Hamlet Essay, Research Paper

Hamlet Essay – Soliloquy

A soliloquy occurs when a character shares his feelings and thoughts on a subject with the audience alone. No other character hears what that initial character is saying. Hamlet has six major soliloquy s throughout the course of the play. Through them he expresses many of his own opinions and views, such as his feelings about his own free will, his job as an avenger and his views of women.

Hamlet expresses his view of women through at least three major soliloquies. In his first Hamlet shows his disgust and confusion over his mother marrying his uncle so quickly after her husband s death, a husband that in Hamlet s mind was perfect. Therefore he could not understand why a woman would not mourn her husband s death for an extended period of time but rather move on to another man so quickly, especially her husbands brother. The reader will begin to understand his tainted view of women when he remarks, Let me not think on t; frailty thy name is woman! (I / ii / 146) He further extends his disgust with women in his second soliloquy. This time he shows his belief that all women are wicked and destructive. He feels that they prey upon men, and use them to benefit themselves. The reader knows this by the way Hamlet responds to his father s ghost in act two. After he hears the truth about his father s murder he remarks, O Most pernicious woman!/O villain, villain, smiling, damned, villain! (II / V / 106/107) Now Hamlet knowing his uncle killed his father is even more distressed over the idea that his mother has married not only his uncle but his father s murderer. Further more he believes his mother has married his uncle because of the way his uncle had seduced her. This increases his hatred for his uncle and his need to to get revenge on behalf of his father. Later on Hamlet sees Fortinbras and seeing how he is such an influential leader, he begins to consider what his real purpose is in life, dealing with the revenge of his father. Among this he mentions something small about his mother being tainted by the whole affair. That have father killed, a mother stained, (IV / IV / 59) Although only a few words, we can see how Hamlet now feels about his mother. Further along in the same soliloquy he says And let all sleep, while to my shame I see (IV / IV / 61) Hamlet feels shame for the way his mother acted after his father s death. Her actions are what have caused him to lose faith and respect for all women in general.

Another major theme seen throughout Hamlet s Soliloquy s is death and the feeling of being non-existent. In the first soliloquy Hamlet is expressing his feelings over the death of his father and his mothers actions. Here he introduces the idea of killing himself and how bleak the world looks right now. By His cannon gainst self-slaughter! O God, God, / How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable / Seem to me all the uses of this world! (1, ii, 132/133/134), the reader can see how Hamlet is angry that god doesn t allow suicide, therefor he can not end his misery. The reader can also see how Hamlet s outlook on life has changed. He now sees the world as a bleak and dreary place. Then comes Hamlet s most famous soliloquy which many researchers believe is his thoughts on whether to exist or not to exist. To be or not to be-that is the question (3, I, 57), shows how Hamlet is now debating whether or not it is worth it to be living or better to just end it all. He decides it is better to live a terrible life then to die because one doesn t know what the other side holds. To grunt and sweat under a weary life, But that the dread of something after death, / The undiscovered country from whose bourn / No traveler returns, puzzle the will / and makes us rather bear those ills we have / Than fly to others we know not of? (3, I, 78/79/80/81/82/83) This passage also shows how Hamlet s outlook on life has deteriorated even more. The pangs of despised love, the law s delay, / the insolence of office, and the spurns / That patient merit of th unworthy takes (3, I, 73/74/75) In Hamlet s last soliloquy his attitude about life has changed. At the beginning the reader can see how Hamlet is still debating the worth of his exsistence. What is a man / If his chief good and market of his time / Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more. (4, iiii, 35/36/37) After he sees Fortinbras honourably leading thousands of men, his finally understands the importance of his existence. Hamlet realises that he has been taking too long to avenge his fathers death and that he too can be strong enough to act upon his fathers (ghost) will. He comes to the conclusion that all his thoughts and actions from that point on will be towards avenging his father s death. O, from this time forth / My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth! (4, iiii, 67/68) In this one soliloquy Hamlet went from debating his exsistence to understanding his true purpose in life.