

Shakespeare's "midsummer night's dream" essay

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" is a play that reveals the connection between reality and the dream state. There are numerous major themes in the play that link a person's mind to dreams. The surreal and unconscious world is closely tied with person's psychology through the nature of the mind, thoughts and emotions, love, rationality, achievements and manifestation of dreams through real life.

This is done for a purpose, as to show how much unity there is between the different states of the mind, and what the person experiences in dreams can be the "wanted" reality that is dreamt of while being awake.

The very first theme that the audience is introduced with is love and obedience. Hermia and Lysander are in love with each other but Hermia's father does not approve of the union and so, they decide to run away (Shakespeare, 15).

The issue of a person's own wants and needs is contrasted with the responsibility to parents and their wishes. In the end, every person must decide for themselves what they have to do with their life because it is their own. The psychological battle between the responsibility that Hermia owes to her father and the love for Lysander, make her chose love, as it in no way decreases the love and respect she has for her father.

Person's feelings and more specifically, love are what define life and emotional state of a person. In such a situation, an individual chooses the lesser of two evils by listening to the heart and feeling what must be done. Even though a person is considered to be a rational creature, everything is

directed by feelings and the greater the feeling is, the more rational pull there is to the object of affection.

It is clear that Hermia cannot live without Lysander and considers him much closer than her father. A philosophical point of view would argue that Hermia's father has lived his life the way he wanted and made his own choice of having a child, supposing that the child would have their own life and choose whatever they find best for themselves.

No one has the right to deprive a child of their life and choices because they also deserve the chance to live the way they want and think is right. An important question is where do feelings and rationality come from. It could be supposed that it is biological with the involvement of genes or more specifically, the information that is passed on through generations. If most of the ancestors were interested in literature or mathematics, then the person is likely to follow the same route.

This suggests that the more someone knows or tries, in different aspects of knowledge, sciences and information, the better choice they will have in selecting something of liking. But even though a lot of people share DNA and genetic information varies insignificantly, there are still individuals who are unique and original in a lot of ways (Pálsson, 22). This means that biology is not the only thing that makes up a person, it is something much deeper.

But one thing for certain, is that people first receive an impulse, a feeling that appears which cannot be sourced by the conscious mind. The next step is a person reacting on the feeling by the use of rationality and reason. The

play is distinctly separated into three realities—the real which is logical, the one that is filled with feelings and the dream world. The play which is being practiced by the villagers is put into the content to create a perspective between the play that people experience in life and on stage.

The fairies represent the dream world where anything is possible and people can be ruled by magical forces. The real world is shown as unfair and cruel to people, even those who are in love. The connection is made apparent to remind the audience that rationality, feeling and dreaming about or for something, are all united in a person and serve as mind's tools to find the meaning of life.

A deeper philosophical look will question love and where it comes from. It is not clear why someone loves something or someone. It is obvious that love makes a person to be with another person, see them prosper and do anything possible to give a hand in all beginnings (Velasquez, 475).

It is an unexplained feeling that does not come from rational thinking, quite the opposite, it is sometimes irrational. People often fall in love with someone who is opposite of them or someone their rational mind does not like. Shakespeare's play makes an evident illustration of the opposites and love.

It is seen when Hermia and Helen converse about their love, Hermia says: "The more I hate, the more he follows me" to which Helen responds, "The more I love, the more he hateth me" (Shakespeare, 14). The mysterious force of love is unexplained when someone has strong affection towards a

person but does not receive the same feeling back. Sometimes, the state of being in love is cherished for the pure fact of love existing.

A person likes being in love, the emotions and thoughts that come around when they feel affection towards another human being. In reality, a person does not have full control of their emotions, and thoughts lead out of feelings and unexplainable affections that a person has. But, as history has shown, love is much needed in the world and can be thought of as one of the most important feelings there are.

Shakespeare's plays are filled with feelings and emotions for a particular reason. This is to show how much time and life love takes up and what is the real moving force of all that happens in the world. Strong feelings of love and hate have been proven to cause the same chemical reaction in the brain; the only thing opposite to love and hate is neutrality, nothing taking place. This means that love and hate are very close and this is another major theme of Shakespeare's play.

But love does not necessarily have to be towards a person. People can love objects outside the self, some individuals love power, money and other objects but primarily, they have great and selfish love for themselves which nonetheless, proves the fact that love rules the world.

People can also love concepts and ideas, as a scientist who is ruled by a formula or theorem. One thing for sure is that love was not created by people but it is given to humanity to enjoy and understand its importance. The play illustrates that love is very close to a person's wishes and dreams

and this leads into another theme of "Midsummer Night's Dream" which is the dream state.

Throughout the play there is much opposition between reality and the dream world which are two opposite realms of life. It is evident that sleep is a much needed life process and before, people have thought that the brain shuts down during sleep. Presently, it is known that the brain stays very active and the dream states are sometimes, fully experienced, just as much as the real world. In a dream, a person does not use eyes to see or ears to hear.

The physical stimuli that are associated with feelings of hot or cold, hard or soft, pain and pleasure are not received by regular senses. The brain's comprehension is the same in a dream, as it is during awoken state and people do see and feel the environment as real, in their dreams. The fairies from the play can be thought of as a bridge into the real world from the surreal one. When Titania talks to Oberon, their dialogue can be representative of the two states, the real and the dream one:

" But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.

Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,

As in revenge, have sucked up from the sea

Contagious fogs, which falling in the land

Have every pelting river made so proud

That they have overborne their continents" (Shakespeare, 26).

When Titania mentions that he has "disturbed" their "sport", this can be seen as the confusion that dreams sometimes cause to the person's rational thinking and understanding of the world. Oberon is portrayed as a dream that upsets a person's rationality, as if he summons the winds and the fog that make reasoning murky and float away like the rivers out of their shores.

This is a clear link to the rest of the play and the real world, when a person is so much confused by the reality of the dream, they believe it to be true.

Dreams are a direct link to something people cannot fully understand. Why do people dream and is it possible that the dream world is relatively as real as the world that people see when they are awake? Since dreams do exist, there must be a reason for them to be and so, often, people can find sense in their dreams, long forgotten and lost understanding of the past, present or future.

But also, dreams serve as a place where person's wishes and goals come true. If someone has hardships in their life and is unable to achieve something, the brain manifests these wants into a projection that is seen in the dream. The intricate mechanism of the mind that makes this happen must have a direct link between person's wants from reality and individual's state in dream.

There are even numerous accounts when future predictions are made in the sleep and thus, it becomes clear that dreams and reality are closely connected (Westmoreland, 640). Some might go as far as to think that mental projections made in the sleep will become real, through person's

desires. The play makes a clear indication that the two worlds collide and the wishes that each person has could come true.

In his play, Shakespeare has shown that he was a great thinker and understood human nature. The connection between dreams and reality is sometimes barely visible and people lose track of where they are at a certain point in life but love and hate stay the same in both places.

Palsson, Gisli. *Anthropology and the New Genetics*. New York, United States: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Print

Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Minneapolis, United States: Filiquarian Publishing, LLC., 2007. Print.

Velasquez, Manuel. *Philosophy: A Text With Readings*. Boston, United States: Cengage Learning, 2011. Print.

Westmoreland, Perry. *Ancient Greek Beliefs*. San Ysidro, United States: Lee And Vance Publishing Co, 2007. Print.