

Dorian gray analysis

Business



Death is truly life's greatest mystery. People contemplate it and debate it, and establish religions that offer comfort for what happens during it. The whole point of life is to live and then die, which does not alarm many people because the concept is so difficult to understand.

Death is simple, as everyone will die, but no one truly knows what comes next. People have explored it in a variety of ways, and it is often a prominent theme in literature. Oscar Wilde analyzes death, and in turn, life, in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Lord Henry, the character that symbolizes sin, attests to this by explaining to Dorian that, "Life has always poppies in her hands" (Wilde 105). Lord Henry's ironic quotation explains how Wilde used *The Picture of Dorian Gray* to analyze death using symbolism. Wilde analyzes death through Sibyl Vane, who, ironically enough, is a woman.

Lord Henry personifies life as a woman in his quotation about the poppies, which indicates that Sibyl Vane and her tragic death were exploratory topics for Wilde. When Dorian first finds out of her suicide, he feels guilty and terrible, until Lord Henry glamorizes the idea of death. Lord Henry first plants the idea in Dorian's head by remarking that, "There is something to me quite beautiful about her (Sibyl Vane's) death" (Wilde 106). He justifies his logic to Dorian by explaining that, "the girl never really lived, and so she has never really died" (Wilde 107). Dorian is easily influenced by the dominant Lord Henry, and quickly begins to romanticize Sibyl's death. Through Lord Henry, Wilde explores death as a romantic and feminine concept.

Dorian also attests to this idea by later comparing Sibyl to the romantic Shakespeare character that she portrayed as an actress: "When she knew

its unreality, she died, as Juliet might have died” (Wilde 113). The comparison of Sibyl to Juliet from Shakespeare’s iconic play alludes to Wilde’s romantic and glamorous ideas about death. It can even be argued that Dorian viewed Sibyl’s death as artistic, because of how he related her suicide to Juliet’s suicide. Dorian emphasizes this by saying, “ It is one of the great romantic tragedies of the age...-she acted badly because she had known the reality of love” (Wilde 113). Based on how Lord Henry influences Dorian, Wilde explored the idea through a sugarcoated lens, and sought to romanticize and feminize a normally morbid concept.