

*Much Ado About Nothing* Class Discussion Notes

Beatrice - she is very witty and a tease. She doesn't mind laughing at herself, but she can be brutal towards others. Teasing can get out of hand. It can also be a cover-up for insecurities in a person. Others seem not to mind her quick wit, but when is enough enough?

Benedick - He is also fond of teasing and joking. He puts women down, does not trust their faithfulness, and says he will never marry. Is it okay to paint everyone with the same broad brush?

Claudio - he is young and apparently impressionable. He is in love with Hero, but does not seem to know her well enough to trust her completely. So when she is accused of being unfaithful, he believes the lie and embarrasses her at their wedding. Trust is something that must be earned and takes time. How quick are you to judge a situation without giving the person you trust the benefit of the doubt?

Hero - she is depicted as being very sweet and innocent. But she is willing to play along at being dead to incite a reaction from the one who judged her guilty. Doing the wrong thing for the right reason still makes it wrong.

Don Pedro - he is very close to his soldiers and is willing to use deceit to help Claudio win Hero's heart. Once again, does doing the wrong thing to help someone make it right? Using deceit even for something good can backfire in a major way as it almost did in the play.

Leonato - he is the well-respected governor and most events take place in his home. He loves his daughter, Hero, but he is quick to believe the worst that is being said about her.

Don John - feels inferior to his half brother, Don Pedro. He is envious and jealous and very unhappy. And these traits cause him to want to hurt others. He schemes to ruin Claudio and Hero's happiness. Envy and jealousy are very dangerous traits. They can contribute to destructive actions towards yourself and others. Being miserable and sullen, for whatever reason, is really a choice. Taking responsibility for your own life goes a long way to improving your situation.

Borachio - he is not trustworthy and is willing to take part in a deception to hurt others. Even if the deception does not involve you personally, taking part in the deception is destructive to your character. Trust is damaged if not destroyed and takes time to earn back if it ever is.

Conrade - places his loyalty with someone who is only out to hurt others for his own satisfaction. You must choose your friends wisely

The play suggests that men should not trust women and women should just accept that men are not trustworthy. Trust is part of the foundation in any relationship whether among family or friends. It can be easily damaged but is worth repairing.

Thanks to Jackie Peterson for reading the play and for creating our class discussion page.