

# The oedipus complex by karen horney essay sample



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The essay is about the Oedipus complex which is the presence of sexual desire strong enough to arouse so much jealousy and fear that they can be dissolved only by repression. Horney begins by stating what it is that Freud means by Oedipus complex and expands on his research by refuting and confirming some of his theories. For instance Freud believed that the complex was simply biological and Horney disagrees with that notion. Freud's theory was according to the libido theory every human relationship is based ultimately on instinctual drives. And when the theory is applied to child-parent relationships several conclusions are suggested: any kind of submissive devotion to a parent of the same sex is probably the expression of passive homosexuality or of sexual masochistic trends, while a rebellious rejection of a parent of the same sex is probably an inner fight against existing homosexual desires, just to name a few.

Horney goes on to define what the complex and separates it into two theories of her own. The first is sexual stimulation by the parents and the second is an attachment mainly created by anxiety and not a sexual matter. The first theory is a result of the parents emotional or sexual dissatisfaction. The second is an outcome of conflicting tendencies and needs. The goal in the incestuous bond is love; in the second group the primary goal is security. Consequently, in the first group, the attachment goes to the parent who elicits love; in the second group it usually goes to the parent who is more powerful and awe-inspiring, for the winning of his affection promises the greatest chance of protection. Horney goes on and states that in both groups it is not a biologically given phenomenon but rather a response to the

provocations of the outside world. The significance of the Oedipus complex is due to its effects it has on later relationships in life.

Horney illustrates her points by first introducing a theory by explaining it and then giving examples. She first gives the Freudian theories and then expands on them with her own new theories and ideas. She uses hypothetical situations to inform the reader of how the theories work in real life. She also gives her own opinions to communicate her points.

Horney's word choice in the essay is a more refined tongue, not in the vernacular. She speaks scholarly and learned and if you are not familiar in some psycho lingo you might have to use the dictionary to look up a few unknowns. She also speaks in the 1st person while explaining some of her opinions giving it a little bit more of a personal edge whereas in the beginning a more cold and distant tone.