
The Ways Shakespeare Explores The Theme Of Guilt Through The Characters In Macbeth

Guilt is a profound emotion that is uniquely characterized by the complex human nature of individuals and their perspectives. William Shakespeare's eponymous text *Macbeth*, written in 1606 embodies prominent values as it demonstrates the uprise of his status and his eventual downfall. The thematic concern of guilt molds life in the text and depicts a significant aspect of Macbeth's life to increase the understanding of life during the Elizabethan Era.

Shakespeare demonstrated that out of all the virtues and excellence a man can acquire, bravery universally defeats the seemingly impossible adversity. This is precisely portrayed when Macbeth fought the arduous battle depicting his ruthlessness and supreme virtue. "Which smoked with bloody execution, till he unseamed him from the navel to the chops, and fixed his head upon our battlements." Clearly indicating how Macbeth is a mighty warrior as he leads the Scottish troops to victory over an invading force. The persona's human nature is undoubtedly the particular defining aspect that evidently surpasses all greatness as he violently kills the enemy displaying no remorse. Shakespeare utilized literary techniques to fabricate the text, and he deliberately used a metaphor when saying "which smoked with bloody execution" to convey the literal meaning of a sword by mentioning the smoke. The utilization of a metaphor was distinctly portrayed as the sword seemed to erupt smoke due to the merciless killing of the enemy. Macbeth's bravery is depicted as he shows no emotion and does not procrastinate about the consequences as he faces situations upfront. Hence, once the sword came into contact with the enemy, Macbeth split his body open from his navel down to his jaw and placed his head on the sword as a sign of victory. The historical context during the 1600s was a time where men possessed all power and Shakespeare highlighted this issue through all his plays and actors. *Macbeth* does not only explore his bravery and lack of remorse but also his vulnerable state of being.

Shakespeare illustrates vulnerability through the eyes of the persona denoting the emotional state of Macbeth. This is accurately presented when Macbeth hallucinates the dagger before committing the ultimate sin of regicide. "And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood, Which was not so before." Incorporating a confused tone of voice, Macbeth showcases his psychological nature as he is unable to think clearly. Reinforcing the importance of the character's state of mind to strengthen the overall atmosphere of the play. Shakespeare applied symbolism to clearly annotate meaning in the text. The blood is symbolized as a constant reminder of guilt even before the crime has been committed and the outcomes of his power. It also serves as an image that provokes Macbeth to reflect in his deeds. Imagery is essentially created to stimulate the reader's imagination and Shakespeare purposely used this to illustrate Macbeth's state of delusion as he hallucinates the dagger. Macbeth's vulnerability is demonstrated as signs and indications of guilt through the persona's hallucination. Macbeth becomes emotional at the thought of murdering an individual who trusts and values him. The persona does not only experience a vulnerable state of mind but also encounters the consequence of guilt.

Due to unlawful and shameful deeds, Shakespeare exemplifies how a guilty conscience plagues the mind of Macbeth. This is accurately illustrated when Macbeth is distressed about

murdering a righteous man while being in a peaceful state. For sleep in Shakespeare is the privilege of the good and the innocent. The voice kept crying. "Sleep no more. Macbeth has murdered sleep, and therefore will sleep no more." Integrating an emphatic tone of voice, this showcases how Macbeth will never be at peace with his mind. Duncan is not even alive for his presence to be felt however Macbeth's conscience is eating away his sanity. The persona crumbles as he suffers the guilt and this plays heavily upon his character until his personality is completely destroyed. This statement also succeeds in demonstrating the internal conflict and paranoia that torments Macbeth for the rest of the play. Shakespeare has effectively assimilated the utilization of foreshadowing as this allows the audience to predict and anticipate the character's next action as they are knowledgeable of Macbeth's fears and intentions. This literally foreshadows the persona's suffering of insomnia and insanity that plagues Macbeth as he hallucinates a voice crying out to him. This quote reflects the fact that Macbeth murdered Duncan in his sleep and therefore will not be able to rest easy any longer. The world is accompanied by decisions and in regards to Macbeth, due to his poor decision making the consequences carved a dent in his life.

To conclude, William Shakespeare's Macbeth is a prominent text set during the 1600s during the Elizabethan Era. The eponymous text explored the element of guilt through the eyes of Macbeth as it succeeds in displaying the uprise of his social status and his eventual downfall. The text depicts a momentous aspect as our understanding of life during the 1600s were enhanced as we got exposed to Macbeth's decisions as he faced the consequences of his illicit actions.