

# Grace of life. the ancient greeks believed

Law



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Grace GeorgoAntigone Essay Topic: 1980A recurring theme in Antigone is the war between passion and responsibility. Love, passion, desire, emotion, all conflict with moral duty, and doing what's right is not always best. In this classic Greek tragedy, Antigone must choose what is right, even if it means taking her own life, and it is the nature of the conflict that illuminates the meaning of the work. The ancient Greeks believe that religious rites and law are of equal status, but when it comes down to Polynices, Antigone's brother and traitor of the land of Thebes, divine law and law of men collide.

Every deceased man is subject to a proper burial to honor his life, but the same cannot be said for a traitor. Creon, King of Thebes, believes that the body of Polynices should be left to rot against the rule of the gods. So, Antigone had to choose, accept her brother's fate or defy the law of the land by doing what is morally right. She chose the latter. Her actions would come at the price of her own life, but she knew "if I die in the act, that death will be a glory" (line 85). And it would be her death that would change Thebes forever. Fate is a very significant component of life.

The ancient Greeks believed that the gods decided the people's fate and there is nothing to be done to change it. Through Antigone's actions, the people of Thebes come to learn what happens when you try to change fate. The terrible truth is, no one can. And through her attempts, underlying themes of the work are highlighted and can be learned from. Maybe it was Antigone's fate to die in honor of her brother, but it was also her responsibility and passion that drove her to defy the law of men. And from her death, spawned many more. Much can be learned from this conflict between passion and responsibility.

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Not only does it coincide with the powers of fate, but it also narrows the fine lines of morality versus duty. By risking her own life to honor that of her brother's, Antigone does what is truly right, but still lives out her fate by committing this crime knowing that her life was going to be the price. If death is what the gods had in store for her, then why "dishonor the laws the gods hold in honor?" (lines 90-91). In conclusion, Antigone confronted the demands of private passion versus her responsibilities, and through her brave actions, not only is her fate sealed, but so is the meaning of Sophocles' Antigone.