

Hamlet and crime and punishment by shakespeare and fyodor dostoyevsky

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The two novels, Hamlet and Crime and Punishment, were similar in how the two main characters, Hamlet and Raskolnikov, were having internal conflicts on what they should do in reference to dealing with the consequences that were gonna come with killing someone. Due to these internal conflicts, they were going through multiple emotions that changed how they looked to the other people, wondering if both of them had gone mad. So, the themes of the roots of madness, the question of whether we ever have the right to take a life, and what defines true freedom came into play in these two books.

The roots of madness was evident all throughout both novels from the start. Once Raskolnikov killed Aliona he became mad at the thought that someone would find out what he did, meanwhile Hamlet was mad with the thought of not knowing whether or not he should kill Claudius. To begin with, Raskolnikov began to feel the effects of madness almost immediately when he killed Aliona. For example, when he got home he kept checking if everything was back in its place three times (Dostoevsky 85). He continues this the next morning when someone mentions Chief Clerk by panicking and being able to keep his composure (122). Even though this is completely normal for any sane person to feel these types of emotions, it gets worse as the book continues.

Throughout the book Hamlet was dealing with this internal conflict of not knowing whether or not he should kill Claudius. By reason of this, Hamlet claimed at first to act mad in order to psych out Claudius (Hamlet 101). But as time went on, the madness became real. For instance, when Hamlet finally confessed to Gertrude how he felt, he saw the ghost of Hamlet, this time this may have not been real this time. That possibly this may have been <https://assignbuster.com/hamlet-and-crime-and-punishment-by-shakespeare-and-fyodor-dostoyevsky/>

a figment of his imagination and just needed a reason to continue to try and kill Claudius (181). He even admitted it to Laertes that it was his madness that killed Polonius, not his own will (277).

The question of whether or not to take a life was also displayed within these two novels. Raskolnikov thought that taking the life of Aliona was gonna create something positive for the people around, while Hamlet didn't wanna risk what would happen to him in the afterlife. In *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov wrote this essay on the extraordinary and ordinary people, claiming that the extraordinary people are the calm ones that do the killing or any other immoral act, but it's all fine that they can do that because they're doing it for the greater good (Dostoevsky 162). His reasoning for doing this comes up again near the end once he told Sonia that he "was ambitious to become another Napoleon; that was why I committed the murder" (395). In spite of that, Hamlet killed Claudius out of pure revenge. He wanted to get justice for his father and make Claudius pay for what he had done.

Both characters felt that their actions were justified and that they had to take a life in order to get done what they needed to get done. Throughout the book, Raskolnikov and Hamlet were dealing with their personal demons. Raskolnikov felt the need to be punished in a way just so he can feel free from what he had done. Hamlet, on the other hand, felt that the only way that he could feel freedom would be if killed Claudius in order to put at rest King Hamlet's soul. One of the most notable scenes in *Crime and Punishment* displayed that Raskolnikov needed a release when he met with Porfiry.

Even though he tried to avoid making any mistakes when Porfiry asked him questions, he always believed that it would just be easier if he confessed (Dostoevsky 316). Before this meeting, he was even contemplating suicide because he wasn't able to live with this baggage on his shoulders (166). Raskolnikov, however, was able to get the freedom that he was craving for at the end of the story when he confessed and was sent to a Siberian prison. He even claimed that he liked the prison because he worked all day, allowing him to be able to sleep, which he hadn't been getting outside of the prison (516). On the other hand, Hamlet had a different type of freedom that also came forth at the end of the book as well. Finally, Hamlet killed Claudius at the end, being able to fulfill his father's wishes.

The turning point here was that Hamlet finally accepted death since throughout the play he was conflicted over what would be life after death (Hamlet 285). Once Hamlet realized that he was struck with the poisonous sword, he took the opportunity to kill Claudius. He wouldn't have been able to let his conscious be free if he hadn't done so (285). So, even though the freedoms for Hamlet and Raskolnikov were different, they still were able to feel the weight off of their shoulders. Overall, both novels were almost indistinguishable when one is looking at the themes of each book.

The themes of the books correlated with each other with the work as a whole. The three themes of the roots of madness, if we ever have the right to take a life, and what defines true freedom all made the book what it is was. The books wouldn't have been as effective as they are now without these three themes being paired up as they are.