

# William shakespeare's hamlet, prince of denmark essay

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



When discussing William Shakespeare's tragedy Hamlet, one is to keep in mind the major themes of the play. First of all, it should be pointed out that one of the most common themes the tragedy represents seems to be the issue of revenge. Other important aspects are related to religion, fortune, fate, corruption, appearance vs. reality, providence, impossibility of certainty, mortality and complexity of action (Tinkham 2004, p. 2).

Generally, the main idea of the play is considered to be the impact of people's actions on their future. "The ghost of Hamlet's father does urge him to action" (Fredson 1966, p. 1). In other words, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is recognized to be one of the most required readings, as it discloses the issue of revenge and its consequences. On the other hand, the author wants his readers to be familiar with the effect of people's thoughts.

"Reducing all human concerns to sex and status leaves out all positive sociality, eliminating the interplay between impulses of dominance and impulses of affiliative, cooperative sociality" (Carroll 2010, p. 236).

William Shakespeare's tragedy is not easy to understand, as there are serious issues, which the author discusses. For instance, Shakespeare's reflection of death and incest, gives us an opportunity to suppose that the play should not be studied by a young audience.

It is obvious that "In Hamlet, the image of death is introduced from the very beginning" (Galita 2008, p. 29). Moreover, the language of an English playwright's work is rather complicated; so, one can still fail to understand the essence of the author's speech.

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that the tragedy gives young readers an opportunity to develop critical thinking, “ being able to better understand Shakespeare’s language, and hopefully coming to at least appreciate some of his other works because of the knowledge gained from this unit” (Waldo 2008, p. 10).

Unfortunately, most of Shakespeare’s works are associated with negative connotations, as students cannot define the point of the plays.

When speaking about a critical interpretation of Act four, scene five of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, it is necessary to define the major points of the part. So, scene five reflects Ophelia’s “ madness”, Laertes, who “ storms” the castle, and Ophelia and Laertes.

The relationship between the main character Hamlet and Ophelia are rather unusual. For instance, at first sight, Hamlet’s feeling about Ophelia seems to be quite shallow. Thus, “ he rejected her while she was alive; his behavior contributed to her madness, and it is upon her death, that he finally announces his undying love for her” (Compare Ophelia’s madness with Hamlet’s madness or feigned madness n. d., para. 3). The main character understands what real love means; however, his signs of consciousness are late. So, Hamlet says:

Ham. I lov’d Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers

Could not (with all their quantity of love)

Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her? (William Shakespeare: Hamlet 2005, p. 100).

In my opinion, a deeper understanding of Hamlet's feelings seems to be the effect of the so-called canonical pieces the tragedy includes.

Ophelia's affection reflects her position of a woman, who belongs to the noble class. Taking into account her conversation with the queen and the king, one can understand her inner nature. She is honest, and innocent. Her womanly character is reflected in all the phrases she says:

Oph. (Sings)

Larded all with sweet flowers;

Which bewept to the grave did not go

With true-love showers (William Shakespeare: Hamlet 2005, p. 79).

Ophelia's worldview is reflected in the language she speaks. There is a need to state that Ophelia's descriptions have a symbolic meaning. Thus, she seems to represent an opposite side of a patriarchic community, and she is opposed to other characters who possess power. To my mind, Ophelia's loss of identity is considered to be the key issue of the fourth Act.

In Reading Ophelia's Madness, the author writes, "Motherless and completely circumscribed by the men around her, Ophelia has been shaped to conform to external demands, to reflect others' desires" (Dane 1998, p. 406).

When reading the fourth Act, it becomes obvious that Ophelia is accepted by the readers in different ways. However, I suppose that it was the desire of the playwright to leave the circumstances of her death unsure and inconsistent. Maybe the author “ gives Gertrude this less than typical messenger performance (her only extended monologue in the play) and then provides for its immediate discrediting by the gravediggers. There is an epistemological gap in the text that cannot be filled in” (Peterson 1998, p. 257).

While analyzing the fifth scene, it becomes evident that Ophelia is mostly associated with “ the green girl of pastoral, the virginal Rose of May and the sexually explicit madwoman who, in giving away her wild flowers and herbs, is symbolically deflowering herself” (Showalter 2011, para. 1).

Generally, the meaning of the fourth Act is really important, as this part gives the readers an opportunity to predict the future of the main characters on the basis of their actions.

The fourth Act is one of the conclusive parts of the tragedy. The play is mostly based on the characters' actions, but not the emotions as some readers think.

Carroll, J. 2010, ' Intentional Meaning in Hamlet: An Evolutionary Perspective,' University of Missouri-St. Louis, pp. 230-260. Web.

' Compare Ophelia's madness with Hamlet's madness or feigned madness', n. d., Unc. edu. Web.

Dane, G. 1998, ' Reading Ophelia's Madness', *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, pp. 405-23.

Fredson, B. 1966, ' Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy 1587-1642', Princeton: Princeton UP, pp. 1-2.

Galita, R. 2008, ' Imagery of Death in Hamlet', Galati University Press, pp. 29-37. Web.

Peterson, K. 1998, ' Framing Ophelia: Representation and the Pictorial Tradition', *Shakespearean Criticism*, pp. 255-62.

Showalter, E. 2011, ' Commentary/Scholarly Articles on Ophelia', Pittsburg State University – Pittsburg, Kansas. Web.

Tinkham, A. 2004, ' William Shakespeare's Hamlet, Prince of Denmark'. Web.

Waldo, L. 2008, ' Revenge in Hamlet', Uga. edu, pp. 2-38. Web.

' William Shakespeare: Hamlet', 2005, Renaissance Editions, pp. 1-112. Web.