

Corruption in hamlet essay sample

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In the play ' Hamlet', corruption is conveyed within many of the key characters; Prince Hamlet is not corrupt, but merely fools the people around him into believing that he is, in order to help him carry out his orders. Prince Hamlet learns at the beginning of the play of his father's murder. He then is ordered by his father ghost to seek revenge on his father's murderer, Claudius. It is the flaws within the state of Denmark, which have led to the previous kings murder. Hamlet persuades the new king, Claudius, into believing that he is a madman, convincing the people around him as well, in order to take revenge.

Prince Hamlet is portrayed as a madman throughout the play, however Prince Hamlet only pretends to be mad. Within the first scene of the play, Hamlet encounters his father's ghost. This is not a symbol of his madness, as the ghost is also scene by Horatio, Barnardo and Marcellus. It is shortly after this incident when Hamlet warns his friends that he might pretend to be mad " To put on an antic position" in order to carry out his fathers ghosts orders. Soon after this we hear King Claudius " nor th'exterior nor the inward man" which makes us assume that Hamlet is dressed differently than he was in previous scenes and is also acting differently then the scenes before. This proves Hamlets change in character after his recent discovery of his father's murder.

Prince Hamlet is perceived by the other characters in the play as being mad, when actually the corruption lies within the other characters in the play. The first sign of corruption within the other characters of the play is in Polonius. Polonius hires a man to spy on his son Laertes, as he has no trust in his son living in Paris. Later in this Act Ophelia tells Polonius that Hamlet is under

pressure and is possibly mad as “ He took me by the wrist and held me hard”. Polonius then later says that Hamlet “ is mad” when really Polonius is corrupt himself. Hamlet says “ O what a rogue and peasant slave”. He is saying that he wishes to act as the revenger hero but cannot summon the necessary qualities to act. This shows that Hamlet is not mad, but a good human being as he says that it is not in his nature to kill.

The state of Denmark is corrupt; Hamlet is caught up in the corruption. Claudius’ guilty alarm interrupts the performance, which confirms that Prince Hamlets fathers ghost was speaking the truth when he told Prince Hamlet that Claudius murdered him. This proves once again that Hamlet is not mad. It is Claudius who is corrupt as he murdered the king. The Queen is also corrupt as she was widowed only to re-marry shortly after the death of the King. Prince Hamlet tells the Queen that he is “ not in madness, But mad in craft”. Hamlet acts not as a madman, but acts in revenge for his father’s death. Hamlet finally carries out his revenge taking his life in the process.

It is not Hamlet that is corrupt but the state of Denmark and many of the key characters. It is Hamlets cunning idea to pretend to be mad which allows him to carry out his orders and take his revenge. Hamlet is caught between the corruption of Denmark and his willingness to revenge his father’s death; he senses the corruption within Denmark and uses it to his advantage.

Bibliography:

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