

Sarah Strause  
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Creative Project Analysis

Shakespeare writes with a common theme of death in many of his sonnets as well as in his tragedy, *Hamlet*. Virtually all of his sonnets that have to do with aging and the cycle of life forewarn his readers that as we age so does our beauty, and eventually we will wither away and die. Because the cycle of life ends with death, Shakespeare writes his sonnets to keep the memory of people who have passed on alive. This can be seen in sonnet 18 as he compares a woman to a summer's day, "But thy eternal summer shall not fade nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st, Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade, when in eternal lines to time thou grow'st: So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, so long lives this, and this gives life to thee," (lines 8-14). In this particular sonnet, Shakespeare shows that although death is inevitable, we can remain alive through the memories of others, particularly those captured in poetry.

Shakespeare not only makes reference to living through the memories of others, but also says that we can remain alive through our children. An example of this can be seen in sonnet 3, "Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee calls back the lovely April of her prime; So thou through windows of thine age shalt see despite of wrinkles this thy golden time. But if thou live remember'd not to be, die single, and thine image dies with thee," (lines 9-14). In this particular sonnet, Shakespeare tells his readers that when we die, it is through our offspring that we continue to live.

Shakespeare's death theme is also seen in his tragedy, *Hamlet*. The play begins with Hamlet's father being dead, murdered. As the play progresses, Shakespeare keeps him alive through the memory of Hamlet. On a few different occasions, a ghost,

representing Hamlet's father comes to him in a vision. This further illustrates Shakespeare's theme on death and proves that it is through our offspring and their memories that one stays alive.

Shakespeare is a beautiful writer and poet, but what intrigues me the most are the themes intertwined within his works, particularly his death theme. Shakespeare's death theme intrigues me, because through the circle of life, we will all eventually die, however we are the only ones who decide what we will leave behind once we are gone. Incorporated in this theme, Shakespeare also reminds his readers that because all we have to leave behind are memories, we must focus on developing a good reputation for ourselves while we can. This also appeals to me, because it reminds people that in order to be remembered once we pass on, we must develop relationships and be good to our peers. The fact that Shakespeare also suggests that one can live through his/her offspring convinces his readers to have children, and therefore develop loving relationships with people in order to procreate. This further emphasizes the fact that we should all try to develop relationships with others and do positive things, while alive, so that when we die, we will leave something positive behind. That is why I chose to do my creative project based on this particular theme. The face that I have painted represents life after death. Half of the face represents death and the other half, life. This symbolizes that when we die, we stay alive through the memories of others and through the lives of our offspring. The piece that I have created also represents the whole circle of life in which Shakespeare devotes many of his works to. The circle of life represents the journey from birth to death, including procreation. Looking at the face from one side, one sees a lifeless form,

dead and blank in color. However, looking at the same face from the opposite side, one sees a face full of color and life, furthermore, representing the tie between life and death.