

# Pride in antigone

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Pride in Antigone Gandhi once said, “ Anger is the enemy of non-violence, and pride is a matter that swallows it up. ” Pride is never an acceptable notion and it often leads to one's downfall, as we see often throughout Sophocles’ play, Antigone. Multiple characters in Antigone experience prideful thoughts and actions during the course of the play resulting in the tragedy of negative outcomes in the end. In the beginning of Antigone the two sisters, Antigone and Ismene, are discussing their mal situation of their dead brothers, Polyneices and Eteocles. The prideful brothers had fought against each other for the throne in battle, only to both be killed by the other. Creon had now taken rule of Thebes and made the decision to only give Eteocles a proper burial, and to leave Polyneices out to rot. This infuriated Antigone because without a proper burial one's soul cannot go to the after life with the gods. Antigone decides she is going to put Polyneices’ soul to rest and asks Ismene if she will “ share the labor" (line 50, pg. 954). Ismene is put in between a rock and a hard place when Antigone asks her to assist her because it is against Creon’s law to bury Polyneices, but she wants to honor her brother as well. The main difference between Antigone and Ismene is that Antigone is full of pride for her family and holds her family over the law of the city. Ismene, on the other hand, holds the good of the city over the good of her family when she declines Antigone’s offer to bury their brother. With all of the drama her family has endured, Ismene wants to stay clear from any more conflict. Instead of standing up for her family, Ismene belittles herself as she tries to persuade Antigone to rethink burying Polyneices as she states, “ remember we are women, we’re not born to conflict with men" (line 74 — 75, pg. 955). Ismene’s statement infuriates

Antigone even more so, as Antigone insists she will follow out the law of the gods by giving Polyneices a proper burial with or without Ismene's help. Antigone does not think about the consequences of death because she is too prideful and disobeys Creon's law regardless of the outcome. Creon is the character most overcome by pride in Antigone. He holds the importance of loyalty to the city and himself over anything else. Creon, full of pride, wants everyone to follow out his will, even though his will defies the will of the gods. Once the body of Polyneices had received a proper burial, a Sentry had to deliver the news to Creon that his law had been disobeyed. Creon was less than pleased with the news and accused his guard of bribery as he exclaims, "I'm convinced — they've perverted my own guard, bribed them to do their own work" (line 33 — 35, pg. 963). Although the Sentry is not guilty of Creon's accusations, Creon's pride got the best of him as he tells the Sentry he will pay if the "criminal" is not found. Even though it was brought to Creon's attention that the gods could have been responsible for the burial of Polyneices, his pride for himself is greater than his respect for the gods. Creon believes Polyneices was a criminal and the gods do not honor the guilty; he is too prideful to realize that he is the one defying the law of the gods by keeping a secret from them. Even the Chorus, the group of elders, believes Creon is in the wrong of making the unjust law that defies the law of the gods. They state Creon will be punished in the future for his disobedience and lack of respect for the gods, but Creon is too prideful to see his fate. After Antigone buried Polyneices, the Sentries dusted him off in order to reverse the burial. Antigone could not stand this thought and went to bury him again. She had too much pride for her family for Polyneices to not have

a proper burial, resulting in the carelessness of getting caught in the act. Once the Sentries caught her they eagerly brought the criminal to Creon. Creon asked Antigone if she was guilty of the burial and if she knew doing so was forbidden. Antigone, full of pride and knowing her consequences, stated, " I did it. I don't deny a thing...[I was] well aware. How could I avoid it? It was public" (lines 492 — 497, pg. 967). This raged Creon, not only because his law had been broken, but also because a woman defied his law as he states, " no woman is going to lord it over me" (line 594, pg. 970). Creon then has Ismene brought to him, for he suspects she was involved in the crime as well. Even though Ismene clearly did not assist Antigone, Ismene took the blame for the burial as she states, " I did it, yes — if only she consents — I share in the guilt, the consequences too" (lines 604 — 606, pg. 971). At this moment it is revealed to the reader that Ismene truly does value her family and she does not want to live alone without her sister. Antigone quickly responds that Ismene had no part in the burial of Polyneices, but Ismene is adamant that she contributed in the crime. Creon is full of anger as he orders his guards to " take them in. From now on they'll act like women, tie them up, no more running loose" (line 651 — 653, pg. 973). Haemon, Creon's son, comes to visit Creon after hearing his father has sent his fiancée, Antigone, away. Creon suspects Haemon has come to spare his fiancée. Creon puts Haemon in a difficult position when he states, " Son, you've heard the final verdict of your bride? Are you coming now, raving against your father? Or do you love me, no matter what I do? " (line 706 — 708, pg. 974). In Creon's eyes love is connected to obedience, as well good parenting. Although Creon expects Haemon to defy him, instead Haemon

reveals to his father that he respects his decision he only wants to offer his father advice. He tells Creon that " the city mourns for this young girl" and that the citizens think her action was " glorious" (line 776 — 778, pg. 976). Haemon admits he is young, but his knowledge is accurate. Instead of taking Haemon's advise into consideration, Creon ridicules him. Creon is full of too much pride to take the advise of anyone, much less from someone younger than him. This angers him as he confesses no one will tell him how to rule the city. Creon taunts Haemon by telling him he will bring Antigone out in front of him and kill her " beside her groom" (line 854, pg. 979). Haemon, extremely upset, runs out vowing this is the last time his father will ever see him. Creon does not take Haemon's words to heart and shows no emotion towards him. Creon's pride gets in the way of making decisions that could affect the fate of his future in a positive way by " cutting his nose in spite of his face. " Instead of killing both Antigone and Ismene Creon spares Ismene because she was not involved. Creon then orders the guards to take Antigone away and lock her in a cave with little food so she will starve to death instead of killing her so her blood was not in his hands. Creon is then visited by the blind prophet, Tiresias, who warns him of the unhappy gods. Creon is still too prideful and stubborn to take advise from anyone that does not agree with him. He accuses Tiresias of lying to him for money, even though he has never been wrong before. Tiresias warns Creon that harm will come to him and the city because the gods are unhappy, but Creon still dismisses Tiresias's knowledge. Creon's pride still gets the best of him because he will not change his mind because in his mind it is a sign of weakness. Finally after much consideration Creon changes his mind because

he is worried about the outcome of his fate and goes to free Antigone himself. Antigone, still full of pride, takes it upon herself to commit suicide. In her eyes it is better to take her own life than to die slowly at Creon's will. After Creon witnesses her lifeless body hanging there he was full of remorse because he knew his pride had gotten the best of him. Little did he know how Haemon would react to the sight of his fiancée. Haemon took his sword and tried to kill his father only to take it and plunge it in his own chest. The couple then lay there "body enfolding body" (line 1369, pg. 995). Creon could not believe his eyes. He returned to Thebes prideless and somber. To make matters worse, Creon came home to the news that his wife, Eurydice, had committed suicide as well because of the loss of her son. In this moment Creon has nothing, not even his pride. Creon is now able to sympathize with Antigone and how she felt about the loss of her family. He regrets his actions and wishes his pride had not gotten in his way of listening to others because he knows he could have avoided all of his heartache. The only positive outcome out of this dreary situation is Creon finally obtains wisdom through his suffering. Antigone is a story full of prideful actions. As we see pride lead to the destruction of both Antigone and Creon. Antigone had too much pride for her family resulting in the crime of the burial of Polyneices. With the crime came the result of her death. Creon was too proud to take the advice of others leading to his own self destruction. Not only was his son gone, but his wife took her life as well. As soon as these events took place Creon had nothing, only the wisdom he had gained from realizing he was wrong. Alluding back to Gandhi's quote, both Antigone and Creon were filled with

anger and their pride “swallowed” them up resulting in their own self-destruction.