

Oedipus own life  
(dawe 9). "when  
oedipus



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Oedipus the King and Hamlet are classical tragic stories; this is evident at the end of both plays. Oedipus and Hamlet both insisted on finding out the truth concerning their safety and that is what led to the tragedies that both faced.

Claudia was crowned king of Denmark after the previous king had died. Oedipus was also made king of Thebes since the previous king had been killed. Oedipus and Claudia exhibit similarities in terms of how they both attained their crowns, their conduct as rulers and their relationships with their queens. However, they also differ in the same contexts as displayed in both plays. To begin with both Oedipus and King Claudius are both Kings. Oedipus was made the King of Thebes after solving the riddle of Sphinx “ What is the creature that walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three in the evening (Hall 25)?” This riddle had baffled many if not all the diviners at Thebes. Oedipus saved the great nation of Thebes after answering the riddle.

However, this was after he had murder his father and former King of Thebes Laius which left the set vacant. On the other hand King Claudius became king after killing the former king who was Hamlet’s father. Claudius powered poison in the king’s ears which killed him; this is revealed to Hamlet by his father’s ghost. The ghost disclosed to Hamlet that “ he—the elder Hamlet— was murdered by Claudius’ pouring poison in his ear (Foster 112).” Though Oedipus did not selfishly acquired kingship like Claudius did. Oedipus was not aware that Laius was his father since he was horrified when he realized what fate had in store for him; he never wanted to kill his father.

However, the fact is both Oedipus and Claudius managed to get the post of kingship after killing the former kings leaving the seats vacant. In addition, Claudia and Oedipus characters as kings differ greatly. Claudius is a shrewd, conniving, lustful and corrupt king.

All that mattered to Claudius is getting what he wanted; he executed anything or anyone who came between him and his power. He found a legitimate excuse to execute prince Hamlet after realizing that he knew his dark secret. Claudius decided to send Hamlet to England together with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on diplomatic grounds.

However, Claudius clearly disclosed that he was in reality sending Hamlet to face his own death. He was actually revenging as he clearly stated "Revenge should know no bounds (Hoy 132)." On the other hand, Oedipus is neither conniving nor lustful and that is why after he realized what he had done, he decided to gouge out his eyes as a way of punishing himself for conducting a big sin Creon stated "Speak out, before all of us. The sorrows of my people here mean more to me than any fear I may have for my own life (Dawe 9). " When Oedipus was on his way to Thebes from Delphi, he struggled with his father over whose chariots had the right to crossover the bridge first.

This shows that Oedipus was also selfish and adamant. Finally, Oedipus and Claudius exhibit similar attitudes of great love and concern for wives. Claudius married Hamlets mother Gertrude who was the Queen of Denmark out of love since he had always wanted to have her long before the king died. However, his aim with her was to help him win over the thrown from

Hamlet which brings out the selfishness in him. When Gertrude informed Claudius that Hamlet had killed Polonius, he only thinks of his life and not of Gertrude (Edwards, 110). However, Jocasta was handed over to Oedipus after he answered the riddle. The people of Thebes was very much pleased when Oedipus saved them and that is why they have him Jocasta to be his wife.

Oedipus never had any ill intentions with Jocasta when he married her. This brings out the great difference between Oedipus and Claudius. Both Oedipus the King and Claudius treated their wives well since they were in love.

Oedipus refers to his wife as “ My wife, my queen, Jocasta, why hast thou summoned me from my palace (Dawe 19).” This shows that Oedipus recognizes Jocasta as his wife and queen depicted that he loved her. Oedipus managed to get a child with Jocasta which shows that they both loved each other and out of that love a child was born. Claudius married Gertrude out of love and the queen loved him too and respected him and that is why she defended Claudius from Hamlet.

Gertrude even covered Claudius sins. When the messenger from Corinth reveals that Oedipus was Jocasta’s son, the woman he had taken and loved as his wife, dramatically expresses his love for her in his desire to spare the anguish that he was suffering. Oedipus gouged out his eyes leaving him blind to show that he did not like what he had done and he did not want to see Jocasta suffer. The love he had for her wife and also his family was so great and that is why he never wanted to see them suffer in any way. He would rather suffer or go away to escape from the reality. As demonstrated above, both Oedipus and Claudius had strong love for their wives. In

conclusion, both Oedipus and King Claudius attained their crown after killing the previous kings.

However, in terms of character, King Claudius was corrupt, lustful, selfish and conniving more than Oedipus. They however both loved their wives whom they inherited from the previous kings.

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