

# No Oedipal Complex Found in Hamlet

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## No Oedipal Complex Found in Hamlet

Some scholars have interpreted Hamlet's actions throughout Hamlet to be the Oedipus complex. According to the story of Oedipus, Laius, his father, learned from an oracle that Oedipus would kill him. Laius then left his son to die on a mountain, where he was found and raised by the King of Corinth. Oedipus was also told that he would someday kill his own father, and fled Corinth because he believed that the King of Corinth was his real father. On Oedipus's journey, he passes Laius on the road, they argue and Oedipus kills Laius, without even knowing Laius was his true father. Oedipus eventually marries his mother, Queen [Jocasta](#), unaware of her true identity.

[Sigmund Freud](#) introduced the Oedipus complex, and his theory states that the individual suffers from a repressed sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex while having a rivalry with the parent of the same sex. Many people see a connection between Hamlet and Oedipus. They insist Hamlet is in love with his mother and this is why he wants to kill Claudius, Hamlet's uncle and Gertrude's new husband. They contend that Hamlet's "madness" is actually his repressed longing for his mother. Although Hamlet and Oedipus both kill their fathers, their actions are for different reasons. Hamlet loves his mother, but

he is not in love with her or desire her sexually. The reason behind his anger towards Claudius is not due to feelings of jealousy, but because Claudius killed Hamlet's father, whom he loved dearly. Hamlet does not suffer from an [Oedipal](#) complex.

Upon closer examinati...

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...p; "So excellent a king, that was to this Hyperion to a satyr," (I.ii.143-144). Hamlet would not be regularly complimenting his father if he had ever been jealous of his relationship with Gertrude. Thus, Hamlet feels anger towards Claudius because he murdered Hamlet's father, not for feelings of rivalry.

The Oedipus complex theory proposes that Hamlet desires his mother and wishes to kill his father because he is jealous of their closeness. This is not the case in Hamlet. Hamlet's actions which follow the Oedipus complex are for completely different reasons than Freud's theory states. Hamlet is not secretly in love with Gertrude, nor does he desire her physically. He also does not feel jealous of Claudius. Hamlet does not suffer from the Oedipus complex because he does not follow the pattern of this theory.

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