

# Gender stereotyping in "antigone" essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## Gender Stereotyping in “Antigone” Essay Sample

“Die then, and love the dead if thou must; No woman shall be the master while I live (184).”

This quotation portrays a powerful and important theme about gender and the role that a woman plays in Greek society. Antigone's gender has an incredible effect on the others around her, for her actions don't constitute those of an average woman in Greek society. An average Greek woman is characterized as subservient and passive, but Antigone possesses independent, strong-willed characteristics that make her intimidating to the men around her. Creon says himself that the need to defeat and control her is greater because she is a woman. Antigone rebels against social structure because she is caught between serving two different men. The first is her deceased brother, while the second is her hostile ruler. However, Creon is more than just her king, he is also her future father-in-law, as well as her guardian since the exile of Oedipus. Her feminine obligations are to men, but she is torn between the two opposing forces in her life. In a sense though, Antigone is indeed following the gender role of a woman, because she is serving a man, her brother, Polyneices. Antigone's individualistic social rebellion is exceptionally intimidating to Creon because it upsets gender roles in hierarchy.

This propagating insurgence disrupts social order and his authoritative power, causing the unsteady Labdacids to return to a previous state of chaos that it experienced during the war. By refusing to be acquiescent, she upsets the principle rules of her antediluvian culture. This overturning of the

fundamental order of Greek culture can be seen when Creon rambles to the chorus about the decision of whether or not to kill Antigone. “ Now if she thus can flout authority unpunished, I am woman, she the man (174).” In this quote, Creon implores that he cannot back down from his ruling because the triumph of a woman is unacceptable and would make a fool out of him. He also must suppress Antigone because her defiance is seen to him as an attempt to undermine his male status and claim it as her own. Through Antigone’s simple duty of burying Polyneices, she disrupts gender hierarchy and power hierarchy at the same time. Creon wants Antigone to take the role of a woman and be submissive, obedient, and defeated, while making himself dominant, free, authoritative, and victorious. Coincidentally, Creon is the only one in the story who cares about this gender hierarchy, because it is he, who, as a man in power, has the most to gain from this unjust system.