In King Lear, Hamlet, Oedipus Rex Essay, Research Paper

Tragic Heroes

In King Lear, Hamlet, Oedipus Rex

Since the beginning of civilization there always been tragedies. Man has always had to come to a tragic faith throughout the years. Men, women, and children have had to deal with pre-determined faith of each and everyone down throughout the centuries. Tragedy is a conflict between a force on one side, to a protagonist of the other. What usually makes a tragic hero is lack of self-knowledge that he or she has. The tragic hero in a tragedy suffers on the bases of his choices. As Cleanth Brooks put it, Tragic heroes suffering is never merely imposed, he incurs it by his own decision, or, at the least he finally wills to accept it as properly pertaining to the nature of things, including his own deepest nature. 1 page 123 Meaning that the tragic hero puts a tragic faith on him by himself with the choices that he makes. Tragedy is a thing that most always leads to a downfall of a single person or people. Most tragedies end up on a bad path, because the truth comes out in all directions upon the tragic hero. When, the truth all comes out on the tragic hero he can t control it and it puts him in a jam. In tragedy, usually the truth is what will cause the downfall of the tragic hero. In every tragedy, there is always more and more complication that adds on to the problem for the tragic hero. All these problems keep adding on until the end when the tragic hero has to accept them all and deal with them. As George Lukas said, Tragedy can extend only in one direction: upward, it begins at the moment when enigmatic forces have distilled the essence from a man have forced him to become essential: and the progress of tragedy consists in his essential, true nature becoming more and more manifest. 2 page 213 Meaning that in the beginning everything is simple, and through his or her journey more and more complications get in the way, more lies and uncertainties, finally at the end it all comes down on the tragic hero which breaks him or kills him. Hubris is a word that is used to describe tragedy, it means that a tragic hero who has overwhelming pride. The word Hubris also goes along with George Lukas saying It is that power in human nature which arises a man to upset the metaphysical balance of the universe and in doing so triggers a chain of consequences that inexorably precipitous his own doom. 2 Page 224 A tragic hero is seen as a link of chain, one link adding to another until the end, for the tragic hero it s the end of his life, when to the chain it s the ending of the link and nothing else. The tragic hero Oedipus and King Lear fall into this tragic faith, because they don t see the truth, only what they want to see and believe. Hamlet on the other side is tragic, because he was blinded by the consequence of his actions.

King Lear is a tragedy, because right from the beginning we see that the King forces out love from his daughter s, instead of it been given freely, that love is not asked for, but is given 3 Page 63 . Love is something that a person cannot ask for, but is given to a person. King Lear raised as a king doesn t know what love is, and this makes him tragic. Right in the beginning of the play, we see that King Lear is asking his three daughters to tell him how much they love him. Goneril and Regan use flattery to gain land for them selves from the king, both of these daughters tell Lear that they love him a lot, and that he is the best father they can have. Cordelia on the other side tells Lear that she loves him, but that when she gets married half of her love will be given to him. I shall give you half my love, and my husband the other half. 4 Page 180 After, hearing this King Lear banishes her youngest daughter Cordelia from the kingdom. We see this play is tragic, because King Lear banishes the daughter that actually really loves him, and cares for him. Cordelia out of the three daughters was the one that truly loved the King for what he was and not for his money or kingdom. King Lear not knowing what true love really was banishes her daughter from the kingdom. We also see that Lear gives away his land too the two daughters that didn t love him, but loved him for his money. This is tragic, because Cordelia the good daughter, is banished from her kingdom, and it is because of the tragic King Lear, not knowing what love truly was. King Lear was brought up in a environment that was all flattery, people in the kingdom always used flattery on him to gets what they wanted, Lear never was able to learn what love really was. King Lear being a tragic hero thought love was something taken not given. King Lear little by little saw Goneril and Regan taking over his kingdom. Goneril showed no respect for Lear either as a father or a King. One day, Lear and Goneral got in a fight and Lear went to Regan for advice. Regan also having no respect for Lear told him that she would not give him hospitality until he apologizes to Goneral. King Lear is offended by how his two daughters who he thought loved him, would do such a thing to him, by stripping all of his belongings, and authority. We see the tragic hero now falling and not knowing what to do; he is all emotional and tragically broken up. King Lear confused and upset runs into a storm, where he realizes what he has done. This is a baptismal scene, in where the king realizes that the two daughters of his Goneral and Regan are evil, and that they don’t love him for himself, but love him for his land and money. The rain and the storm washed away the idea of love that Lear had, and replenishes it with what love truly is. In the storm, King Lear realized that Cordelia was the one that truly loved him, adored, and respected him. While King Lear was in the storm figuring out what love really was, his kingdom was being taken over by Edmund. King Lear after realizing that he loved Cordelia, he tried to fight Edmund to protect her from dying. It was to late Cordelia had been hung, and King Lear died in trying to save her.

King Lear was a tragedy because it had to take the tragic heroes death to figure out that the daughter he despised was the one that truly loved him. Cordelia knew what love was, and when King Lear asked her to tell him how much she loved him, she couldn t tell him, because love couldn t be asked for, but is given. King Lear didn t understand love and banished her. King Lear didn t understand, and didn t know what love was and that was why he was tragic. Lear was a man that thought what he was doing was right only to find out in the end that what he did all his life was wrong. He realized that he made the biggest mistake in giving all his land to Goneril and Regan, because they were evil and used trickery to get it. In the end, King Lear found out what love was, but it took his life in finding out what it really was and it lead it to his death, and also the death of the one person that truly loved him Cordelia.

The significance of King Lear is to know what love really is, to know it and understand it. Love is something very hard to understand to many people, many people use trickery to get something from a person telling them that it is love. For example: A woman marrying a man for his money and then divorcing him when he loses his money. This relates to the modern world by that it still goes on, everyone does something for someone to get something back in return. It may not be as shallow like it was in King Lear, but people still do things for other people, because they want something in return from them.

Hamlet is a tragedy, because his mother’s new husband King Cladius has killed his father King Hamlet. In this play, the tragic hero Hamlet has only one intention, which is to kill Cladius for killing his father. Throughout the play, Hamlet tries to find the right time to kill Claudis to avenge the death of his own father. It is tragic, because Hamlet trying to kill Cladius, in doing so kills many other people which he loved and adored, and at the end even himself. It is tragic, because he kills his friends Rosencrantz, Guildenstern who were innocent in doing their job. Hamlet kills Polonius his girlfriend s father, thinking he was Claudius. Hamlet ends up making Ophelia his love committing suicide, because he breaks up with her, even though he loved her very much. He breaks up with her, because he had his hands full in trying to avenge the death of his father. Hamlet was like a spy playing a spying game to find out who killed his father, only making mistakes and killing wrong people. Hamlet is also a play about spying The Mystery of the observer Observed. 4 Page 144 Meaning that Hamlet was like a detective trying to find how and when Claudis killed his father. After Ophelia committed suicide, Laertes the brother of Ophelia blamed Hamlet for the death of Ophelia. In the end of the play, we see Hamlet in a battle with Laertes organized by Cladius to resolve the problems. Cladius knows that Hamlet is trying to kill him, so he gets Laertes to put some poison on the sword that he was going to use to fight Hamlet with. Claudis also puts poison in the toasting glass wine of Hamlet, just in case if the poison sword didn t nick Hamlet. Therefore, the tragic hero Hamlet, and Laertes fight. In the middle of the fight Gertrude the mother of Hamlet gets excited and drinks the poison wine, which was for Hamlet. The fight goes on as if nothing had happened until Laertes is stabbed, and the poison sword nicks Hamlet. We now see the tragedy coming to the climax. Gertrude falls to the ground because of the poison, Hamlet runs over to her. Laertes gets up and tells Hamlet that he is dead to, because his sword that had poison on it nicked him. Hamlet finds out that Claudis had put the poison on the sword and had planned to kill him one way or the other. Hamlet gets all emotionally mad, and runs over to Claudis and stabs him. After stabbing him, he makes sure he is dead by pouring the rest of the poison wine down in him. After Hamlets mothers dies, Claudis dies, and at last Hamlet dies, his last words were that Fortinbras be the new ruler of Denmark.

Hamlet was a tragedy, because he had a predetermined faith, that he had to kill Claudis no matter what. He had to avenge the death of his father, which was done by Claudis. Hamlets heroes quest led us to the death of Claudis and himself. Since the beginning of the play, Hamlet tried to find justice in who killed his father and at the end, he did. This is a tragedy, because the tragic hero died at the end, and in doing so he lost his love Ophelia, all of his friends, and his mother. While, Hamlet was trying to avenge his fathers death, he didn t see the consequence of his actions, he didn t see him not paying any attention to Ophelia, not paying attention to who he was fighting or killing for what reasons. Hamlet was blind side by the consequences of his actions, and his quest to find the murder of his father, which made him a tragic hero. Hamlet was blind sided he didn t see everything, he didn t understand fully. Hamlet was way to busy after his father s death to have a life; he put everything to the side and that led to his death. Hamlet didn t balance his life with his goal to avenge his father s death. Hamlet lost everyone he loved, and cared for including himself by death.

The significance of Hamlet is to learn to know all the facts, before acting on a action. Hamlet throughout the play had a lack of knowledge he didn t see what his actions were doing. The theme I got of the play was to think before you act. That before you do something drastically like kill someone make sure it s the right person, or that if you even want to do it. It gave me the idea about to think heavily on something before I go out and do it on a spur of the moment thing. This play can relate to the modern world by that, people still make decision before they think of the consequence. For example: people drink and drive even though they know what alcohol does to their driving capabilities.

Oedipus Rex is a tragedy, Oedipus had a pre- determined faith, it was said earlier, when he was born by a oracle, that he was going to kill his father, save his kingdom, by a plague, and marry his mother. Therefore, when his parents heard this they gave Oedipus away. Although they gave the baby away he still came back and finished off his pre-determined faith. When he killed his father, married his mother, and became King, he tried to find out who had killed King Laius. He tired and tried only to find out that it was he, himself. The climax of this tragedy is when he forces the old man to speak by threatening him. When, the old man tells Oedipus what he wanted to know he realizes that he was the one that killed his father and married his mother. Oedipus goes crazy telling what he has done and that now he should be punished for it. Oedipus pierces his eyes so he wouldn t have to look for what he has done. He began to review his sins, cried in pain, and wished that he had of died when he was a child. What makes him a tragic hero is that he faced up to his mistakes, and took the punishment. Oedipus had hubris in him, he didn t want to except that he had killed his father and married his mother in the beginning. Although, as the play went on it became evident that he did so, and he couldn t handle it, and blinded himself. King Oedipus tried to help the people, because they were rioting, and tried to lift the curse, by finding out who killed King Laius, and in doing so, he destroyed himself. Hamlet is seen to us as an innocent tragic hero, because he didn t know that the person that he killed was his father, he had no way of knowing. It was his pre-determined tragic faith, which made it a tragedy for him.

Oedipus Rex was a tragedy, because he had a lack of knowledge. He didn t know everything about his life and birth. He didn t know that the parents that raised him weren t his actual parents. Oedipus is tragic, because he thought he was doing good only to find out that what he was doing was bad. He had pride in himself to take punishment on himself for killing his father and marrying his mother he was tragic, because he didn t know his pre-determined life. His lack of knowledge was the main cause of his tragedy.

The significance of Oedipus Rex was to teach people to think before they act. It tells people that before you start to look for something try to remember what you are looking for, it might be something that you might not want to find out. It becomes to them a symbol of our common human failing to look for evil everywhere but in ourselves 4 Page 88 Meaning that you look everywhere else when something goes wrong except in your self knowledge. For example: say you lose something you valued a lot, and then blame your mother for losing it only to find out that you hid it somewhere and just forgot where you put it. This play relates to the modern world by that people go searching for things today too, only to find out something that they didn t want to. For Example: Adopted people go searching for their biological parents, only to find out that they still don t want them, or don t want to do anything with them.

Therefore, as you can see tragedy has been everywhere since the dawn of time, to the up coming time. People have suffered from knowledge and from lack of knowledge. Through all these play s there were many tragic heroes, that went through their heroes quest. Each of these tragic heroes failed no matter how hard they tried to avoid it. These tragic heroes weren t looking for failure, but it was their pre-determined faith that made them fail. Tragic heroes are doomed, no matter how hard they try to avoid it.

348