, which shows the relationship between the immigrants in America and Blanche as a relic in the New America with her southern aristocratic superiority being no longer visible.