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Andrea Gismond 9/25/12 World Lit Reason Vs Passion In the play Tartuffe by Jean-Baptiste Moliere, the characters within the story are mostly driven either by reason or by passion. The two characters that stand out the most as being either the most passionate or reasonable are the servant, Dorine and the father of the house, Orgon. The views of these two characters are completely opposite, which result in the arguing of the two throughout the story. Although Dorine is able to provide evidence for the accusations she has against Tartuffe, such as his lying, Orgon refuses to believe her or anyone else for that matter. Orgon, blinded by the deception of Tartuffe, can only rely solely on his own feelings and the lessons Tartuffe has instilled into him. Orgon acts as though he can no longer think for himself. His actions are driven by the things Tartuffe wants. Orgon believes everything Tartuffe does is for the good of himself and his family, and in order for them to be free of sin they must accommodate all of his needs. This being said, Orgon stands behind Tartuffe in the first of the story, in hopes that his actions will save his soul. This play makes as a perfect example that when a person is driven too much by passion, the truth is masked and emotions take over, yet if driven too much by reason, morals and values can be lost. Therefore, it would seem that in order to obtain a decent outlook on situations and by making the best decisions, there must be an equal balance of the two. In the first half of the play there is an argument between Dorine and Orgon that clearly represents both of their views on a dilemma. Orgon proposes his daughter Marianne marry Tartuffe, so that her soul will be forever saved and Tartuffe will always be in their lives. Orgon's decisions are based off of the fact that he believes Tartuffe is some great holy man who was sent to him and his family by God.

Orgon attempts to persuade his daughter that she and Tartuffe's relationship will be filled with love and trust and that he will be such a good husband, yet Tartuffe has been nothing but an imposter ever since he first met Orgon. Orgon only sees what Tartuffe will allow him to, " He's taught me to love nothing and no one! Mother, father, wife, daughter, son- They could die right now, I'd feel no pain. " (I. 5. 26-28). Orgon does not realize that by ignoring reality, he is being taken advantage of by a man who is posing to be a Christian, but in actuality is an arrogant hypocrite. Dorine is a character that Baptiste uses to represent the audiences voice in the play. During both Marianne and Orgon's conversation and Marianne and Valere's, Dorine stands out as the voice of reason. At both times the other characters are deciding to make their choices based on their emotions. Marianne and Valere could possibly have ended their relationship for good, just because each was too proud to admit they loved the other. Dorine is constantly voicing her opinion and what should be done in that instant, if the others weren't so oblivious to rational decisions, perhaps they too would have seen the right choices all along. " Saw and heard it all. Now listen to me. The only thing she wants, Valere, is you. I can attest to that right now. It's true. And Marianne, he wants you for his wife, And only you. On that I'll stake my life. " (II. 4. 102-106). Dorine has to tell Marianne and Valere that they want each other. Marianne and Valere were making decisions based on their emotions at that particular moment, they would have rather stood their arguing and lying to each other about nonsense, that to just admit that they loved each other. Dorine is always trying to fix the problems caused by the emotional and irrational characters. Neither Orgon nor Dorine were wrong by being

passionate or realistic, it is only when a person is controlled by either reason or passion alone, instead of an equal amount of each. In order to be rational about life, one has to consider what is right and wrong, and also what one feels is the best thing to do. Also, to be considered is what would actually work. What, above all, would be the reasonable thing to do? Orgon without a doubt lacks reason. Even when the truth is exposed to him about Tartuffe, and he had seen his sinful acts with his own eyes, Orgon still goes on to curse all holy men, hating every last one. He allows anger to engulf and control him. Accepting Tartuffe as a devious hypocrite, and that he was wrong and his family was right the whole time, would have been the appropriate response. Instead, he blames others and holds holy men accountable for his own stupidity. In the end, the problems were solved through the characters that had learned to find a balance between reason and passion. Having too much of one or the other is overwhelming, and will ultimately cause issues, but when one considers them both when making decisions, the result will be much more acceptable.