Elizabethan Views Of Richard Iii Essay, Research Paper

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My Essay on Whether What Richard III did was Right, or Wrong

King Richard III, in my opinion, was a greedy, yet determined man who would do whatever it took to achieve the position of king of England. What he did to get to this position was wrong, however, how he went about achieving what he wanted shows that he had intelligence. Having to kill a family member to get to where he wanted to be, did not even stop him. I believe that him doing this was very dishonorable. Even the book, Shakespeare and the Renaissance Code of Honor says ?dishonor is worse than death.? In this same book I found a piece of information saying ?If the renaissance aristocracy loved and pursued honor intensely, and with it?s whole being. It follows logically that dishonor was the one thing in life which could not be tolerated.? Another quote from the same book on honor says ?Since honor was so highly esteemed not only to one?s own life, but also the lives of those close and dear to oneself, might be sacrificed in order to maintain one?s reputation?, which is almost exactly what Richard did.

As stated above, in my opinion, I think that what Richard III did to achieve his position was wrong, but he does have a massive amount of intelligence to be able to pull off his master plan. His goal is to become the King of England, and he would go to any means necessary to get this. Although what he did proved to be morally in correct, the also proved to be intelligent ideas. For example, he sees a path he can take that will lead him right to the thrown, but his brother, Clarence, is next in line to inherit it. What Richard does to prevent this from happening is he has his own brother murdered. That, in my views, is one of the most dishonorable things he does in the play. Yet he executes this plan very wisely. The reason behind this being that he hired two hit-men to do it for him, and the authorities have no way of pinning this crime on Richard. From one internet site Richard in the Mirror of the Centuries, it says, ?Shakespeare?s characterization of Richard III has been accepted as a historical portrait ? a portrait of the most wicked of English kings. The question is, whether this is not rather exaggerated?? After reading further in this document, I find that it blatantly says ?From the very first beginning, in the opening soliloquy, Richard tells the spectators about his own wickedness and he really does prove a villain! He verifies the impression we get in the first scene throughout the drama by acting and thinking the way he does. Always doing what he was ?promised? before, he appears to be an unscrupulous person ? a night-mare king.? Which supports my opinion which says what he does is wrong. There is also another type of honor that I see broken in this play, and that?s honor to your family. If he honored his family, he would let things take the course they are supposed to take, and let his brother Clarence take over as King. I found a quote in the book Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor, by a man by the name of Castiglione, and the quote says ?for it is a great deal less dispraise for him that is not born a gentleman to fail in the acts of virtue, than for a gentleman. If he swerve from the steps of his ancestors, he has straineth the name of his family.? In addition to this quote, I would like to mention that this book also says ?Loyalty to one?s family is placed ahead of obedience.? So according to these teaching, what Richard did, just killing his brother, appears to be very dishonorable, and that is aside from everything else that he did.

In conclusion to my essay would like to say that there seems to be plenty of facts, in books, that proves my opinion which is, what Richard did was wrong. According to the Elizabethan Laws, All the things that he did was extremely dishonorable. All the facts that I found in my references are true facts, they are not laws that are made for the story. I can see how the laws, or teaching have changed from back in the Elizabethan time, and now. For an interesting thought, I think that these acts, to a certain extent, are prevalant in today?s political society. I think that certain people in politics today exercise the ability to be dishonorable. A lot of times today, people, in general will lie about anything, and back in the Elizabethan era, being dishonorable was one of the worst things that you could be known as. If you lost your honor, it was like you didn?t have anything left. I hope that in this essay I have convinced the reader that what I think, is right. Even though they proved to be intelligent plans, the whole doing of it was wrong. This is my final opinion on this subject.

Bibliography

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