

In society, intellect is placed higher than imagination; in the education system, intelligence is valued over creativity; and in general, logic is privileged over passion. This binary is prevalent in most of all modern institutions and has deeply influenced the way humans interact with each other. Logically biased people act cautiously and realistically, and they rarely ever allow their imagination to overcome their reason; this outlook on life, more often than not, ensures a safe and secure fate. On the other hand, passionate and ambitious behaving people usually result in a path filled with turmoil, conflict, and pain. Yet, along with all the negative consequences of this irrational behavior, drastic change – either for better or for worse - in the surrounding environment is inevitable. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, and George

Lucas's Star Wars, the binary of logic versus passion is present and is imposed upon the characters within. They are influenced by hegemonic agencies, ethical ideologies, and personal conscience, to act through reason and logic, rather than passion and emotion. But, there are characters that oppose this binary and discard their logical method of thinking. These characters, although they do not necessarily achieve their goal entirely or manage to affect the environment in a positive way, do, in fact, change something. It is only when one substitutes their rational thinking for the radical, can any change occur in a society, a country, or a galaxy. However, where these emotionally driven characters meet their downfall, is when their extravagant methods by which they proceed overcome their logical thinking entirely, and they exceed the boundaries by which they should behave. Therefore, I intend to deconstruct the logic – passion dichotomy in these three texts through proving that, when and only when, a character can retain a stabilized balance of both logical and passionate behavior, can a positive change in the surrounding environment arise. Coinciding, when a character either acts too logically or too passionately, there is either no change, or there is too severe a change in a negative way, resulting in a loss of opportunity, or a loss of stability and safety.

There are certain aspects of personality that affect the way characters behave. Passionate behavior is the result of hatred, fear, curiosity, love, or desire; logical behavior is caused by fear, anxiety, weakness, or wisdom. These are not the only attributes by which one may be influenced; however, they are the ones upon which I intend to focus. It is evident that several of these influences are present in the causes of both passionate and logical behavior. This is the result of different characters dealing with controversial issues and situations differently, a direct result of varying personality traits. As well,

environmental influences such as youthful occurrences, disgust for specific dealings, and external intervention, all spur a character to travel a path of passionate conduct. These factors can contribute to the severity of one's emotional behavior, and the more the exposure to such agencies is present, the more severe the effect on the individual is. Although characters may not have the opportunity to avoid contact with these factors, they do determine the way they will deal with them. Therefore, I secondly intend to prove that characters are not born as either passionate or logical beings, but are influenced, through time, to become such through their own thoughts, personal decisions, and actions.

The dichotomy of passion versus logic has been present throughout all of time. Dating back to Biblical time periods, when Adam and Eve first ate from the forbidden tree, they were acting out of passion for the fruit, whereas they should have been thinking logically and understood that there was a reason for which God forbade that tree. When Alexander the Great pressed through Asia, even when all his counselors advised him not to, he was acting through emotion rather than reason. When the World Trade Centers were under attack from Bin Ladin's terrorist regime, it was a direct result of passionate hatred for the United States. These are all prime examples of passion overcoming the logicity, and even today, there are countless cases where emotion overpowers reason. In the educational system, most of the science based teachers influence students to think logically, and even some of the subjective subjects put a bias on logic. In government, political leaders persuade the citizens to act through reason when a problem arises, mainly through petitioning, lobbying, or formal complaints. In society, humans have been encouraged to think before they act, implying that all actions should be based on

logic rather than emotion. One cannot help but wonder why this binary has been constructed in such a way, when it is obvious that the most notable events in history have been the result of men and women acting out of passion. I would argue that this binary is a control mechanism enforced by authoritative figures who do not wish to lose their secure position in society, government, or any form of hierarchical structure. For example, teachers do not want their students acting through emotion, because they need a structured environment where students do not speak up or misbehave when something occurs they may not agree with. Principals and administrative figureheads also want the inhabitants of the school (whether they be teachers or students) to act through reason, because conflicts that arise in schools should be solved through logical and rational methods, not through passionate and emotional confrontations, since this could lead to harmful altercations. Governments want the population to behave in a civilized and reasonable fashion, for the same reason as the educational system. People in power do not want to lose their power; therefore, they manipulate laws and influence citizens, in order to maintain a structured system. Radical people who act through passion tend to cause the most commotion, through working strikes, protesting, and irrational behavior such as hunger strikes. Government powers try to avoid having such problems arise, so they have enforced logical and rational behavior such as the previously mentioned methods. Finally, society has also used this binary beneficially. Men and women who are pleased with their financial, social, and political status are afraid of change; as a result, they subliminally persuade other people to act through logic, because they realize passion leads to revolution. It is clear that this dichotomy is a form of control, and when one opposes this dichotomy, hierarchical disarray is the result.

Passionate behavior can have many consequences – some for the better, some for the worse. Passion is a very powerful attribute when attempting to create change, because it is only in a state of passion, where one can entirely disregard their inhibitions and completely devote themselves to one specific objective. Logical thinking, on the other hand, tends to stimulate doubt and fear in the individual, and prohibits them from attempting any sort of revolutionized change. However, it is very difficult to restrain ambitious, passionate behavior. Oftentimes, individuals will become overcome with a sudden surge of extravagant passion, and as a result, will overshoot their goal, and create more change than originally intended. Only when one can control their emotion, through tapping into a small amount of logical, restrictive thinking, can the consequences of passionate behavior be controlled.

In each text, there are two characters which will be focused upon – in Hamlet, Horatio and Hamlet are two men that behave in two very different ways. They are both surrounded by the same events, the same conflicts, and the same corruption; however, they do not react in the same manner. Originally, they both behave in very rational and logical methods, but as the plot progresses, they begin to separate in their similarities, as Hamlet becomes much more passionate, and Horatio becomes quite passive and conducts himself in a very logical way. As the play draws to an end, Hamlet generates the most change, and affects the environment most drastically, whereas Horatio has virtually no effect whatsoever on the plot of the play.

As the play opens, we are given our first introduction to Horatio, and are immediately shown his logical path of thinking. The ghost has been sighted around the

palace of Elsinore, and Horatio has been brought along by Marcellus to view this supernatural spectacle. Naturally, logical thinkers do not believe in the supernatural, because it exceeds the boundaries of empirical science. We are told that “Horatio says ‘tis but [their] fantasy’, / And will not let belief take hold of him / Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of [them]:” (1.1.23) which leads us to believe that Horatio only believes what he can see and prove – a common trait of logical thinkers. A possible reason as to why Horatio acts this way is that he is afraid of such a mystic anomaly: “it harrows me with fear and wonder” (1.1.43). Fear is a prevalent factor in causing one to behave logically. A juxtapositioned perception of the situation is given when Hamlet first hears about the ghost. Instead of trying to justify such an abnormality, Hamlet instantly becomes overwhelmed at the thought of his father’s appearance and is consumed with curiosity. He repeatedly asks questions about the ghost, and Horatio replies with answers, one after another. This constant stream of questions shows much impatience, suggesting that Hamlet is in an excited state, a sure sign of passionate behavior. When he meets the ghost, he does not question the validity of such a sight; rather, he quickly asks the ghost to speak. As the ghost beckons Hamlet to follow, instead of questioning whether or not it would be safe to follow and logically analyzing the situation, he decides to follow right away. Contradicting this decision, Horatio pleads with Hamlet not to follow, because he has already calculated the risks and logically concluded that there are too many variables that could potentially harm Hamlet.

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,

That beetles o’er his base into the sea,

And there assume some other horrible form,  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
 And draw you into madness? (1.4.69-74)

This passage shows Horatio's opinion on not only this occurrence, but also pertaining to irrational decisions in general. When he juxtapositions "reason" with "madness", it is evident that he considers madness to be the only alternative of reason. This clearly gives us a deeper view into Horatio's character and contributes to our overall perception of him. Following this passage, Horatio states that Hamlet is "desperate with imagination" (1.4.87), which now clarifies Hamlet's character, showing the reader that Hamlet is driven by his imagination.

Although Hamlet appears to be passionate and ambitious at the beginning of the play, it is evident that he is all talk and no action. While talking to the ghost he states: "Haste me to know't; that I, with wings as swift / As meditation or the thoughts of love, / May sweep to my revenge" (1.5.29-31). He may have the intention to be passionate; however, his scholarly background has restricted him to act in such a way. Originally, he does very little to follow his vow, yet as the play progresses, more and more factors contribute to him releasing his rationality, and adopting a more irrational behavior pattern. There are two main factors that spur Hamlet to disregard his reason, and assume a more emotional disposition. Firstly, Hamlet's utter distaste for his mother's quick abandonment of his father has erupted within. Once he is made aware that King Claudius, his uncle and newly appointed step-father, was the conspirator behind his father's death, Hamlet is overwhelmed with bitter hatred for both his mother and Claudius. This anger continually builds up within him, yet he does not act upon it. In

Act 2, Scene 2, after the players leave along with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet laments on his inactivity, and resolves to change his logical, patterned behavior.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!  
 Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
 But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
 Could force his soul to his whole conceit  
 That from her working all his visage wann'd;  
 Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,  
 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
 With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing! (2.2.546 – 552)

He is amazed at how an actor, who has no anger, passion, or emotion fueling him, can behave so passionately, imaginatively, and emotionally, while Hamlet himself, who *does* have anger, passion, and emotion, cannot even manage to act upon his motives because he is a “coward” (2.2.567). This revelation within him starts a trend of passionate action, and he begins his plot to ensnare the king.

Secondly, Hamlet is finally influenced by his obscene murder of Polonius. An accident, yes, however this action allows Hamlet to see, within himself, that he has entirely abandoned all logic, and the only option he has left, is finally unleash his imagination. During this scene, after Polonius has been killed, and the ghost has entered, Hamlet admits to the ghost that he has “lapsed in time and passion” (3.4.109). Towards the end of the scene, Hamlet comments on the events that have passed, and subtly reveals that “this man shall set [him] packing”. Of course, on the surface he appears to be saying that “I have killed Polonius, now I must leave or I will suffer severe consequences”;

however, this acts as a metaphor by suggesting that Polonius has spurred Hamlet to action. Overall, these two factors eventually compel Hamlet to unveil his underlying passion, as he finally commits his final murder, along with causing his own. Before the duel, Hamlet and Horatio have one final confrontation. Horatio is trying to convince Hamlet that he will lose the bout. Hamlet, on the other hand, explains he does not care if he dies, “since / no man has aught of what he leaves, what is’t to leave / betimes? Let be” (5.2.213-215). This conversation is one final illustration of the evolution of Hamlet’s character. At the beginning of the play, Horatio logically attempted to persuade Hamlet not to follow the ghost, due to danger. Hamlet did not see any danger, therefore he appeared to act ambitiously, yet deep down, he knew there was no real risk. Coinciding, Horatio is once again trying to convince Hamlet not to proceed; Hamlet once again rejects this rational suggestion, and he results to pursuing his passion of killing Claudius. This time, however, Hamlet understands that there is a threat, but he does not alter his motives, because he has completely forsaken his logical thinking, and has entirely evolved into a passionate, emotional, and irrational character. Hamlet, although he invoked his own downfall, was able to complete his goal of revenge, through passionate and imaginative behavior.

After the commotion of the duel has settled down, and Hamlet has died, – but not without completing his goal of revenge - Horatio is left on scene. Horatio, now, has the opportunity to cause drastic change, because no one is left in power. Of course, Fortinbras has stormed in, but Horatio is the only one who knows the truth behind the events that have occurred. Hamlet has asked Horatio to tell of what has happened, and the people are listening. It is not often when one has such control, and Horatio could

have manipulated the audience to suit his goals; however, being the logical, pathological man he is, Horatio complies with Hamlet's wishes and does not invoke any change.

In Fahrenheit 451, the contradicting nature of Guy Montag and Professor Faber is quite notably clearer than that of Hamlet and Horatio. It is obvious that Faber is the passive, logical character, whereas Montag appears to be the ambitious, passionate character. These two very different men work together throughout the text, creating upheaval, turmoil, and destruction along the way; however, through passionate and irrational behavior fueled by curiosity and desire, they – specifically Montag - are able to inflict significant change in the environment around them and ultimately affect the outcome of the novel's events.

Montag is a member of an oppressed society. He is continually force-fed these radical ideologies that influence men and woman to believe that literature is a destructive ideal. This nonsense has caused the society to become like zombies, where free intellectual thought is nearly erased, and the general passion for knowledge is lost. Without literature, the people are not able to express themselves, nor are they able to learn from other people's experiences. Montag is not only oppressed by this ideology, he unwillingly supports it. He is a fireman who destroys the books; however, throughout the course of the book, he realizes the absurdity of his profession and contests it. And, as if the elimination of literature from society isn't enough, the replacement source of intellectual income is through wall-sized television screens, where images are blasted at the viewer along with incredible sound. This form of entertainment blinds the spectator from the fact that nothing of value is being shown to them, and they are being bombarded with visual gibberish, which has no beneficial outcomes. Montag, through time, notices

this nonsensical fashion of social behavior and begins to question it. His curiosity for what the books contain rises as he experiences several influential events. First off, his interaction with Clarisse McClellan spurs his critical thinking processes, and their conversations have a catalytic effect on the evolution of his continually growing curiosity. He has never been exposed to such imagination, and her bizarre behaviors appeal to his desire for knowledge. After one conversation, when she states that she “like[s] to put [her] head back, [like this], and let the rain fall in [her] mouth” (23), he becomes quite curious and finally “tilt[s] his head back in the rain, for just a few moments, and open[s] his mouth” (24). His behavior continues like this, as he often ponders about the things that Clarisse comments on. Secondly, his experience at the old woman’s house, where she chooses to die along with her books, astonishes him and he cannot help but wonder what could inspire someone to behave like that, and his curiosity rises even more. He realizes that “there must be something in the books, things [he] can’t imagine, to make a woman stay in a burning house” (51). While he is in the ladies house, his curiosity gets the best of him, and he steals a book: “Montag had done nothing. His hand had done it all, his hand, with a brain of his own, with a conscience and a curiosity in each trembling finger, had turned thief” (37). He is consumed in a state of passion. His logical nature screams at him to put the book back, but his underlying passion drives him to keep it. Lastly, Beatty’s speech about the destructive power of books finally causes Montag’s curiosity to overflow. He says, “I’m going to do something...I don’t even know what yet, but I’m going to do something big” (65). He cannot bear to not know what is within the books, and he starts to read them and is fascinated. His curiosity turns into desire – desire for more knowledge. I would argue,

that at this point, Montag's character evolves from a logical, rule-following member of society, to a passionate, defiant rebel, who has placed the ideal of reclaiming literature over the value of his own life.

Soon after, Montag contacts Faber, and we are introduced to this very intelligent, but cowardly old man, who has, for a long time, envisioned a change in society where books would be encouraged and supported. Montag and Faber share the same motives; however, Montag has been exposed to much more graphically influential stimuli, whereas Faber is fueled by nothing other than his memory of life before the censorship of literature. These different pasts cause the men to behave differently, but through the aid of Montag's ambition, Faber is able to put aside his cowardly fears, and control Montag through logical thinking.

When Montag first meets Faber at his house, Faber is quite fearful and cautious. His logical conscience warns him of the potential danger that Montag presents, but he eventually overcomes his fear and allows Montag to enter. After calming down, Faber admits that Montag is "looking at a coward" (82). He explains that he could have changed the way things occurred back in the past; however, he was much too afraid to speak up. Throughout the conversation, we learn that Faber is a logical man, who always calculates the risks involved with any actions. When presented with the notion that Montag and himself could still invoke change in the world, his logical conscience sends of a warning signal, alarming him of the possible danger of such a proposition.

"I can *get* books."

"You're running a risk."

“That’s the good part of dying; when you’ve nothing to lose,  
you run any risk you want.” (85)

This passage is quite similar to the interaction between Hamlet and Horatio at the end of the play, where Horatio is trying to convince Hamlet that he is “running a risk” by fighting Laertes. Both Hamlet and Montag have put an ideal ahead of the cost of their own life; therefore, they are able to look past the risk because the potential result outweighs the sacrifice. Faber does not feel the same way, because he doesn’t want to get “burnt for [his] trouble” (85). He continually shows that he values his own life more than the ideal, and therefore, he cannot possibly achieve any revolutionary outcome.

After Montag explodes with passion and sets Captain Beatty on fire, along with the Mechanical Hound, he quickly makes his way towards Faber’s house. As soon as he reaches the house, he realizes he has made a grave mistake. However, Faber contests that “At least [he was] a fool about the right things” (130). Faber is realizing that Montag had it right all along – that he should have relied on passion rather than logic.

“I feel alive for the first time in years ... I feel I’m doing  
what I should’ve done a lifetime ago. For a little while, I’m  
not afraid. Maybe it’s because I’m doing the right thing at  
last. Maybe it’s because I’ve done a rash thing and don’t  
want to look the coward to you.”

Not only does he realize this, but he also agrees to help Montag. However, he still is controlled by his logical rationale, therefore he does not put himself at risk; rather, he simply assists in putting Montag at risk. Perhaps if he were to have journeyed with Montag, he could have provided another powerful element to the band of rebels on the

railroad. Nevertheless, however, he remains at his house, and most likely suffers the fate of all the other inhabitants of the doomed city. Deconstructing this occurrence, one cannot help but notice the irony in how the seemingly logical decision of remaining within the security of one's home *should* be safer than the passionate decision of leaving and pursuing an ideal, but in this novel, the exact opposite occurs, where it is safer to leave the confines of isolation than to remain, as Faber is destroyed by the bombing, and Montag survives outside of the city.

In the movies Star Wars: Episode 1: The Phantom Menace (E1), Episode 2: The Attack of the Clone (E2), and Episode 3: The Revenge of the Sith (E3), the development of Anakin Skywalker is portrayed through numerous events, where he conducts himself in several different manners. His passionate persona evolves through exposure to influential factors such as fear, anger, desire, and pain, and as a result, he leads a destructive path through which his catastrophic downfall is summoned. From a mere slave, to arguably the most powerful Jedi in the galaxy, Anakin Skywalker, due to several key factors, evolves from a compassionate and innocent child, to an utterly evil and oppressive tormenter. Contrarily, Obi-Wan Kenobi is introduced as an ambitious, passionate student, yet transforms into a rational, rule-following master, who shows great charisma and self-control. His logicity controls him, restricting him from significantly influencing the outcome of the plot; however, his reason enables him to maintain his own safety, while partially affecting the decisions of other characters throughout the saga.

Christopher Brown, in his essay, “‘A Wretched Hive of Scum and Villainy’: *Star Wars* and the Problem of Evil” suggests that:

“God creates all beings in the universe and so no creature is inherently evil. Instead, since rational creatures such as the Emperor, Darth Maul, and Darth Vader have free will, each one of them is ultimately responsible for their own turn to the Dark Side.” (77)

He argues that Anakin is born a “rational” creature, and through time, he, by succumbing to his eccentric ambitions, is responsible for his downfall. He later on suggests that “factors external to Anakin may still have an influence on his choice: the Emperor’s temptations, Anakin’s desires for Padme, his mother’s death at the hands of the Sand People, and his conflicted relationship with Obi-Wan” (77). However, the blame his ultimate downfall should not be placed on these factors; it was Anakin’s own decision that caused his destruction.

On Tatooine, we are first introduced to a young boy, who appears to have no evil intentions about him. However, we immediately see that his ambitions are greater than that of an average boy, much less an average slave. He aspires to visit every star system in the galaxy, a feat near impossible; he is a pod-racer, the only human ever able to withstand the pressure of such immense speeds; he wants to become a Jedi. All of these ambitions signify great passion within such a small container, but as the years pass by, this innocent form of passion evolves into a lustful, irrational desire to accomplish such ambitions. When Anakin is first brought in front of the Jedi council, Master Yoda lectures him of his thoughts. “Fear is the path to the dark side... fear leads to anger... anger leads to hate... hate leads to suffering” (E1<sup>1</sup>). Yoda senses much fear within Anakin. He has left his mother behind, has been introduced to a far different environment than that of Tatooine, and has also been clouded by desire for Padme, his

---

1 No line reference in internet source for E1, E2, and E3

future lover. These agencies – fear of loss, amazement, and desire – all affect his thoughts; Yoda notices this and warns him of a potential danger. Throughout the following years, Anakin grows in power and in knowledge. His Jedi skills are far greater than any other at his age, and he is continually being more and more fascinated at his growing abilities. He becomes passionate for more power, as if it were an addictive drug. During the chase of the bounty hunter in Episode 2, Anakin performs countless death defying acrobatics, all of which Obi-Wan disagrees with. Anakin disregards Obi-Wan’s scolding, and rushes off after the bounty hunter:

Obi-Wan: Anakin!

Anakin: She went into that club, Master.

Obi-Wan: Patience. Use the Force, Anakin. Think. (E2)

All the while he is saying this, Anakin is showing signs of great impatience, and is eager to pursue. He is overwhelmed at the excitement of being powerful, and his passion overcomes his reason. However, just as Obi-Wan is attempting to restrain Anakin’s passion, Senator Palpatine is trying to enforce it: “You don’t need guidance, Anakin. In time, you will learn to trust your feelings. Then you will be invincible. I have said it many times, you are the most gifted Jedi I have ever met” (E2). These weeds being sewn in Anakin’s head can only be reaped as passion, and as a result, Obi-Wan’s efforts to control Anakin are gone to waste. His love for Padme is increasing every day. He is directly opposing the Jedi way by falling in love; love is a forbidden emotion of the Jedi, yet he continues to pursue his relationship with Padme. Padme tries to convince him that it is an illogical decision on his part, but he responds with a very key statement: “You’re asking me to be rational. That is something I know I cannot do” (E2). This line blatantly

states that he has knowingly abandoned his rationale, and has transformed into a being controlled by emotion. The climactic turning point for Anakin is on Tatooine, after he slaughters the Tuscan raiders. They had kidnapped his mother, and caused her to die. He becomes overwhelmed with fury, and kills them all. When he returns to Padme, their conversation illustrates the change in Anakin's character.

Padme: Sometimes there are things that no one can fix. You're not all powerful, Annie.

Anakin: I should be! Someday I will be ... I will be the most powerful Jedi ever! (E2)

Anakin admits he is pursuing power, not peace. The Jedi ideology is to preserve peace in the galaxy. Anakin does not concern himself with peace; rather, he is fueled by desire for ambitious power. Finally, in E3, Anakin is faced with a very key decision. He believes that Padme is going to die, and the only way for him to save her – his love – is to convert to the Dark Side, and become a Sith. He does in fact choose this, without considering the alternatives, and he finally loses all sense of conscientious restriction, and converts. As a result, Anakin becomes the destructive factor in the downfall of the Republic, and is the sole reason for the death of thousands of Jedi. He is entirely to blame for his irrational decision. Ironically, this decision does not even save his love, Padme. He in fact causes her death, along with his own destruction, and is forced to live a life filled with turmoil, destruction and pain. Yes, Anakin Skywalker does invoke great change, but it is as the cost of his own well-being as well as the well-being of others, and in the end, no positive change occurs due to his irrational behavior.

Obi-Wan was quite similar in character to Anakin at one time. In E1, his master,

Qui-Gon Jinn, was able to purge Obi-Wan of his radical behavior. Obi-Wan learned to trust the Force, not his feelings. Of course the Force may not be the equivalent of reason; however, it does seem to balance the essence of good and evil. Anakin was never able to “wish [his] feelings away” (E2). Obi-Wan continued to grow in maturity, and throughout E2 and E3, shows great wisdom and control. However, his rational methods hinder him from restraining Anakin. Anakin repeatedly defies him, and Obi-Wan does not act aggressively. Rather, he tries to reason with Anakin, instead of forcing him to obey. As Anakin drifts further and further away from the Jedi way, Obi-Wan becomes more and more passive. He can foresee Anakin’s destructive path, yet does nothing. In the end, Obi-Wan is able to summon some source of passion, and defeats Anakin in the final battle of E3.

Obi-Wan: It’s over, Anakin. I have the high ground.

Anakin: You underestimate my power!

Obi-Wan: Don’t try it. (E3)

This is the last time Obi-Wan tries to reason with Anakin. Finally, Anakin attempts to attack Obi-Wan, but Obi-Wan has had enough, and defeats Anakin with one final passionate blow. It is only when Obi-Wan acts out of passion that any influential change occurs.

I have argued that characters act through passion and emotion as a result of several environmental factors. A different point of view is argued by Peter Coy in his essay, “Why Logic Often Takes a Backseat” provides a biological explanation as to why characters act the way they do. He argues that the study of “neuroeconomics may topple the notion of rational decision making” (94-95<sup>2</sup>). Through brain scans, he has discovered

---

<sup>2</sup> No page separation indication on internet source

that “when people feel they're being treated unfairly, a small area called the anterior insula lights up, engendering the same disgust that people get from, say, smelling a skunk. That overwhelms the deliberations of the prefrontal cortex” (94-95). All of this brain hyperactivity then causes logic to “take a back seat” and the result is an entirely different persona overcoming brain functions. He muses that it is quite similar to “a monkey driving a car” (94-95). This could explain why Anakin, Montag, and Hamlet react in such irrational manners after witnessing graphic events such as Anakin’s mother dying, the old woman being burnt alive with her books, and Gertrude’s disloyalty to King Hamlet. Their brain interprets these distasteful events and they seek an immediate solution to their problem. This immediate solution is provided through passionate, irrational behavior, and since the brain is overcome with activity, it does not have the chance to consider the long-term consequences. “For decisions about the far-off future, the prefrontal cortex takes a long-term perspective” (94-95), and since the prefrontal cortex is overcome with activity, it is unable to calculate the potential long term effects. I would argue, however, that the characters still make their own decisions after the commotion of the brain dies down. The blame for their actions cannot be put on a biological dysfunction of the brain. Even though they may make a few irrational decisions during the time period of a mental lapse, they still have the opportunity to balance out their passionate behavior, with logical solutions.

In all three texts, an unequal balance of logic and passion is evident within their respective characters. In Fahrenheit 451, Montag is too emotional, and Faber is too restrictive; in Hamlet, Hamlet is too irrational, while Horatio is too passive; and in Star

Wars, Anakin is too passionate and Obi-Wan is too logical. All of these unbalances cause conflict within the texts, and it is only when a harmonized balance is maintained, that any positive outcome can result. However, when a balance occurs with the cooperation of two different characters – one being passionate, the other being logical –, the chance of positive change also increases. For instance, Montag and Faber work together to achieve the same outcome. The over-passionate Montag creates a balanced equilibrium with the over-passive Faber. Since Montag continually seeks advice and direction from Faber, his passion is partially controlled by Faber's logic, and he is able to survive. On the flip-side Anakin and Obi-Wan continually quarrel and disagree; therefore, their inability to cooperate causes grave destruction, and they both are left with a tormenting fate. Hamlet and Horatio do provide somewhat of a balance, in as much as they both have the general same goal. But, since Hamlet overlooks Horatio's logical advice, he cannot experience a productive outcome. With that said, if each of the passionate characters were to completely comply with the advice of the logical characters, no change, either positive or negative, would occur. If Hamlet followed Horatio's warning not to follow the ghost, no change would occur. If Montag were to have agreed with Faber's pessimistic attitude toward change, no advancement would have been made. Finally, if Anakin were to have followed Obi-Wan's logical advice, he would never have become powerful enough to, *eventually*, (in Star Wars Episode 6: The Return of the Jedi) destroy the oppression of the Sith. It is only when one can harness their passion through the use of a logical intervention – whether it is personal conscience, or outside influence – that any constructive change can arise.

The logic-passion dichotomy is portrayed in all three texts through very different manners. The underlying truth, however, is the same. Logic has continuously been privileged over emotion through countless generations, yet when looked at through a deconstructive lens, it is truly evident that, if one is to follow their logical convictions throughout their everyday interactions, a secure fate may be the result, but no revolutionizing change can emerge. Without passion, there is no action.