

Connor Gilbert

Mrs. Rutan

AP Literature and Composition

27 October 2016

The Motherless Son Stigma

The moment a child's mother leaves him at a young age, is the moment that the son becomes a social outcast; forever a shell of a would-be well adjusted person. Boys who grow up without a mother tend to lack a sense of affection. Without a maternal figure around boys often are less compassionate to those around them. According to Angeliki Coconi, an expert on the influence parents have on their children states, "this unfortunate absence may leave room for countless problems, including negative influences on gender development" (Coconi,1). Children need a female figure in their lives to instill confidence in them, and show them self worth through love and affection. This theory is proven to be true in Khaled Hosseini's novel, The Kite Runner; and Karl Capek's short story, The stamp Collection. In both of these stories the two main characters grow up without a maternal figure in their life, this devastating detail affects both of their lives and pushes away some of their closest relationships.

In The Kite Runner, the main character Amir is in desperate need for approval from his father. It seems as though everything Amir does isn't good enough for his father. Typically the maternal figure fills this void, the unconditional love and acceptance a mother has for her children gives the child a sense of self worth. According to Coconi, "A mother's love helps any boy build up his confidence and become more able to explore other situations and connect with other people" (Coconi, 1). Without this support Amir finds himself stuck in life, he isn't able to

move on and explore other relationships. Instead, Amir is obsessed with finding affection through Baba, his father. This kind of love isn't always present when a child's only parent is a male role model. Men typically are more stern and distant with their children, always expecting more— a form of “tough love” if you will. Amir desperately desires acceptance, the type of love he can never get from his father. He becomes so obsessed with accomplishing this he would do anything to obtain it. Amir eventually betrayed his closest friend Hassan in pursuit of making his father proud. Amir realizes that this betrayal could ultimately destroy his relationship with Hassan. Amir states, “Maybe Hassan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay, to win Baba” (Hosseini, 77). The absence of Amir's mother left him desperate for acceptance, he ruined his most valuable relationship in pursuit of the void his mother left him.

The short story, The Stamp Collection, is about an older man named Mr. Karas. When he was younger he grew up without a mother as well. This affected his relationship with his wife later in life. Ph.D and Child Psychologist Kenneth Condrell states, “Mothers rarely emasculate their sons; they simply aid them in gaining a security around women, the masculine quality of looking after and taking care of the women in their lives. For the same reason, boys without mothers rarely end up more masculine, just less able to relate to the opposite sex.” (Coconi/Condrell, 1). Mr. Karas struggled later on in life because he was never exposed to women when he was younger. He found it difficult to love and care for his wife because he had never experienced showing affection to the opposite gender when he was a child. Mr, Karsas admits shortly after his wife passed away, “ I did not love the woman I married” (Kapek, 3). Without his mother around Mr. Karas experienced many failed relationships and had trouble loving the ones closest to him.

Mothers are among the most influential figures a child comes across growing up. They're vital in the development of a child's character and can leave a lasting impact on the life the child will lead in the future. Both [The Kite Runner](#) and [The Stamp Collection](#) show just how important a mother is to the development of the child, and how their absences can leave a lasting impact on their children's future relationships with others.

Works Cited

Coconi, Angeliki. "Gender Development of Boys Without Their Mothers." *Modern Mom*. Modern Mom, 23 May 2011. Web. 1 Nov. 2016.

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Riverhead, 2003. Print.

Capek, Karl. "The Stamp Collection." *The Society for Czechoslovak Philately The Society for Czechoslovak Philately*. The Society for Czechoslovak Philately, 09 Aug. 2011. Web. 1 Nov. 2016.