

Shakespeare romeo and juliet critical analysis assignment

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To many, Romeo and Juliet is seen as one of Shakespearean greatest tragedies. Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy about star-crossed lovers that come from varied backgrounds. They are dying to be together, but they both know that being together is nearly impossible. Romeo and Juliet is seen as a tragedy, but many critics think otherwise. Romeo and Juliet is more of a problem play than a tragedy, and many critics support this cause on the grounds of what makes the construction of a tragedy and a problem play, and what makes a character have tragic or problematic stature.

A tragedy is a dramatic composition with a serious theme, typically that of a great person destined through a flaw of character or conflict with some overpowering force, such as fate or society, leading to downfall or destruction (Tragedy). Many critics believe that Shakespearean Romeo and Juliet is in fact not a tragic play because it does not meet these criteria. In a drama, a tragedy normally recounts significant events in a protagonist's life that ultimately end in a catastrophe (Yacht).

Critics argue that the ambiguity that surrounds the cause of the lovers' deaths generates the play into an apprentice tragedy. Often, Romeo and Juliet is considered an experimental tragedy because Shakespeare breaks away from the traditional patterns of what makes a tragic play. In contrast, Critics have proposed three ways to interpret Shakespearean plot in Romeo and Juliet. One method is looking at the events that take place as a helpless display of fate. Another method is looking at Romeo and Juliet as a tragedy of divine will.

Lastly, some critics suggest that the lovers' own reckless passions leads the way to their inevitable double suicide (Yacht). Other critics such as Charley suggest that, " It is exceedingly difficult to make an emotion as employ and ambivalent as love seem an adequate motivating cause for tragedy' (Yacht). Likely, critics either believe that the play is a complete tragedy or not a tragedy at all and there is little grey area to work with in regarding Shakespearean motives in Romeo and Juliet. A problem play is a play that is not easily categorized as either a tragedy or a comedy.

Problem plays deal with controversial social issues in a realistic manner, and Shakespeare is known for writing many problem plays, such as All's Well That Ends Well (Britannica). Some critics believe that Romeo and Juliet is neither a tragedy nor a comedy and therefore it should lie in the problem play category. Often critics suggest that Shakespeare is running the risk of creating pathos, and not a tragedy at all (Tyler). Romeo and Juliet proves unsuccessful on the grounds of being a tragedy because the inclusion of a comedy deviates from the traditions of a tragedy (Tyler).

Critics often suggest that comedy emerged from sexual and physical bravado amongst Gregory and Samson in act one of the play (Debates). Comedic aspects can also be seen in the opening scene of the play where Shakespeare tries to ensure as much comedy as he can into the play before the drama takes place (Debates). Likewise, tragic events occur at the end when both lovers die in close proximity to each other. In light of a problem play having both tragic and comedic qualities, many suggest that Romeo and Juliet can fall into either category.

In Norte, critics often suggest that Shakespeare is more of a problematic play than that of a tragedy. A tragic character's stature can be characterized as being noble and great, with his own destruction resulting in a greater cause or principle (Learners). Chaney suggests that "Shakespeare has trouble endowing Romeo and Juliet with tragic stature; in some ways they are not tragic at all" (Yacht). Critics also hint at the fact that these characters do not bring tragedy upon themselves at all, and therefore they do not qualify as being tragic protagonists.

Chaney states that it is not until Mercutio's death that the play takes a tragic turn (Yacht). In light of this, Chaney is suggesting that the dramatic and comedic events in the beginning do not set up Romeo and Juliet as a tragedy as a whole. Other critics suggest that Shakespeare's goal was to write to please the audiences because he was also involved in the whitetail part of his plays (Yacht). Therefore, he did not stick to classical structures to make sure the play was sufficient while it was being acted.

Since Shakespeare stayed away from the classic traditions of what makes a tragedy a tragedy, it is difficult to firmly say that Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy. In contrast to what makes a tragedy, Shakespeare most likely intended Romeo and Juliet to be a tragedy, but since he was also caught up in its production, he may have accidentally ended up with a problem play. In the mix of a problem play, a character's stature acts upon that of comedic or tragic qualities. Problem plays cover the grey areas that occur between comedies and tragedies.

When critics agree that Romeo and Juliet is in fact a tragedy, it is on the grounds that the tragedy revolves around fate rather than a tragic flaw (Itchy). Critics state that it is not their faults that they are destroyed; it is just the simple fact that they are unlucky (Itchy). This is why it is difficult to classify Romeo and Juliet as a tragedy over a problem play. The characters do not do anything that leads to their ultimate tragic downfall, and without a tragic downfall it is hard to connect the characters with having complete tragic structure.

What makes Romeo and Juliet more of a problem play than a tragedy? To begin with the play develops into a tragedy rather than starting out as one. Snyder, a literary critic, suggested that, "Romeo and Juliet is essentially a comedy transformed into a tragedy" (Snyder). Most tragedies have reversals, but when dealing with Romeo and Juliet, the reversal is so extremely radical that it constitutes a change of genre all together (Snyder). The pattern of action at the beginning of Romeo and Juliet resembles a comedy, but then the pattern of action turns toward tragedy with the iris death in the play.

So where is the line drawn between a comedy and a tragedy, or even a problem play in contrast to those? Tragedies and comedies together protect their own opposing worlds; with the tragic world being governed inevitability and the comic world being evitable (Is this a word?) (Snyder). The laws of tragedy and comedy differ so drastically that they often oppose the concepts of law themselves. Some aspects of Romeo and Juliet strongly suggest comic characteristics, while other aspects of Romeo and Juliet strongly suggest tragic characteristics (Yacht).

If both are drawn together on the play as a whole, then a problem play would be born. The main argument opposing tragedy is that although violence and disasters are present in Romeo and Juliet they are, at the time, unrealized threats. Arguably, Tybalt is the only recognizable tragic character in the play (Attie). He speaks in tragic rhetoric of death and honor, but his true tragic characteristics only come to life after he departs from it (Itchy). The beginning of the play enters into an exhilarating array of action and comic fighting that occurs through the two families, but ends in gruesome tragedy and death (Itchy).

This puzzles critics alike on the fact of what Romeo and Juliet truly is.

Throughout the entirety of the play comedic and tragic qualities bounce back and forth like balls in a ball pit. There is not a straight and narrow on what will occur next, tragedy or comedy? After Shakespeare wrote Romeo and Juliet, he never again returned to the comedy into tragedy formula; as many suggest that this formula was too confusing and strayed too far from traditional tragic characteristics (Snyder). The shift from comedy to tragedy isn't the only thing that sets Romeo and Juliet apart from the rest of Shakespearean plays.

Critics often note, and sometimes disapprovingly, that the external fate in the play is what determines the tragic outcome over anything else (Snyder).

In Shakespearean views, tragedy is usually a matter for both the characters and the circumstance at hand. What determines a tragedy is if the destruction of the characters results from their own internal weakness. For Romeo and Juliet, their destruction comes from fate, rather than their own

weakness (Snyder). Their love is comical and transits into a tragic downfall that, for Romeo and Juliet, is not caused by their own errors.

Drawing ace from various critics, the conclusion can be made that Romeo and Juliet is a problem play in its finest. After reviewing the roots oaf tragedy and a problem play, one can draw upon their own conclusions on where Romeo and Juliet as a play stands. Some refer to Romeo and Juliet as a tragedy because of the tragic ending, and the fact that fate caused their ultimate downfall which is a raw material for the base of a tragedy. Others refer to Romeo and Juliet as a problem play due to the fact that Romeo and Juliet don't hold tragic stature, and the play itself has a comic beginning that is somewhat misleading in the tragic world.

Many people and critics alike have argued over rather Romeo and Juliet is Shakespearean most decorated tragedy or his most hidden problem play. To promote problematic characteristics one must analyze their roots, and then directly place them into the play to see if they match. For a problem play, one must ask themselves if comic roots occur within the tragedy and if the characters have a downfall created by themselves or an outside source. To examine Romeo and Juliet as a whole, one must be familiar with problematic and tragic characteristics, and one must also be in sync with what makes a tragedy and what makes a problem play.

In the case of Romeo and Juliet, for a character to have tragic stature they must be noble and great with their destruction being caused by their own downfall. For Romeo, and that of Juliet, their destruction does not match any of these criteria, and many refer to their destruction as a cause of fate.

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Although fate is a form of tragedy, their fate has comic tangents within that can lead equally towards a problem play over that of a tragedy. When reviewing the play as a whole, and ciphering out what the critics say, one can conclude that Romeo and Juliet is listed as a tragedy play,