

The julius caesar essay history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Power is a goal that most people strive for in their lives. When someone takes power for granted they can manipulate their friends and cause serious trouble. In terms of ancient history, specifically regarding ancient Rome, having too much power can lead to negative outcomes. When someone mentions the name Julius Caesar, it triggers an image of Rome's greatest leader in history. July 13, 100 B. C., was the beginning of a new era in Roman society. This marked the birth of Rome's greatest political figure, Gaius Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar's rise through Rome's political ranks of Rome came quickly and it was believed by many individuals in the Senate that Julius Caesar was becoming too powerful for his own good. They also believed that he was becoming a threat of the Republican government.(CITE 7) After establishing himself as the dictator of Rome, the Senate believed that he had dreams of kingship and ultimate power. This led to Senatorial conspiracy and eventually to his assassination. His assassination was a result of his dramatic rise to power, which posed a threat to the senates. Ultimately his sudden death was a result of various personal factors that offended the senators and created animosity between them and Caesar, deeming his death inevitable. His death leads to a domino effect, which happens to lead to the inevitable collapse of the Roman Empire.

On March 15 44 BC, Gaius Julius Caesar was murdered by men in his own Senate; which is known as the Ides of March. Julius Caesar had many men that were coming up with a plot against him to assassinate him. Among the 60 men plotting to murder him, many were senators, which included Gaius Cassius Longinus, Marcus Junius Brutus, and Decimus Brutus Albinus (CITE 6). Fearing that fact if Caesar added Parthia to his conquests he would

undeniably become king. Knowing that in four days Caesar was going on campaign against Parthia that time was pressing, so they had to make their move very soon (CITE 3) On the day of Caesar's murder, the Senate held a meeting in a hall adjacent to Pompey's statue. At the beginning of the meeting, a man by the name of Cimber first knelt in front of Caesar to plead to him and recall his brother from banishment. When Caesar refused, Cimber yanked Julius' toga down from his neck and stabbed him in the upright shoulder, since he was nervous and missed his neck. (CITE 2). The other conspirators followed suit and began to stab Caesar. When they were done the stabbing, Caesar lay dead with 35 wounds on his body.(CITE 3)

Julius Caesar's rise to power came in an amazingly short period of time, faster than many before him. Caesar gained authority through the use of his public image as a Populares because he was born into the ideal social class, as a Patrician. He came from an old and established family line that made it only natural for him to go into the involvement of politics and government. Due to his family background, he had ties to the populares who were well known Roman political leaders on the side of 'the people'. Caesar was a popular politician representing the masses of the people. His charisma and military victories over the Germanic tribes in Gaul and his victories in Egypt, enabled him to quickly advance up the political ranks. One of the most critical political moves he made that contributed to his unbelievable success was an important 3-way partnership. Caesar proposed this 3-way partnership known as the 1st triumvirate. This strategic alliance was made between Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gaius Julius Caesar. It proposed by Caesar because there was increasing hostility between

Pompey and Crassus. They divided up the Roman provinces between each other and the relationship between Pompey and Caesar was cemented by Pompey's marriage to Caesar's daughter, Julia. However, the degeneration of the Triumvirate came with quickly with the death of Caesar's daughter Julia, which broke the personal bond that Caesar and Pompey shared. This was followed by death of Crassus due to an attack by the Parthian army, which ended the Triumvirate. At the time of the First Triumvirate, the commonly known Republican form of government in Rome was already well on its way to turning into a monarchy.

The first critical error Caesar made in his rise to power was when he was in Gaul. Caesar was accused of treason by some members of the senate because he had both tribunes on his side. Since they were on his side the tribunes both imposed their vetoes on the treason claim. The majority of the senate decided to ignore the vetoes and they ordered Caesar, who was now charged with treason to return back to Rome, without his army. Caesar did return to Rome but he did so with his army. As soon as he crossed the Rubicon River, he had in fact legally, committed treason. He was committing 'imperium', as he was exercising 'imperium when forbidden by the law. Waiting for Caesar was Pompey with his army, and the battle of Pharsalus took place in 48 BC. Caesar won the battle and Pompey was forced to flee to Egypt. Due to Caesar's political innovation techniques, he was able to make political alliances that helped him rise in power, and that left him as the leader of the Roman world.

Once Caesar returned to Rome he ruled alone where he began a platform of reform for Rome. He decided to make himself 'dictator for life' and he

appointed his own personal senators. Many citizens were hoping that, after the Civil War had ended, Caesar would restore the constitution and make the laws and the courts function again.(CITE 5) As he conquered more and more enemies, he became increasingly popular with the people of Rome. His military victories are what gave him ultimate political popularity and furthered his claim as true leader of Rome. His military prominence is what helped Rome flourish into arguably the greatest ancient civilizations in history. His outstanding military campaigns are what helped Rome prosper in both size and power. He increased the size of the Senate from about 600 members to 900, bringing in new men into the ranks of office holders. (CITE 5). He gave the poor new jobs and they became faithful supporters, furthermore increasing his popularity with the people. He also assisted the poor citizens by regularly checking the spread of money throughout Rome to make sure that no one was living too poorly (CITE 5). In addition, he rewarded thousands of Veterans with pieces of land and cash bonuses. (CITE 5). This was another smart strategy that Caesar implemented which made his soldiers fight better, because they had a cause to fight for, which was their land, family, and leader. With this act Caesar made Rome a more wealthy, open, and safe place to live.

With Caesar's quick increasing popularity the Senate tried to prevent Caesar obtaining the position of the consulate, which was a very important position because it was the position that was in charge of Rome's defence forces. The Senate felt that Caesar wanted to take on the position of 'king' of Rome. The divine honours that he accepted, the temple, the priest, the name divus Julius, and the festivals that marked the rule of the hellenistic monarchs, all

point in that direction. It was thought by many in the Senate that Julius Caesar was becoming too powerful, and that he had dreams of kingship and ultimate power.(CITE 5) To the Senate this was a major threat towards the stability of the Roman Empire and this would have drastically reduced the power of the Senators. They feared that Caesar would turn the Roman Republic into a tyrannical monarchy (CITE 6). Caesar said that the republic was but a name without substance or form.(CITE 5) He called many assemblies to have them vote on laws that were constructed by him and to and to elect the candidates he had personally chosen. His disrespect of the constitution of Rome was on full display by an event in the year 45 BC, which was two and a half months before his death. Word came to Caesar that a consul in his office had suddenly died. Caesar quickly called an assembly and had it elect a new man to take over the position. This made the Senate extremely angry with Caesar and thus, the idea of eventually getting rid of Caesar by murder, was starting to evolve.

The motive for the Senate's killing of Caesar was ultimately out of personal hatred. They had personal animosity towards Caesar for his actions towards them. The friends of Caesar were infuriated to see him promote former enemies to positions of equality with themselves. Many of these former enemies, instead of feeling gratitude toward Caesar for their lives and for the benefits they had received, continued to feel resentment because they had lost so much to Caesar. (CITE 6). Many blamed Caesar personally for the setbacks that they or their families suffered. No Roman in history had ever exerted so much control over the lives of his fellow aristocrats more than Caesar. According to (CITE 6) the motive for the murder of Caesar was

established when he sat in his golden chair before the new temple of Venus, the mother of his house, Caesar failed to rise to thank the fathers. This contributed to personal hatred on Caesar by the Senate. There were more than 60 senators associated with the plot. Many of them were Caesar's former close friends. They had their own reasons for joining in on the organization, but majority were at a personal level. Many felt Caesar personally insulted them or their families. Therefore, Brutus and Cassius became the leaders in a plot to slay the Caesar, along with 60 other men, mainly pardoned by Caesar who were determined to carry out the deed of murdering him. (CITE 5).

There were two key men who had an extreme personal hatred for Caesar and were the leaders in creating the perfect plot to murder him. Their names were Gaius Cassius, and Decimus Brutus, who was a special friend of Caesar. They both wanted personal revenge on Caesar with all the suffering they went through in the civil war Caesar created. Gaius Cassius Longinus was the first leader of this conspiracy who also had deep resentment for Caesar. The first thing Caesar did to infuriate Cassius was when he bypassed Cassius for the prestigious urban praetorship, consulting the office on Brutus instead. Cassius was also offended by Caesar's unwillingness to award him the consulship until 41 BCE. (CITE 6). In addition, Caesar was very hesitant trust Cassius, even though he was one of the most experienced and able military commanders of his day. (CITE 4) He never rewarded Cassius with a major command position which suggests a lingering distrust, which is confirmed by Caesar light hearted remark to his friends, that he suspected Cassius because of his paleness (CITE 5). On the other hand, Marcus Junius Brutus is

the other best known figure in the conspiracy and he had a strong personal reason for his resentment of Caesar. Brutus was a very close friend of Caesar and Caesar trusted Brutus above all others in his administration. There was an apparent rumour which suggested that Caesar had an affair with Brutus' mother, Servilia and it had provoked the idea that he was Caesar's natural son. There were more rumours suggesting she offered Caesar her daughter Tertia who was Brutus' half-sister. (CITE 6) With all of these events, Brutus must have been deeply embarrassed by the matter, and his mother's conduct is one possible explanation for his personal motivation to kill Caesar. The sum of the evidence suggested that the personal motives Cassius and Brutus might have had for participating in the conspiracy to kill Caesar, also led them to hate Caesar for impeding their careers at several vital stages.

Ultimately, Julius Caesar was a man of great care and charisma who also desired power, but above all, wanted to witness the citizens of Rome thrive under his authority. When he defeated Pompey's army and gained control of all of Rome, he began to establish reforms intended to make the people of Rome happier and more prosperous at all levels of society. He quickly became beloved by his citizens and gained incredible popularity among the Roman people. His increasing popularity and power became a grave threat to a group of Senators who were worried they would lose all of their power. The conspirators who feared the Caesar, created a plot to murder Rome's greatest political figure. Led by Marcus Brutus and Gaius Cassius, the group of conspirators butchered Caesar until his death on the footsteps of the statue of Pompey. The motive clearly influencing these two men to kill Caesar was undeniably at the personal level. Their personal hatred towards

Caesar is what led to the fall of Rome some five hundred years later. Julius Caesar made many key contribution to make Rome as successful and as powerful as it was. The chaos that ensued after his death, and the ultimate collapse of Rome, proves that his assassination was indeed a tragedy.