

The theme of illusion and fantasy in the play streetcar named desire

[Literature](#)



The Theme of Illusion and Fantasy in the Play Streetcar Named Desire

Illusion is referred to misrepresentation of situation to provide a deceptive appearance of an act or event. Illusion can be motivated by need to make readers or audience get a wrong picture of the reality as obviously expected. Fantasy on the hand involves imagining and putting ones shoes in situation that are not actually attainable given current situation. The play Streetcar named desire presents various cases of illusion and fantasy as portrayed by various characters.

Fantasy depicted in this play clearly by Blanche. Blanche from the word go represents fantasy. She comes to Elysian Fields “dressed in a white suit with a fluffy bodice” and “incongruous” to the New Orleans state which portrays reality (Murphy 8). To those who would judge Blanche by her look, she would appear as glamorous queen of the highest class but this represent fantasy and fairytale. Her dress code portrays purity and virginity and the same is the meaning of her name, “white Wood” (Murphy 7). The white colour represent complete innocence but later in the play it is shown the Blanche represents total opposite of this purity and virginity. The author hints at this at the introduction of Blanche (Murphy 12). He says, “There is something about her uncertain manner.... that suggest a moth.” Blanche tries to stick to her pure and innocent illusion of herself throughout the play. Evidently she does tries to do this on the way by trying to hide her age. She tells Mitch Stella is “somewhat older” than her and to further try to make Mitch get less of her reality, she hides in the darkness. The tittle too depicts conflict between illusion and reality. The word “streetcar” and the inspired quality of aspiration portrayed in “desire” shows juxtaposition of antagonizing subject

of dreams and realism (Murphy 8).

Fantasy is also shown in the story through Blanche who uses it as her primary means of defense against her own demons and external pressure (Murphy 10). Her deceit carry no motive of malice, but rather they result from her weakness and inability to face truth head on. Blanche blocks off things not pleasant to her: - " I don't want to hear anymore" (Murphy 11). Although in that instance she is not representing fantasy she is running away from truth which itself signifies illusion. She does this make her life comfy. Blanche also refuses to accept her association with ' Old America' and for this reason forms a world in her mind where ' New America' exists (Murphy 13). Since the fall of her family she has tried to associate herself with the ' New America' and the working class. Stanley further makes this Blanche's fantasy more clear by the way he portrays a down to earth American who refuse to play to Blanche's fantasies. Blanche cannot take bright light. She made an error being " delude" by having Allan in her life; a " blinding light". Since the death of Allan, she kept away from light, the sign of truth. Light therefore becomes her enemy for she knows that it can taint her illusion (Murphy 15).

As from the topic analysis illusion and fantasy have been intensively applied in the play through Blanche. Not only does the character use illusion and fantasy as defense mechanism but it also her live in her dream world of " New America." Illusion and fantasy is thus a theme that provides lesson to the readers on reality of life and what we wish for. It help install consciousness of good decision making with reality of life.

Works Cited

<https://assignbuster.com/the-theme-of-illusion-and-fantasy-in-the-play-streetcar-named-desire/>

Murphy, Brenda. *A streetcar Named Desire*, by Tennessee Williams.
Pasadena, Calif.: Salem, 2010. Print.