

"5 ways to kill a man" by edwin brock essay sample

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



“ 5 Ways to Kill a Man” by Edwin Brock Essay Sample

In this poem, “ Five Ways to Kill a Man”, the poet, Edwin Brock contrasts between the killings of humans at different time periods in the world. The first stanza tells of the executions in the times of Jesus. The second stanza tells of the times when knights used to duel on white horses. The German’s deadly chlorine gas attacks from World War I are described in the third stanza. The fourth stanza tells of the last part of the Second World War when the atomic bombs were dropped. Brock then, in his last stanza, tells of the last and easiest way to kill a man, and that is by placing the man in the 20th century.

The five ways to kill a man that Brock describes in his poem are chronologically arranged. The most ancient way of killing was the most complicated and the latest was the easiest. The first verse reads, “ There are many cumbersome ways to kill a man”, as the first is most cumbersome requiring “ a plank of wood”, “ a crowd of people wearing sandals”, “ a hill”, “ a cock that crows”, “ a cloak to dissect,”, “ a sponge”, “ some vinegar” and “ one man to hammer the nails”. The third stanza starts with, “ Dispensing with nobility, you may, if the wind allows, blow gas at him”. This clearly means that Brock believes that the Germans played a dirty trick in World War I. Brock then tells of the Atomic Bomb and how easy it was to drop it and kill the people. He writes, “ Fly miles above your victim and dispose of him by pressing a switch”. There is an apparent contrast between the previous types of killings and this one. “ Pressing a switch” is much easier and more effective, in terms of number of people being killed, than gathering

white horses, wearing armor, and charging at each other in a duel as described in the second stanza.

The last part of the poem is the most satirical and interesting. Brock writes that " simpler, direct, and much more neat is to see that he is living somewhere in the middle of the twentieth century". In the past four types of killings, the man is actually killed. However, in this last stanza, the man is never killed but made to live.