

The treatment of deception in the glass menagerie



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The term 'deception' is defined as the distortion of reality or employing tricks, ruses and withholding the truth.

Throughout the play at almost all stages, deception constantly occurs. It is an integral part of the plot that moulds and determines the outcome of the play. This essay will discuss the various ways through which deception has been implemented into the play. The very first scene, Tom compares himself to a magician and establishes the fact that his story is one of reality although enacted out in a world of 'illusion' when he states, "I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion.

The world in which his family lives is one which is a total distortion of the reality of the harsh world. Throughout the play, it seems as though all members of the family are similar to the animals in the glass menagerie as they are confined within glass. To end with, Laura and Amanda are also seen conversing in sound proof glass. Now that it is obvious that they are living in a world of deception, I will go on to elaborate on how this world of deception works.

In the play, the characters deceive themselves, particularly Amanda.

Amanda deceives herself various ways. She lives in the world she wishes to remember rather than her present world. She rants about the number of gentlemen callers there were in Blue Mountain while constantly boasting about her popularity amongst them. She deceives herself to the extent that when Laura explains to her that there won't be any callers, she exclaims, "It can't be true! There must be a flood, there must have been a tornado!" It is

obvious she simply cannot accept reality. Another character who is guilty of deceiving himself is Jim O' Connor.

He constantly chooses to re live his glorious youth as he constantly talks about it. He believes that taking a speaking course is going to change all those years of no progress whatsoever into something fantastic. It is not surprising to take note of the deception in the play as the two main characters that move the play deceive themselves. Characters in the play deceive others around them as well. From the very beginning of the play, we are informed that Mr.

Wingfield has ditched the family. We are later told by Amanda that she married Mr. Wingfield because she got deceived by his charm. Amanda also tells us while boasting about Blue Mountain that she has mastered the 'art of conversation' making it seem almost artificial and for the sake of deceiving.

This is obvious when she tells a customer that she is a 'Christian martyr' to make her feel better about herself. Laura deceives her mother when she pretends to go to business school even though she isn't doing so. In Laura's case, the deception is a result of a lack of communication between mother and daughter. Tom also deceives his mother for this very reason. His Mother cannot accept his ambitions and he ends up using money kept aside for lighting bills to pay for his enrollment in the marines.

When Jim returns home drunk and is said to look like a spasm of a man in contrast to the sustained power and dignity of the Almighty, it is obvious he cannot fulfill his mother's hopes. As irresponsible as it is, it can be said that <https://assignbuster.com/the-treatment-of-deception-in-the-glass-menagerie/>

the lack of communication and understanding is caused due to Amanda's self deception that has brought about Tom's deception and unacceptable behavior. The Wingfield family as a whole deceives Jim ' O Connor. They change the state of the house 180 degrees in order to give Jim the wrong impression for Laura's benefit.

Amanda gives Laura ' gay deceivers' to make her tits look bigger than they actually are to make her more attractive. The lamp shades are changed and Amanda says that the house must ' pass inspection'. They are all trying to deceive Jim into marrying Laura withholding all the truth about their troubles. Deception is used at this point as a means of withholding truth by getting everyone to participate in it. I would like to call it a deception orgy:).

The tables however, soon turn. Jim ends up deceiving Laura when he promises to hold the unicorn safely and ends up dropping it. Similarly, he informs Laura about his girlfriend Betty despite seizing the moment and kissing her which not only steals her heart but leaves her in a momentary daze. After hoping that Jim would lead the family to salvation, it seems like it was never meant to be and Jim had deceived the family along with the reader from his very appearance. In conclusion, I believe that deception is a very central theme to the play as all characters mentioned in the play either deceive themselves, deceive others, individually or they almost conspire together to deceive. It is a result of their desperation socially and financially as well as a cause of a lack of communication between family members.

Without deception, the play would not have taken its course.