

Free essay about hamlet: character analysis

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Shakespeare's "The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" presents the themes of love and madness to the audience. Literary critic, Alexander W. Crawford introduces the controversial "the usual interpretations of Hamlet make it a very curious and mysterious but not a great play, and the Prince a very interesting psychological phenomenon but not a great character." (Crawford, par. 1). However, one may say that Hamlet is not free to fashion himself, however, he is the voice of Denmark. This voice speaks of the horrors of his life and the trauma of his mother's marriage to his uncle. Similar to the other major characters, Hamlet is not true himself. Hamlet often forgets himself and his education even as he writes his father's commandments. Nevertheless, Hamlet removes that side from the reader's views and replaces it the principles of his aggressive father. After this Hamlet's soliloquies comes off as debates that divides his soul. Hamlet is a brave soldier in spirit, as one clearly sees the distressing inner conflict to protect the dominion of his soul. He notes "my thoughts be bloody," ("Hamlet," Act IV, 38). While Hamlet's anger is questionable, the truth behind his anger justifies his actions.

Gertrude and Claudius are responsible for the monster that emerges in Hamlet throughout the play. Hamlet is similar to his father in many respects but one can easily argue that through Hamlet's dying words, the readers see that he is different from his father. Shakespeare presents Hamlet as a temperamental, dramatic, clever, and brilliant character who shows fascination and torment through his uncertainty and introspection. It is distinctively complicated to analyze his real feelings and emotions towards the other characters as Hamlet shows himself in different ways to each

character. Arguably, Hamlet follows his thoughts and feelings mainly for investigational values, and not for his interest in applying his logical reasoning to the real world. He assesses the situation with Gertrude and Claudius and sees that Claudius is responsible for the death of the father he loves dearly. In fact, the variations in Hamlet's moods shift from madness to sanity and vice versa and encompass a variety of human characteristics, and add to the fact that his actions are fair.

Hamlet shows his human characteristics when he becomes angry at his mother who quickly remarries after his father's death. It is this remarriage that sets the play's actions into motion. One could say that without this anger the play would not reveal the ways in which one's emotions lead one to commit serious crimes. Hamlet says "That it should come to this! / But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two: Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!" ("Hamlet," Act I Scene ii, p. 5). The reader clearly sees Hamlet's grief mount and the act of treachery and cold-heartedness on Gertrude's part tears away at the core of Hamlet's heart. As a result, Hamlet tortures himself with loving reflections of father and mother. These inner thoughts lead to Hamlet's murderous thoughts. The reader is not surprised that Hamlet seeks revenge on Claudius despite the Bible's teachings against vengeance in Roman 12: 19. Interestingly, Hamlet's former self disappears with the rising anger he feels towards everyone who is close to Claudius, he completely forgets his Christian ways as he takes revenge on Claudius. Shakespeare successfully shows that the play, "Hamlet," "that the Prince of Denmark counterfeits madness," (Egan, par. 8), but the conflict that exists between Christian law and lawlessness, gives way to ordinary human

impulses. One's hatred or desire knows no lawful boundaries. The reader sees how easily Hamlet sends his unfaithful friends, Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, to their untimely death. Arguably, one can justify his actions because human nature encompasses the need to feel intense hurt when others betray a friend. In addition, William Radar analyzes the play from a biblical perspective and indicates that "the conflict which sometimes wages between the desire for vengeance and the higher law of honorable duty, is found in Shakespeare's delineation of the character of Hamlet," (Radar, par. 3). In fact, Radar adds that there is an "apparent emotional skepticism, morbid forebodings, the spirit of vengeance, the sense of duty, and altogether a miserable and unhappy state of affairs," (Radar, par. 3). The events surrounding Hamlet's actions contradict Radar views that "vengeance is not the property of a man," (Radar, par. 3). Hamlet describes many unfortunate lives, caught in the mesh of circumstances, and incapable of solving the perplexing problems of life.

One can easily understand Hamlet's need for revenge on Claudius as Hamlet is a man with real feelings and emotions. But, is his action fair to the other characters that have done him no wrong. Brandes (n. p) writes "Hamlet draws away from Ophelia from the moment when he feels himself the appointed minister of a sacred revenge," (Brandes, n. p). Ophelia loves him dearly, yet Hamlet's anger, which leads to madness, eventually forces him away from those who love him genuinely. Still, human nature demands "an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth." The reality is that Shakespeare wanted to make his characters believable.

In concluding, Hamlet shows the normal human characteristics that allows

him to fuel his anger. His uncle's and mother's "betrayal" leads Hamlet to shun his Christian values and seek revenge in the very society that makes him the prince of Denmark. In order for the readers to understand and feel sympathy towards Hamlet, Shakespeare shows his immense emotions at the death of his father. Conversely, Hamlet's calculated plan shows that he understands the weaknesses in others and he plays on the weaknesses as he slowly takes away the people Claudius from his life. Strategically, Hamlet shows Claudius what it feels like to lose someone he loves. But, one could argue correctly that Hamlet loses more in the end because of his blind anger.

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