

Shed do ! ” (34,
prologue).this
statement by



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shed pieces of theatrical work that reflects upon Greek mythology and culture. Antigone has several themes and circumstantial settings that can be indirectly referred or related to in modern society. Sophocles uses various and strategically placed characters to present his play as well as his themes. The play mainly revolves around Antigone who acts alongside her elder sister, Ismene. Both are daughters of Oedipus and Jocasta who are in the context of the play deceased.

This essay will analyze these two characters alongside one other female minor character, Eurydice who contributes significantly to the development and success of the play. From the start of the play, the audience is given a vague idea of both Antigones and Ismenes characters. Both sisters have suffered the anguish of having lost their brothers, Eteocles and Polyneices. It is at the beginning of the play that we see Antigones braveness.

She notifies Ismene of her intentions to bury Polyneices despite the fact that such an act is punishable by death, for Creon considers Polyneices to be a traitor and that by not having his body buried, Polyneices suffers a posthumous punishment. She makes this declaration while being fully aware of the penalties involved and this brings to light several other things about her character. The audience is able to see that she is confident in her actions and will justify anything that she does.

Meanwhile Ismene can be viewed as being afraid and uneager to agree to an action. She confronts her sisters statements by saying, " But think of the danger ! Think what Creon will do ! " (34, Prologue). This statement by Ismene create a vague feeling in the audience that Ismene is a pessimist.

This view is further reinforced when she says, " And do what he has forbidden ! We are women / We cannot fight with men, Antigone ! " (46-47, Prologue). Hence Ismene is seen seeking a way out by giving excuses that are in a sense linked to negative stereotypes and this makes a reflection of her pessimistic nature. Antigones actions at the beginning of the play reflect her impulsivness and rash manner in handling situations. Rather than try to confront Creon regarding the burial of her brother she goes ahead to bury him. Her impulsive manner is also seen when she doubts Ismenes promise that she will not divulge any information to anybody else regarding Antigones plans to bury her brother.

She does this despite the reasonable consideration that Ismene is her only sister and family member left. Her actions at this point also reflect on her indifference in carrying out actions that reflect on others. She does not seem to care about the fact that burying her brother may have unfavorable consequences on Ismene who would lose her sister and at the same time be in a dilemma. Ismene would have to risk telling the authorities and get her sister prosecuted so as to be a true patriot and to save her own life or keep mum and be prosecuted for aiding and abetting an offense alongside her sister whom she will eventually loose, regardless of what she decides to do . This scenario presents a strong argument that Ismene is considerate and rational as she eventually decides to keep Antigones plans secret and continues to do so even when Antigone attacks her. She responds by saying, " But a loyal friend indeed to those who love." (85, Prologue). This demonstrates Ismenes passive and unvengeful nature.

Antigone bears responsibility well and can therefore be seen to be responsible. When brought before Creon, she admits her actions in burying Polyneices without much ado, she audaciously confesses, " I do. I deny nothing " (52, ODE I, Scene II). She goes ahead and justifies her action, and calmly makes it clear that she is not afraid of the punishment due to be imposed on her.. In contrast Ismene bears a sense of responsibility just like her sister.

When brought before Creon, she admits her role in Antigones crime without hesitation, she says, " Yes, if she will let me say so. I am guilty. " This and the ensuing exchange that follows between