
Providing Motives In Hamlet

In the play Hamlet by William Shakespeare, motifs are displayed throughout the play. Motifs such as life and death, truth and lies, and loyalty and betrayal, are some of the biggest ones, just to name a few. The motifs in the play are used to see the main ideas and themes such as revenge and sanity. William Shakespeare shows the ideas of loyalty and betrayal in Hamlet through the characters of Hamlet, Claudius, Gertrude, Ophelia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Loyalty and betrayal was carried throughout the play with encounters among these characters to show that betrayal can lead to deadly consequences.

In Hamlet, loyalty is not very common among characters. Loyalty is most often shown in Hamlet when he is trying to avenge Old Hamlet's death. Hamlet is unhappy with the death of his father caused by Claudius, his father's brother, and then the fact that his mother, Gertrude, married Claudius; Hamlet sets out to prove that Claudius killed Old Hamlet and then to kill Claudius to avenge his father's death. "A bloody deed --almost as bad, good mother, as kill a king and marry with his brother." (3.4.34-35) This is Hamlet talking to his mother; Hamlet is revealing his feeling about all that has happened. This is the first time they actually sit down and talk about what happened. Hamlet is almost telling his mother that what he just did to Polonius, when Hamlet kills him, was going to happen to Claudius to avenge the death of Old Hamlet. Loyalty is also shown through Horatio. Horatio stays loyal to Hamlet throughout the play. Horatio especially shows his loyalty when Hamlet is dying, he wants Hamlet's story to live on and promises Hamlet that he will do so. "Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest." (5.2.397-398) The loyalty of Horatio to Hamlet is what helps Hamlet accomplish what he wants, which is to avenge his father's death, and without Horatio staying loyal to Hamlet throughout the play Hamlet would have killed himself and not fought to help his father. The loyalty in the play is not shown within many characters, but the way it is shown is very significant to the outcome of the play.

The idea of betrayal in Hamlet, is much more prominent among characters. The biggest form of betrayal in a character is Claudius. Claudius poisons and kills his brother, takes the spot as king, and marries his brother's wife, Gertrude. "Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?" (3.4.74-75) Hamlet talks to his mother about how Claudius was the cause of Old Hamlet's death, but Gertrude is unsure what to believe at that moment because she has also betrayed Old Hamlet and Hamlet by marrying Claudius and she is starting to see her mistake, but is still unsure. "(O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason would have mourned longer!), married with my uncle," (1.2.154-156) Hamlet sees the betrayal Gertrude did to Hamlet and Old Hamlet, but tries to show her that Claudius has killed Old Hamlet. Claudius uses Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to help him get rid of Hamlet.

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Claudius sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on Hamlet, which is them betraying Hamlet. They were friends with Hamlet and now are going behind his back and becoming an alliance to Claudius. The betrayal of so many characters is important to the play in such a way that it leads the death of those who betrayed others.

William Shakespeare shows the ideas of loyalty and betrayal in Hamlet through the characters of Hamlet, Claudius, Gertrude, Ophelia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Loyalty and betrayal was carried throughout the play with encounters among these characters to show that betrayal can lead to deadly consequences. Those who have betrayed other in the play received deadly consequences. Claudius is killed the way that he killed Old Hamlet, which is by drinking poison. Gertrude was also killed by poison, which is done by Claudius, who betrayed Gertrude also. The play is trying to show that betrayal is not the way to get to good places in life, and that it will lead to serious consequences, and in this case, deadly consequences. The idea of loyalty is used to show that loyalty is one way to get to a good place in life. Even though Hamlet did die in the end, he stayed loyal to his father throughout the play. His death can be seen as Christ-like because he died trying to avenge his father's death. The loyalty shown by Horatio is carried out throughout the play, and continues even after Hamlet dies. The loyalty and betrayal are complete opposites but are both used to show the consequences of betrayal.

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