

Comparing the peaceweavers

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



Contents

Throughout the British Literature time period of 450-1066: the roles and perspective of women were very subjective in the idea that a woman needs a man to be powerful. An independent woman was viewed as weak and unimportant. The belief that a man good fix or heal an evil/ bad women was a common belief.

By looking at the different roles Women play in Beowulf, women either have to be good or evil, there is no middle or in-between, to be good they seem to have to be affiliated with a man.

Throughout the poem, there are several women Characters from Wealhtheow to Grendel's Mother. While some are shown to be nice and loving others such as Grendel's mom are portrayed as demonic monsters. The poet and novelist George Meredith said that every society must have its civilization judged by the way it treats its women: what happens in bodily fact, and also what is said, felt, imagined and fantasize by and about them. Sometimes there is a wide gap between fact and fancy(Herbert 1997).

The two queens in Beowulf, Wealhtheow, and Hygd are married to the Kings Hrothgar and Hygela both queens take up the important jobs of cupbearer, Wealhtheow came in, Urging him to drink deep and enjoy it(Beowulf 612) and becoming Peaceweavers. A Peace weaver is a woman who married someone from an enemy tribe in order to establish peace between her family and his.

The royal bride who holds out her welcome to bring warring tribes together in friendship at her wedding feast (Herbert 1997) Their main job was to see the comfort of the men and bear children(" The Wife's Lament Pages").

Queen Wealtheow is married to the enemy of her people, her daughters even carry drinks between the members of her own tribe and the Geats. The marriage of a peaceweaver is basically a political event but they actually do love their husbands and respect them.

Now one of the Queen's important jobs is to be the cupbearer what they do is carry the mead cup and pass it to the King and his warriors. This role might seem passive but it's actually empowering and adds to the queens' power. They will give the cup first to the king because he is the highest in rank and the first time Beowulf would be the last to recover it, however, the second time around the order went from the King to Beowulf second.

Haerehts daughter moved throughout the spacious building with mead cups, cared for the people, carried flagons to drink to the hands of the Heathens.

The two queens play a role in politics and do influence it. After Grendels death by Beowulf queen Wealtheow said a speech to Hrothgar. be gracious towards the geats(1173) and she heard they told me that you wish to take the warrior to be a son to you. I would think this means he would become king one day. After the king dies Hygd tries to pass the Beowulf the crown to be King, she did not trust that her son knew how to hold the throne of his homeland against foreign nations.(Beowulf 2373-76) In old English poems, noble women would give gifts Beloved Beowulf, enjoy this collar with good fortune, and make good use of this garment.

Now on the opposite side of the spectrum, let's look at how Grendel's Mother is portrayed compared to the queens. So for one, she is completely isolated and lives by herself in what she calls home in a cave under a lake. She is an independent woman and has no affiliation to a man other than her son Grendel. She is portrayed as an evil demonic monster, Grendel's mother, Monstrous hell-bride, brooded on her wrongs. She had been forced down into fearful waters (Beowulf 1258).

She is seen as evil and independent and it just so happens she has no male affiliation attached to her. Perhaps, for this reason, Grendel's Mother is presented as husbandless and son-obsessed- to suggest to an Anglo-Saxon audience the dangers inherent in woman's functions as a friousibb pledge of peace. The author gives Grendel's mom masculine traits. And uses masculine words/phrases to describe her. Grendel's mother has the form of a woman (idese onlicnes, 1351) and is weaker than a man and more cowardly, for she flees in fear for her life when discovered by Heorot. The author occasionally uses a masculine pronoun when referring to her s be instead of so be in 1260, 1497 and h instead of ho in lines 1392, 1394 (Heaney Beowulf A Verse Translation 1895).

Modthyrth a queen who punishes anyone if they look at her the wrong way. She killed anyone that came into her hall. To look her in the face, if an eye, not her lords Stared at her directly during daylight, The outcome was sealed: he was bound in hand-tightened shackles, racked, tortured until doom was announced-death by the sword, Slash of blade, blood gush and death qualms in an evil display (Beowulf 1934). Modthyrth is shown as an evil

queen and for good reason at that. She is almost stereotyped into how she should act because she's a queen. Even a queen Outstanding in beauty must not overstep like that. A queen should weave peace, not punish the innocent(Beowulf 1940).

She is compared to Hygd she is presented as a how women are supposed to behave. Hygd is described as gracious in bearing and manner, attentive to the men around her, and loyal to her husband and lord. The author makes Queen Modthryth the foil of Hygd. A foil is a character whose traits contrast with and another. Even a queen Outstanding in beauty must not overstep like that. A queen should weave peace, not punish the innocent(Beowulf 1940).

Queen Modthyth and Hygd are described as different and makes Hygd seem far superior to Modthyth. It carries the same ideology that a woman is supposed to act a certain way. She will eventually stop her bad doings and settle down to marry, as soon as she boarded a boat to cross the pale waters to marry Offa according to her fathers counsel. Once there the woman worked well on the throne, renowned for goodness(" Good Queen Modthryth? How marriage makes women (and men) better" 2018). This holds the idea that bad woman can be fixed by a man.

Queen Wealhtheow and Grendel's mother are similar in that they are both mothers.

Wealhtheow is seen as a more superior woman compared to Grendel's mom because she is a peaceweaver, cupbearer and a queen. Grendel's mom lives below the earth in an empty cave underneath a lake and Wealhtheow lives

above land and it in a castle. So there is a clear social class gap between the two. Wealhtheow represents the good in life, mankind, and light mindful of etiquette (Beowulf 613). Grendel's mom represents evil, darkness, and danger.

Wealhtheow is shown as a beautiful, childlike female, Grendel's mom is fat, old, and lonely.

The women in Beowulf closely resemble the Anglo-Saxon woman in that they had the option to choose who they could marry. Arranged marriages were however usually held in the upper class, peace-weaving marriages were considered even higher. In order to become a peace-weaver, you had to be of high class to marry another tribes king in an effort to keep the peace. Some would argue they held more power than the kings since they're the ones keeping peace from one another's clans.

The Queens were described as how and what women should act like and be during this time period. Queen Modryth was viewed as evil and helpless and had to have a man in her life to resolve her problems. If you look closely at the end of the book the women you are married/ have a man in close relation, are viewed as better or more important. Grendel's mother doesn't even have a name for crying out loud. I wonder if she was married we would know her real name.

The author gives the reader a biased description of her attacks against the humans, he didn't truly state her point of view which made her seem a selfish evil monster. Monstrous hell-bride(Beowulf 1259). I wonder if he added that she was doing the same act that Beowulf was doing it'd be

different. I mean Beowulf is avenging the men Grendel's mom killed so why is he considered a hero when he caused their deaths by killing Grendel? Although the author is unknown I would bet the author was a male, just based on the trend of women can't be good until/ unless a man is in their life.