



As You Like It: A Dream Play

May 21, 2016 · Volume 20 (2016)

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Vogel LB, Friedman RC, Cruise EJ. As You Like It: A Dream Play. PsyArt Journal. 2016 May 21 [last modified: 2016 Jul 15]. Edition 1.

Abstract

The title *As You Like It* suggests satisfaction of the audience's fancies. We propose that the play's construction incorporates the strategy of dreams, in which a dream wish is disguised by dream work: here the "wish" is the consummation of Rosalind and Orlando's mutual desire, and the dream work includes elision of logic, magical thinking, displacement, condensation, and symbolization. The audience become dreamers, and the improbable plot the dream. The dream-like qualities of the play are enhanced in the Forest of Arden, the realm of snake and lioness and fairy-tales, a territory that evokes wishes and fears. Shakespeare's use of condensation accounts for some of the variability in interpretation and perception of the plays.

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PsyArt-2016-Article-8-L-Vogel