

# Streetcar named desirepsychology flashcard



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Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire* is considered by most people to be his most flawless masterpiece. This is because Williams work blends both tragic and comic elements together. He shows the true nature of the hero and doesn't let the reader judge the characters based on one single action. Most readers think because there are so many tragic events that take place through out the story that it is indeed a tragic story. The comical circumstances encountered in the play contradict the role of tragedy. The reader is often left wondering the true meaning of this story. For example, Blanche says, "I'm sorry, but I haven't noticed the stamp of genius on Stanley's forehead, that just shows the comical side to this play" (Williams 2303). The play forces a sense of both reality and drama that are present in everyday life. This is for sure the true nature of tragicomedy.

Through out the play many mixed emotions are thrown around between Stanley and Blanche. Their tendencies are both appalling and appealing. Both characters display elements of the profane and sacred, but on two distinct levels. In the social sense, Blanche can be considered the heroine of the play. Blanche desperately tries to preserve her aristocratic values. She must compete against everything that Stanley does and says. Blanche represents the cultural boundaries, which are love of language, music and art. Stanley is the complete opposite. His animal and brute ways serve as the destroyer of Blanche. Blanche, the romantic delicate southern belle, will meet her doom at the hands of the crude and rude Stanley. Stanley somehow emerges as the hero in the play. His sexually healthy marriage he shares with his wife is contrary to the perverted way he exploits Blanche. Never the less, Blanche is just as much to blame as Stanley. Blanche is like

an intruder into his personal life. This makes Stanley react violently when he feels his household is being threatened. Stanley and Blanche on their respective levels serve as the classic heroes fighting to find self-preservation. You must look at the play through both social and psychological elements in order to fully see the unclear duality of both Stanley and Blanche. The comic aspect is displayed through the incompatible tendencies of both characters.

Through the character Mitch, Williams shows the comedy with tragic elements, which are central to the tragicomic theme. While Blanche's world is increasingly closing in on her and becoming more tragic, her wanting a husband, Mitch is completely blind to her sexual advances. For example, while Blanche is virtually dying inside and looking for someone to share herself with, Mitch totally misses the hints and thinks Blanche wants to talk about her weight. This comedy theme is positioned between two highly dramatic tragic confidences in which Blanche shares with Mitch. Her belief is that Stanley will ultimately destroy her. The conflict between Stanley and Blanche throughout the play is permeated with humorous incidents showing the dramatic action. Another example of this is shown when Stanley initially feels put down by Blanche's trying to break into his and Stella's life. In most dramas, comedy serves as a relief from tragedy and that is clearly what Williams is doing here. The comic elements here tend to turn towards the way reality is while the tragic leans towards the dark and evil side of people.

Through all the flaws apparent in these two characters, it seems Williams brings out the romantic side for various reasons. It is clear that Williams shows a sympathetic side for Blanche's fragile yet destroyed side. At the <https://assignbuster.com/streetcar-named-desirepsychology-flashcard/>

beginning of the play Blanche pretty much has her destiny laid out. She was to get on a Streetcar Named Desire, pass through the cemeteries, and end up at her sister, Stella's house. This is just a literal journey but it later develops into a spiritual journey. Blanche wants to reconcile for her past deeds. She feels guilty for the deaths that she has caused or witnessed. Her strong sense of illusion fuels her desire. She realizes that in some way she must pass through the cemeteries, which represent death. Stanley is not condemned for his harsh actions against Blanche. It seems as if Williams praises Stanley for maintaining his domain. In the end Stella is left debating with herself the rightness of her actions. In a Streetcar Named Desire it is clearly shown the tragicomedy Williams uses. He uses his tragicomedy to permit the audience something that everyone desires.

Bibliography: