

# Explanation of hamlet's mystery (by: ernest jones)

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



pg. 101: Explanation of Hamlet's Mystery by Ernest Jones Much as he hates him, he can never denounce him with the ardent indignation that boils straight from his blood when he reproaches his mother, for the more vigorously he denounces his uncle the more powerfully does he stimulate to activity his own unconscious and "repressed" complexes. He is therefore in a dilemma between on the one hand allowing his natural detestation of his uncle to have free play, a consumption which would make him aware of his own horrible wishes, and on the other ignoring the imperative call for vengeance that his obvious duty demands. He must either realise his own evil in denouncing his uncle's, or strive to ignore, to condone and if possible even to forget the latter in continuing to "repress" the former; his moral fate is bound up with his uncle's for good or ill. The call of duty to slay his uncle cannot be obeyed because it links itself with the call of his nature to slay his mother's husband, whether this is the first or the second; the latter call is strongly "repressed," and therefore necessarily the former also.

It is no mere chance that he says of himself that he is prompted to the revenge "by heaven and hell," though the true significance of the expression of course quite escapes him. Hamlet's dammed-up feeling finds a partial vent in other directions, the natural one being blocked. The petulant irascibility and explosive outbursts called forth by the vexation of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, and especially of Polonius, are evidently to be interpreted in this way, as also is in part the burning nature of his reproaches to his mother. Indeed towards the end of the interview with his mother the thought of her misconduct expresses itself in that almost physical disgust which is so often the manifestation of intensely "repressed" sexual

feeling. " Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed; Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse; And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses, Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers, Make you to ravel all this matter out. " His attitude towards Polonius is highly instructive. Here the absence of family ties, and of other influences, enables him to indulge to a relatively unrestrained degree his hostility towards the prating and sententious dotard.