

# Oedipus the king – characters and performance essay

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



Oedipus explores a rich Greek Mythology casting Oedipus as a strong, young man with great determination in all his undertakings (Bagg 5). However, one outstanding feature of these qualities comes out strongly when this young man was walking down the rustic lane where an arrogant young opulent merchant nearly rumbled over him with a chariot. Oedipus, according to McNamara (23), engages the opponent in a duel, killing the young opulent merchant.

In another outburst, Oedipus encounters Sphinx whose theatrics has been to plague the populations in the City of Thebes. Using riddles, the Sphinx draws attention in the streets robbing the pedestrians of handsome cash (Bagg 5). Oedipus is able to solve a riddle properly, and this makes him a pillar in the eyes of many. Consequently, Oedipus is made the King of Thebes and further marries Jocasta, – a widowed Queen of Thebes who at the time was the admiration of many.

Oedipus's cleverness makes his candidature to surface as the best individual to inherit the throne, hence becoming the King of Thebes. Oedipus is evidently a sharp and quick thinker that makes him a most admired King (McNamara 14). He seems to have clear-cut out policies to redeem his people from their plights. When the plague hit the city, for example, he readily presents different action plans to deal with the crisis.

His good decision-making skills permeate the drama, and his frugality at the throne is more about securing the betterment of his people. His decisions, according to Bagg (25), are both bold and wise; they are devoid of regrets. Oedipus probably led his people to success and merriment. Unfortunately,

the very prudent leadership skills that he used to drive his people to believe he is perfect ended up destroying him.

Creon is a brother to Jocasta and brother in law to Oedipus. Creon is typically political and critical to Oedipus's reign. In an attempt to contain him, McNamara (23) notes that Oedipus accuses him of treason, but he refutes the claims and demands that Oedipus produce evidence of his allegations. As the play ends, Creon seems more energized to inherit the throne as the dwindling power of Oedipus grips the Kingdom (Bagg 15). Creon is evidently careful with his actions not to fall in the same trap as Oedipus did. He pays more attention to the gods of the Kingdom to direct his attentions.

Tiresias is Creon's co-accused by Oedipus, and together they face treason charges. He is a seer and prophesized that the end times of Oedipus is nigh. Though not outspoken, McNamara (32) observes that Tiresias is keen with his utterances though he claims that Oedipus is responsible for the murder of King Laius whom he succeeds as a King (Bagg 35). He utters riddles that openly show that Oedipus is guilty of killing his father and inheriting his mother.

She is both a wife and mother to Oedipus. Oedipus inherits her upon assuming the throne left vacant by his father. As the play unfolds, McNamara (45) explores that she seems reluctant to believe the prophecy of the seers. She thinks Jocasta does not take Tiresias claims cordially and advises Oedipus to ignore him (Bagg 55). Her trust in Oedipus wanes when it dawns on her that Oedipus killed his father – her husband – to bequeath the throne

and inherit her. Jocasta is very much perturbed at heart by several revelations prompting her to take away her life.

Watching the drama as Oedipus' fates unfolds could be very appalling. At first, the audience encounters a very admirable hero. However, as the plot progresses, one is likely to share in the vicarious horror that permeates the fate and suffering that characterize the power and destiny of Oedipus the King.

Bagg, Robert. Oedipus the King. Amherst: U of Massachusetts, 1982. Print.

McNamara, Kilian. Oedipus Rex. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. Print.