

The Relationship Between Cruelty and Masculinity Characters in Macbeth frequently dwell on issues of gender. Malcolm's comment shows that he has learned the lesson Macduff gave him on the sentient nature of true masculinity. To Malcolm's suggestion, "Dispute it like a man," Macduff replies, "I shall do so. But I must also feel it as a man" (4.3.221–223). At the end of the play, Siward receives news of his son's death rather complacently. Malcolm responds: "He's worth more sorrow [than you have expressed] / And that I'll spend for him" (5.8.16–17). It also suggests that, with Malcolm's coronation, order will be restored to the Kingdom of Scotland. Macduff shows the young heir apparent that he has a mistaken understanding of masculinity.