

Sketch Outline

I: Introduction

A: Romeo and Juliet as a romantic paragon.

B: Beatrice and Benedick having a rougher but truer version of love.

II: Thesis

What: Beatrice and Benedick's willingness to be married in the face of their bad qualities demonstrates that they understand and truly love each other. (5.4.74-94)

Romeo and Juliet only love the appearance and romantic illusion of each other, and so are only infatuated.

So What:

A: Love is not in the appearance of love, but in knowing the complete truth about a person and still loving them.

B: Whereas having only the appearance of love (i.e. infatuation) leads a person further from their true self and true purpose/place, real love moves one towards their true self and true place.

III: Romeo and Juliet's love is shallow and false.

A: Based solely on appearances.

B: Ruled by their romantic ideals.

IV: Beatrice and Benedick's love is stronger because they accept each other entirely.

A: Realize and accept each other's faults.

B: Love each other very strongly.

V: Romeo and Juliet's love leads them into discord and away from their real selves.

A: Romeo becomes involved in the feud he had previously avoided.

B: Juliet upsets her family order and becomes mentally anguished.

VI: Beatrice and Benedick's love makes them more of their true selves, and leads them to harmony.

A: Gulling scene forces both to realize that they are not publicly seen as they see themselves/ the way they think they are seen.

B: Love does not change either person's basic personality.

VII: Conclusion

A: At first glance appears that Romeo and Juliet were born for each other, and that Beatrice and Benedick could not be less in love. However, beneath the surface, the prettier love is empty, while the rougher hides deep love and understanding.

B: Shakespeare *is* arguing for the concept of soul mates, but it's the person who challenges and knows you that is right for you, not just the person who can speak prettily.

Working Outline

I: Introduction:

Romeo and Juliet is a story that is known worldwide, and has been remade many times. It is heralded as one of the greatest love stories of all time; however, the true purpose of the play is to discuss the feud and not love. Closer reading of the exchanges between Romeo and Juliet demonstrate that in fact the legendary love is based on nothing more than appearances, and is only two rash teenagers acting on their hormones. It could not be more different in Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing. The secondary couple, Beatrice and Benedick shows all outward appearance of finding the other disgusting, and swear to remain unwed forever. This is only a front for their real understanding and love for each other. Although their love is imperfect, it is by far the happier and more realistic of the two.

II: Thesis

What: Beatrice and Benedick's willingness to be married, even in the face of their remaining bad qualities (in this case pride) at 5.4.74-94. demonstrates that they understand each other and love the other for everything that they are. Romeo and Juliet only the love the appearance and romantic illusion of each other, and so are only infatuated.

These two different aspects of love lead the two couples to completely different things inside and outside of themselves, even allowing for the fact that one play is a tragedy and one a comedy.

So What:

A: Love is not in the appearance of love, but in knowing the complete truth about a person and still loving them.

B: Whereas having only the appearance of love (i.e. infatuation) leads a person further from their true self and true purpose/place, real love moves one towards their true self and true place.

III: Romeo and Juliet's love is shallow and false.

A: Based solely on appearances.

- (1.4. 165-166) "Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, *sight*, / For I ne'er saw true *beauty* till this night" (my italics) – Romeo bases his love solely on Juliet's looks.
- All the compliments they pay each other only concern physical appearance:
- See (2.1. 62) "the brightness of her cheek would shame those stars", or (5.3.102) "yet so fair"; For Juliet, see (2.1.83-85) "What's a Montague? It is nor hand nor foot, / nor arm nor face, nor any other part/ Belonging to a man."

B: Ruled by their romantic ideals.

- Follow romantic conventions; behave like they believe lovers should.
- See (1.4.223) "thou kiss by the book" – Juliet remarks that Romeo kisses just the way she expects him to.

- Juliet is correcting/instructing Romeo in how he should properly woo her: see (2.1.152) “swear not by the moon”.

IV: Beatrice and Benedick’s love is stronger because they accept each other entirely.

A: Realize and accept each other’s faults.

- clearly see the faults in each other as there are constantly teasing about them.
- Benedick witnesses Beatrice’s anger and violence in 4.1 and demonstrates acceptance by taking her side and agreeing to challenge his good friend, Claudio.
- in (2.1.137-143) Beatrice remarks to the masked Benedick that although Benedick is “a very dull fool” she wishes “he had boarded [her]”– even if only for the chance to be able to turn him down, she desires his attentions.

B: Love each other very strongly.

- Beatrice’s first line in the play is asking after Benedick’s return from the war.
- Benedick says he will trust no women (1.1.235) but in 4.1 he trusts Beatrice’s opinion enough to warrant fighting his good friend.
- They love each other so much that they will have no one else, and would rather be alone than pretend to love another:
- Benedick does not notice other women for noticing Beatrice (1.1.186-187) and imagines that he needs the perfect woman (beginning of 2.3) in order to explain to himself why he cannot love other women.
- Beatrice refuses the *Prince*’s marriage proposal, and also remarks about how no man could be good enough – beard, no beard, etc.

V: Romeo and Juliet’s love leads them into discord and away from their real selves.

A: Romeo becomes involved in the feud he had previously avoided.

- Romeo was previously uninterested in the feud, mostly ignored his friends.
- Suddenly, he kills Tybalt for revenge, going against all earlier ideas of his identity, and without thinking about what it might do to Juliet.
- His being banished only further complicates their lives.

B: Juliet upsets her family order and becomes mentally anguished.

- Against all previous definitions of herself, a good girl, argues with her parents
- Does not want to do so, as she begs for her father’s mercy (3.5.157).
- Pushes her towards discord – she must now be with Romeo, or die, or commit a sin and be married twice.

VI: Beatrice and Benedick’s love makes them more of their true selves, and leads them to harmony.

A: Gulling scene forces both to realize that they are not publicly seen as they see themselves/ the way they think they are seen.

- Both are shocked to think that they are seen in the overstated way presented in the gulling scene, do not believe that that is the kind of people they really are, so decide to change how they act outwardly, including admitting to love.
- Therefore, in loving each other, both characters are becoming more of the person they are on the inside, more of themselves.

- This reaches a peak in 5.4 when both are forced to admit their love in front of a crowd, and so are then seen in a respect closer to that which they see themselves.

B: Love does not change either person's basic personality.

- Beatrice is still proud, loyal, and angry; see (5.4) and (4.1)
- Benedick is still loyal, egotistical, and a bit of a buffoon; see (4.1) and (5.4.122) "Get thee a wife".

VII: Conclusion

Although the paragon love story is that of Romeo and Juliet, it has been shown that the stronger love really resides between Beatrice and Benedick. Shakespeare meant for the 'ultimate' love to be shallow, as it further intensifies the futility of the feud. However, this is not to say that he did not argue for love, but as is shown in Much Ado About Nothing, Shakespeare was trying to say that real love makes you more yourself and not less, and is something that ultimately brings you to peace within yourself and the world around you.

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