

Sample essay on revenge as a driver of plot in hamlet

[Countries](#), [England](#)



Hamlet is as much the product of Shakespeare's understanding of psychology and culture as Shakespeare was a product of Elizabethan England's renaissance. The famous theme is the theme of two faces, one personal and hidden and the other public. Hamlet cannot find peace because he cannot reconcile the two characters that he has needed to adopt, and the cogitative dissonance that affords him leads to his demise. The play is fueled by a central theme of revenge. This is not just any revenge, and this is revenge to avenge the death of a father. This causal effects of this theme are what keeps the narrative plot of the play unfolding. The central preoccupation of the play's protagonist is Hamlet's torment in determining if Claudius is indeed responsible for his father's death. This theme can be understood best when analyzed under the social and cultural context under which Shakespeare was writing, Elizabethan England. Hamlet is not just haunted by the memory of his father; a ghost haunts him with a real presence in the play and in hamlet's mind. His father, now a ghost, says to him, " I am thy father's spirit, / Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, / And for the day confined to fast in fires, Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature / Are burnt or purged away. But that I am forbidden / To tell the secrets of my prison-house, / I could a tale unfold whose lightest word." Hamlet is less tormented by his seeking revenge than he is by his doubt. He suspects his mind is unsound. This doubt has led to the most famous quotation, most parodied theme of the work, " To be, or not to be: that is the question:/ Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, / Or to take arms against a sea of troubles." Hamlet is driven mad by vacillating between these deeply counterpoised positions."

A look at the trends of culture in Elizabethan England gives us some context to understand why this theme of revenge was so striking to the audience that the play was intended for. Elizabethan England was a very good time for England. The country was under an artistic renaissance, and this factor was important in creating a literary figure like Shakespeare. Duels were something that occurred in this time period and England, and there were very strict social norms, which governs people's everyday lives. Avenging a death was not an option, it was a necessity to restore honor to the family. (Shakespeare Resource Center, 1). The Catholic church had lost military power during this time period, which contributed to civil society becoming an important way to govern the conduct.

The natural cause and effect within the Elizabethan culture would have been to take revenge. This cause in affects governs the other characters seeking revenge within the play. Hamlet is noteworthy because he is the only character to waiver in his resolve. As a comparison there are another character who have a much firmer resolve than Hamlet. Fortinbras makes a long journey and can avenge his father's death. Laertes the character is unwavering in his plot to avenge his father's death by the death of his father Polonius.

The plot is governed by the theme of revenge like vengeance as a must governed Elizabethan culture. It is important as a cause that leads to the effect of the development of the plot. Without it the plot would not move forward.

Works Cited

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