

# "much ado about nothing" by william shakespeare essay sample

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**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## **“ Much Ado About Nothing” by William Shakespeare Essay Sample**

“ Hero’s and Claudio’s relationship is nave, immature and unlikely to succeed, whereas Benedick’s and Beatrice’s relationship is a triumph.’ How far do you agree with this interpretation of Much Ado About Nothing?

Shakespeare uses fashion and manners as one of the main themes in Much Ado About Nothing to suggest masking and disguise of the personalities in a society where status and appearance is important. In the play prose is spoken by Beatrice and Benedick whose realistic language represents their down to earth characters. They also provide the comedy in the drama. When Beatrice says: ‘ he is no less than a stuffed man’ and when Benedick says: ‘ my dear lady disdain! Are you yet living?’ they provide a ‘ merry war’ of conflict, which amuses the audience but overshadows the main plot including Hero and Claudio. This shows they are matched and would make a triumphant relationship. Hero and Claudio speak in poetic verse, which artificially and ideally underlines their sentiments. This indicates their love is superficial and is unlikely to succeed. However it is considered that Beatrice and Benedick are nave and immature because they are deceived into loving each other and mock each other constantly. Furthermore their relationship may not succeed because they both reject marriage. However, there are signs to say that they have already had a distant affair and they both have the fear of being hurt.

Attitudes to love were different in the Elizabethan period to the modern period we have now. In the Elizabethan period, love was about status,

companionship, money, power and mostly about being in the public's eye. They have a mutual understanding, equality, love and trust. However, Claudio cannot possibly love Hero completely because of his mistrust and belief that Hero has been unfaithful to him. Claudio is therefore naive as he is tricked by Don John. So Claudio is more interested at this point in social status rather than actually being 'in love' with Hero. Claudio and Hero do not speak out of the public's eye, because their relationship is about conforming to courtly society. However I believe their relationship will succeed as in the Elizabethan period this was considered the norm. Hero speaks confidently when she is out of the public's eye, because she complies with social expectations and her class. She shows she has wit and inner beauty. However, as Claudio's fiancée her social role leads to her suppressing her intellectual side 'and bid her steal into the pleached bower'.

Claudio and Hero are naive as they are young and impressionable. Claudio is tricked by Don John twice. He tells Claudio, 'I heard him swear his affection' at the ball. Claudio thinks that Don Pedro has stolen Hero, 'the prince wooes for himself' and thinks that her beauty has seduced Don Pedro, 'for beauty is a witch'. Claudio is then tricked by Don John a second time when he tells Claudio and Don Pedro, 'the lady is disloyal'. According to critics Hero is naive as she is marrying Claudio without even knowing anything about him. Hero always does what her father would tell her to do 'I will do any modest office, my lord'. Claudio also does not know Hero, so is immature to say he loves her. In the Elizabethan period courtly society individuals were obsessed with self advancement often at the cost of other people. However, Hero does

not know that Claudio is a jealous person whom likes to control his women; Beatrice describes him as having a 'jealous complexion'.

Hero and Claudio will not succeed as they are happy to accept an arranged marriage, even though they believe they love one another 'I love her, I feel'. However, they both have the same ambition in life, which is to climb the social ladder even using their acquaintances if necessary. One viewpoint is that Claudio uses Hero to obtain his fortune, and that Hero is ambitious and acts like the dutiful daughter in order to get what she wants. Claudio acts with courtly suspicion at the ball as he pretends to be Benedick when asked by Don John. This can be deemed as mature, because he uses guile to propel himself within the court 'men were deceivers ever'. Hero is not naive as she appears to know what her goal is and knows how she will achieve this goal, 'and here's another'. Conversely however, Claudio is immature as he thinks he can win over Hero by being nice to Leonato, 'O noble sir'. However, in the Elizabethan times marriage and love was largely to do with eligibility and social status rather than love. Men had a lot of control over women in the Elizabethan period, and many women like Hero had to keep up an appearance that would appeal to the single, eligible men like Claudio around them. Women were seen as much lower than men, socially. So when a woman is proposed to, she would not dare refuse as it would cause a great uproar for family and friends surrounding them.

Beatrice and Benedick are engaged in a 'merry war' which introduces two characters who are in danger of being single forever. Beatrice is different from the social norm, as Beatrice and Benedick express their dislike for each

other a little too much. Beatrice believes that she cannot be influenced by love, and Benedick believes that marriage would be bad as his freedom would disappear. These would be much more modern views of love and marriage.

However, I believe that Beatrice loves Benedick but puts on a show to her family and friends. Ursula and Hero believe that Beatrice likes Benedick and that they should get married, as they believe they would make a good couple and would be a triumphant success. However, Beatrice is toying with the idea of keeping her 'maiden pride' as she thinks she will be changed by Benedick and trained to be naive like Hero. Beatrice and Benedick are both spirited and witty and at heart romantics. Some critics would say that Beatrice and Benedick secretly in love with each other. However I disagree with this as I believe that they are both bitter and lonely towards each other as they have had an affair which ended badly. They both have commitment phobias and Benedick only uses his wit as a defence mechanism as he is a professional soldier and bachelor.

Because comedy is the genre in Much Ado About Nothing, it shows certain characters personalities and why they would be good for each other and succeed. In this case Beatrice and Benedick play on each others words, which have the desired comedy effect and shows that the couple will succeed.

In conclusion I believe that Beatrice and Benedick would make a great success of their relationship and would triumph above Hero and Claudio. I

think that Hero and Claudio are naive to think that their relationship will succeed, as they are not truly 'in love' and Claudio does not love or respect Hero. However, Beatrice and Benedick do have trust and respect one another.

#### References.

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