

THE BARD AND THE BRAND: A CLOSE ANALYSIS ON THE LEGACY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND THE IPHONE'S MARKET DOMINANCE

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary landscape of cultural and technological dominance, this research paper takes up on a compelling exploration, juxtaposing the indelible legacy of William Shakespeare in English literature with the unprecedented market supremacy of the iPhone over the past few years. The study scrutinizes the striking parallels between these seemingly disparate entities, analyzing their respective dominance, societal acceptance despite inherent flaws, showcase of upper-class politics and luxury, evolution of establishment, and pivotal moments of market disruption. The paper delves into Shakespeare's enduring literary reign, elucidating the universal acceptance and timeless relevance of his works despite controversies and imperfections pointed out by numerous critics. Similarly, it dissects the iPhone's meteoric rise to market prominence, dissecting the factors contributing to its unrivaled success amid acknowledged limitations. Drawing connections between Shakespeare's portrayal of politics and luxury in his era with the iPhone's status as a contemporary symbol of affluence, this research scrutinizes their roles as cultural icons. Furthermore, it examines how both entities challenged established norms, tracing the evolution of their establishments and analyzing market takeovers—highlighting the iPhone's impact akin to Shakespeare's transformative

influence on literature. This comparative analysis offers insights into the entwined narrative of artistic legacy and technological dominance, revealing intriguing parallels that transcend epochs and domains.

Keywords: Dominance, Luxury, Acceptance, Parallels

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the realm of literature, there are some outstanding figures who have revolutionized the whole domain of writing. Some have been known for their immaculate writing style, while some for their thematic content brilliance. From a global outlook, there would be less scope for a debate if someone from any discipline says that William Shakespeare is one of their favourite or well-known writer. The famous quote about Shakespeare by Ben Jonson in his poem *"The Memory of My Beloved, the Author Mr. William Shakespeare"*, rightly suggests so; *"He was not of an age, but for all time"*. Researchers have come up with many reasons for which Shakespeare is timeless and became the *'Bard of Avon'*. Even after four centuries, William Shakespeare keeps on inspiring the writers of every age, irrespective of the societal conditions and literary trends. Now, if the focus is slightly shifted towards another discipline, of technology and innovation, the smartphone is obviously

top tier innovation of the twenty first century and speaking of which one brand stands out among the rest, i.e.; The Apple Inc.'s iPhone. Since it's initial launch in 2007, their series of phones have completely over took the market of smartphones. Their phones are so popular these days that they have set the standards of an ideal smartphone. Many companies, including their close competitors in the market are forcefully adopting to the tech industry the apple way'. This paper titled *The Bard and the Brand: A Close Analysis on the Legacy of William Shakespeare and the iPhone's Market Dominance*, tries to analyse their similarities of success in the respective fields. At its core, this research seeks to draw parallels between Shakespeare's unparalleled influence as a literary giant and the iPhone's indisputable market position as a symbol of technological supremacy. It endeavors to illuminate the uncanny resemblances between these seemingly distinct entities—both hailed as icons in their respective realms. Through such a study the shared traits between Shakespeare's lasting legacy and the iPhone's market ascendancy, exploring themes of dominance, societal acceptance despite acknowledged flaws, evolution of establishment, and pivotal moments of market disruption can be understood.

UNMATCHED DOMINANCE OF SHAKESPEARE AND IPHONES

The modern world is considered to be one of the most competitive period in the history of mankind. Everyone is engaged in one race or another to achieve different goals in their life. The field of English literature as well as the market of smartphone industry, which put together does not make much sense, is taken for analysis. Both of them being different disciplines might instantly make an individual think about

why such an analysis should exist. The reason, being the two dominant, better to say the most dominant entities of their respective fields, makes the parallels of such an analysis relevant.

William Shakespeare stands as an eternal colossus in the realm of literature, his influence transcending epochs and borders. His literary dominance is evidenced by the sheer universality and timeless appeal of his works. For instance, in *Hamlet*, 'the soliloquy To be, or not to be' encapsulates the existential struggles of humanity, resonating across cultures and generations. Similarly, the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* remains a quintessential narrative exploring love, conflict, and fate, retaining its relevance in contemporary adaptations and discourse. Shakespeare's impact extends beyond his celebrated plays. His sonnets, notably Sonnet 18 (*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?*), encapsulate the essence of beauty and immortality, exemplifying his unmatched command over language and emotion. In his blog, *What Makes Shakespeare Great*, Philip Yancey has mentioned that As I reviewed the 38 plays recently, I realized anew why Shakespeare is regarded as the greatest writer in English. He stuck to the universals. As a result, his works have been translated into every major language, and have inspired thousands of paintings and some 20,000 pieces of music.

In the realm of technology and innovation, the iPhone, since its introduction in 2007 by Steve Jobs, has reigned supreme, revolutionizing the landscape of smartphones. Its dominance is exemplified by its consistent market performance and unparalleled consumer demand. For instance, the introduction of the iPhone 3G in 2008 not only brought 3G connectivity but also solidified Apple's position in the market, spurring global adoption. The iPhone's influence

has been marked by its iterative advancements. The introduction of Touch ID in the iPhone 5s and Face ID in subsequent models redefined smartphone security standards. Moreover, the iPhone's App Store, offering a vast ecosystem of applications, amplified its allure, contributing significantly to its market dominance.

The iPhone's consistent hold on market dominance, evident in its yearly release cycles and consumer anticipation, mirrors Shakespeare's timeless dominance in literature. Just as Shakespeare's works continue to be celebrated and studied, the iPhone's successive models sustain consumer enthusiasm, solidifying its position at the forefront of the smartphone industry. This parallel between Shakespeare's enduring literary dominance

and the iPhone's unyielding market supremacy underscores the profound impact both entities have wielded in their respective realms, shaping cultural narratives and technological advancements alike.

THE IMITATION CONUNDRUM: FAILED ATTEMPTS TO REPLICATE SUCCESS

In the pursuit of greatness, emulation often emerges as a strategy for competitors to replicate the success of iconic figures. Some might apply the same winning mantra of a successful person in their life and find it helpful but some may still not be able to achieve heights with it. The two entities being discussed in this paper are arguably the best examples for this. The competitors tried hard to copy everything that went well for the other, but still fell short in the competition. Some competitors were at times better than them, but still could not catch the lime light.

If they were to follow him successfully, they would have to think and feel as he did, and with

the same intensity; and that was too much of an imitator. (Sutherland,23) Imitating Shakespeare was/is never an easy task, as the imitator will have to check many boxes. They admired his character drawing, his treatment of the passions, his rough majestic force, but rarely his language (Sutherland,24) Shakespeare's characters and subject are universal which is indeed hard to copy. His treatment of the subjects were often known as the 'Shakespearean treatment' as well. Thomas Dekker and John Fletcher collaborated on plays such as „*The Honest Whore* series attempting to capture Shakespeare's versatility in writing both tragedies and comedies. While their works showcased elements of dramatic skill, they couldn't match the profound impact or enduring popularity of Shakespeare's plays in the theatrical landscape. Even some writers of the eighteenth century like Nicholas Rowe had openly admitted to imitate Shakespeare after his work „*The Tragedy of Jane Shore. Written in Imitation of William Shakespeare's Style*. After talking about one imitator admitting his failure to imitate, Theobald says that I know, Your Lordship's Discernment will easily perceive that my imitation is very Superficial; extending only to the borrowing of some of his Words without being able to follow him in the Position of them, his Style, or his Elegance. All sorts of imitators, let it be in case of poetry or drama, struggled to replicate Shakespeare's unparalleled command over language, intricate characterization, and profound understanding of human nature. The failures of these attempts to imitate Shakespeare serve as a testament to the singular brilliance and irreplaceability of his contributions to English literature.

The smartphone market has been witness to a myriad of attempts by competitors to emulate the unparalleled success of the iPhone. Companies like Samsung, HTC, BlackBerry

Xiaomi, and Realme, among others, have endeavored to replicate the design aesthetics, features, and marketing strategies that contributed to Apple's dominance. However, these attempts often faced challenges in truly capturing the essence of what made the iPhone iconic. Companies like Xiaomi and Realme, known for their budget-friendly yet feature-rich smartphones, ventured into designs reminiscent of Apple's sleek aesthetics. Xiaomi, for instance, introduced models like the Mi 8, featuring a notched display very similar to the iPhone X. Realme, with its Realme 1 and subsequent models, emphasized minimalist designs echoing iPhone-like aesthetics in the mid-range market. Despite these efforts, the distinctiveness and premium feel associated with Apple's design ethos often remained elusive for these competitors. Apple's bold decision to remove the headphone jack and charging brick from the iPhone packaging was a strategic move that influenced the smartphone industry. This decision, aimed at driving wireless technology adoption and reducing environmental impact, set a trend. However, when competitors like Xiaomi and Samsung attempted similar strategies, removing the headphone jack or omitting charging bricks from their smartphone packages, the reception was mixed. While some consumers embraced the change, others criticized these moves as following Apple without introducing significant innovation of their own. The endeavors of companies like Xiaomi, Realme, and Samsung to replicate the iPhone's design or marketing strategies highlight the influential position Apple holds in the smartphone industry. Despite attempts to emulate certain features or design elements, these competitors have faced hurdles in achieving the same level of consumer loyalty, innovation, and ecosystem integration

that characterize Apple's market dominance. This further emphasizes the challenges of mere replication in a market driven by innovation, user experience, and brand identity.

The failures in imitating Shakespeare's literary genius or the iPhone's market dominance offer valuable insights. They underscore the essence of authenticity, innovation, and the irreplaceable nature of genuine brilliance. These unsuccessful endeavors to replicate success serve as cautionary tales, emphasizing the significance of carving one's path rather than pursuing mere replication.

ACCEPTANCE AMIDST IMPERFECTIONS: SOCIETAL PERCEPTIONS OF UPPER- CLASS POLITICS AND LUXURY

As Stephen Hawking said Nothing is Perfect , this implies to everything around us. People may often get critical about it, but here, our established entities surpasses those critics. Acceptance amid acknowledged flaws and the portrayal of upper-class politics and luxury play pivotal roles in shaping societal perceptions. Shakespeare's plays are not without controversy or imperfections. Criticisms of historical inaccuracies, cultural insensitivity, or gender representations exist within his works. For instance, the portrayal of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* raises debates about anti-Semitic tropes. However, despite these flaws, Shakespeare's plays are widely accepted and celebrated for their timeless exploration of human nature, intricate characterizations, and universal themes that resonate across cultures and eras. By 1700 Shakespeare's language was already beginning to look uncouth; sometimes, indeed, it was quite unintelligible. (Sutherland,23) even after famous

researchers found out that Shakespeare had some imperfections, people blindly believed that there is no one better than him. Shakespeare's plays often delved into the politics of the upper class, offering insightful commentary on power dynamics, political maneuvering, and societal hierarchies. Works like *Richard III* or *Macbeth* vividly illustrate the manipulation and consequences of power struggles within the aristocracy. Moreover, the depiction of opulence and extravagance in plays such as *King Lear* or *Twelfth Night* presents a commentary on the allure and perils of luxury in the creamy layer of society.

Similar to Shakespeare's works, the iPhone, despite its technological advancements, has faced criticisms and acknowledged flaws. Issues like battery performance, software limitations, removal of power brick, or the removal of features like the headphone jack have been points of contention among consumers. The iPhones started to get packed without a charger since 2020 starting from the iPhone 12 series. The brands claim for such a decision, as mentioned above, was to protect the environment by reducing carbon footprint and all. In reality, they started to sell their chargers separately which again increased their revenue. The problem is that buying chargers or headphones separately could mean more packaging waste and emissions from separate deliveries. Some of that might add to Apple's carbon footprint, and some of it might get tacked on to different companies' carbon footprints if consumers decide to buy the accessories from other vendors. That doesn't necessarily reduce emissions overall; it just spreads the greenhouse gasses around between different companies. (Calma) Just because it is an Apple iPhone, people are willing to pay the extra for a separate charger. However, akin to Shakespeare's

enduring popularity, the iPhone continues to be widely accepted and sought after, symbolizing technological sophistication and status. The iPhone has become a symbol of status and luxury in contemporary society, mirroring Shakespeare's portrayal of opulence in the upper class. Apple's marketing strategies, premium pricing, and sleek designs contribute to its association with affluence. The exclusivity and desirability of owning an iPhone parallel the allure of luxury depicted in Shakespearean dramas, reflecting societal perceptions of prestige and wealth. The societal acceptance of Shakespeare's flawed yet revered works and the iPhone's embraced imperfections while symbolizing luxury draw attention to broader societal interpretations. They reflect how society embraces nuances, forgives imperfections in revered entities, and associates luxury and status with certain brands or cultural artifacts.

CONCLUSION

Various aspects of literature and technology work together to keep Shakespeare and iPhone on the top of their lists respectively. They have grown to an extent where their rivals have no scope to compete. The competition for the iPhone are the android smartphones from the companies like Samsung, Huawei, Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo etc. and the sales of their recent best flagship phones have always fallen short of the iPhones from each of the recent years. Likewise, the repetition of such a similar outcome can be seen in the case of Shakespeare too. He stands as a giant literary figure compared to his past contemporaries, and even the later generations to come. It is evident that they have created some sort of monopoly in their respective fields, the key difference in this continuing dominance is that Shakespeare is not alive and the Apple Inc. is an active company.

The thought of attempting such a paper began from asking two simple questions to some of my friends, who were from different academic disciplines; Who is your favourite English Writer(s)? Which is your favourite/dream smartphone? . The answers were quite similar and the responses were William Shakespeare and iPhone respectively. The follow-up question to them was then Why? . They had no perfect answers to defend their choice other than just saying that both are very popular and that is where this paper gives a proper answer to the Why? . The similar factors for their dominance include luxury, acceptance beyond their flaws, unmatched potentials etc. There will never be an objection in considering William Shakespeare as a great writer, nor there will be any dispute regarding the qualities of the iPhone. A fair competition is needed everywhere but it is this monopoly in their respective areas that pulls back their rivals. Otherwise, there would have been enough appreciations for many writers and smartphones as well. Even though it is difficult to choose a perfect rival for both, the emphasis of this paper was to bring into account that the two entities, William Shakespeare and iPhone, are indeed not perfect and the notion that people follow them blindly needs to change.

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