

**ILLUSION AND REALITY
IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS**

Gayle Wade

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ABSTRACT

GAYLE WADE

AN EXAMINATION OF THE THEME OF ILLUSION AND REALITY IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

An examination of the use of illusion in Shakespeare's plays reveals a definite progression in its treatment. This progression is both technical, dealing with the method of creating illusion, and philosophical, dealing with the consequences of misapprehension.

Technically, the method for creating illusion progresses from a simple, slapstick device, such as the use of look-alikes, which creates misapprehension of identity, to the use of physical disguise to hide identity, to behavioral disguise to conceal true nature.

Philosophically, the effects of misapprehension are presented in a comic mode, in a semi-comic vein, and in the tragic realm. The effects are more calamitous as the motives behind the creation of illusion are more diabolical.

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In analyzing the theme of illusion and reality it has been necessary to narrowly define my approach in order to keep the subject within workable boundaries.

The subject has been given attention by many scholars but always with a different focus than the one I have chosen. Most studies have dealt with the theme from the point of analyzing the resolution of the problem, not the complication. I have chosen to address myself to the reasons for the development of the problem of misapprehension. This approach necessarily eliminates the incorporation of the previous studies into my paper since I prefer to offer an original analysis rather than simply collate material. Accordingly, I have elected not to trespass on some areas that have been well traveled before me.

Conspicuous by their absence in this paper are certain plays and characters that would seem to lend themselves to such a study. For instance, I have chosen not to include King Lear, Troilus and Cressida, or Macbeth because they have received a great deal of attention by others who have approached them from a wider field of consideration.

I have included Hamlet even though it must fall into the same category as King Lear etc. because the element of feigned madness is crucial to the development of the progression I am documenting. However, within the play itself I have chosen to concentrate on the major characters and leave out those such as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern because they are not necessary to the development of my theme at that particular point. Their type of behavioral practise is examined elsewhere.

I have mentioned Ophelia only in relation to the contrast between her true madness and Hamlet's feigned condition. To further explore Ophelia would not be possible without the introduction of material beyond the scope of this study.

Likewise, in Much Ado I have chosen to delete two major characters, Beatrice and Benedick, in order to keep from throwing open the way to the enormous amount of literature written about them. Instead I concentrate on the increasing complexity in the use of physical disguise in relation to Hero and Claudio.

These deletions on my part do not prevent the emergence of a recognizable progression in Shakespeare's use of illusion and therefore do not constitute a major obstacle in the development of the thesis.

I. This paper deals with the presentation of illusion and reality in a number of Shakespeare's plays. The topic itself is by no means a novel one, and it might best be left to provide fodder for undergraduate term papers, except that its resurrection here can be justified by the fact that its examination suggests a definite progression. The nature of this progression is both technical and philosophical. Technically, the creation of illusion progresses from a simple, slapstick device such as look-alikes which causes misapprehension of identity, to physical disguise which hides identity, to behavioral disguise which conceals true nature. The method of creating illusion becomes increasingly complex. Philosophically, the effects of the illusion and consequences of misapprehension are depicted in the comic realm, then the more serious and finally the tragic realm, each stage reflecting Shakespeare's changing attitude and darkening world view.

I have chosen plays representative of each of Shakespeare's four major periods which show his use of illusion. Many times the same basic device, such as behavioral disguise, is used first in a comic vein and later in a tragic one. Obviously, the theme itself is one which can be adapted to suit the dramatic needs of the play whether those needs are comic or tragic. I have chosen plays which illustrate this adaptation.

The problem itself, around which illusion can be

created, is the inability of the senses to determine truth. The inability is caused by the limited nature of sense perception; it apprehends only outside appearances. This limitation is a fact of life, the existence of which has been recognized by Shakespeare, and which must be dealt with by everyone. Shakespeare shows all the possible effects of misapprehension and faulty judgements based on incomplete information as provided by the senses. The outcome of this presentation is a realization by the audience of the exploitability of this human weakness by those who make use of deception to further their own ends.

The progression of the theme is not a linear one but a cyclical one corresponding to the cyclical pattern of Shakespeares dramatic modes. It begins at the high point of comedy, moves toward the serious, descends to the tragic and re-ascends to the comic. If viewed in relation to the cyclical pattern of time, the comic can be said to represent morning, the serious afternoon, and the tragic night, followed again by morning.

This chapter examines Shakespeare's use of illusion in four early plays. From the simple, slapstick device of mistaken identity in Comedy of Errors, the illusion is complicated in Two Gentlemen of Verona to include deliberate disguise. In The Taming of the Shrew, the illusion is extended to include the audience in the world of misapprehension, while in Love's Labour's Lost there is an examination of the consequences of trying to create and

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live in a world which denies the true nature of things.

Therefore, within the scope of these four early plays, we can discern the beginnings of a gradual development of technique and application. The movement is from the relatively unsophisticated visual misapprehension confined only to the characters, toward a deliberately deceptive behavior which expands to include the audience as well in its misconceptions.

Comedy of Errors

Comedy of Errors exemplifies misapprehension working on one level, that of mistaken identity. The misapprehension is brought about by having two sets of identical twins in the same town, each unknown to the other. Therefore, the possibility of mistaken identity is inherent in their real physical make-up. There is no necessity for the assumption of disguise by a character to effect a mistake in apprehending his true identity.

The audience from the outset knows of the existence of two sets of twins and also that one of each pair is unknown to the other. We, therefore, begin with a logical explanation for the ensuing confusion. The audience simply observes and is not drawn into the situation as victims of deception. From the first encounter of a member of one set of twins with a member of the other, everyone's true identity is fully known to the audience.

Although the plot of Comedy of Errors is well known, its complexity might justify a brief summary. The situation is thus: Aegeon's wife gave birth to twin boys. The couple then bought another set of twin boys, born at the same time to a poor couple, to serve as servants to their own sons. As children, the two sets of twins were in a shipwreck. Each of Aegeon's sons was paired off with a servant and cast adrift. Each pair of boys was saved by different people and thus was separated from the other pair. Two of the boys, his own son and his son's servant, were saved with Aegeon. Thus he has told them of the existence of the other two boys. The second set of boys was separated from Aegeon's wife at the time of rescue and thus had no one to tell them of the existence of their brothers. Therefore, as the play opens, both pairs of master and servant are accidentally in the same town. Each pair, obviously has a different background. The conflicting backgrounds, or histories, interfere with the ability of each man to deal with the problem of mistaken identity in that they provide different explanations for what is going on. The problem is further complicated by the fact that the boys who were saved with Aegeon have taken their brother's names in fond remembrance of them. This creates, for all intents and purposes, two Antipholus' and two Dromios, alike in name and appearance, but not so in personal knowledge and background.

The first case of mistaken identity occurs between Antipholus S. and Dromio E. This encounter provides the first of many hilarious conversations with each character talking at cross purposes to the other. The direction the mistaken identity is going to take becomes obvious; it is going to provide comedy built around puns and lack of knowledge concerning what the other participant is saying. For instance, when Antipholus S. presses Dromio E. for information about the thousand marks he has given Dromio S., the exchange is as follows:

Dromio E. - I have some marks of yours
upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks
upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks
between you both. (I, 11, 82-85)¹

Ant. S. - They mistress' marks? what
mistress, slave, hast thou?

Dromio E. - Your worship's wife, my
mistress at the Phoenix;
She that doth fast till you
come home to dinner and prays
that you will hie you home
to dinner.

Ant. S. - What, wilt thou flout me thus
unto my face, Being forbid? (I, 11, 87-92)

Antipholus S. is in the position of not being able to mesh what he knows with Dromio's actions. His senses tell him that he is talking to his own slave because the physical appearance is the same as the Dromio he knows.

But the actions are incongruous and Antipholus S. can not

¹Hardin Craig, ed., The Complete Works of Shakespeare (Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company). All other quotes will be from this edition.

explain the incongruity. He has no reason to doubt his senses, after all, physical evidence is sound. Therefore, he searches for an explanation within the behavior, and arrives at the following conclusion:

Upon my life, by some device or other
The villain is o'er-raught of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage,
Dark working sorcerers that change the
mind, (I, ii, 95-99)

He attributes the incongruity of Dromio's behavior to sorcerers and magicians. The only explanation Antipholus can give is one which removes the blame for the inconsistency from himself.

If Antipholus would doubt his senses he might then be able to penetrate the illusion of mistaken identity. In effect he could work backwards from the incongruity and reason that: the slave does not act like Dromio S., therefore, it must not be him, therefore, my eyes are deceived by his appearance. The point is, however, that it is not the human condition to proceed in such a manner, but rather to believe in and trust what our senses tell us. Antipholus S., like all of us, is under the impression that what he perceives to be so, is so.

Antipholus repeatedly demonstrates his propensity to trust his own appraisal. After dining with Adriana, the wife of Antipholus E., he says:

To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme:
What was I married to her in my dream?
Or sleep I now and think I hear all this?
What error drives our eyes and ears
amiss? (II, ii, 183-186)

Still being unable to reconcile what he sees with the behavior of those near him, he is willing to extend his conclusion that magical forces are at work controlling actions to include the possibility that all of what he sees is an illusion. Rather than doubt the infallibility of sense impression, Antipholus S. would attribute incongruous behavior to dreams, another phase of awareness. Instead of logically proceeding from the fact of Adriana's strange behavior and working backward to the possibility that her senses are deceiving her, he attributes the behavior to a product of his mind. Nothing happens the way Antipholus thinks it should, therefore, what is amiss must be beyond his control (magical). Strangely enough, at this point, Antipholus comes near the mark. By admitting the possibility that he is dreaming, he implicitly acknowledges that some of his assumptions might not in fact be true. What prevents his following through with this admission is his all too human faith in his own perception.

Let us shift our perspective in order to consider the other characters and their reactions to the problem. After the dinner with Antipholus S., Adriana and Luciana discuss what has transpired. Antipholus S., has acted incongruently to what they would expect if he were truly Antipholus E. He has made advances toward Luciana, who is supposedly his sister-in-law. The women are as unprepared to doubt their senses as is Antipholus S. Their eyes tell them that he looks like Antipholus E., therefore he must

be him. They reach the only conclusion their assumptions will permit, that he is mad. In order to rectify this condition they procure a conjurer and the three of them go off to apprehend the madman. They encounter not Antipholus S., but Antipholus E. in the street in the custody of a jailer and confront him with their story. What follows is a conversation so confusing to all of them that no one can work his way out of it and the result is that Antipholus E. is bound.

There happens here an interesting occurrence. Working backward from the assumption that Antipholus E. is mad, Luciana's senses are tempered by this conclusion. As he struggles against the men binding him, she observes:

Ay me, poor man, how pale and wan he
looks! (iv, lll)

Luciana is in fact seeing something which cannot be present because in truth, Antipholus E. is not mad. The question being posed here is one concerning the limits of the senses. Are they so fragile and easily deceived that they can be tricked into seeing what we want them to see and not what really is? If this is so, how helpless and susceptible to mistake and intrigue we are. If what is being presented here is true, that is, if our senses are incapable of perceiving beyond appearances and if we reach a faulty conclusion based on this misapprehension which in turn can influence our senses, how can we ever conclude correctly, except by chance?

This suggestion of perceptual - conceptual inadequacy is played with again in a marvelous parody of scientific deduction on the part of the Abbess. She hears what Adriana believes to be the true story of the events, ending with her conclusion of Antipholus E's madness. The Abbess proceeds to link all Adriana's actions toward her husband in a cause-effect relationship, confirming the conclusion of madness. She says:

It seems his sleeps were hindered by
thy railing,
And thereof comes it that his head is
light.
Thou sayest his meat was sauced with thy
upbraidings:
Unquiet meals make ill digestions;
Thereof the raging fire of fever bred;
And what's a fever but a fit of
madness? (V,1,71-76)

This is an example of an illusion being justified in a logical manner. What is evident is that the Abbess at no time questions the validity of Adriana's story, in all its incongruity. Like everyone else, she has implicit trust in her own, as well as other people's, sense perceptions. If Adriana says her story is true why question it? Therefore, there is a failure of the logic to scrutinize the validity of sense perceptions. We are presented with the inadequacy of the senses followed by the inadequacy of the mental processes to determine the true nature of the situation. The mental processes fail because they accept the false conclusions derived from sense perception. This perception is inadequate because it perceives only

appearances, which, obviously, can be misleading. In this manner, the characters, trying to discover a logical basis for what they see, sink deeper into the illusion, and the situation becomes totally bewildering.

The Duke resolves the dramatic action as well as the confusion over what is happening. The illusion must be shattered, otherwise no one would realize that the misapprehension was the result of accepting as truth the conclusions based on sensory perception. The Duke happens to be passing by accompanying Aegeon to his execution. Thus, an accident of circumstance reveals the true nature of things.

The key to this revelation is the knowledge that Aegeon has of both sets of twins. He thus re-unites the separate histories of the twins by making the complete story known to all parties. He frees them from the influence of appearances and faulty logic and forces each of them to come to terms with the fact that sense perceptions are an unreliable basis to form judgements on because they can perceive only as much as they are shown. They are incapable of discerning the true nature of things beneath appearances if the two are contradictory. The senses are one dimensional, and often that is not enough to know the truth.

Throughout the play the audience has been in a position of enlightenment as to the true identities of the characters, because from the outset the audience has

possessed the knowledge necessary to know who the person was behind his appearances. This key of course, was the story of the shipwreck and separation as told to us by Aegeon in the first act. Because of this knowledge, we are not subject only to appearances and are therefore free from the misapprehensions suffered by the characters. The audience does not succumb to their fallacies nor does it participate in their delusions. When masters beat the wrong slaves, when a word said in earnest can be misconstrued because it is spoken unknowingly to the wrong man, when the women berate or make advances to the wrong men, we can laugh or pity them because we are in a position of exalted perspicacity. We know the truth and the characters do not. The confusion is comic because we know the real identity of the speaker and his non-relationship to the other character. Were it not for the knowledge of the true identities of the characters and their relationships or lack of them with the other characters, the comedy would not work. If we too were subject to misapprehension, the comedy would take on a serious aspect because once we are deceived by appearances we would no longer possess the security, false as it may be, that lies in the certainty of the reliability of our own conclusions. Then we would have to admit our own perceptual limitations and our superiority would vanish. The fact that at this point in Shakespeare's use of illusion the audience is still uninvolved with the problem makes this a completely comic

presentation.

In this early play, faulty perception and judgements lead to comic situations and confrontations, made funny by the fact that we, the audience, can enjoy them without participating in them. We remain undeceived by appearances, as we possess the omniscience necessary to be able to laugh whole-heartedly at a group of characters fumbling around in the darkness of an illusion brought on by their limitations.

The effects of the misapprehensions are limited to the play itself and can simply be enjoyed for their comic results. In Two Gentlemen of Verona these effects will remain, but already the problem of illusion and reality has been mapped out. In the Comedy of Errors the limitations of the senses have been presented: they perceive only what is shown to them. The senses cannot penetrate beyond the obvious physical facade. Therefore, when judgements are based on sensory perception, they will be faulty if what is real contradicts what is shown. The converse is also true; if a faulty judgement is reached, the senses can be deceived into supporting it by perceiving what they are wanted to perceive. The theme is developed and expanded in Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Two Gentlemen of Verona

In Two Gentlemen of Verona, the method of creating illusion is developed in two ways, ways which show a slight development in technique. Illusion, or appearance in

contradiction to reality, is created by deliberate disguise. The disguise takes two forms, physical disguise assumed to conceal identity and personality disguise assumed to hide a true nature. This technique differs from that used in The Comedy of Errors in that the cause for misapprehension is here purposely assumed by the characters. Misapprehension of others is therefore, within the control of those who assume disguises. Misapprehension is thus created and controlled and doesn't just fortuitously happen as it does with the coincidence of look-alikes. What we can not fail to realize is the serious implication of deliberately assumed disguise, it is available to anyone. These two methods of creating illusion, physical and personality disguise, are the two major methods for dealing with the creation of misapprehension and will be used repeatedly in the following plays.

Let us first examine the character, Proteus. It is he who assumes a behavioral disguise to conceal his true nature. He is presented at first as a loyal friend to Valentine, and a true and devoted lover to Julia. His soliloquy which attests to his love and devotion to her presents a picture of noble, honorable manhood. He says:

I leave myself, my friends and all, for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me. (I, i, 65-66)

This is the statement of a man whose entire being is centered around the woman he loves. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his feelings, indeed, at this point

they are true. But this picture of Proteus sharply contrasts with that presented after his first encounter with Silvia.

Even as one heat another heat expels,
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten
(II, iv, 192-195)

This later soliloquy demonstrates Proteus' true nature emerging. He is inconstant, not faithful, and his loyalties are easily re-oriented. All of his swearing of love and loyalty does not make him so. Importantly, he recognizes this aberration of love.

If I can check my erring love, I will:
If not, to compass her I'll use my
skill. (II, iv, 213-214)

Proteus expresses his knowledge that his feelings for Silvia are aberrant, but at the same time shows his determination to follow them through. He is perfectly willing to use any means within the power of his cunning to bring about the success of his desires. This passage demonstrates his inconstancy as well as an evil streak within that unconstancy. This evil part of his true nature is amplified in another soliloquy in which he methodically convinces himself that his new course is a just one:

Julia I lose and Valentine I lose:
If I keep them, I needs must lose myself;
If I lose them, thus find I by their loss
For Valentine myself, for Julia Silvia.
I to myself am dearer than a friend, (II, vi, 19-23)

As Proteus sees the situation, he must be true to his own feelings, whatever they happen to be at the moment. He

can allow no previous loyalties to interfere with his present desires. The changing of his affections frees him from honoring prior commitments. Thus he reasons, finally concluding that:

I will forget that Julia is alive,
Remembering that my love to her is dead;
And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,
Aiming at Silvia as a sweeter friend.
I cannot prove constant to myself,
Without some treachery used to
Valentine. (II,vi,27-32)

With this final resolution, both sides of Proteus' personality become blatantly obvious. On one hand he is a seemingly loyal friend, while on the other he is a disloyal schemer who will stop at nothing to bring his desires to fruition. It is apparent that the former personality is the means to implement the desires of the latter. The presentation of himself as a true friend and devoted lover leaves Proteus above suspicion, and thus frees him to effect the desires of his true nature, which are opposed to those expressed by his facade. In this manner and for these purposes, he assumes a behavioral disguise. He pretends that he is still a loyal friend and lover for the expressed purpose of being a disloyal one. To bring about the success of his diabolical plans, it is necessary to remove all obstacles from his path, therefore he informs the Duke of the elopement plans, taking care to preserve the pretense of loyalty. The manner in which Proteus justifies his behavior to the Duke reveals his treacherous nature:

My gracious lord, that which I would discover
The law of friendship bids me to conceal;
But when I call to mind your gracious favors
Done to me, undeserving as I am,
Thy duty pricks me on to utter that
Which else no worldly good should draw
from me. (III, 1, 4-9)

Here the personality disguise which he has assumed is implemented. Proteus proclaims that his loyalty to Valentine is subordinate to his affection for the Duke. This proclamation is perfectly in keeping with his true nature which dictates his actions. It is an outright lie, a falsification, just like his honorable demeanor. Proteus pretends to be one thing when, in effect, he is quite another. His pretense to loyalty hides his disloyalty. Proteus really has ulterior motives for his actions which are not alluded to. The reasons that he professes compel him to betray his friend have nothing to do with his real motives. The betrayal of Valentine is recognized for what it is, a diabolical act, but it is not considered to be consequential. The facade is successful, however, and the Duke as well as everyone else is taken in by the appearance Proteus gives of being nobly motivated. His true evil nature is effectively hidden.

Proteus continues the charade with Valentine, who still believes that what he perceives about Proteus' nature through his behavior, is true. Proteus convinces Valentine of his continued loyalty and help in a scene which is witnessed by Launce, Proteus' servant. After they exit, Valentine confident in his friend's loyalty, and Proteus

confident in the success of his feigned friendship, Launce expresses an insight into the true nature of things:

I am but a fool, look you; and yet
I have the wit to think my master
is a kind of knave: (III, i, 261-262)

Proteus is a knave, but it is still a well kept secret. The Duke continues to be influenced by what he perceives to be Proteus' true nature and plays right into Proteus' hands, allowing him to woo his daughter on behalf of Thurio. In granting permission, the Duke cites Valentine's evaluation of Proteus' nature:

Because we know, on Valentine's report,
You are already love's firm votary
And cannot soon revolt and change
your mind. (III, ii, 57-59)

Valentine, like everyone else, has been deceived by Proteus' facade and his erroneous statement points out how great the disparity between the assumed personality and the true one is and, therefore, how far off the mark an evaluation based on what is shown outwardly and perceived sensorily can be. Even a nature completely antithetical to the one shown can be concealed.

It is at this juncture that the technique of physical disguise is introduced. Julia, Proteus' lover, has disguised herself as a page and has assumed the name Sebastian, her purpose being to travel unmolested to Milan in order to be with Proteus. It was necessary for her to disguise her identity. not her character, indeed Julia's character remains constant throughout. She never ceases

to love Proteus or to be true to him. But upon arriving in Milan, her disguise assumes another purpose. It enables her to discover Proteus' true nature. She sees him woo Silvia and, therefore, is privy to the information that he is not true and loyal.

Proteus, a master at deceptive appearances, is himself deceived by Julia's disguise. He fails to discern her true identity behind her appearance. Because of this failure, he is open and unguarded in her presence, thereby substantiating what she suspects is his real nature. Proteus employs her in his efforts to woo Silvia. When he does this, the audience knows that he is cutting his own throat and is only too happy to watch him bleed.

The physical disguise creates an illusion of a different and, therefore, false identity. The importance of this deception lies in the effect it has on the other characters. Unable to discern the real identity behind the assumed one, characters reveal their true natures. Because they trust their senses to supply them with truth instead of merely appearance, the characters are unguarded about revealing their true personalities. They act honestly according to the dictates of their real nature, assuming they are safe from the detection of their facade. They have no reason to mask their true intentions or natures because there is no reason to hide anything from the person they think they are dealing with. Therefore, the characters act as their own foil because they themselves are deceived.

The characters are unable to make the connection that what seems to be real is not always so unless their mistake is pointed out to them. To accomplish this task, it is necessary to expose the disguise and return to reality. This exposure is perhaps the most important function of the physical disguise. With true identities revealed, the characters realize that their perception has been incomplete. They have taken in only appearances and accepted them as being representative of the true nature beneath them. With this realization, they then are able to understand that what appears to be true is not necessarily so. When appearance contradicts true nature, it is not possible to unquestioningly accept sense perception as truth. The senses are only capable of taking in the illusion. The characters must finally admit their own faulty perceptive capabilities and learn to doubt their own sensory input.

Throughout all this deception, there is a figure of constancy and consistency. Silvia is the constant, true lover to Valentine and, although the two women have never met, the true friend of Julia.

This portrait of a character consistent in terms of appearance and true nature serves to emphasize the disparity between the appearance and real nature of Proteus. These two characters act as illuminating devices for each other, Silvia drawing attention to Proteus' false appearances through her lack of them, and Proteus emphasizing Silvia's admirable nature through the

revelation of his evil one. Silvia is exactly what she appears to be, a loyal, noble young woman, unswayed from her devotion to Valentine by Proteus. She rebuffs Proteus' attempts to win her love and rebukes him for his unfaithfulness to both Valentine and Julia. These two polar opposites, Proteus and Silvia, are set off against one another in a soliloquy by Proteus:

Already I have been false to Valentine
And now I must be as unjust to Thurio.
Under the colour of commending him,
I have access my own love to prefer:
But Silvia is too fair, too true, too holy,
To be corrupted with my worthless gifts.
When I protest true loyalty to her,
She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;
When to her beauty I commend my vows,
She bids me think how I have been forsworn
In breaking faith with Julia whom I
love: (IV, ii, 1-11)

Proteus' treachery is blatantly admitted to by him. He has betrayed everyone who trusted him in an attempt to further his own ends. Silvia, on the other hand, refuses to be deceived by his behavior or corrupted by his true nature. She remains aloof and uninfluenced.

It is obvious that Proteus has miscalculated Silvia's true nature. Instead of realizing the futility of his efforts, he continues to try to woo her and win her love. Perhaps Proteus, a man who knows the dissimilarity between the facade he assumes and the real nature behind it, judges others by his own standards. Unable to maintain a consistency between his appearances and his real nature, Proteus is also unable to recognize one.

It is important to note that in the presence of the disguised Julia, Silvia reveals the same personality as at other times. When she is unguarded her behavior remains consistent to nature just like the other characters, but in her case there is no change in behavior.

Silvia then, is a character in which the perception by the senses of her outward behavior provides an accurate evaluation of her true nature. Unfortunately, Proteus cannot recognize the fact that her behavior reveals her true nature because he himself lives in a world of deceit, where consistency between appearance and real nature is non-existent. She serves as a reminder that sometimes what is perceived in outward appearance can be trusted to reveal truth. It is striking because her type of inward and outward consistency is rare. She serves to illuminate by contrast the fact that when there is a contradiction between appearance and true nature, we still have only our senses to rely on to perceive, and they can perceive only appearance.

In this play, we have seen a progression in the method used to create illusion or misapprehension. The technique has employed the use of two kinds of disguise, behavioral and physical. We, the omniscient audience have been allowed to watch the characters fumble around under the spell of the illusions and it has been entertaining. There is no reason at this point to suspect that the problem of perception extends beyond the perimeter of the

stage. The mood has been light, the effect comic, and our attitude remains one of detached superiority. In The Taming of the Shrew this omniscience is forfeited and we find ourselves incorporated into the illusion, suffering the malaise of misapprehension just like the characters.

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

In Taming of the Shrew illusion is employed in several ways. In keeping with the already familiar method of personality disguise, Katherine and Bianca have assumed behavioral postures in contradiction to their true natures. They have done so for specific purposes. Katherine has assumed the behavior of a shrew in order to prevent her marriage, while Bianca has assumed a docile, sweet demeanor in order to facilitate her own betrothal. Physical disguise is again employed in order to hide a true identity and thereby allow the perpetrator of the disguise proximity to the person he desires, without endangering his cause through knowledge of who he is. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, in Sly, there is an example of a man who through the sheer force of sensory input, abandons his reason and accepts and participates in the illusion created for him.

This practise perpetrated by the Lord is important because it is through the audience's attitude as a result of the deceit that we are made susceptible to the

Katherine-Bianca illusion, and thus the problem of distinguishing reality in a world of appearances is extended beyond the perimeter of the stage to include real life. Because of the pre-requisite nature of the audience's attitude developed through the practise played on Sly, I will deal with the Induction scene first.

In the Induction, a deliberate practise is perpetrated on an individual ideally suited to succumb to it. The practise consists of the Lord and his men enacting a series of feigned situations on Christopher Sly. The situations all have one thing in common, they rely on the appearance of truth to be convincing. The only way they can succeed at convincing Sly that they are true is if they engage his senses in apprehending the trick for truth and thus force him to admit that they must be true. Toward that end elaborate instructions are given by the Lord describing how to manage the presentations:

Some one be ready with a costly suit
And ask him what apparel he will wear;
Another tell him of his hounds and horse,
And that his lady mourns at his disease:
Persuade him that he hath been lunatic;
And when he says he is, say that he dreams,
For he is nothing but a mighty lord. (Induction,
59-65)

Obviously, the success of the practise relies on convincing Sly that what he sees is real. He must be made to accept the appearances being presented to him as truth, even if it conflicts with everything he remembers of his true life. His objections have been anticipated and provided for.

This world of illusion, constructed only on appearances, with not even a shred of truth to support it, is the world that Sly awakens to from his drunken stupor. His first impulse is logical enough. What he sees does not tally with what he knows to be true, therefore, he doubts the veracity of what is perceived.

I am Christophero Sly; call me not 'honour'
nor 'lordship:' (Induction, 11, 5)

The men persist in their practise and the Lord urges Sly to,
Look how thy servants do attend on thee,
(Induction, 11, 35)

Sly is told to use his senses to determine the truth by the Lord, who knows all too well the discrepancy between those perceptible appearances and the truth that they obscure. Sly, who can find no fault with the logic of this approach is compelled to follow the Lord's admonitions and he finally abandons all his reason and knowledge of the past and says:

Am I a lord? and have I such a lady?
Or do I dream? or have I dreamed till now?
I do not sleep: I see, I hear, I speak;
I smell sweet savours and I feel soft things:
Upon my life, I am a lord indeed
And not a tinker nor Christophero Sly.
(Induction, 11, 70-75)

Sly thus moves from considering what he perceives to be an illusion (dream) to considering that maybe his memory of a different existence is the dream and what he sees now is the truth, or reality. The basis for this shift in perspective is the information he is receiving through his senses.

..... I see, I hear, I speak;
I smell sweet savours and I feel soft things:
(Induction, 11, 72-73)

Sensory input then, is the criterion for ascribing validity. That which Sly can sense is, for him, true. He recognizes that this sensory input does not tally with his memory, and the conclusion he reaches is that it is his memory which is functioning incorrectly. He abjures his memory on the basis that his senses provide a contradiction. Therefore, what he perceives sensorily, he trusts. His sensual perception tells him he is being treated like a lord, ergo he must be one. He relies totally on sensory input to determine reality. When the conflicting situations are arranged in terms of sensory vs. intellectual information, Sly opts for the validity of the sense perceptions with never a second thought. With the decision made that he is a lord, he alters his behavior accordingly. He begins to play the part, issuing orders and taking charge in an appropriate manner. The practise functions perfectly, the senses are made to apprehend an illusion, and on the basis of this apprehension and the trust in it to reflect the truth, a judgement is made in contradiction to reality. Sly is completely deceived and caught up in the illusion.

Here in the induction is a situation in which the human tendency to trust sensory perception to reveal truth is exploited to the utmost. The audience is allowed to laugh at Sly for his ineptitude in determining

what is real and for his blind allegiance to his senses. Our attitude must be one of aloofness. Sly is stupid and deserves what he gets, but it could never happen to us. Watching and laughing at Sly has given us a sense of false security, because as we approach the play proper with an attitude of detached assuredness in our own ability to perceive truth, we succumb to the same sort of misapprehension that Sly did. Our misapprehension is in relation to the true natures of Katherine and Bianca. What we so confidently take to be their real natures turns out to be illusory and for the first time, the audience is forced to admit that we too are susceptible to deceptive appearances.

Katherine and Bianca are the characters about whom the central emphasis of illusion and reality operates. It is through them that a practise is worked on the audience as well as the other characters in the play. The illusion is created by these women, each of whom projects a personality which is in contradiction to her real nature. Katherine assumes the appearance of being a shrew, while Bianca pretends to be sweet and docile. The misapprehension by the audience and characters alike, of the women's true natures is based solely on the behavior each presents to the public. Therefore, the determination of truth is based completely on what is perceived through the senses. In this play there are no soliloquies to reveal the hidden, true personality beneath the facade, therefore,

only that information which is available to the other characters in the play, the actual, unqualified behavior of the women, can be used by the audience to form a private judgement. In this manner, through the absence of extra information to the contrary, all are subject to appearances. The problem of misapprehension is introduced with the presentation of Katherine and Bianca..

The two women are contrasted in their behavior from the beginning. The first encounter with the principals leaves no doubt as to the definitions of their personalities. When Baptista gives permission to either of Bianca's suitors to "court" Katherine, Gremio replies:

To cart her rather: she's too rough for me
(I, i, 55)

Hortensio follows with:

.... no mates for you,
Unless you were of gentler, milder
mould (I,i,59-60)

Katherine establishes her volatile, acerbic behavior with her rejoinder:

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear:
I wis it is not half way to her heart;
But if it were, doubt not her care should be
To comb your noddle with a three-legg'd stool
And paint your face and use you like
a fool. (I,i, 61-65)

This acrimonious display of Katherine's is sharply contrasted with the comment made about Bianca:

But in the other's silence do I see
Maid's mild behaviour and sobriety (I,i,70-71)

This separate presentation of the two sisters is completed

by an exchange between the women themselves which even more explicitly defines the polarity of their personalities through direct confrontation.

Kath - A pretty peat! it is best
Put finger in the eye, an she knew why.
Bian - Sister, content you in my discontent.
Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe
My books and instruments shall be my
company,
On them to look and practise by myself
(I,1, 78-83)

This exchange is important for several reasons. First, obviously, it directly contrasts the two personalities, one shrewish and cynical, one submissive and sweet. Second, it provides the basis for determining these personalities as illusions at the end of the play. Here, Katherine makes a remark than can be construed as a ribald one, since in Elizabethan terms, the eye was equated with female sexual organs.² Bianca does not reply directly to this ribald pun, but rather ignores it, thus demonstrating a reluctance to engage in obscene discussion. Third, Bianca's reply includes an interesting use of the word "practise". Since this specific word was used by the Lord in the Induction to describe the type of joke played on Sly, perhaps this reference can be construed as a clue to what is real and what is simply appearance. As we shall see, Bianca does indeed continue to pretend her patient, acquiescent demeanor until she accomplishes the objective for which it was assumed; marriage.

²Eric Patridge, Shakespeare's Bawdy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1955) p.142.

But marriage is not only the agent for Bianca's reversal of behavior in accordance with her true nature, it serves the same purpose for Katherine. This becomes evident at the marriage feast after Bianca's wedding to Lucentio. It is in this scene that the illusion created by personality disguise becomes apparent as such and the true natures of the two women surface, dispelling the illusion that their previous behavior created.

The feast opens with some quick witted jesting between the characters, and during this, the widow insults Katherine:

Widow - Your husband, being troubled with
a shrew,
Measures my husband's sorrow by
his woe. (V, ii, 28-29)

Katherine replies with an insult of her own and it is apparent that she has lost nothing of her hot temper and quick tongue. But it is here that a more significant reply is made by Bianca, who says,

Head and butt! an hasty-witted body
Would say your head and butt were
head and horns! (V, ii, 40-41)

This statement is an obviously ribald allusion to cuckoldry and it is quite unexpected from Bianca, the heretofore model of docile womanhood. It is the first clue that she and Katherine have, in effect, switched personalities. Bianca, who previously endured Katherine's bold jests in silence is here inaugurating some of her own. Conversely, it is equally conspicuous that here Katherine's repartee

is devoid of all such puns and double entendres.

When both women are summoned and only Katherine responds obediently, it becomes obvious that what is expected to be Bianca's behavior is exhibited by Katherine, and vice-versa. Again, their demeanors are contrasted, for after Katherine dutifully follows Petruchio's order to throw off her hat, Bianca and Lucentio have a heated exchange.

- Bian. - Fie! What a foolish duty call you this?
Lue - I would your duty were as foolish too:
The wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca,
Hath cost me an hundred crowns since
suppertime.
Bian. - The more fool you, for laying on my
duty. (V, ii, 125-129)

With this presentation of unexpected behavior, everyone, including the audience, must finally realize that they have been deceived into having expectations. Everything we saw and heard led us to believe that Katherine was shrewish and Bianca docile. Now, with a contradiction between what we expect from them and what they actually do, we must attribute the discrepancy to our faulty perception of what was true. We expected certain behavior from each of them because we based our judgement on what appeared to be their true natures. The outward facade of behavior was accepted as being consistent with the true nature behind it. In fact, the behavior did not reflect the truth, it obscured it. The audience experiences with the characters this ultimate realization of the limits of sensory perception, and in the process extends the problem

of distinguishing illusion and reality from the stage to the entire world.

There is one character, however, who, unlike the others, is not susceptible to the illusion created by behavioral disguise. This, of course, is Petruchio, because he disdains outward appearance. He considers outward appearance to be of no consequence and, therefore, is not subject to its misleading effects. Because he doesn't care for appearances, preferring to relate to whatever is behind them, he disregards them when making judgements. This disregard enables him to pierce whatever illusion is created and discern what is true behind the outward show.

As far as Katherine is concerned, Petruchio is the only person capable of realizing her true nature. He does not go about creating desirable qualities in Katherine. This is not the effect of the "taming of the shrew", instead, he goes about allowing the truly tame nature of Katherine to surface. As Cecil Seronsky points out in his article "'Supposes', as the Unifying Theme in the Taming of the Shrew", Petruchio imagines qualities in her which turn out to be true. This statement implies an element of chance which I do not believe is applicable. I suggest that Petruchio doesn't imagine, but rather discerns, through the facade, the presence of characteristics that Katherine truly possesses, but does not show. Petruchio then fashions their relationship to allow her to see the folly of her pretense and let her true nature come

to light. This unique ability to ignore the facade of appearances created by her behavior and discern the true qualities of Katherine hidden beneath, are obvious throughout the play. Petruchio's attitude toward appearance and its effect, or lack of it, on him are presented repeatedly. After their first vitriolic encounter, Petruchio says to Katherine:

..... I find you passing gentle.
Twas told me you were rough, and coy,
and sullen,
And now I find report a very liar;
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time
flowers: (II,1,244-248)

Certainly nothing in Katherine's behavior could have prompted such an appraisal. Petruchio is here stating what he perceives to be true underneath the facade of her demeanor. He is not expressing a desire for these qualities to be attained or a hope that they exist, but a recognition of their existence. He sees Katherine's shrewish deportment as a ruse when no one else has been able to. He says to Baptista:

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world,
that talked of her, have talked amiss of her:
If she be curst, it is for policy. (II,1,292-295)

He clearly sees her behavior as "policy", an outward disguise which hides her true nature from view. Once the appearance has been thus perceived, it follows that the true nature must conflict with the disguised behavior. It is because of this ability to consider and disregard the behavior of Katherine as a disguise to obscure her true

personality, that Petruchio can perceive what constitutes the true nature she hides.

His disregard of appearances and his regard for what lies beneath is demonstrated most conspicuously by his manner of dress and subsequent moralizing on his wedding day. Petruchio scoffs at the adjurations of Baptista and Gremio to change into more appropriate apparel:

Good sooth, even thus; therefore ha' done
with words:
To me she's married, not unto my clothes:
Could I repair what she will wear in me,
As I can these poor accoutrements,
'Twer well for Kate and better for
myself. (III,ii, 118-122)

Here we have Petruchio's philosophy succinctly presented. Appearances, to him, are of no consequence. They are a dressing, a facade, and an unimportant one. What matters is what lies beneath the outward picture, because this is the true substance of reality, the true nature of the person. What he does not say is that this true nature may or may not correspond to the appearance portrayed. If it does, then a judgement based on what is shown can be correct, but if truth and appearance are in contradiction, then a judgement based on the appearance will be faulty. Unfortunately, it is not the human condition to separate the two, and therein lies the problem of faulty judgement. The senses are relied on to perceive the truth and in fact what they can perceive is only the appearance. Petruchio, by usually eliminating the value of appearances from his

criterion for judgement, has almost completely overcome the problem. He does not continually rely on his sensory input to supply him with truth. He recognizes the limitations and easy susceptibility of such an approach.

He re-emphasizes this philosophy in his admonitions to Kate before returning to her home for Bianca's wedding. He says:

Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's
Even in these honest mean habiliments:
Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor;
For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich;
And as the sun bursts through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest
habit. (III,ii,171-176)

Petruchio has not only pierced the illusion, appearances and dispelled the idea of their importance, he has broached a subject of great importance which will be developed further elsewhere, namely, what constitutes true nobility. Do the accoutrements of honor guarantee its presence or is it contained elsewhere, within? If appearances constitute honor and nobility then it is available to only a few who can afford to adopt its accoutrements. But if it lies beneath appearance, in the true character of the person, then it is available to all. The obvious corollary to this assumption is that those who purport to be honorable and noble as signified by their appearance, may not always be so. This facet of the problem of perception is dealt with in Richard III, but for now Petruchio has touched upon it and opened it up for examination. At any rate, Petruchio's insight is proven accurate in the

end when Katherine, who has been made by him to see the folly of maintaining her shrewish behavior, ceases to continue her charade, and exhibits the docile demeanor Petruchio believed she possessed.

The use of physical disguises in this play is of minor importance, serving largely to demonstrate the susceptibility of persons to deception. Lucentio and Hortensio both don disguises and assume false identities in order to allow them proximity to Bianca. They are successful in deceiving her father, who, unable to discern their true identities, allows them access to his daughter.

It is interesting to note that within the machinations of this plot Petruchio too is fooled and thus even the seeming exception proves the rule. He is unable to determine the real Vincentio. He succumbs to the disguise of the Pedant and in the erroneous manner of the Abbess in the Comedy of Errors, provides a logical explanation, logical that is, if the first premise were correct, which of course it is not. Not realizing that the Pedant is claiming to be Vincentio, Petruchio interprets his generosity as owing to his newly developed affection for Lucentio. But when identities are laid claim to, Petruchio reacts in a manner which leads one to believe that his unique perceptual powers have been suspended. He turns to Vincentio and says:

Why, how now, gentleman! why,
this is flat knavery, to take upon you
another man's name. (V,1,38-39)

This is the only time that Petruchio's ability to ignore appearances and perceive truth fails him, but it is enough to demonstrate that even he is not entirely impervious to the powers of illusion. If Petruchio can sometimes be forced into misapprehensions by relying on his sensory input to determine truth solely through an analysis of physical evidence, how susceptible the rest of us are who almost exclusively rely on appearances to reflect truth.

Therefore, in the Taming of the Shrew, the illusion has been deployed in two ways, through the use of physical disguise to hide identity in order to achieve a desired purpose, and through the use of behavioral disguise assumed to hide true nature. There has also been an example of a unique character, one who has been able, for the most part, to distinguish between appearance and truth. The unreliability of outward appearance has been stressed by Petruchio. But most importantly, in the presentation of Katherine and Bianca solely on a physical, perceivable basis, without benefit of revealing soliloquy, the audience has been incorporated into the misapprehension and the problem of true perception has been extended beyond the confines of the play house into the real world. When, at the end, we discover that Katherine is by nature docile and Bianca shrewish, we are forced to re-evaluate our criteria for judgement and admit the limitation of our senses in their ability to perceive beyond appearance to reality.

In this play, the mood is still comic. Our inability to perceive true natures has allowed for a surprise ending to a lighthearted play. Our realization that we too have been fooled is not particularly important, for the consequences presented have been comic in nature. At this point, our lack of truth perception has been a joke on us and an adjunct to enjoyment. Eventually, as the theme moves out of the comic realm, this inability to correctly perceive will take on more serious ramifications. But while we are still in the totally comic realm, the problem of illusion and reality can be dealt with in yet another form, in Love's Labour's Lost.

Love's Labour's Lost

I do not wish to deal with the complex problem of assigning Love's Labour's Lost its proper position in the order of composition of Shakespeare's plays. I am dealing with an increasing complexity in his use of illusion and given that standard, Love's Labour's Lost follows the Taming of the Shrew.

Love's Labour's Lost examines the consequences of trying to construct an illusory, or artificial world in direct contradiction to human nature and the real world as it already exists. The struggle to create and live in an artificial world is undertaken by the King and his lords. They recognize the real world as it is, but attempt to withdraw from it. As Bobbyann Roessen has noted, the men surround themselves in unreality by establishing a world

of artificiality.³

This unreal, or illusory world, is one of ascetic denial of the basic components and desires of human life, consisting especially of the denial of love. It is inaugurated as an ideal world where all energy is directed toward the pursuit of intellectual enrichment. The intellect and the body are seen as warring elements, one needing to be denied in order to allow the other to flourish. This ascetic world of denial is illusory in that it is in contradiction to the facts of existence. To deny reality is to live an illusion. Whatever the merits of this medieval conception of the battle of body and soul, in Love's Labour's Lost it becomes absurdly impossible to deny the reality of love. Love is an integral part of the reality of human nature and the desire for it is a fact of existence. The real world of Navarre, is full of the opportunities and demands for love, indeed love is the most conspicuous attribute of reality as it exists in Navarre.

When illusion and reality are opposed, one must eventually give way to the other, they cannot exist in symbiosis. The King and his lords think that reality can be temporarily ignored or denied, and attempt to do so. The outcome of this type of conflict, between illusion and reality, or the ideal and the existing, is that reality

³B. Roosen, "Love's Labour's Lost" Shakespeare Quarterly (1953), p.416-426.

must finally win. The nature of reality may not be denied or ignored. It may be temporarily circumvented, but it will always re-assert itself.

In Love's Labour's Lost there is also a use of physical disguise, when the lords masquerade as Russians. The purpose is the same as before, to hide identity in order to gain proximity to another person, but the effect is more than that. In this case, disguise is used to illuminate the different tendencies of the participants towards the real or the imaginary.

The conflict between illusion and reality will here be examined in relation to the opposing viewpoints of the major characters and their eventual vindication or defeat. The King and his lords represent the illusory world, while the Princess and her ladies represent the real world. Within this bilateral division of warring opposites, there are three salient positions to consider.

First, there is the King of Navarre. It is he who initiates the creation of the illusory world of ascetic denial for the purpose of intellectual pursuit. He represents the attitude that reality can be denied, and is, of course, proven wrong. Second, there is Biron. He is a paradoxical character in that he is skeptical of the chances to succeed in denying reality but he participates anyway. His skepticism is vindicated in the end. Third, there are the ladies. They are the embodiment of the real world in that they represent the ever present emotion of love, which

cannot be denied. They are characters wholly rooted in reality and realize not only that the men's denial of reality must fail, but also why it must do so.

The King of Navarrê is the main proponent of the ascetic life of intellectual pursuit. To reach this end he has devised rules to be followed in order to effect his purpose. They are, as described by Biron, as follows:

As not to see a woman in that term,
And one day in a week to touch no food
And but one meal on every day beside...
And then, to sleep but three hours in the night,
And not be seen to wink of all the day- (I,1,37,
39-40),42-43)

The King clearly believes not only in the necessity of denying these basic needs, but in the possibility of doing so successfully. He has forsworn three of the basic human needs; food, sleep, and love. He insists on following this line of behavior and forces obedience on his subjects.

Disorder begins immediately with the arrest of Costard for consorting with a woman. This first act of disobedience to the King's proclamation begins the process of chipping away at Navarre's world of denial, and in an attempt to keep the artificial world intact, the King punishes Costard. But this first evidence of the eventual crumbling of the illusory world in which he chooses to live, only makes the King more determined to succeed at his plan. He says:

And go we, lords, to put in practice that
Which each to other hath so strongly
sworn. (I,1, 308-309)

The King's inability to see the ultimate defeat of his proposal is here coupled with his determination to make it work. In this case he is convinced that men of high calibre, such as he and his lords, can succeed in maintaining loyalty to their oath when lesser men cannot keep from succumbing to temptation.

But the King and his lords are as quickly affected by the natural tendency for love as Costard was. Upon their first encounter with the women they are smitten. Boyet observes,

If my observation, which very seldom lies,
By the heart's still rhetoric disclosed
with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected. (II,1,228-230)

Indeed, after the direct confrontation with the women, who personify love and the natural inclinations of the real world, Navarre's attitude changes. He is forced to admit that he has succumbed to the temptations of the world and to abandon the precepts of the illusory one. He admits his love for the Princess.

With this admission, reality has, in effect, won out in the confrontation with illusion and eliminated all possibility of success in prolonging its existence. The King has been forced to internalize the conflict and pit his ascetic desires against his natural ones. He has had to deal with the confrontation on a completely personal basis, equating the illusory with his own desires for asceticism, and reality with his natural inclinations toward love. Obviously, his natural impulses have

overcome his unrealistic desires. Nature, or reality, has re-asserted itself and claimed its just victory. The world of love which the King tried so hard to deny has triumphed over the world of denial which he tried so hard to establish.

One must assume that this triumph of reality has come as a shock to the King since at no time did he exhibit any foreknowledge of the eventual outcome of his attempt to live in an illusory world. He did realize that the life he was proposing was a harsh experiment and he did impose a time limit, but up until the time reality forcefully re-asserted itself upon him, the King believed in the possibility of success for his program of asceticism. With the re-entry into the world as it exists, in this case full of love, the King has made a sudden about face. This is not the case for Biron, who, although he agreed to participate in the illusion on a point of honor because he had already pledged his support before the particulars were made known, realized the inevitability of its defeat from the very start.

After agreeing to join the King and others in their pursuit, Biron states his evaluation of the scheme.

Necessity will make us all forsworn
Three thousand times within this three
years' space;
For every man with his affects is born,
Not by might master'd but by special grace:
If I break faith, this word shall speak for me;
I am forsworn on 'mere necessity'. (I, i, 150-155)

He sees the denial of natural demands as an act which is in

contradiction to nature, and thus doomed to failure. The natural inclinations that the real world imposes on humans cannot be ignored. They will not disappear because a person wills them to. If indeed they disappear at all, it is through the intercession of "special grace". He clearly sees the attempt to deny the tendencies imposed on humans by nature, or reality, as foolish. His presence in the group of lords offers a foreboding of their ultimate failure in maintaining the world they are striving to create.

Biron's skepticism is vindicated when he and the other lords fall in love with the ladies and are forced to abandon their ascetic world and return to the real one. When this happens, Biron restates his reasons for expecting it to occur.

Consider what you did first swear unto,
To fast, to study, and to see no woman;
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly
state of youth. (IV, iii, 291-293)

He explains the folly of acting in contradiction to the facts of existence. When reality is denied, it will always re-assert itself. To deny one's own natural impulses is treason against reality and, therefore, cannot succeed. He further implies that it is immoral to try to make it succeed. One should follow one's own natural inclinations since they reflect the reality of existence.

The two figures, the King and Biron, as well as the other lords are set up in direct opposition to the

Princess and her ladies. The ladies are thoroughly in tune with reality and realize the folly of the lords' attempt to deny it. In the exchange between the Princess and the King, it becomes apparent that she realizes the inevitable failure of his ways.

King - Hear me, dear lady; I have sworn an oath
Prin.- Our lady help my lord! he'll be forsworn
King - Not for the world, fair madam,
by my will.
Prin.- Why, will shall break it; will and
nothing else.
King - Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.
Prin.- Were my lord so, his ignorance
were wise,
Where now his knowledge must prove
ignorance. (II,1,97-103)

Here the Princess states exactly the problem and its solution. It is here that the two differing positions are most clearly defined. The King says he has sworn an oath, to which the Princess replies that he'll be forsworn. He then states his view succinctly; he will remain true to his oath because he wills it so. She, of course, like Biron, realizes that the will to deny nature in no way insures the success of the attempt. She responds that it is precisely his will, or natural inclinations, which will overcome allegiance to an illusion. At this point though, the King is unable to know this outcome, he is still caught up in his illusory world. She knows that in time, what he believes to be true will be proven false and he will return to the reality she embodies.

The Princess obviously has the ability to see the reason for the King's inevitable change of mind. She

recognizes the undeniable compulsion to answer our natural inclinations. These inclinations must be responded to and satisfied. They will be the agents for the downfall of the world of illusion the King insists on pursuing.

This difference of attitude is further developed in the disguise scene when the lords present themselves to the ladies, masked as Russians. They come to woo the women, each of whom has received a token from the lord who loves her. Realizing the men's proclivity to function in illusion, the women take advantage of it and exchange favors. This causes a situation in which the disguised men do not know to whom they speak, while the women know the true identities behind the disguises. This lack of knowledge on the one part contrasted with the possession of true knowledge on the other part re-emphasizes the two sides of illusion and reality to which each group belongs. The men, who embarked upon a plan to deny reality and to live in an illusory world are here forced to act under the power of illusion. They misapprehend true identities just as they misapprehended the limits of their own capacities for denying their true natures. The women, meanwhile, who have from the start known the inevitability of the triumph of reality over illusion, have created an illusion which perplexes the men but doesn't affect them. They remain in a world of true knowledge and perception.

This scene illustrates the confrontation between illusion and reality. It is important to note that the

women, who have opted to remain within the confines of reality, are in complete control of the situation. They thoroughly exploit the lords' inability to perceive and thus function in reality. In this confrontation between the embodiments of the illusory and real worlds, the women prevail. They force the men to abandon their disguises and return to their true identities, just as the reality of their natural proclivities has forced them to abandon their illusory way of life and return to reality. In this manner, the use of physical disguises here has served to illuminate the two conflicting entities of illusion and reality, and also to parallel the eventual outcome of the greater conflict.

Therefore, in this play, the problem of illusion and reality has been presented in terms of the two opposing forces in conflict. The consequences of such a conflict have been examined. When reality and illusion, or the real world and the ideal world are set off against one another, it must lead to the defeat of the illusory and the triumph of the real. In this case the illusory, or make believe, world was one in which love and other natural human tendencies were denied. The real world was one in which love was the dominant operative force. Eventually, this force of love could no longer be denied. It encroached on the illusory world until it finally had to be allowed access. The real world as it exists can be temporarily ignored in the pursuit of an ideal, illusory

one, but ultimately it must be returned to and the illusion must be dissipated. It is impossible to deny reality and exist outside of it for very long.

In this section, dealing with four of Shakespeare's early plays, we have been able to see a progressive complexity in Shakespeare's use of illusion. This progression has taken the form of a change in the technical presentation of illusion as well as the philosophical attitude. The technique has developed from one relying on physical resemblance to cause misapprehension of true identity, to the assumption of physical and behavioral disguise to obscure true nature. Finally, the consequences of trying to live an illusion has been examined. The philosophic effect has gone from the innocuous, one which does not concern the audience, to one in which the audience is forced to admit its own propensity for misapprehension. Finally, reality is seen to be an undeniable force which cannot be circumvented.

The system for presenting the problem has been defined in these early works. While the techniques remain essentially the same, the philosophy changes. The more serious consequences of misapprehension are examined in later works and we will see that indeed, the comic consequences presented here are only one facet to the problem of illusion and reality.

II. In this section I will examine several of Shakespeare's plays which show a further progression of the use of the theme of illusion and reality; Richard III, Romeo and Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing, and 1 and 2 Henry IV. These plays demonstrate the same techniques as seen in earlier plays, disguised personality and identity, to cause misapprehension, the pitting of illusion and reality against each other, and also one other twist, personal misapprehension or lack of self knowledge. Although the techniques remain virtually the same, though perhaps with increased complexity, the mood behind them changes. With these plays, Shakespeare begins to probe the serious side of misapprehension. Here, the movement out of the purely comic into the tragic begins. Basically, each of these plays except Romeo and Juliet ends on a happy note, but within the plays themselves, grave complications arise. Richard III examines the consequences of having a person in power assume a personality disguise for his own diabolical purposes and the problems caused by the failure of most of the other characters to apprehend his true nature beneath his facade. This play also deals with the question of true nobility as touched on in The Taming of the Shrew. It is interesting to note that in this play, the same failure to judge true natures that brings about Richard's success, leads to his downfall when he himself suffers from the inability to perceive correctly. Therefore, personality disguise is shown to have serious results when assumed for

evil purposes.

Romeo and Juliet is in a sense a sequel to Love's Labours Lost in that once again illusion and reality, or the ideal and the existing, are pitted against each other as opposing forces. The existing world is one of hatred in which the Capulets and Montagues are violently feuding with one another. The illusory world is one of peace and love which Romeo and Juliet try to construct for themselves in spite of the real world which surrounds them. Again, as in Love's Labour's Lost, reality wins out and defeats the world of illusion. In this case the result is tragic because of the nature of the real world; it is fraught with hatred. When hatred and violence defeat love and peace the effects can only be death and destruction. Therefore, the optimistic ending of Love's Labour's Lost is reversed and the technique of pitting illusion and reality against each other is brought into the tragic realm in Romeo and Juliet.

In Much Ado About Nothing the movement toward tragedy is continued because there is the use of physical, not behavioral disguise, for diabolical purposes. The practises worked on the characters through these identity disguises have serious undertones. This play, therefore, points up the possibility of tragedy when an unsuspecting character is deceived into mistaking true identities by an unscrupulous one. Also in this play the problem of misapprehension is extended to include lack of self

knowledge, or personal misapprehension. This technique involves Dogberry and the effects are purely comical.

In 1, 2 Henry IV there is the sequel to Richard III in that the play again employs the technique of a personality disguise assumed by a person in power. This time, however, the disguise is not assumed for diabolical purposes and thus leads to stability, not destruction. Here too, is the examination of the consequences of lack of self knowledge in the case of Falstaff, with a more serious result than in the case of Dogberry.

In this section, techniques already examined for their comic effects are here presented in a different light. Therefore, the progression is primarily one of mood, not method, and reflects Shakespeare's world view as it was darkening.

Richard III

Richard III presents the consequences of a person in power assuming a personality disguise for his own diabolical purposes. In this play the theme of illusion and reality takes on serious ramifications. Richard assumes the appearance of being a loyal, trustworthy, noble man in order to ascend to the throne through deception and murder. The results of the success of his practise are chaos and destruction for all concerned. The technique used to present his true nature is a series of revealing

soliloquies or dialogues immediately juxtaposed with his actions. He progresses from bringing about the defeat and destruction of others through his almost impenetrable facade to his own defeat and destruction when he too falls victim to misapprehension of true natures. Importantly, those who perceive Richard's true nature i.e. Queen Margaret, are helpless to prevent his actions and those who are victims of his disguise are often very willing to be deceived because they want to believe him for their own purposes, as in the case of Buckingham.

It is known that Shakespeare took liberties in developing the character of Richard into that of an arch-fiend. The effect of this development has been to emphasize the inability of the senses to determine true nature through apprehending appearances. Richard is presented as a dual personality, one aspect of which he shows the world, and another contradictory one which he hides. These two facets of him are consistently set off against one another for emphasis. Richard's development can be examined through his relationships with the main characters who misapprehend him and thus bring about their own destruction. These characters are Clarence, the young Prince, Hastings and Buckingham. A close look at each of these and his dealings with Richard will yield a clear picture of the consequences of their misapprehension of his true nature.

The opening soliloquy gives Richard's own

assessment of himself as an evil man. He says:

I am determined to prove a villain (I,1,30)

And later

Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
by drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other:
And if Edward be as true and just
As I am subtle, false and treacherous;
This day should Clarence be mewed up. (I,1,32-38)

This revelation of his treachery in having Clarence/
imprisoned is followed immediately by his encounter with
Clarence on the way to the Tower and Richard's promise to
come to Clarence's aid.

Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;
I will deliver you, or else lie for you:
(V,1,114-115)

Following Clarence's exit the real intention behind the
facade of faithfulness emerges,

Go, tread the path that thou shalt
ne'er return,
Simple, plain Clarence! I do love thee so,
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven.
(I,1,117-119)

Here is an obvious example of Richard's method of
operation. He pretends true concern and loyalty while
actually meaning the exact opposite. Clarence's inability
to perceive past Richard's appearance of loyalty leads to
his death. The consequences of misapprehension have become
quite serious indeed. They continue to be so. Richard
works the same sort of practise on the young Prince of
Wales. Richard states the problem of perception to him
and works it to his own advantage.

Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of
your years
Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit:
Nor more can you distinguish of a man
Than his outward show; which, God he knows,
Seldom or never jumpeth with the
heart. (III, 1, 7-11)

Richard is fully aware of the necessity of an acceptable outward show, because this is all that is used as a basis for judgement. He is counting on this truth to insure his own successful ascension to the throne. The problem, as explained here, accrues not only to the young prince, but to almost everyone in the play. The malady of misapprehension based on appearances is a ubiquitous one, and one which can be maneuvered with great success. Richard notes the dichotomy of appearance and true nature but no one is capable of applying this knowledge to his own case. By calling the prince's attention to the outward show of others, Richard calls it away from his own and the dichotomy between his appearances and true nature goes unmarked.

Of course, this inability to apprehend Richard's true nature has dire consequences, for the young prince is duped into trusting Richard who in turn orders the prince's death.

But the inability to discern Richard's true nature beneath his behavior extends also to a man who prides himself on his powers of apprehension. Hastings, who has been sounded out regarding his support for Richard's cause and who has shown contempt for the plan, is disposed of

by Richard. His help would be beneficial, but his non-support is a hindrance which must be eliminated.

Therefore, he is duped into going to the Tower by Buckingham who is acting for Richard. Once there, Hastings attests to his own incredible lack of perception as well as his total dependence on his perceptual faculty for forming judgements.

Hast. - I think there's never a man in
Christan dom
That can less hide his love or hate than
he;
For by his face straight shall
you know his heart.

Derby - What of his heart perceive you in
his face

Hast - By any likelihood he show'd to-day?
Marry, that with no man here is he
offended;
For, were he, he had shown it in his
looks. (III,iv, 53-59)

Hastings' basic assumption about Richard's talent for hiding his true nature is false, therefore his logic breaks down. Instead of seeing Richard's affable behavior as a ruse to hide his real intentions, Hastings sees it as a reflection of those intentions. For this reason, he fails to discern the truth beyond the appearances, and once again, the consequence for this failure is death. This scene emphasizes Hastings' and everyone's inability to correctly perceive but total willingness to rely on their perceptions of external show to reveal truth. It is important to note that Derby is the man who is privy to this evaluation of Hastings' and also to its results, for it is he who practises the same sort of disguised

behavior on Richard and brings about Richard's downfall.

There remains one more character whose destruction is brought about by his misapprehension of Richard's true nature, Buckingham. Buckingham is privy to Richard's plans from the very beginning and is a central participant in bringing them to fruition. He, therefore, knows the discrepancy between Richard's outward show and his true nature. What he fails to recognize is that the show is performed for his benefit as well as everyone else's. He has the further advantage of being warned of Richard's pretense by Queen Margaret, the only person who perceives Richard's true nature and evil intentions. She says to Buckingham:

Look, when he fawns, he bites, and
when he bites,
His venom tooth will rankle to
the death: (I, iii, 290-291)

Unfortunately, Queen Margaret is not in a position of power to be able to stop Richard herself, and in the nature of Cassandra in Troilus and Cressida is ignored by those who can. Buckingham dismisses her advice, preferring to rely on his own assessment of Richard's character. He continues believing that his friendship and loyalty are returned by Richard and only realizes differently after he has placed Richard on the throne. Richard turns against him, denying him the reward he had previously promised, and Buckingham is forced to flee for his life. Again, the consequences of misapprehension of Richard's true nature has had serious

overtones.

But it is also true that although Buckingham's failure to recognize Richard's true nature has caused his downfall, Richard's failure to recognize Buckingham's true nature starts the beginning of his defeat. Richard, who has relied on the disparity between his appearances and true nature for his success, is now subject to the same sort of misapprehension suffered by his victims. He takes Buckingham's hesitation about murdering the young princes as a sign of disloyalty. In doing this, he misjudges the only truly devoted friend he has and the prophecy of Queen Margaret begins to be fulfilled, for she has cursed Richard with the following:

Thy friends suspect for traitors
while thou livest,
And take deep traitors for thy
dearest friends ! (I, iii, 223-224).

In the absence of Buckingham, Richard turns to Lord Stanley for support. Lord Stanley, however, has seen how Richard operates and is himself working the same sort of practise on him. Stanley is giving the appearance of loyalty when in actuality he is working for Richard's overthrow.

Again, Richard fails to recognize Stanley's behavior as an act and instead takes it to reflect his true nature. It is ironic that the character who so completely mastered the technique of assuming behavior in contradiction to his real nature is himself so completely duped by the same

sort of practise. His reliance on Stanley and Stanley's failure to come to his aid brings about Richard's defeat in battle and his fall from power. Once again, the failure to distinguish true nature from appearances has led to destruction.

The result of this final destruction is to restore the monarchy to a man of honor, so the end result can be said to be a creative one. But in the course of the presentation of Richard, the question of true nobility has been answered. Richard possessed all the outward appearances of true nobility. He seemed to be loyal, courageous, trustworthy and just. In fact, he was not. The conclusion which can be reached from this is that true nobility is not a matter of appearance, but rather a matter of inner character. If the outward show of nobility is inconsequential, then the attribute is available to all, regardless of their accoutrements.

In this play, the consequences of misapprehending the true, evil nature of a person in power has led to death and destruction. This pattern was repeated in each instance when a character failed to perceive beyond Richard's behavior to his real intentions. It occurred again when Richard himself was guilty of misapprehending true nature, and directly led to his eventual downfall.

Romeo and Juliet

In Romeo and Juliet illusion and reality are again pitted against each other as different modes of existence in conflict. In this case, the position of love is reversed from that in Love's Labour's Lost. Here love belongs to the illusory, not the real world. The real world is the world of Verona. It is a world in which hate abounds. The two families, the Capulets and the Montagues, are involved in a violent feud and their hatred for each other dominates their relationship. This hatred and its ensuing violence are the salient features of the facts of existence in Verona. The illusory, or ideal world is one which embodies love and peace. This world is illusory in that it does not exist and must be created in spite of the influence of the real world. This world of love is represented by the love between Romeo and Juliet and their attempts to establish it as a viable alternative to reality as it exists. They try to create, in denial of reality, a world of their own based on their love for each other in which that love can flourish.

According to the formula established in Love's Labour's Lost, when reality and illusion, or the real and the ideal, conflict, illusion may make small advances toward success, but eventually reality must triumph and defeat illusion. Reality can only be temporarily denied or ignored, it always re-asserts itself in the end.

Therefore, the two opposing worlds, one which is

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real and exists and which is marked by the hatred and violence it contains, and another which is illusory in that it does not exist and its main features of love and peace contradict known reality, are placed in conflict. Within this conflict, or rather to bring it about, physical disguise is used. The assumption of disguise by Romeo and his men hides their identities and thus allows them to attend the Capulets' ball. In this manner the situation is created for Romeo and Juliet to fall in love uninfluenced by the knowledge of each others' true identities and the animosity which must accomplish that knowledge, given the state of affairs that exists between their families.

The conflict is illuminated by juxtaposing the two worlds in rapid succession throughout the play. Each time the lovers enact a plan to circumvent the facts of their existence and enable them to function within their own world of love, reality immediately raises its ugly head and thwarts them.

This pattern of confrontation and consequence is established forcibly in the first act and continued throughout the play. The two worlds are defined by their representatives, Romeo and Juliet embodying the illusory world they strive to create, and Tybalt and Old Capulet representing the real world which already exists.

The two sides of the conflict are clearly defined as the play opens. The riot between the two households of Montague and Capulet begins over a trivial matter. An

attempt by Benvolio, to restore peace is fruitless. It is quickly suppressed by Tybalt, thus demonstrating how pervasive and forceful is the quality of hate in the real world. A voice of peace has no chance against the roar of hatred. Also clearly demonstrated here is the contagion of the existing hatred. To defy it is useless, anyone who attempts to do so is defeated and drawn into the battle. Nothing has power or holds sway except the hatred itself, and it is omnipotent. This is the world of Verona as it exists, permeated with hatred and violence. The expression of these two components is the order of the day.

This portrayal of the real world is juxtaposed with the presentation of Romeo and Juliet. Romeo is a man concerned with love who has no heart for the battle. Juliet is young and innocent and does ~~not~~ belong in a world of violence.

The two conflicting worlds of reality and illusion are thus defined. On the one hand is the sickness and power of hatred which permeates the world as it exists, represented by the violence of the riot. On the other hand is the world permeated with innocence and concerned with love, represented by the two young lovers. There is a world unspoiled by contact with reality. The union of these two lovers through their love for each other places them in direct conflict for survival with reality in an attempt to bring their love to fruition.

Their union is brought about through the agency of

physical disguise. Romeo conceals his identity and thus the two lovers are free to respond to each other unenumbered by political loyalties. By the time they each discover who the other one is it is too late to turn back. Their natural impulse is to love and by following it they must conflict with the facts of their own existence in a world of hatred, because this natural impulse is not in harmony with the real world as it was in Love's Labour's Lost, it is in direct contradiction with the hatred Romeo and Juliet are expected to feel for each other. The real world allows no flexibility to include love in its pattern of existence. The only emotion present between the two families is hate.

Like Biron in Love's Labour's Lost, they know they are steering an untrue course, untrue in the sense of being disharmonious with the demands of the real world, and they have misgivings about the possibility of succeeding in defying that real world.

Jul. - I have no joy of this contract
to-night;
It is too rash, too unadvised,
too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which
doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens.' (II, ii, 117-120)

The optimism and exuberance they feel in acknowledging their love is tempered by the fact that in order to follow it through to its natural ending, they must for a while, operate in the real world. In defiance of the menacing world of hatred which promises to prevent their success by

encroaching on their hopes, they try to circumvent reality and establish their own world of love in which they can be happy. To this end they are married and briefly their goal is accomplished; they are united in a world of their own creation, a world defined by their love, in spite of the problems posed by the facts of their existence. They have succeeded in defying reality and creating their own standard of existence based on love, but establishing it permanently is another matter, for according to the established formula, reality cannot be denied for very long.

Reality re-asserts itself in the form of Tybalt, who acting within the dictates of reality and motivated by hatred and a desire for violence challenges Romeo to a duel. As in a repetition of the first confrontation, Romeo pleads for peace and is ignored, eventually being dragged into the fight himself. With this re-assertion of the supremacy of hate over love, the advances of love are negated. Romeo is banished and thus the marriage is meaningless since he cannot participate in it.

The two worlds have here clashed and reality has triumphed. The impossibility of permanently constructing a world in defiance of the facts of existence has been demonstrated by presenting the attempt to do so, followed by its negation.

Romeo says:

O, I am fortune's fool! (III,i,141)

This statement may be the ultimate expression of reality in a world dominated by illusion because Romeo's world of love is destined to be crushed by reality and he along with it. At any rate, it is his destiny to slave away at his impossible task; to permanently defy reality and create a world where he can live unaffected by the real world as it already exists. The impossibility of doing this is being presented and re-emphasized.

But it is still Romeo's plight to labor at his task and thus he steals one night with Juliet before he must flee. Their departure from each other illustrates their position in the world of illusion and the recognition of its imminent destruction.

Jul. - O, think'st thou we shall ever
meet again?

Rom. - I doubt it not; and all these
woes shall serve
For sweet discovers in our time
to come. (III, v, 51-53)

This passage signifies their illusory hope for the eventual triumph of their world of love. This hope is expressed even after the world of reality has encroached upon their illusory world and partially destroyed it. The marriage they hoped would insure their triumph over the world of hatred, has itself been rendered ineffective in the struggle. Still, the lovers refuse to acknowledge and accept defeat. They are still very much in the world of illusion they have created, enough so to think that the eventual conclusion of the conflicting worlds will be resolved in their favor.

They still believe in the possibility of illusion winning out over reality. But at the same time they have been forced to recognize the possibility of their defeat and their confidence is undermined. They have misgivings about the future even in the midst of their hope. Reality is forcing them to recognize its power and it will eventually force them to yield to it.

Jul. - O God, I have an ill-divining
soul!
Methinks I see thee, now thou art
below,
As one dead in the bottom of a
tomb:
Either my eyesight fails, or thou
look'st pale.

Rom. - And trust me, love, in my eye so do
you. (III,v, 54-58)

They have acknowledged the possibility of their defeat and have even approached a knowledge of the price for their attempt to defy reality.

At this point, reality forces itself further into their world, this time represented by Capulet who has arranged for Juliet's marriage to Paris. This action sets the stage for the final confrontation between the world of illusion and the world of reality.

The confrontation is brought about through Friar Lawrence's plan to prevent Juliet's marriage to Paris and to reunite the lovers. During the process of enacting this plan, Juliet, and hence the world she embodies, become even more clearly delineated and isolated. Her nurse, who has previously been her ally, deserts her cause and aligns

herself with the faction promoting marriage to Paris.

Therefore, in the final confrontation, the world of illusion is reduced to singularity and pitted against the overwhelmingly inclusive world of reality. The results of a confrontation so clearly unbalanced must be decisive and final.

The outcome is quite conclusive and the two lovers lose their lives in a lost cause, for it is impossible to permanently construct an illusory world in contradiction to reality. Thus, the logical result of an attempt to create a lasting world of love in defiance of the facts of existence which embody hate as a salient feature, is the obliteration of the illusory world of love. The price of the attempt is death and destruction. The order which the lovers tried to create and live in is defeated and replaced by chaos. Death runs rampant throughout the real world leaving no faction untouched. The result is, as the Prince says,

... all are punish'd. (V,iii,295)

Here is presented a different effect of the clash between reality and illusion than that presented in Love's Labour's Lost, although the result has been the same. The basic premises have been alike, the attempt to construct a world of illusion which denies reality as it exists, followed by the ultimate failure of that attempt with the triumph of reality. Reality must eventually win out in the conflict, but the effect of that triumph depends on the nature of the reality, or the attributes of the facts of

existence. In Romeo and Juliet, the facts of existence were tempered by the presence of hatred and violence, thus their re-assertion brought about tragedy in that it defeated a world of love and replaced it with its opposite, accompanied by death and destruction.

By comparing the effects of this resolvment with that of Love's Labour's Lost, it becomes apparent that the mood of the theme has changed drastically. From an ending which resulted in a basically comic vein, the resolution has been altered to express Shakespeare's darkening world view as he progresses from the realm of comedy to the realm of tragedy.

From the examination of the serious consequences of a conflict between illusion and reality, we move on to the presentation of the serious nature of using physical disguises to hide true identities.

Much Ado About Nothing

In Much Ado About Nothing, there are three types of illusion, or misapprehension that I shall examine. First, there is the misapprehension of a conversation, the malfunctioning of the senses in determining what has actually transpired. Second, there is the use of physical disguise to hide true identities, and also to reveal true natures. Third, there is the misapprehension of self, in the case of Dogberry, who overestimates his own value.

Except in the case of Dogberry, the failure to perceive correctly has serious overtones and thus we continue to move out of the realm of comedy into the more serious side of the problem of distinguishing illusion from reality.

The misapprehension of truth occurs first in the failure of Antonio's Servant correctly to determine the plans of Don Pedro and Claudio concerning the wooing of Hero. The plan is, of course, for Don Pedro to disguise himself as Claudio and woo Hero, then turn her over to Claudio when she is won. The servant misconstrues the conversation to the point that he reports that Don Pedro will woo Hero for himself. The plans are also misconstrued by Borachio who reports to Don John that Don Pedro will woo Hero for himself and then give her to Claudio.

The misapprehension of the plans creates a chain of confusion, with each successive victim adding veracity to the mistake. Although the servant obviously has failed to perceive correctly through his senses, the possibility of this happening is never considered by those whom he tells what he has overheard. The tendency to trust the ability of the senses to function correctly in determining the truth is too strong to leave any room for doubt.

This proclivity for trusting the senses is further exploited through physical disguise. The first instance of using physical disguise for evil purposes occurs between Don John and Claudio at the masked ball. Each person has assumed the identity of another. Don Pedro,

under the disguise of Claudio, is wooing Hero, and the real Claudio is dressed like Benedick. Don John, who knows the true identity of Claudio behind his disguise, is able to manipulate the situation for his own purposes. Feigning to believe that Claudio is Benedick, he reveals that Don Pedro is in love with Hero and will marry her the same night. Claudio with complete faith in his appearance to obscure his true identity believes Don John to have spoken the truth since he thought he spoke to Benedick. Because of this, he believes him and despairs at his own stupidity for trusting Don Pedro. Thus he is led to abjure his knowledge of the real situation for someone else's evaluation of it on the basis of his faith in physical disguise to hide true identity. Claudio, pretending to be Benedick, thinks that everyone is fooled by his disguise. He lacks the awareness to realize that Don John has penetrated his appearance and is setting him up. In doing so, he shows us an important facet of his nature, he is highly susceptible to the practise of an illusion. Claudio relies heavily on appearances to provide truth.

Therefore, he is the perfect subject for the practise which follows. Based on physical disguise, he is led to believe that Hero talks to a lover through her open window. Claudio sees two people in disguise, but true to his nature never questions that their appearance might hide their true identities. Instead, he completely believes what Don John wants him to believe, that it is indeed Hero

at the window, and that she is indeed unfaithful. The consequences of this plot are spoken by Borachio,

....to misuse the prince, to vex
Claudio, to undo Hero and kill
Leonato. (II,ii,28-29)

These results are successful almost to the letter, for Claudio, on the basis of what he has misapprehended, denounces Hero before the entire congregation. He is perfectly willing to replace his previous evaluation of her with one based solely on what he has been able to perceive sensorily. He never questions the capability of his senses to perceive the truth. He doesn't recognize that what appears to be true may not be so. He reveals the incapability to distinguish appearance from truth when he says,

She's but the sign and semblance of
her honor. (IV,i,34)

and later,

.... Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? (IV,i,39-41)

and finally,

Out on thee ! Seeming ! I will write
against it: (IV, i,57)

Claudio is perfectly capable of realizing that appearance can obscure true nature, but he is not capable of separating the illusion from the real nature. His capabilities do not extend beyond the ability to recognize the problem. He cannot resolve it. What he here takes for "semblance" is actually true, and what he takes for truth

is actually semblance. This is an example of a person, through the use of physical disguise, being led to believe that another person has assumed a personality disguise when, in fact, she hasn't. Hero is a person whose appearance and true nature correspond, but Claudio has been duped into believing that they conflict. Because of Claudio's susceptibility to appearances, he is incapable of judging the evidence of Hero's unfaithfulness as false and is thus deceived by a man who has manipulated physical disguise for an evil purpose. The consequences are serious, because his subsequent actions destroy his happiness and slander an innocent girl.

There is another conspicuous presentation of misapprehension in Much Ado, and that is by Dogberry. He has illusions, or misconceptions, about his own value. His misconception is entirely self-generated. He says:

I am a wise fellow, and, which is more,
an officer, and which is more, a householder,
and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh
as any as is in Messina, and me that knows the
law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to;
and a fellow that hath had losses, and one
that hath two gowns and everything handsome
about him. (IV, ii, 82-88)

This is a highly inflated self image, inflated in the sense of the value he attributes to the qualities he enumerates and thus in the importance he ascribes to himself for possessing them. The total image is not one which coincides with what is presented of Dogberry in the play. His misapprehensions parallel the misconceptions of the other

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This is a highly inflated self image, inflated in the sense of the value he attributes to the qualities he enumerates and thus in the importance he ascribes to himself for possessing them. The total image is not one which coincides with what is presented of Dogberry in the play. His misapprehensions parallel the misconceptions of the other

characters and yet he stumbles onto the solution that untangles the illusions. What is conspicuous about the finding of the key to the solution is that it is an accident, a fortuitous occurrence over which he exerts no conscious control. His accidental encounter with the solution and the procedure he follows in determining just what he has found are much more in keeping, as an evaluation, with Dogberry's later statement,

O that I had been writ down an ass! (IV,ii,88)

Dogberry is a perfect example of comic mirth which can be described as being evoked by the sight of self-ignorance or self-conceit in a person who is powerless to inflict hurt on others. Dogberry keeps the play from moving out of the realm of comedy despite its serious overtones and consequences.

Therefore, in Much Ado, we can discern another slight shift of mood. The technique of physical disguise has now been examined in a serious vein, with the consequences of the misapprehension caused by the disguise becoming dire. We can certainly discern a more pronounced movement away from the comic, a change which is marked by a darkening comic vision and which will subsequently be replaced by a tragic one. This movement is noted by the presentation of the problem of distinguishing illusion from reality and the increasingly serious results of a failure to do so. There remains one more presentation of the problem with serious possibilities, but which remains

essentially comic, and that is in the Henry IV plays.

1-2 Henry IV

I have treated the Henry IV plays as a whole because many of the illusions created in the first part are not dispelled until the second. The techniques for creating illusion are personality disguise, physical disguise and personal misapprehension, or lack of self knowledge.

Almost everyone in the play, at some time, pretends to be something that he is not. There are as well several minor instances of illusion and misapprehension which parallel the central one, which concerns Hal and Falstaff. Hal assumes a personality disguise to hide his true nature, while Falstaff misapprehends his own value.

Prince Hal pretends to be a wanton in order to increase the value men will ascribe to his true nature when he finally exposes it. The fact that his actions are a pretense is established in his first soliloquy, in which he reveals his plan.

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him
(IH.IV,I,ii,221-26)

This passage is important because it explains why he consorts with men such as Falstaff and Poins; it provides a cover for his real nature, but more importantly, this statement establishes that it is his real nature which he will eventually expose. He doesn't plan just to replace one illusion with another when it is expedient to change his image. When he throws off the facade of scurrility, he will replace it with his true nature.

The purpose of his personality disguise is not to enable him to effect evil intentions, instead, it is politically motivated to increase the respect of his subjects when he sheds it in favor of his real nature. He says:

And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
(I, ii, 235-38)

Hal firmly believes that if he gives others cause to doubt his possession of a royal nature, they will appreciate it more when he proves himself to be truly noble. If others are allowed to take for granted that he will be a noble, competent ruler, they will be less appreciative of his royal qualities.

Hal's disguise is successful, as his true nature is misapprehended by all. Everyone believes Hal's actions reflect his real personality, not obscure it. Therefore, he is thought to be degenerate, lacking in courage, loyalty and honor. This misapprehension is demonstrated

in relation to the King and Hotspur, both of whom misapprehend Hal's true nature. Both base their evaluations on sense perception. They believe what they see of Hal's actions to indicate his real self. They trust their senses to reveal the truth when all they can apprehend are appearances. Thus the King says of Hal that he sees:

... riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. (IH.IV,I,1,85-86)

Of course these attributes do have that effect in the King's viewpoint, for indeed Hal is engaged in riotous and dishonorable activities. But what is apparent is that the King is unable to make the distinction between the appearance of riot and dishonor that Hal has chosen to assume, and his royal nature which his facade obscures. The King sees appearance and reality as one and the same. Because Henry accepts Hal's appearance of wantonness as truth, he misjudges Hal's loyalty. Reasoning that Hal's actions reveal his true nature, the King believes Hal to be a wanton. Therefore, Hal must not be truly noble, therefore, he must be disloyal. In this manner, the King reaches a false conclusion about his son's character and thus misjudges his integrity. The result of this misapprehension is a lack of faith in Hal as a supporter. In order to align Hal with himself against the rebels, the King makes a ploy to evoke Hal's sympathies. He says:

Why Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,
Which art my nearest and dearest enemy?
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear,
Base inclination and the start of spleen,

To fight against me under Percy's pay,
To dog his heels and curtsy at his frowns,
To show how much thou art degenerate.

(I.H.IV,III,11,122-28)

The King is voicing his evaluation of Hal's loyalty based on his judgement of Hal's true nature. The King believes that his accusations might indeed be possible and is attempting to prevent them from happening by confronting Hal with them in the hope that Hal can be dissuaded from joining with the rebels.

The ploy works, and Hal is persuaded to forsake a little of his facade and swear his loyalty to his father.

Do not think so; you shall not find it so:
(I.H.IV,III,11,129)

What is apparent here is that although Hal declares that his loyalties are with his father, he doesn't abandon his behavioral disguise completely. It is still not expedient to do so, and he continues to associate with his Eastcheap friends. And, although the King must trust him, he continues to have doubts about Hal's true nature. When, in the midst of the battle, Hal saves his father's life by vanquishing Douglas, the King is genuinely surprised. He says to Hal:

Stay, and breathe awhile:
Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,
And show'd thou makest some tender of my life,
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.
(I.H.IV,V, IV,47-50)

The King recognizes that his previous opinion of Hal's loyalty was inaccurate, but he is still unable to determine why. He cannot work backwards and say, Hal is

loyal, therefore he must be truly noble, therefore his degenerate behavior is a facade.

Instead, the King continues to believe his faulty evaluation of Hal as an unnoble, incapable ruler, and tries to mitigate the possible ramifications of endowing such a man with power. The King tells Thomas of Clarence to serve as a mediator between Hal and his other brothers, influencing Hal toward just rule and curbing his sourrility. But when Henry finds out that Hal is dining in Eastcheap he expresses his worst fears!

The blood weeps from my heart when I
do shape
In forms imaginary the unguided days
And rotten times that you shall look upon
When I am sleeping with my ancestors.
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,
When rage and not blood are his counsellors,
When means and lavish manners meet together,
O, with what wings shall his affections fly
Towards fronting peril and opposed decay.
(2H.IV, IV, iv, 58-66)

The King is still unable to discern an element of true nobility in Hal and thinks that Hal's reign will be characterized by debauchery. His failure to ascertain Hal's real character tempers his interpretation of all his son's actions. This influence is especially evident when Hal, thinking his father dead, removes the crown from his pillow. Henry's reaction is to think that Hal is anxious for his death and his own subsequent ascension to the throne. The King says:

Is he so hasty that he doth suppose
My sleep my death? (IV, v, 61-62)

Henry goes on to attest to his faulty evaluation of his son's nature when he says:

O foolish youth!
Thou seek'st the greatness that will
overwhelm thee. (2H.IV, IV, v, 97-98)

Henry clearly doubts Hal's ability to rule judiciously. The King goes on to touch on the problem of perception when he says:

Thy life did manifest thou lovedst me not,
And thou wilt have me die assured of it. (2H.IV, IV, v, 105-06)

Henry's mistake has been to take that manifestation as truth instead of the act it really is. / He continues to adhere to his opinion though, and says in the manner of a prophecy.

For the fifth Harry from curb'd license plucks
The muzzle of restraint and the wild dog
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent
O my poor Kingdom, sick with civil blows!
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants!
(2 H.IV, IV, v, 131-38)

Because Henry sees no difference between Hal's behavior and his true nature, he sees no chance for reform. The only effect power can have on Hal is to increase his capacity for unscrupulous behavior by removing all checks on his appetite.

Hal swears his love for his father and explains his actions saying that if what he says now is not true,

O, let me in my present wilderness die
And never live to show the incredulous world,
The noble change that I have purposed.
(2H. IV, IV, v, 153-55)

Therefore, Hal declares his intention to change his image, and confesses that it has been his plan all along.

What is ironic is that the disguise that the King has failed to perceive in Hal is one based on his own policy. The King fails to see his own philosophy regarding public relations being put into practice by his son. As Henry explains to Hal, if he had been so exposed to the common man he could never have gained their respect which enabled him to ascend to the throne. Instead, he says:

By being seldom seen, I could not stir
But like a comet I was wonder'd at:
(IH.IV,III,11,46-47)

And later,

Thus did I keep my person fresh and new;
My presence, like a robe pontifical,
Ne'er seen but wonder'd at: and so my state,
Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast
And won by rareness such solemnity. (IH.IV,III,11,55-59)

The King believes in keeping himself hidden from public view, allowing only occasional glimpses of himself. This, he thinks, enhances his worth by making him a rare, not a common object. To allow himself to be seen too often would debase his value by surfeiting the public with his presence, and thus removing any aura of distinction. This is exactly the precept that Hal follows in hiding his true nature under a behavioral disguise. When his real personality is exposed, it will be better appreciated if its existence had been doubtful. Therefore, the King, who knows well the value of creating an impression fails to recognize the

same policy being implemented by his son, and thus fails to perceive Hal's true nature.

The King's misapprehension of Hal is based on an inability to perceive where his loyalty lies and an inability to determine his capacity for judicious action. This type of misapprehension is also applied to Hotspur. Based on Hotspur's actions in battle, the King determines that he is a truly noble, loyal man. Hotspur has defeated Douglas and taken prisoners while fighting for the King. In hearing of these exploits, the King says:

Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin
In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so blest a son,
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue,
Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant;
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her
pride. (IH, IV, I, 1, 78-83)

As in his estimation of Hal, Henry assumes that behavior defines character. Hotspur's actions signify valor and loyalty, therefore he is valorous and loyal. It is true that Hotspur is a valiant warrior, just as it was true that Hal was engaged in scurrilous activities, but the King repeats his mistake of considering loyalty to go hand in hand with outward show. Just as he assumed Hal's loyalties to be against him, he considers Hotspur's to be with him. Indeed, they are with him, but not to the degree that the King believes. Because he misjudges the degree of Hotspur's loyalty, Henry takes it for granted that it will not change. He makes too many demands of Hotspur and thus alienates him.

The King sends for Hotspur to explain why he has

not given his prisoners over to the King. Hotspur's are acceptable, but the King still questions Percy's request for the King to ransom Mortimer. The King calls Mortimer a traitor and Hotspur comes to his defense, citing his brave actions in battle against Glendower, the King's enemy. Finally, the King oversteps himself, accusing Percy of lying for Mortimer. Henry then demands:

But, sirrah, henceforth
Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer
Send me your prisoners with the speediest
means
Or you shall hear in such kind from me
As will displease you (IH.IV,I,iii,118-22)

The King has made the mistake of thinking Hotspur's loyalty unconditionally rendered. He has erroneously assumed that Hotspur will remain his constant ally no matter how much he is abused by Henry. The misapprehension is not created by Hotspur, he doesn't deliberately try to deceive anyone. The fault lies with Henry and his inability to perceive true natures. The fact that Percy was a valiant warrior on the King's behalf was construed to mean that he would always be so.

Hotspur's reaction to the King's demand is immediate and passionate, proving the King's estimation of his loyalty wrong, and setting in motion the events leading to the confrontation between Hotspur and Hal.

An if the devil come and roar for them,
I will not send them. (IHV,I,iii,125-26)

Hotspur, like the King, is a victim of misapprehension. He misapprehends Hal's true nature, first

like the King does, equating behavior with character. Thus he dismisses Hal's worth as an opponent. This misapprehension leads to another, perhaps more dire one, Hotspur over-estimates his own chances for success. Because he disregards the value of Hal as a warrior, Hotspur becomes confident in his own abilities to achieve victory. Based on the false conclusion thus reached, he is optimistic, believing in his own eventual victory no matter what obstacle surfaces to mitigate his chances. Maintaining the idea of his certain success, Hotspur interprets each setback as a sign of victory. He is incapable of adjusting his vision of reality to comply with the facts, therefore, when the facts no longer support his contention of victory, he refuses to relinquish his vision of success and what might once have been a reality, now becomes an illusion.

This proclivity to misinterpret the facts and reach an unsupportable conclusion is evident when Hotspur learns that his father will not join forces with him. At first he recognizes the effect on possible victory that Northumberland's absence will have.

Sick now! droop now! this sickness doth infect
The very life blood of our enterprise.
(I.H.IV,IV,1, 28-29)

Then Hotspur begins to offer interpretations of the setback as an omen of success.

A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off:
And yet, in faith, it is not; his present want
Seems more than we shall find it: were it good
To set the exact wealth of all our states
All at one cast? (I.H.IV,IV,1,43-47)

Hotspur reasons that it is best to keep a reserve force rather than to venture into battle with the entire limit of armies available, for then, if they were defeated it would be final. He finally concludes that:

I rather of his absence make this use:
It lends a lustre and more great opinion,
A larger dare to our great enterprise,
Than if the earl were have; for men must think,
If we without his help can make a head
To push against a kingdom, with his help
We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down.

(IH.IV,IV,1,75-82)

Hotspur has reasoned inaccurately, misinterpreting the facts to suit his own needs. Instead of recognizing the impossibility of success without Northumberland, Hotspur refuses to abandon his dream of victory and sees Northumberland's absence as enhancing the victory he will achieve. Therefore, Hotspur is incapable of distinguishing reality in terms of what he knows of the facts, substituting an illusory dream, clinged to despite evidence of its impossibility. After manipulating the facts by interpreting them to suit his own needs; i.e. to support his original contention of victory even though it is no longer possible, Hotspur makes the final mistake of believing his own utterances. This belief brings about his eventual defeat because he insists in going into battle inadequately supported. Once he has accepted the inevitability of his victory, Hotspur disregards further setbacks and refuses to adjust accordingly. The fact that many of his men have not arrived and others are tired does not deter him from launching into battle. He becomes blind to everything

except his unfounded belief in his ability to succeed. He becomes a slave to his illusion.

The impossibility of converting that illusion into reality occurs when Hotspur meets Hal and they fight. Still believing in his evaluation of Hal's lack of ability and courage in battle, Hotspur confronts the Prince assured of victory and concerned only that there won't be much honor in defeating a known wanton

for the hour is come
To end one of us; and would to God
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine!
(IH.IV,V, iv, 68-70)

With Hal's victory and Hotspur's death the misapprehensions by and about these two men are made apparent. The man thought by all to be devoid of noble honor, courage and loyalty defeats the man thought by all to possess these qualities. Therefore, it is established that Hal truly does possess a royal nature. Hotspur's misapprehension of Hal's nature results in his death, and that death dispels any lingering illusion about victory for the rebels. The unfounded confidence and optimism which gave rise to Hotspur's actions are shown to be illusory, and the folly of bending the facts of reality to support a false conclusion is demonstrated. Hotspur meets his death because he is a victim of both appearances and a belief in his own capabilities which is not verified by the facts.

There are other instances of characters pretending to be something they are not which should be noted.

Northumberland seems to be a loyal father and courageous devotee to the rebel cause. He is among the leaders of the rebel troops and his support is integral to them. But when the time comes for him to lend more than his verbal support to Hotspur's group, he reneges. He sends a letter excusing himself on the grounds of sickness. That this sickness is a pretense becomes evident in the remarks of Hotspur's widow when Northumberland is preparing to lead his troops to give assistance to Archbishop York. The content of her remark is foreshadowed by Rumour, who says:

..... old Northumberland
Lies crafty-sick: (2H.IV, Induction, 36-37)

Lady Percy says to Northumberland:

O yet, for God's sake, go not to these wars!
The time was, father, that you broke your word,
When you were more endear'd to it than now;
When your own Percy, when my heart's dear Harry,
Threw many a northward look to see his father
Bring up his powers; but he did long in vain.
Who then persuaded you to stay at home?
There were two honours lost, yours and your souls.
(2H.IV, II, iii 9-16)

Obviously, he was not sick when he refused to go to his son's aid. He failed to keep his word and proved himself dishonorable and cowardly. He, of course, fails again by refusing to go to the Archbishop's aid. Therefore, Northumberland's semblance of courage and honor is a facade that does not correspond to his real nature. The consequences for failing to distinguish between Northumberland's appearances and his true nature have been defeat for his allies, marked also by their death.

At the end of the battle with the Archbishop, Lancaster and Westmoreland deceive Hastings and Mowbray by pretending to be something they are not. Lancaster and Westmoreland feign a restored friendship with the rebels. Lancaster agrees to redress the rebels' grievances and implores them to disperse their troops

Lanc. ... If this may please you,
Discharge your powers unto their several
counties,
As we will ours: and here between the
armies
Let's drink together friendly and embrace,
That all their eyes may bear those tokens
home
Of our restored love and amity.
(2H.IV, IV, ii, 60-65)

Hastings and Mowbray accept this adjuration at face value and don't consider the possibility of an ulterior motive for the Prince's instructions. Because of this faith in what they perceive to be his intentions, they dismiss their troops and leave themselves vulnerable to Lancaster's reprisal. Left with no defense, Hastings and Mowbray are executed. Because they have failed to discern the real motive behind the appearance of friendship, they forfeit their lives.

The battle with the rebels provides yet another twist on the use of physical disguise. Blunt and several others have disguised themselves as the King in order to protect the real Henry's life. The rebels, coming upon them in battle, fight with them in the belief that they are fighting the King. The rebels are unable to perceive the true identity of the disguised man and are thus drawn

into battle with the wrong opponent. But for Blunt, the consequence of assuming the disguise is death at the hands of Douglas. Therefore, although the motive for assuming the disguise is a noble one, to protect the King, the consequence for it is death. Death is the penalty for successfully deceiving the rebels into believing the illusion created by the disguise. The disguise does not afford physical protection for the wearer, but places him in jeopardy. Therefore, its success, not the failure of the disguise to hide true identity, has dire consequences for the perpetrators.

The introduction of Rumour at the beginning of 2 Henry IV serves to re-emphasize the misapprehensions which are occurring on all levels of the play. Rumour is the epitome of illusion. Rumour creates misapprehension by substituting what is false for the truth. Through the use of rumor, truth is obscured and false reports are believed. The ubiquitous success of Rumour to compel belief attests to the overwhelming tendency of humans to accept at face value those things offered to the senses for perception. The human condition is not to delve past the surface and glean the truth behind it, but to accept the outward show as reflecting, not obscuring that truth.

Obviously, almost everyone in the play is involved in deception and misapprehension and Falstaff is no exception. His misapprehension takes two forms. Like everyone else, he misapprehends Hal's true nature and, like Hotspur,

therefore overestimates his own value in relation to Hal. But Falstaff is also guilty of overestimating his own value in relation to himself. Falstaff's picture of himself, like Dogberry's, is one that does not coincide with what can be discerned of his true nature. He sees himself as being a valuable member of Hal's entourage, indeed an indispensable one. At the same time, he pretends to possess qualities that he is, in fact, devoid of, such as courage. Falstaff flaunts those characteristics he does not possess, he brags about his courage when, in fact, he isn't courageous. Falstaff is an imposter. Therefore, the nature of his practice is to pretend to possess non-existent qualities. This practice makes him a classic alazon character.

As has already been discussed, the nature of Hal's practice is to assume behavior which is beneath his stature and thus to hide his good qualities under the guise of scurrility. This self-deprecating practice makes Hal a classic eiron character and thus sets Hal and Falstaff in opposition.

In classical drama the self-deprecating figure and the imposter figure formed the basis for the comic action as they struggled for dominance. This is the case between Hal and Falstaff. The result is the dominance of Hal. This struggle is in direct relation to their powers of apprehending truth, and can be examined in this light.

Hal is able to pierce the illusion of Falstaff's

assumed practise and know him for the coward he is. Hal is not deceived by Falstaff's appearances, therefore, he is in touch with reality. Falstaff, on the other hand, believes Hal's behavior to reflect his true nature. He succumbs to the illusion Hal has created and thus is not in touch with reality. Because each man bases his actions on his perception of truth, Hal is eventually successful and Falstaff is not, because ultimately illusion is dispelled and replaced by reality.

The final confrontation between the two occurs in the rejection scene. It is here that Falstaff is at his most inflated, and also where he is most subject to his misapprehensions. His misapprehensions have taken the form of believing Hal's behavior to correspond to his real nature. Thus Falstaff miscalculates his own importance to the Prince. He reasons that since he has been Hal's mentor in wantonness, he will continue to exist influence on him. He cannot see the possibility that Hal's reign as King will be different from his previous behavior. In his typical way, Falstaff has made extravagant promises with the thought in mind that Hal will grant his every wish. Therefore, believing that things are as they seem to be, Falstaff approaches Hal just after his coronation. His mode of address is familiar, reflecting his appraisal of the situation and their relationship, and Hal wastes no time in letting Falstaff know that things are not what they seem to be.

I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!
I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swell'd, so old and so profane;
But being awaked, I do despise my dream.
(2H.IV,V, v, 51-55)

The King refers to his previous relationship with Falstaff as a dream, something not real. His present condition is like an awakening, a return to reality. Hal has not assumed another behavioral disguise, he has, as he said he would, revealed his true nature. He continues,

Presume not that I am the thing I was;
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turn'd away my former self;
(2H.IV,V,v,60-62)

He is saying that no one should believe that he truly is what he seemed to be. His previous behavior was only a pretense, and doesn't correspond to his true nature. Again, Hal is re-stating that what is shown now in his behavior is his true nature.

Presume not that I am the thing I was
(2H.II,V,v,60)

This can be paraphrased as, "don't believe that my true nature corresponds to the pretense I showed." Hal carefully controlled the misapprehension of his nature and now it is necessary to reveal that fact. Falstaff, however, can not comprehend the fact that what is past was an illusion, and his relationship with Hal was the product of his own mind, based on his misapprehension of the situation.

Therefore, Hal, a character who has been in touch

with reality throughout the plays, emerges from the confrontation victorious. Falstaff, who is a victim of misapprehension about both himself and others, is unable to penetrate the illusion thus created, and is defeated.

The problem of distinguishing illusion from reality has been presented in these plays in a semi-comic vein. Like Richard III, Hal assumed a personality disguise for basically political purposes. The difference is that Richard had a nature that was truly evil under a facade of admirable actions, while Hal hid a basically admirable nature under a guise of deplorable behavior. Therefore, it is not Hal's death that restores hope and order to England, it is his shedding of his disguise. Again, the problem of the failure to perceive true natures and intentions has brought death and destruction, but those who have died were those who would depose the King and thus prevent the reign of Hal. With Hal's ascension to the throne, the words of Vernon are realized:

If he outlive the envy of this day,
England did never owe so sweet a hope,
So much misconstrued in his wantonness.
(IH.IV,I,11,67-70)

From this semi-comic mood, Shakespeare moves rapidly into the realm of tragedy, where his darkening world vision becomes evident in the treatment of illusion.

III. In Hamlet, Othello, Timon of Athens, and Cymbeline, the progression of the technique of creating illusion is extended to include the assumption of an aberrant behavior, not just to hide true nature, but to give the appearance of insanity. The behavioral disguise becomes then, a psychological disguise, creating misconceptions about the mental state of the perpetrator, not just misconceptions about his nature. Another twist to the problem of self-misapprehension is the extension of the misconception to include not faulty evaluation of character, but a lack of knowledge of self-identity.

The movement into the tragic realm necessarily implies completely devastating consequences for the failure to perceive truth. Shakespeare's deteriorating world view is quite evident in the examination of the particular theme of illusion and reality. From the optimistic presentation of the early comedies, the mood sinks to one of despair at man's limited capabilities in determining truth. In Timon of Athens the problem is not just one of sensory deception followed by its consequences. The characters in that play deal with the realization of both the limited capabilities of the senses to determine truth and the possibility of vast differences between what appears to be so and what really is. The play deals primarily with coping with the knowledge of human susceptibility to illusion. With the admission of the problem of distinguishing reality, the mood accompanying that admission goes from tragedy to

despair.

From the depths of despair, the mood again rises to the realm of comedy and a return to the optimistic as the treatment of illusion is again a light one and the results of misapprehension are basically amusing. The ultimate result is a resolution conducive to happiness of the complications brought on by misconception.

HAMLET

In Hamlet, there are two major and two minor displays of behavioral disguise. Claudius and Hamlet are the most important characters who assume disguised behavior, and the Queen and Laertes provide examples of the same sort of disguised actions on a less important level.

The central problem of distinguishing reality from illusion revolves around Claudius and Hamlet. Claudius adopts the familiar pattern of assuming admirable behavior in order to hide an evil nature. Hamlet, on the other hand, displays a behavior meant to reflect madness. The purpose of his disguise is to create the misapprehension in others that he is insane. In this manner, he hides his rational, sane powers of deduction and covers up the fact that he is conducting an investigation of Claudius. It is, therefore, as important for Hamlet's actions to be ascribed to madness as it is for them to just be observed.

Claudius is introduced as a concerned, loving

father-figure, worried about Hamlet's protracted period of mourning for his father. He urges Hamlet to:

throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. (I,11,106-12)

Claudius does not suspect at this point that the reason for Hamlet's melancholy is the hasty marriage of Claudius and Gertrude. All he can do is recognize a pattern of behavior and ascribe its cause incorrectly. When Hamlet purposefully alters his behavior more drastically, the King is at a loss to explain it. Therefore, he becomes intent on finding out the cause of Hamlet's madness. Claudius continues to show concern for Hamlet, sending for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to find out the cause of his insanity. In doing so the King expresses his evaluation of Hamlet's behavior and his own susceptibility to the deception.

Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles what it was. (II,11,4-7)

The King has observed Hamlet's actions and has believed them to reflect insanity. Claudius, although involved in presenting false appearances himself, does not recognize them in Hamlet.

Claudius reveals his guilt and his practise in hiding it through a facade of admirable behavior in an aside after a comment by Polonius.

Pol. 'Tis too much proved-that with devotion's
visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give
my conscience!

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
(III,1,47-53)

Obviously, Claudius' concern for Hamlet and the rest of
his honorable behavior is an act assumed to hide his evil
nature.

The King moves from this admission of his own
behavioral disguise to the recognition of Hamlet's. After
observing Hamlet with Ophelia, the King says:

Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melaucholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: (III,1,170-75)

Therefore, Claudius recognizes Hamlet's behavior for what
it is, an act, deliberately assumed for a specific purpose.
He also suspects that Hamlet has knowledge of his guilty
deed and fears what will happen if Hamlet's suspicions are
confirmed. Because of this, Claudius makes plans to send
Hamlet to England and have him killed upon arrival. He
covers up his real plan with the expressed purpose of the
trip being for Hamlet's own good.

Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus

From fashion of himself. (III,ii,179-83)

So, still feigning concern for Hamlet, but really fearing his own peril, Claudius plots Hamlet's death. When the plot fails, the King is not deterred, he simply makes another plan. This plan, of course, is to have Laertes and Hamlet fence and either have Hamlet pricked with a poisoned sword, or drink from a poisoned cup.

Strangely enough, Hamlet, who has long since known the King's true nature doesn't suspect any foul intent behind the King's arranging the match. He goes into it fully believing that all parties are as honorable as their word. The result of the King's plan to kill Hamlet is wholesale destruction, leaving all the principles dead.

Before I draw any conclusions about the final result, let us turn our attention to Hamlet. At the beginning of the play, Hamlet is melancholic over the marriage of his mother to Claudius. He does not know of his father's murder. He is unable to express his disapproval of the marriage and thus pretends that his behavior is due to mourning. He reveals his practise in an exchange with his mother. She states that everything that lives must die and that Hamlet knows it, therefore,

Q. Why seems it so particular with thee?
Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes
of grief,

That can denote me truly: these indeed
seem,
For they are actions that a man might
play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of
woe. (I,ii,76-86)

Hamlet enumerates all the outward appearances of mourning which he has assumed and then exposes them for what they are, an act. He says that the assumption of them does not truly denote his feelings or real nature. He recognizes the difference between seeming and being. He admits to working a practise on the members of the court in his behavior. He has assumed a pattern of behavior that hides his true concern. He has forced the others to ascribe his melancholy to his father's death instead of his mother's marriage.

When the Ghost reveals the truth about his murder to Hamlet, the Prince realizes that Claudius is not what he seems to be. He is not a loving uncle and king, he is a murderer. Hamlet expresses his recognition of Claudius' practise and his true nature when he says of the King:

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, - meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
(I,v,106-108)

Realizing completely the value of a behavioral disguise, Hamlet knows that it is his knowledge of the crime and his ensuing investigation for substantiation of the charges which must be hidden. In order to accomplish this deception, he must cause doubt about his rational faculties. Therefore, he assumes the appearance of madness. Hamlet

expresses his intention to do this when he says to Horatio,

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soerer I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put antic disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
.....

..... to note
That you know aught of me: (I,v,169-173, 178-79)

This deception will afford Hamlet the protection from suspicion that he needs, while buying him time and allowing him proximity to the court.

The deception is quite successful for a time, convincing the King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia and others that he is mad. However, they are obsessed with pinpointing a cause for it. They believe their evaluations of his nature based on the apprehension of his behavior. Hamlet acts mad, therefore, he must be so, therefore, there must be a reason. While everyone is busy trying to determine that reason, Hamlet is free to act according to his plan of investigation. Other characters, like the Abbess in Comedy of Errors, are engaged in substantiating a madness that does not exist. As Polonius says:

and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
(II,11,100-103)

Polonius comes close to identifying the problem, but works from a false conclusion. If he were capable of doubting his own senses he could recognize the effect as a disguise and deduce that there must be a reason for its assumption.

He cannot doubt what he sees as being true and thus must stumble around trying to logically explain an illusion. An example of this process at work is offered by Polonius who observes that Hamlet's responses to him are not altogether irrational. He says:

Though this be madness, yet there is
method in't (II,ii,208-09)

And later,

How
pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that
often madness hits on, which reason and sanity
could not so prosperously be delivered
of. (II,ii,211-14)

Because Polonius has already assumed Hamlet to be mad, he sees all of Hamlet's actions as supporting that assumption. Therefore, instead of reasoning that Hamlet's replies are too cogent for a madman's capabilities, Polonius prefers to attribute their cogency to madness. This is a case where a foregone conclusion tempers what is perceived to serve as substantiation.

It is within the efforts to determine the cause for Hamlet's madness that the King discovers that it is an act. Claudius reasons differently in this instance from Polonius. He hears Hamlet's remarks and realizes that a truly mad person could not utter them. Therefore, once reaching that decision, the King re-evaluates his previous conclusion. To him the evidence of Hamlet's comments has contradicted his first conclusion, thus he alters the conclusion to fit the facts, not the reverse, as does

Polonius.

This realization by Claudius, that Hamlet's madness is a facade, places the two in confrontation. Their behavioral disguises are at cross purposes. Claudius' hides his guilt, while Hamlet's disguise enables him to discover it. Therefore, in order for either to succeed, the other must be exposed and eliminated. The method is for each man to continue to act as though he is still deceived by the others' practise. If the other person remains secure in his knowledge of the success of his assumed appearances, he will be unguarded and can be further deceived.

To this end, Hamlet arranges for the players to re-enact the murder scene and Claudius plots Hamlet's murder. Hamlet's device works and Claudius reveals his guilt, but Claudius' first attempt at Hamlet's death fails. Undeterred, he tries again. As has already been noted, Hamlet fails to suspect foul play by Claudius and Laertes. Perhaps the reason is that he still believes that his madness is accepted as real, since he offers it as excuse to Laertes. Whatever the reason, Hamlet accepts the invitation to face off with Laertes.

The result is the death of all the principle characters and the loss of the kingdom, in that it is taken over by Fortinbras. Two characters, Claudius and Hamlet, each of whom has assumed a behavioral disguise bring about in their confrontation, death and destruction. The penetration of the disguise of each man by the other has

brought calamity along with the realization that appearances do not always correspond to truth.

The Queen and Laertes offer examples of appearances not corresponding to reality on a level of secondary importance. (Their deceptions are not central to the theme of illusion, but serve to emphasize those deceptions perpetrated by Claudius and Hamlet. The Queen is not the doting and true wife to Hamlet's father that she appeared to be when,

She would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: (I,ii,143-45)

but rather an inconstant woman who married her husband's brother within a month of his funeral. The Ghost describes her as:

....my most seeming-virtuous queen. (I,v,46)

Her virtue is a facade, an act. Although it was perhaps true at the time, her love and dotage were proven false by her subsequent actions following her King's death. The behavior she displayed did not correspond to her true nature which was revealed after her husband's death to be not virtuous, but deplorable in its inconstancy.

Laertes is a lord, a dutiful son and loving brother when he is introduced. He is concerned that Hamlet is using Ophelia and toying with her. He warns her to disregard Hamlet's advances and protests of love. When he returns from France after his father's death he is desirous of revenge, and when his sister dies too, he grieves

heavily, indeed distractedly. But in contrast to the picture of Laertes as the loving and honorable son and brother, is the agreement he makes with the King to murder Hamlet. When the two duellers meet, Laertes maintains his gentlemanly demeanor and accepts Hamlet's apology. Under this guise of friendship and honor, Laertes murders Hamlet with a poisoned sword.

Ophelia serves to emphasize the nature and extent of Hamlet's feigned madness just as Silvia served as the means to demonstrate the inconstancy of Proteus by contrast with her constancy. Ophelia truly goes mad. Her actions do indeed reflect a diseased mental state. She is totally irrational, making incoherent statements and singing nonsensical songs. Her behavior contrasts with the pointed rejoinders of Hamlet while he is pretending madness and serve to emphasize that his behavior is a facade. His actions give the appearance of madness while obscuring the sane reasoning he is engaged in. Ophelia's actions hide nothing; they only demonstrate her truly insane state of mind.

In Hamlet, there is no final sense of hope or happiness. The results of deception and misapprehension are tragic and final. The main characters have both assumed behavioral disguises and succeeded in penetrating the one assumed by the other. The consequences of the penetration have been tragic. In Othello, the susceptibility of man to illusion is emphasized with tragic consequences ensuing

from the inability to determine true nature from assumed behavior.

OTHELLO

In Othello the technique for creating illusion is the assumption of a personality disguise to hide true nature. Iago pretends to be loyal and honest when, in fact, he is a diabolical schemer. His practice is the only one in the play and therefore the emphasis of the play is on the susceptibility of humans to deception through the reliance on the senses to provide truth. The success of Iago's appearances in evoking trust while he is involved in double crossing those who trust him is frighteningly overwhelming.

Iago establishes his method of operation immediately in a discussion with Roderigo. He says of Othello:

I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
(I,1,42)

Iago expresses his intention to work his evil plans on Othello. He further comments on the nature of some servants:

Others there are
Who, trimmed in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them and when they have lined
their coats
Do themselves homage: these fellows have
some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself. (I,1,49-55)

Obviously, Iago not only admires those servants who pretend loyalty while working against their masters for their own gratification, he aligns himself with them. He expands on his own position by adding:

In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge; not I for love and duty,
But seeming so for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.
(I, i, 58-65)

Therefore, the nature of Iago's disguise is enumerated. He intends to feign loyalty and honesty to Othello, while he seeks revenge from him. His assumption of admirable appearances is for his own purposes, purposes which are evil. As he states, it is not fitting or prudent for him to have his actions reflect his true nature. He must appear to be that which he is not.

After this admission of his practise, he goes about implementing his plans. He reveals to Brabantio the marriage of his daughter to Othello. Iago then goes to Othello and assumes his facade of being his loyal ancient. Iago says of Othello:

Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. (I, i, 155-58)

Iago leaves no doubt as to the authenticity of his loyalty to Othello. It is a total fabrication. His true feelings for Othello are those of hate, but his actions lead Othello to believe in Iago's love for him. Knowing that Othello is

subject to his false appearances of honesty, Iago realizes his potential power over his master. He says:

He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
(I,iii,396-97)

Obviously, Iago realizes that the greater Othello's trust in him, the more remote is the chance of suspicion and thus the degree of susceptibility increases. As long as Othello doesn't suspect Iago's motives are different than the love he expresses, Iago can make him believe what he wants Othello to believe. He evaluates Othello in this manner:

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
And will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are. (I,iii,405-08)

Iago judges Othello to be a man whose appearances denote his character and who thinks that it is the same with all men. If this is so, Iago will use it to his advantage by manipulating Othello to serve his own purposes.

Iago's purpose is to obtain revenge by putting
Othello

At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgement cannot cure. (II,i,310-11)

To this end he convinces Othello of Desdemona's adultery with Cassio. He does this by re-enforcing his own position in Othello's eyes which lends credence to his remarks about Desdemona and Cassio. He professes that it is love for Othello which compels him to expose them, when in fact, it is his hate for Othello which compels Iago to invent

the slander. He pretends a reluctance to divulge his knowledge of the situation, but he does so in a way which will pique Othello's curiosity and cause him to press Iago into telling him what he supposedly knows.

It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts. (III,iii,152-54)

This feigned reluctance does two things. It increases Othello's trust in Iago, and it lends weight to what Iago eventually tells him.

Iago very cleverly uses the substance of his own method of deception to convince Othello of Cassio's and Desdemona's guilt. At the same time, like Richard III, in calling attention to the possibility of false appearances in others, he calls it away from himself. Iago says of Cassio:

Men should be what they seem;
Or those that be not, would they might seem
none! (III,iii,126-27)

This statement convinces Othello that Cassio's appearance of innocence substantiates his guilt. He says of Desdemona:

She did deceive her father, marrying you;
And when she seem'd to shake and fear
your looks,
She loved them most. (III,iii,204-06)

And later:

Why, go to then;
She that, so young, could give out such
a seeming,
To seal her father's eyes up close as oak-
(III,iii,208-10)

By adhering to his behavioral disguise and pretending to be loyal and honest when in reality he is disloyal and dishonest, Iago convinces Othello of his truthfulness and love and makes him believe the lie about Cassio and Desdemona.

But it is Othello's own proclivity to deception that enables Iago's practice to be successful. Othello is a man who judges others by his own standards. As Iago has observed, Othello equates appearance with truth. Othello relies on what he perceives through his senses to reveal what is true. This reliance makes him particularly vulnerable to deception based on presenting false appearances, because he is unable to recognize the disparity between outward show and inner truth when the two don't correspond.

Othello judges Iago to be exactly what he appears to be:

A man he is of honesty and trust: (I,iii,285)

This judgement is a logical one based on what Othello has perceived about Iago through Iago's actions. Unfortunately, in basing his judgement on actions, Othello reaches a false conclusion because Iago's behavior contrasts with his true nature. Once the conclusion is reached, however, Othello is incapable of changing it because to do that he would have to doubt his own basis of judgement, sensory input. Othello not only cannot doubt the validity of sensory apprehension, he insists on it as a substantiation of truth. When Iago casts aspersions on Desdemona's fidelity, Othello says:

I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt,
prove; (III,iii,190)

Iago responds by urging Othello to

Look to your wife; observe her well
with Cassio; (III,iii,197)

Iago knows the possibility of misapprehension of physical evidence and thus urges Othello to depend on it for proof of the allegations. Othello co-operates by demanding:

Villain, be sure thou prove my love
a whore,
Be sure of it; give me the ocular
proof; (III,iii,359-60)

His downfall is that Iago provides him with exactly what he demands; physically apprehendable evidence. The fact that the proof is an unsubstantial manipulation of events is unknown and unknowable to Othello, who believes what he sees and trusts his senses to determine truth. To Othello, if it looks true, it is true. He is completely reliant on sensory input as a basis for judgement as is clearly demonstrated. Therefore, Othello accepts the evidence Iago presents to him, flimsy and circumstantial as it is, as proof of Desdemona's illicit affair with Cassio. Never once does he doubt Iago's honesty or the validity of what he apprehends. Othello is a man at the mercy of his own limitations in determining truth. The result is that he believes Desdemona's guilt and kills her. When the truth is finally revealed to him, through the explanation of events by Emilia and the confession of Iago, it is too late to stop the destruction caused by his misapprehension.

But Othello is by no means Iago's only victim. His deceptive appearance is believed by everyone he deals with. Cassio evaluates Iago's nature as being reflected in his behavior and says:

I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest. (III,1,41-42)

Cassio is drawn into Iago's diabolical scheme by believing that Iago is trying to set things right with Othello. In fact, Iago has arranged for Cassio's dismissal and plots his murder. Cassio, however, is unable to discern the true intentions of Iago and thus falls victim to his evil scheme.

Roderigo is deceived by Iago into believing that he accepts and delivers jewels to Desdemona who will supposedly take Roderigo for her lover. The truth is that Iago has stolen the jewels for himself and plots Roderigo's murder, finally stabbing him himself.

Emilia completely believes that her husband is the true and honest man he pretends to be. When Othello tells her that it is Iago who has told him of Desdemona's infidelity, Emilia refuses to believe him. She knows the truth about Desdemona and thus cannot believe that Iago would deliberately lie. She says to him:

Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man:
He says they told'st him that his wife was false:
I know thou didst not, thou'rt not such
a villain: (V,11,172-74)

It is only Iago's admission of guilt that forces her to believe what Othello has told her. Emilia too has taken

Iago's appearances as truth.

The result of everyone's misapprehension, with the exception of Cassio who is only wounded, is death. The realization of the limited capabilities of the senses to determine truth and their reliance on the senses to provide truth is truncated before it can be put to use. Most of the characters are killed as a result of their misapprehension of Iago's true nature. Only Cassio escapes the fate. For the others, their complete reliance on the apprehension of appearances to determine truth has made them susceptible to the evil practise of Iago. This susceptibility, the tendency of humans to act as these have done, is emphasized by their total deception to Iago's practise. The consequences are completely tragic, resulting in death for most of Iago's innocent victims.

The possibility that misapprehension can have devastating results has been presented along with the unfortunate tendency of humans to misapprehend. The mood behind the use of illusion has sunk to a low point of pessimism about the human capability of determining truth and the results of the failure to do so. There remains another presentation of the theme in the tragic realm in Timon of Athens

TIMON OF ATHENS

In Timon of Athens false appearances are created by

behavioral disguise. But here the disguise is not assumed by a main character. Timon is only a victim of misapprehension. The deception and recognition of illusion occurs early in the action. Therefore, the discovery of the difference between illusion and reality is not the resolution of the play, it is part of the complication. The emphasis of the play is the reaction of Timon to the knowledge that what appears to be so isn't really true. In his reaction, Timon is contrasted with two other characters who also recognize the gap between appearances and truth, Apemantus, and Alcibiades.

The deception itself is perpetrated by the lords who take advantage of Timon's generosity. They feign true friendship and loyalty when in fact they are motivated by greed and selfishness. The duality of their existence is demonstrated by their contrasting actions when they themselves are receiving gifts from Timon and when they are asked to give financial aid to Timon.

While they stand to gain from Timon's favors, the lords are almost obsequious in their thanks and praises. Lucilius says on receipt of a large gift:

Humbly I thank your lordship: never may
That state or fortune fall into my keeping,
Which is not owed to you! (I, i, 149-51)

When Timon bestows presents on other of the lords gathered at his house for a feast they reply:

Second Lord - With more than common thanks
I will receive it.
Third Lord - O, he's the very soul of bounty!
(I, ii, 215-16)

First Lord - We are so virtuously bound ...
Sec. Lord - so infinitely endeared - ...
First Lord - the best of happiness,
Honour and fortunes, keep with you,
Lord Timon! (I,ii,232,34,36,37)

Timon accepts these replies as evidence of true love and friendship. He responds:

I take all and your several visitations
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends,
And ne'er be weary. (I,ii,224-27)

A truer evaluation of the pledges of love made by the lords is offered by Apemantus:

O you gods, what a number
of men eat Timon, and he sees 'em not! It
grieves me
to see so many dip their meat in one man's blood;
and all the madness is, he cheers them up
too. (I,i,40-43)

Apemantus sees clearly the disparity between what the lords appear to be and what they truly are. He also sees Timon's inability to discern their true natures and his policy of encouraging their greed with his generosity.

Timon's belief in his judgement of the lords' friendship is evident in his trust in their help when he is in need. He says to Flavius:

Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience
lack,
To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart;
If I would broach the vessels of my love,
And try the argument of hearts by borrowing,
Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use
As I can bid thee speak. (II,ii,184-89)

And later,

... you shall perceive how you
Mistake my fortunes; I am wealthy in my friends.
(II,ii,192-93)

What actually becomes apparent is not the true friendship the lords offered but the emptiness of their oaths of love. Those who couldn't praise Timon's generosity enough when it was profitable to do so now respond with the following:

Lucullus - ... good boy, wink at me, and
say thou sawest me not. (III,1,47-48)
Lucius - ... tell him this from me, I
count it one of my greatest
afflictions, say, that I cannot
pleasure such an honourable
gentleman. (III,11 61-63)
Sempronius - ... But now return,
And with their faint reply this
answer join;
Who bates mine honour shall not
know my coin. (III,111,24-26)

Their responses are all negative, and with the hearing of them, Timon is forced to admit that he has misapprehended the true natures of the lords. Their previous exclamations of friendship are meaningless since they are not backed up by actions. Timon's mistake was to base his judgement on outward show, taking it to signify inner nature. In truth, the pretense of love was just a facade to hide the true natures of the lords for the purpose of greed. Timon must connect the former actions of the lords to his generosity, and admit that his misapprehension has allowed him to be used. Once this connection is made, Timon must live with the fact that people can be deceived into believing illusions. What appears to be true is not necessarily so, and furthermore, the gap between appearances and reality can be immense.

Timon reacts to this knowledge with a disillusionment

in mankind which plunges him into bitterness and despair. But he is not the only character who recognizes the disparity that is possible between appearances and reality, therefore, his reaction can be viewed in relation to theirs.

Apemantus' disillusionment with mankind is present from the beginning of the play. It is he who chides Timon for his participation in a society of flatterers by allowing them to take advantage of him. Apemantus recognizes the falseness of the lords' friendship and despises them for it. He says:

... the fellow that sits next
him now, parts bread with him, pledges the breath of
him in a divided draught, 's the readiest man
to kill him: it has been proved. (I,ii,47-50)

Perhaps the greatest evidence for Apemantus' belief that nothing should be trusted to be what it seems to be is his grace before meals:

Grant that I may never prove so fond,
To trust man on his oath or bond;
Or a harlot, for her weeping;
Or a dog, that seems a-sleeping;
Or a keeper with my freedom;
Or my friends, if I should need 'em.
(I,ii,65-70)

Apemantus' reaction to the knowledge of disparity between appearance and reality is to rail at society from a position of uninvolved superiority. He refuses to belong to the society he condemns, and makes no pretense to cover his feelings. His reaction is one of scorn and alienation.

Another alternative is offered by Alcibiades. He is forced into recognition of false appearances by the Senate who refuse to grant mercy to a friend of Alcibiades

whom he pleads for. Their refusal brings him to the realization that they are not the great men they seem to be. He desires revenge for their actions. His reaction is one of anger and rebellion.

Still another pattern of behavior is displayed by Timon after he comes to realize that things aren't necessarily what they appear to be. Timon does not have the saving grace of a superior attitude like Apemantus, or a desire to correct the situation as does Alcibiades. He goes from not being able to discern evil in men to not being able to discern any good. His conviction in the total evil of mankind is expressed when he says:

..... all is obliquy;
There's nothing level in our cursed natures,
But direct villainy. Therefore, be abhorr'd
All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!
His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains:
(IV, iii, 18-22)

His acerbity includes himself, everyone he knows and the whole universe, which he views as separate elements at war with one another in a parasitic order parallel to the one he belonged to. Timon's reaction to the knowledge of the difference between appearance and reality is bitterness and despair. His despair finally overwhelms him, and Timon seeks release in suicide.

In this play, after the presentation of tragic consequences following a failure to determine true nature, the theme has been extended to include an examination of the results of living with the disillusionment that must attend

the realization that things may not be what they seem to be, and that humans can easily be fooled by appearances. With Timon's suicide, the mood behind the theme of illusion and reality is at its most tragic. The result of realizing the limitations of our senses to determine truth through apprehending outward show as well as the reliability of mankind on that apprehension as the basis for judgement, has been a despair so oppressive that the only escape has been a willing refuge in death. But Timon's isn't the only reaction in the play, or even the final one. Out of the three possibilities presented as reactions to disillusionment, alienation, rebellion, and despair, the play ends with the triumph of rebellion. Alcibiades returns to Athens victoriously, and the play ends on a note of hope.

Perhaps Shakespeare chose rebellion as his own answer to living with the problem of deceptive appearances, because he leaves the tragic realm with its dire consequences for misapprehension and returns once more to the presentation of the theme in the comic realm.

CYMBELINE

In Cymbeline there is a return to the essentially comic in that, in the end everything is happily resolved. There are the much used methods of personality and physical disguises to hide true nature or identity, as well as a new twist to the technique of causing misapprehension.

This development involves Guiderius and Arviragus, who are kept ignorant of their own identities.

The personality disguises are presented by pairing each perpetrator with a highly susceptible victim. The Queen deceives Cymbeline and Iachimo deceives Posthumous.

The Queen assumes the appearance of a loving, sympathetic mother figure intent on helping the two lovers, as well as the appearance of a loving, faithful, loyal wife. Her facade is only impenetrable to Cymbeline. The lovers see through her false appearances immediately, as do other characters. To Imogen she says:

No, be assured you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most step-mothers,
Evil-eyed unto you : (E,1,70-72)

And to Posthumous:

..... For you, Posthumous,
So soon as I can win the offended king,
I will be known your advocate: (I,1,74-76)

They are not deceived by her pretense, however, and are thus not susceptible to her evil intentions. Their knowledge of her true nature protects them from being made pawns in her plot. Imogen calls her

.... a step dame false; (I,vi,1)

Other characters discern the Queen's true nature beneath her appearances. Cornelius says:

I do not like her. She doth think she has
Strange lingering poisons: I do know her spirit,
And will not trust one of her malice with
A drug of such damn'd nature. (I,iv, 33-36)

One of the lords of the court calls her:

.... a crafty devil ... (II,1,57)

And goes on to describe Imogen's situation:

Alas, poor princes,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endurest,
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd
A mother hourly coining plots, (II,1,61-64)

Importantly, those characters who correctly perceive the Queen's true nature are thus able to mitigate the power she can exert in bringing about her evil plot. Imogen flees from her sphere of influence and Cornelius substitutes sleep inducing drugs for harmful ones. But the lord pinpoints the major success of the Queen's practise; all that she does is believed by Cymbeline. He takes her actions at face value; she acts loving and loyal, therefore she is. This acceptance leaves him vulnerable to her influence since he must believe her motivation is his best interest. He follows her advice and brings about war with the Romans. He doesn't perceive her true nature in time to prevent the carnage which ensues, indeed he has to have her practise pointed out to him by the Queen herself in her dying words. That Cymbeline is susceptible to appearance is evident, but it is emphatically demonstrated by his response to the Queen's dying confession of feigned love. He says:

She alone knew this;
And, but she spoke it dying, I would not
Believe her lips in opening it. (V,v,40-42)

And later,

Mine eyes
Were not at fault, for she was beautiful;
Mine ears, that heard her flattery; nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming; it had been
vicious

To have mistrusted her: yet, O my daughter!
That it was folly in me, thou mayest say,
And prove it in thy feeling. (V,v,63-69)

Cymbeline, in this last passage, states the problem quite accurately. The failure was not of his senses to correctly perceive, they functioned properly, taking in all they were capable of taking in; appearances. To doubt the Queen's manifestations of love would have been to distrust appearances. Cymbeline was incapable of this distrust. He relied on his senses to provide truth and their capacity for doing so is severely limited. Only when true nature is reflected by outward behavior can they reveal truth. When there is a contradiction between appearance and reality, the senses can perceive only the appearance, leaving reality effectively obscured and safe from view. Unfortunately, it is a rare occurrence for a person not to depend on sensory input to provide a valid basis for judgement. This is a fact recognized by every successful villain and that brings us to Iachimo.

Iachimo pretends to be an honorable nobleman, and succeeds in convincing everyone, especially Posthumous, that he is. Posthumous trusts him to conduct the trial of Imogen's virtue honestly, which he no doubt intended to do. However, when Iachimo fails to win honorably, the trust Posthumous has in him enables him to insure his victory by foul means without suffering suspicion. Since Iachimo has convinced Posthumous of his honesty through his appearance of being so, he knows Posthumous will accept

his word as the truth. Posthumous' tendency to accept things to be what they appear to be is emphasized by Iachimo's success in convincing him of Imogen's adultery on the basis of circumstantial, physical evidence. He provides a physical description of Imogen's bedchamber, which Posthumous admits could have been acquired through hearsay, and a bracelet. After only a token argument, Posthumous gives in and admits Imogen's guilt:

O no, no, no! 'tis true. (II,iv,106).

Philario challenges Iachimo's assertions and for a brief moment Posthumous half heartedly joins him, but relents with Iachimo's revelation of the placement of Imogen's mole. At this piece of shabby but convincing evidence, Posthumous relents entirely and admits Iachimo's victory. Posthumous can't bring himself to disbelieve what is being shown to him.

Iachimo's practise is successful because Posthumous is incapable of recognizing the disparity between Iachimo's show of honor and his evil nature beneath. He is equally unable to deny the credibility of sense perception as a criterion for judgement and thus recognize the flimsiness of Iachimo's evidence. Posthumous is totally susceptible in all areas of deception and is thus a perfect victim. Like Cymbeline, nothing but Iachimo's own confession can convince Posthumous otherwise of the judgement he has reached about Imogen.

In addition to this perfect victim, there are two

other characters who are completely deceived, but in a manner which further stresses the extent of human susceptibility. Guiderius and Arviragus are kept from knowing their own identities. Their misapprehension about themselves consists of the fact that they simply don't know who they are. This treatment illustrates two things, first, the extent to which people can be fooled by appearances, and second, the power of true nature to assert itself. The second treatment is a continuation of the theme touched on in Richard III and 1,2 Henry IV, namely, what constitutes true nobility?

The truth which is being kept from the boys is that they are of royal birth, sons to the King, not to Belarius. Everything they have ever known has told them that Belarius is their true father and that they are peasants. Yet their actions do not always correspond to what they are supposed to do. Belarius says:

How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!
These boys know little they are sons to the king;
...
In the cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them
In simple and low things to prince it much
Beyond the truck of others. (III,iii,79-80,83-86)

Their true natures, which, obviously correspond to their true identities as princes, assert themselves in their behavior. They exhibit qualities of nobility naturally, even though they are not appropriate to their lifestyle. Obviously, nobility is not a question of outward appearances, witness Cloten who is a man with all the

accoutrements of honor and nobility and none of the qualities themselves. True nobility, therefore, lies within, it is not defined or guaranteed by its vestiges. As has been previously asserted, true nature cannot be denied forever, it must assert itself, and thus the facade the two boys aren't even aware of begins to crack under the advance of their true selves.

With the manifestation of the inherently possessed qualities of nobility, Guiderius and Arviragus lay claim to their rightful places in the order of things. The actual assumption of those places is brought about at the play's end and is precipitated by the use of physical disguise.

Physical disguise in Cymbeline is of secondary importance to the presentation of illusion. Imogen poses as a boy, Cloten masquerades as Posthumous and Posthumous disguises himself as a Roman soldier. The disguises succeed in hiding the identity of the wearer, Imogen is brought into contact with her two lost brothers who believe she is the boy Fidele. Cloten is assumed by Imogen to be Posthumous, but ironically, it is his dead body that deceives her into that mistake.

Perhaps the most important feature of the physical disguises is that their exposure in the end and the ensuing discovery of everyone's true identity illuminates the problem of distinguishing truth from appearances and thus forces the characters to recognize their susceptibility to deceit. Importantly, the discovery of truth restores

happiness, peace and good will and thus resolves the play on a happy note.

In this play, Shakespeare has risen from the gloom of despair to demonstrate a faith in humanity to be able to deal with the problem of distinguishing reality from illusion. Each time an evil character assumed false appearances to aid his or her evil plan, someone discerned the perpetrator's true nature in time to mitigate the effects of the deception. Neither the Queen, nor Cloten, nor Iachimo was allowed to wreak total havoc. Perhaps the message is that when reality is finally filtered out of illusion, it will have been done so in time to save ourselves from total destruction.

This paper has demonstrated a progression in Shakespeare's use of illusion and reality. The examination of the theme has centered around the basic problem of distinguishing reality from illusion, or truth from appearances. The nature of the difficulty rests in the limitation of the senses to perceive truth. The senses, by their very nature, apprehend only appearances; only what is visible or audible etc. They cannot discern what lies beneath the appearances; real identity, true nature, specific motivation. Because of this inability, the senses are incapable of determining truth if that truth is not reflected in outward show. When there is a discrepancy between what appears to be and what really is, the senses apprehend only the facade of appearances. Thus, judgement based on this sense perception will not be accurate since it will be based on something that is not true but only appears to be so. Unfortunately, and this is the salient point revealed in this study, humans all too often rely on what they apprehend sensorily to determine truth. Because of this tendency, people are highly susceptible to illusion, or appearances which contradict facts..

This susceptibility is what is developed in the plays here examined. The development is noted in two forms, technical and philosophical.

In the first chapter of this paper, the most prominent techniques for creating illusion were established;

physical and behavioral disguise. The method for creating illusion and thus causing misapprehension, began with the relatively simple, slapstick device of look alike which was entirely beyond the control of the characters. The device was expanded to include deliberately assumed physical disguises which hid identity, and purposefully assumed behavioral disguise which concealed true nature. The two methods were entirely in the control of the characters who adopted them.

The effects of these devices were to cause misapprehension on the part of other characters. Thus in the case of the deliberately assumed disguises, the victims of the misapprehension were to a great extent manipulated by the perpetrator of the disguise.

Within this section there was also a move to incorporate the audience into the illusion by making them susceptible to appearances. With the recognition by the audience of a susceptibility to illusion, the problem of distinguishing the real from the unreal was extended beyond the confines of the stage to include the whole world.

Another perspective on the problem was examined by pitting illusion and reality against each other as opposing forces, thus demonstrating the folly of trying to construct and live in an illusory world, or one that denies or contradicts the facts of existence. But the total effect was comic, no dire consequences resulted from a failure to

correctly perceive truth and the plays ended happily.

In the second chapter, the techniques for creating illusion remained essentially the same, physical and behavioral disguise, with the addition of self-misapprehension or lack of self-knowledge which resulted in an inaccurate self appraisal. However, the tone behind the use of disguise and the effects of misapprehension took on serious ramifications. Behavioral disguises were assumed for serious purposes, as with Hal, and evil purposes as with Richard. Physical disguises were used to bring about serious consequences.

The susceptibility of humans to deception was emphasized with the possibility of the results of the deception being serious. However, although a move toward the serious was made, the plays remained essentially comic in that the grave consequences of misapprehension were short lived. Eventually things were set right again and the plays ended optimistically.

The one exception to this rule was in the case of Romeo and Juliet, when once again illusion and reality were pitted against each other. The folly of trying to create and perpetuate an illusory world was re-established, but the results of the triumph of reality were death and destruction.

In the final chapter the techniques for creating illusion remained the same, physical and behavioral disguise used to produce misapprehension, but the tone

behind the use of the disguises altered. This alteration took two forms. The motivation behind the assumption of disguise became evil, and the consequences tragic. The failure to perceive truth resulted in death, destruction, chaos and despair. The task of living with the knowledge of the disparity that is possible between appearances and truth was faced up to and dealt with, the ultimate answer being suicide. The problem of illusion and reality reached its lowest possible point, but it was not a point of no return.

After taking the problem to the depths of tragedy, Shakespeare returned to the point from which he began and presented the problem in a comic vein. The misapprehension of truth in Cymbeline created complications, but not grave ones. Ultimately things were righted again and the effects of misapprehension were basically happy.

This examination has established one fact: humans rely on their senses to determine truth and these senses are inadequate to do so. The senses can perceive only appearances, and appearances can either reflect or obscure truth. If there is a discrepancy between appearances and truth, our ability to perceive only appearances place us in jeopardy by making us susceptible to deception.

Within the consequences of succumbing to deception are a number of possible effects. The effects can be innocuous or very grave. If we accept the fact that they

will be grave most often, then we must fall into despair at our incapacibilities. But if we opt for the possibility of the effects being truncated before they become tragic, by forces within or beyond our immediate control, then we can accept our incapacibilities and function in spite of them.

With Shakespeare's cyclical return to the realm of comedy, he has come full circle in his presentation of the problem, and seems (note the word) to have opted for the latter possibility.

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