

Free hamlet essays:
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Hamlet essays: Not Murder, Self Defense in Hamlet

It is said that fall of the Royal family of Denmark, was Prince Hamlets fault. But in truth, Hamlet wasn't responsible for all the deaths. He was simply just avenging his fathers murder, an of Gertrude, Polonius, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Ophelia.

If you don't know who you are killing, are you held fully responsible for the murder? In Hamlets case, he promised his father, he would avenge his fathers murder. After the play, Hamlet was called into Gertrudes room to have a talk with his mother. That evening, Hamlet had performed badly and embarrassed King Claudius by implying that he had killed King Hamlet. At this point in the play, Hamlet was aware that almost everyone was spying on him. So he had reason to be suspicious when he heard a noise from behind a curtain. It was of course Hamlets fault that he had stabbed Polonius, but Hamlet wasn't aware that it was Polonius. He thought that it was Claudius getting ready to pull a knife on him, so as self-defense, Hamlet killed him. Polonius was just mistaken for the King. He was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Therefore Because Hamlet wasn't aware he was killing the wrong person, he can't be fully responsible for Polonius's death. After Hamlet realized that he had murdered the Kings advisor, not the king, he felt sorry for Polonius and sort of apologized. " thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell. I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune. Thou find'st to be too busy in some danger." (Act 3 scene 4, line 38)

Everyone deals with death differently. Hamlet mourns, promising to get even. Gertrude starts new with a new husband to replace the old one. When

Ophelia hears about her father's death, she goes mad. That is how Ophelia deals with death. She turned crazy; acting insane like a mad woman. Soon she got to the point where she couldn't control her actions. As a result, she herself decided to end her life, to end the madness and pain. Ophelia's death was caused because of her father's death. Because Hamlet was not fully responsible for the death of Polonius, he couldn't be responsible for the death of Ophelia. Hamlet loved Ophelia; he wouldn't deliberately hurt her like that. " I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers could not with all their quantity of love make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?" (Act 5 scene 1, line 282) Ophelia drowned herself. It was her decision to end her life. Not Hamlet's. It wasn't Hamlet's fault Ophelia deals with death in a dangerous way.

Many say that Hamlet killed Gertrude. But that statement is false. Claudius killed Gertrude. He didn't originally intend to, he intended to kill Hamlet, but it didn't work out that way. Claudius dropped the pill in the cup, to poison it. To Hamlet's victory, Gertrude lifts the glass to drink. Claudius yells: " Gertrude, do not drink." (Act 5 Scene 2, line 317) But she drinks anyway. It could be argued that Gertrude killed herself, that she could have known that the cup was deadly. But she had no reason to kill herself. Who would have thought a man would poison his stepson, and his nephew. To Gertrude the cup seemed safe, because she trusted her husband, a natural thing for a wife. Claudius could have jumped across the room and grabbed the cup from her. But instead he silently watched her die. He didn't want to embarrass himself and be called a traitor, in front of his kingdom. Being mortified would

cause him more pain than losing his love. Therefore the death of Gertrude was due to Claudius. Hamlet had nothing to do with it.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were supposed to be “ friends” of Hamlet.

Friends should spy on each other. Hamlet was very kind towards

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. “ My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do you both? (Act 2 scene 2, line 242) Hamlet thought that his friends would be there for him. Instead they were there for his mother and his creepy uncle. As the play continued, Hamlet's two “ friends” became more against him and more for his parents. Friends always choose you over your enemy. Therefore, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern weren't real friends of Hamlet, they were just pretending for their own good. They were “ sucking up” to the queen and king. They were greedy. Claudius gave them a letter to deliver to the King of England, that ordered him to kill Hamlet. Although Rosencrantz and Guildenstern didn't know what the letter said, they still would have gone ahead with the King's plan. They did before, why stop now? Hamlet had no choice but to have them killed. It was plainly self defense. He didn't know what they would try next.