

Hamlet's relationship with his mother gertrude research paper

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



William Shakespeare, the famous playwright, has addressed the issue of relationships in most of his plays, especially as of family ties. He has in most of his books and in particular, The Tragedies exposed the good and the bad side of family ties, especially between parents and their kids, including oedipal complex issues.

In Hamlet, the must-read chef-d'oeuvre, Shakespeare brings to light the connections between members of a family, namely Hamlet, who is a prince, his late father, his mother Gertrude and his stepfather Claudius. This paper seeks to address Hamlet's relationship with his mother as brought out in the play through the analysis of the characters.

In this play, Shakespeare uses a woman called Gertrude, who is among the few women featured in the masterwork. Through her relationship with her son Hamlet, Shakespeare paints a picture of betrayal. Gertrude marries the brother of Hamlet's father and this why Hamlet is upset with his mother. In his opinion, remarriage is a tremendous act of betrayal.

In the whole book, Hamlet dedicates most of his time and energy trying to take revenge for the death of the king, his father, whom he believes was cruelly treated by those for whom he cared. Therefore, he suffered during his whole lifetime. Hamlet feels that Gertrude hurts the king more by not mourning during the king's burial.

She instead delights in her new marriage depicting some freedom from oppression that she went through in her former marriage, as the reader can insinuate. As a result, Hamlet develops significant irritation towards her

mother, which he manifests through his monologue and dialogue with other people as depicted in the play.

Hamlet is made to change his perception of love after his mother marries his late father's brother, two months after the death of his father (Shakespeare I. ii. 138). As a result, Hamlet concludes that his father truly loved his mother, yet his mother never loved him.

He fails to understand how his mother could so much dangle on his father (Shakespeare I. ii. 140, 143) then marry Claudius so soon after his father's death. He refuses to admit Gertrude and Claudius' relationship. He, therefore, resolves that woman's adoration is so frail and can be changed so easily depending on the situation that the woman finds herself. Faulkner calls women "frail beings not because of their physical abilities but because of their weak emotions" (146).

According to Hamlet, his mother betrayed not only his father but also the love and the marriage his parents shared. Gertrude's unrefined actions change Hamlet's perception of love towards others. He reaches the level of hating Ophelia, the girl who truly loves him fearing that she might be in possession of his mother's betrayal character.

Because of Gertrude's evil plans of betraying her once-beloved husband, Hamlet's love for Ophelia, the woman who he loved and one who gave back an equal share of the love changes, and is significantly affected.

When with her and watching a play, Ophelia comments that the prologue is very brief and Hamlet likens the briefness to a woman's love (Shakespeare III. ii. 137-138). As time goes by, the gap between Hamlet and Ophelia widens to the level of Hamlet declaring that he does not love Ophelia at all and is not ready to love her anymore (Shakespeare III. i. 119-120).

However, after Ophelia's death, the reader realizes that Hamlet was not sincere with his previous words concerning his faded love to Ophelia since he later on confirms to Laertes that he loved her so much and no amount of love could match his love for her (Shakespeare V. i. 254-256).

The reader realizes the reason behind Hamlet's words that though he knows very well that Ophelia loves him, he fears that it might take after that between his mother and his late father, which was in no doubt fake.

Gertrude's actions instil a lot of anger to Hamlet who in turn reaches the level of killing any man who seems to take up the position of his late father.

Hamlet ends up believing his mother conspired with his uncle into killing his beloved father. He is filled up with so much rage and hatred until he kills Polonius in his mother's bedroom after seeing him and thinking that he is Claudius.

His temper is fueled by the conviction that his mother by conspiring to kill the king and then marrying the killer caused an offence too great to be forgiven. After mistaking Polonius for Claudius and killing him, his mother

calls the action “ a bloody deed to which Hamlet replies that a bloody deed is killing a king and marrying the brother” (Shakespeare III. iv. 26-28).

Hamlet's mother is shocked at this accusation, and the shock is so big until Hamlet begins to doubt if she really killed his father. From this point, though still convinced that she betrayed his father, he changes and starts warning her of her evil actions instead of accusing her. He comes to the full conclusion that his mother never killed her father.

The unacceptable marriage of his mother to his uncle continues to antagonize him. He, therefore, decides to only “ speak daggers to her but use none” (Caxton 366).

With this, he speaks to her harshly addressing her as the queen, wife to the king's brother. He asks her where her shame is and proceeds to compare his father, who he refers to as a combination and a form indeed and his uncle who he calls a ‘ mildewed ear’.

Of course, Gertrude becomes defensive, orders him not to speak to him in that manner but he continues, and warns her to repent her actions and prevent that which is to come (Shakespeare III. iv. 141). He even cautions her against going into her uncle's bed. He tries to make her mother realize she is not doing the right thing and should feel sorry and stop her unrefined actions.

The conversation between Hamlet and his mother brings back Gertrude to her senses where she feels guilty and ashamed of her actions (Caxton 80).

It is at this point that she realizes that all along, she had been doing what was not right, and it was a great act of betrayal to her late husband. She admits that though she had never consciously been aware that Claudius had killed his brother, she had never fully approved of her actions.

Gertrude admits that when she looked into her soul, she was shocked by what she saw. Meanwhile, Hamlet has been acting very madly, where he discloses to his mother that it is just but a feigned state, but he will not reveal it to anyone. From this point henceforth, as Horatio points out, Hamlet and Gertrude's relationship is restored (14). Together now, they begin to seek revenge for the king's death.

Hamlet continues with his feigned state of madness while Gertrude continues to make Claudius trust that the condition is real, and these actions become of great importance later (Shakespeare IV. i. 6-7).

Claudius hence comes to believe the prince's simulated state, and he starts fearing what he may do to him. During the fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes, Gertrude shows that her allegiance is with the prince and not with the king for she gives her son her napkin and tells her that she rejoices in his fortunes.

Mother of Hamlet goes on to drink from the poisoned cup that was meant for him and though her new husband warns and orders her to stop drinking it, she continues and finishes it. This shows where her full allegiance is, and despite there still being intense feelings between them, they find their relationship becoming better before she finally dies.

It is noted throughout the play that even though Hamlet is hurt by her mother's act of betrayal of marrying her husband's brother a short time after her husband's death, he never wishes to hurt her. His main aim all along is to avenge his father's death. His quest for vengeance does not compromise his love for his mother, and all through the play, his love for her is evidently displayed.

He tries and succeeds at convincing her to realize that her actions were wrong and together, they undertake to avenge the king's death. So despite the tense relationship between Hamlet and his mother at the beginning marked with feelings of anger and rage (Friedlander 3), their relationship is restored at the end, and Hamlet finally achieves his objective of avenging his father's death. It is all a message of hope.

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Hamlet's mother is the Queen of Denmark. Her name is Gertrude. She quickly overcame the death of her husband and married Hamlet's uncle King Claudius. She is a caring and loving person, though may look the opposite.

Hamlet feels betrayed and irritated by his mother. He is upset because she married his late father's brother Claudius. Hamlet thinks that remarriage in such circumstances is unacceptable. Through Hamlet's disappointment with his mother, his anger is increased towards Claudius.

It is true that, despite, Hamlet's pain and anger, he still feels love towards his mother. But no one can say for sure, whether he has any romantic feelings towards her. It's up to the reader's interpretation.

Hamlet is angry at his mother for marrying Claudius. However, he still loves her, which is shown in the ways he treats her. Hamlet regularly visits her and tries to protect her from his plans to kill Claudius.