

# Fireside poets essay

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Fireside Poets essay The Romantic Period is a time of feelings and emotions that began in 1800 and ended in 1860. The period has a reverence for imagination and its highest ideals are inspired by nature and its interest in the past. During this time period came the Fireside Poets whom are Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Cullen Bryant, John Greenleaf Whittier, James Russell Lowell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. These poets are very popular in their time period because they, for the first time, challenged British in poetry. The poets William Cullen Bryant, author of “Thanatopsis” and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “author of “The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls” and “A Psalm of Life” show how they perceive the common theme of death. Longfellow’s “A Psalm of Life” describes death by asserting that life goes on and death is not that bad.

Longfellow also states that one live in the present rather than the past by stating, “Let the dead Past bury its dead! / Act,-act in the living Present!” (Longfellow 22-23). Longfellow’s advice is to forget the past and work towards the future. Longfellow in his quote puts forth that: “Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, is our destined end or way; But to act, that each to-morrow Find us farther than to-day” (Longfellow 9-10). Longfellow explains that death is inevitable so spend your life very wisely. Longfellow claims that everyone should live his or her life with purpose; “Lives of great men all remind us We can make our lives sublime, And, departing, leave behind us Footprints in the sands of time” (Longfellow 25-28). Longfellow implies that everyone will die whether they are merry or dismal.

Because death is unavoidable Longfellow says every man should leave this earth with a legacy behind them. In “The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls”

Longfellow states that death is merely a part of the repetitive cycle of life. To imply that death is the everlasting cycle of life Longfellow repeatedly says: “ The tide rises, the tide falls, The twilight darkens, the curlew calls; Along the sea-sands damp and brown The traveller hastens toward the town, And the tide rises, the tide falls” (Longfellow 1-5). This simple line states that life and its people will go on even after you die and that life is just a repetitive cycle of death and life. Because of the inevitable death, we spend our lives fearing that death will hit us very early. For example, Longfellow claims that “ Darkness settles on roofs and walls,/ But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls:/The little waves, with their soft, white hands” (Longfellow 6-9).

Longfellow explains that death is upon all whether they are in the safety of their house or in a dangerous alley. Longfellow also believes that because we are part of a never-ending cycle of death, but life moves on, as should we. For example, Longfellow implies that “ The morning breaks: the steeds in their stalls Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls: The day returns, but nevermore Returns the traveler to the shore, And the tide rises, the tide falls” (Longfellow 12-15). Longfellow means that even after one’s death the rest move on and live life as usual. Longfellow states that death is only part of a cycle in our lives and that life does move on.

In “ Thanatopsis” Bryant’s purpose is to live life instead of spending life avoiding or fearing death. Death is imminent so Bryant claims: “ So live, that when thy summons comes to join The innumerable caravan, that moves To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take His chamber in the silent halls of death, Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night, Scourged to his dungeon, but sustain’d and sooth’d By an unfaltering trust, approach thy <https://assignbuster.com/fireside-poets-essay/>

grave, Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.” (Bryant 73-81). Bryant explains that it is important that we accept death and live our lives like in our dream. Bryant implies that death will occur in our lives and that life will go on when he states that the, “ Earth, that nouris’d thee, shall claim Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again; And, lost each human trace, surrend’ring up Thine individual being, shalt thou go To mix forever with the elements, To be a brother to th’ insensible rock And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain Turns with his share, and treads upon.

” (Bryant 22-29). Bryant explains that death cannot be stopped and that it is merely a part of the cycle in our lives. Bryant suggests that all people should leave life with achieving the goals with pride; for example, “ As the long train Of ages glide away, the sons of men, The youth in life’s green spring, and he who goes In the full strength of years, matron, and maid, The bow’d with age, the infant in the smiles And beauty of its innocent age cut off,- Shall one by one be gathered to thy side, By those, who in their turn shall follow them. ” (Bryant 66-72). Bryant describes though life is short people need to make life worth dying for. Bryant believes in living life with purpose before death catches up to them and it becomes too late.

In conclusion Longfellow and Bryant’s poems reach the same idea that death is the neverending natural order of life. Longfellow explains that one must fully live their life and make themselves known or else they will be forgotten and life will move on. Bryant’s purpose is that one should not stop living in the fear of death and should spend your life living how you please. In the end their poems seem to reach the same morbid theme that we will all die.