

Hamlet's infatuation with death

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Have you ever wondered what happens to you when you kick the bucket? Will you still be the same person? Or is death really the great equalizer? Is it possible we all end up the same? Death is a very scary and lonely thing to think about, and nothing is a greater example of that than William Shakespeare's famous play Hamlet. Hamlet is infatuated with the idea of death and what it brings. With comments like, "To die: to sleep; / No more," (Hamlet 3. 1. 61-62) and "we fat all/ Creatures else to fat us" (4. 3. 3-24), it is clear Hamlet has a very lonely and depressing view on what happens when you bite the dust.

Hamlet's fascination with death and dismal view on it are all evident throughout the whole play. We start to learn that Hamlet has a bizarre fascination with death when, every other scene, he is talking about how everyone will end up in the ground one way or another. "To be or not to be – that is the question" (3. 1. 57), is where it all starts off. From this famous speech to the end of the play, all Hamlet worries about is death. He continues to go on and on about how we will all become equal and starts to wonder what it is like to die.

Hamlet often talks about self-murder, or suicide, and how it will affect his afterlife if he decided to do it. HAMLET. O, that this too solid flesh would melt Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! Or that the Everlasting had not fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O, God! O God! (1. 2. 129-132) Hamlet is obviously contemplating suicide here, but then he realized that he cannot go to Heaven if he commits suicide. Going to Hell is something that Hamlet does not want at all. This is obvious because, throughout the play, Hamlet thinks

about killing himself, but he never does because he is scared to die, and even worse, scared to go to Hell.

The language that Hamlet uses to express death is very interesting. The way and how Hamlet talks about death all the time is extremely depressing to read and I can only imagine how it made Hamlet depressed. Hamlet often has trouble with expressing his views on death as he often has conflicting statements. Sometimes he will think of death as an adventure, “ The undiscovered country from whose bourn/ No traveler returns” (3. 1. 81-82), or he will think of it as an extremely gruesome thing, “ A certain/ Convocation of politic worms are at him. ” (4. 3. 21-22). The way he talks about death here is cringe-worthy.

Just thinking about worms chowing down on Polonius is nauseating. Hamlet does not often talk about death this way in the play, though. He is almost making a joke in this quote, but the joke is true and extremely gross.

Hamlet's view on death is very dark and grim. He believes that death makes us all equal and there is nothing we can do to prevent that. In Act Five, Hamlet is in a graveyard with Horatio and is carrying on a very dark conversation with him. Hamlet has a very interesting quote in this Act, “ Alexander died, Alexander was buried, / Alexander returneth into dust” (5. 1. 189-190).

This quote is about Alexander the Great, and his name should go without saying that he was a very important person. It is depressing to think about it because Alexander was a great king. But he ended up like we will all end up, and that is dust in the ground. In the same scene, Hamlet drops another

interesting quote, "let her paint an/ Inch thick, to this favor she must come" (5. 1. 170-171). Hamlet happens to be holding the skull of Yorick when he says this. No matter how much make-up, or paint, you put on, no matter how much you dress up and act fancy, you will still end up like Yorick.

And the sad part is that there is nothing you can do to prevent it. Mortality is very commonly thought about in this play. Hamlet is not the only character that worries about the afterlife. Almost every character in the play has a view on life and death. Their views may be different, most are still depressing. This theme is present because Shakespeare's view on death was depressing. Hamlet's view on death is a direct relation to William Shakespeare's. They both believe we will end up the same; a dead body in the ground.