



ACT 3 Notes and Quotes

Scenes 2-4



Scene 2 Reminders

Hamlet starts by directing the players to avoid exaggeration that will get them praise from the masses (especially the groundlings). He says “let your own discretion be your tutor”(16-17). He also expresses his frustration with actors who are not authentic and yet who receive praise from many people (28-35). **(CONNECTION: UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND, PRESSURES OF SOCIETY CORRUPTING IDENTITY)**. Notice how the speeches in the play focus on Hamlet’s perspective regarding the hypocrisy in the world. (especially important: 182-219)

Hamlet shows his respect and trust for Horatio (lines 53-56) and shows the reason for this respect in lines 70-73. This line is important because it confirms that a cause for Hamlet’s unrest is the fact that too many men are “passion’s slave” meaning they are motivated by emotion (pride, ambition, etc). **(CONNECTION: UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND, PRESSURES OF SOCIETY CORRUPTING IDENTITY)**.

This frustration is demonstrated when he attacks his mother at the play and through the lines in the play for being able to love so freely resulting in her becoming disloyal **(identity changes from a loyal and loving mother and wife to a weak adulterous woman in Hamlet’s eyes)**. In this scene, Ophelia is clearly juxtaposed with Gertrude confirming that Hamlet feels that she, too, allows her emotions to cloud her judgement resulting in her identity changing from a loyal friend and lover to her father’s puppet (242-243: Hamlet confirms that when **Ophelia puts her duty to her father first, her identity changes in his eyes)**.

Hamlet confirms that Claudius is guilty and the ghost is telling the truth (281-282) Then, in lines 384-386, Hamlet asks that his identity change so that he is capable of avenging his father (**CONNECTION: PRESSURES OF FILIAL PIETY**)

Guildestern says the king is “distempered” and the cause is an excess of “choler” . On page 166, it states that “a choleric person suffered from an excess of bile”. According to studies on melancholy during Shakespeare’s time, “An excess of black bile, arising from the spleen, was seen as the root of melancholy” (Bright, 101). (**Possible Effect Quote for Claudius**)

Hamlet acts “mad” in front of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but in his act he reveals why he is truly deteriorating: “I lack advancement” (331) and in response the men say that this is not appropriate since he has “the voice of the king himself for [his] succession” (332-333). The mention of the proverb reveals that this growing reality of his duties as a king result in his deterioration (see the proverb on page 168) - **CONNECTION: PRESSURES OF SOCIETY - GOOD EFFECT QUOTE**

IN LINES 348-363, Hamlet reveals that he is aware of the lack of loyalty from Guildenstern and Rosencrantz and he says “They fool me to the top of my bent”(375) - **CONNECTION: EFFECT OF THE UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND AND THE RESULT WHEN PRESSURES OF SOCIETY CHANGE LOYAL FRIENDS INTO DISLOYAL PUPPETS**

Scene 3 Reminders

Guildenstern agrees to be loyal to the state rather than be loyal to his childhood friend: “To keep those many many bodies safe/That live and feed upon your majesty”(9-10).

(UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND + PRESSURES OF SOCIETY)

The king shows that he is guilty for his actions, but he does not wish to give back all that he gained from his actions as a murderer. The allusion to Cain shows that his motivation was jealousy + his confession that he murdered his brother for his “own ambition” (this transformed him into a murderer). The pressures of society (after the play reveals his guilt) transforms him into a man who is God fearing **(UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND - PRESSURES OF SOCIETY)**.

Hamlet is not able to live up to his **duty as a son** - he is not able to kill Claudius and avenge his father at the end of this scene - is it his moral compass that prevents him? Is it him being too rational? Is it truly that he wants Claudius to suffer like his father did?

SCENE 4

Gertrude is being directed like a puppet much like Ophelia was - she is **putting her duty to the state before her duty as a mother** in allowing Polonius to hide and spy on Hamlet.

Notice the different ways that Hamlet and his mother address each other “thou” vs “you” - Hamlet is either disrespecting her or letting his guard down and talking to his mother in an intimate, informal manner which could indicate him letting his guard down and cuing the audience to realize that he is not acting at this moment with his mother. “I’ll set you up a glass/Where you may see the inmost part of you”(20-21).

“If damned custom hath not brassed it so” (39) - COULD CONNECT TO **SOCIAL PRESSURES - DUTY TO SOCIAL CUSTOM WHICH HAMLET SEES AS HYPOCRITICAL** - HAMLET SAYS HE WISHES TO APPEAL TO HER MATERNAL HEART AND THE WOMAN SHE ONCE WAS IF HER HYPOCRISY HASN’T COVERED THIS IDENTITY

Lines 43-53: Hamlet reveals that the transformation of his mother’s identity has made him and even the earth sorrowful (**UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND**)

Line 84-87: Hamlet again argues that passion and an inability to control passion in response to external pressures and/or internal desires results in mankind's hypocritical actions (**UNCERTAINTY OF MANKIND + SOCIAL PRESSURES**)

Throughout this scene, Hamlet praises his father showing his **filial piety** and chastises his mother for not honouring his father. Then Hamlet sees his father's ghost. The fact that his mother does not see him may indicate that the ghost is the personification of Hamlet's inner guilt and a sign that his act is turning into a reality and an imbalance in humours. (**EFFECT**)

Line 175-181: Hamlet blames fortune (fortune made him the king's son and it also put Polonius in his path of revenge against Claudius) - **CONNECTION - HAMLET BLAMES PRESSURES OF FILIAL PIETY AND/OR SOCIAL PRESSURES RESULTING FROM THE DIVINITY OF KINDS FOR HIS CURRENT STATE**

Notice Hamlet's advice to his mother at the end of this scene. He contradicts himself - he is unclear - not thinking straight. He is now playing the same game that everyone else is playing: **he is being that hypocrite that he hates** by using his mother as bait to get Claudius (**EFFECT**). He is asking her to go against her morals and take Claudius to bed again so that he (Hamlet) can live up to his filial duty and his duty as heir to the throne (taking revenge on Claudius).

EFFECTS:

After killing Polonius and the queen asks what he has done, Hamlet says, “Nay, I know not: is it the king?”(32). Hamlet’s actions are so rash which is a stark contrast to the rest of the play where he over analyzes every action in his revenge plan - sign of his vulnerability? **Does this indicate his act is consuming him and he is truly going mad?**

Hamlet’s inconsistent sympathy toward Polonius **reveals his instability** (shows he feels guilt when he says he will need blessing but then he says he’ll “lug his guts” and shows a lack of feeling.

Timothy Bright's symptoms of melancholie:

- 'distrust, doubt, diffidence, or dispaire', leading both to anger and 'false laughter' or sardonic wit (p. 101).
- Sufferers are distracted by 'phantasticall apparations' and 'counterfeit goblins' (p. 103).
- Their 'dreames are fearefull' and their 'resolution' delayed by 'long deliberation' (p. 131).
- Even their house may seem 'a prison or dungeon, rather than a place of repose or rest' (p. 263).

Source: *Treatise of Melancholie* (1586)

Bright also argued that madness is "especially disturbing because, in defiance of the natural order humans became like beasts when they lost their power of reason*."

NOTICE THE YELLOW - HAMLET IS SHOWING ALL OF THESE SYMPTOMS. PROOF THAT MELANCHOLIE CAN BE AN EFFECT FOR MANY OF YOUR THESIS STATEMENTS.

ALSO NOTICE THAT THE ABOVE QUOTE CONNECTS TO HAMLET'S FRUSTRATION THROUGHOUT THIS ACT WITH HUMANS NOT BEING RULED BY "PASSIONS". THIS CAN BE ADDED AS A "SO WHAT" / "BECAUSE STATEMENT" / "WHY" TO MANY OF YOUR THESIS STATEMENTS.