

Example of essay on a girl named antigone: her past and present

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The aim of this essay is to present you with a portrait of two dramas. The first one is 'Antigone' and it was written in the Ancient Greek Classical period in approximately 442 B. C., by Sophocles, one of the three poets of Ancient Greece, who along with Aeschylus and Euripides are considered to have established the tragedy as a poetic, theatrical kind of writing. The second play is 'Another Antigone', a modern theatrical play of nowadays which was written by A. R. Gurney and first produced in 1987. The portrait of both plays will be drawn in this essay so that both plays can be compared and contrasted in terms of their similarities and differences. The essay will present you with the basic plot of each play, its setting and its main thematic core so that reflections and conclusions can be easily drawn upon their comparison.

Antigone is the main female character of both plays but she is seen under a totally different aspect. In the Ancient Greek tragedy, Antigone is a girl who witnesses within the historical context of a political civil war in the city of Thebes the death of both her brothers. Her uncle Creon is the man in power, ruling the city and expressing the authoritarian political status of that time. One of Antigone's brothers was fighting against Creon and his other brother. When news spread about the unfair death of both, Creon ordered that the ones fighting against him and his power ought to be left unburied as a kind of punishment and humiliation since they had dared to stand their opposition towards him and the status -quo of his political power. Antigone was against it since religious and ethical principles of her era could not allow human bodies to be left unburied. The need for burying her brother who had fought against her uncle with all the honors, was according to Antigone's ethical

values and brotherly love more than simply necessary.

Thus, Antigone came in opposition to Creon and his orders and commands.

Sophocles in this tragedy puts his target audience face to face with an everlasting dilemma of eternal value. There are more than once occasions in one's life when he / she finds himself to be ordered by cosmic, political power to act in such a way that it is different from what his ethical system of values and principles lead him to do. Yet, it seems that societies intimidated by the threat of being punished by those in authority or of being sent to death, prefer to bend their heads and obey to rules which do not really express their beliefs or values. Antigone is girl who stood for what she believed and chose to die rather than surrender to her uncle's injustice and unethical command.

In other words, Sophocles raised so many years ago the question of to what extent people ought to stand their ethical burden and personality against the microcosm of material and political power. And the message he puts across is definitely that when the goal is worth it, then no fear of losing one's life ought to exist.

The play ' Another Antigone' by A. R. Gurney is a play whose main leading figure is not a girl named Antigone but a girl named Judy. Judy Miller is Jewish and she is a college student of professor Harper who has been teaching Greek Classics for years. But Judy is connected to Antigone. Because it is simply the tragedy of Sophocles, ' Antigone', the play that Judy decides to study as part of her studies in college. So Judy decides to present another reading of Sophocles' Antigone by writing her own play ' Another Antigone'. And this is where the conflict between Judy and her professor Mr. Harper

begins. What is the result? The result is that Judy insists on her decision to present her modern version of the ancient Greek tragedy and Mr. Harper who represents the status -quo and the authorities of college denies it. Mr. Harper seems to have his own belief on how and what the treatment and attitude towards Ancient tragedy ought to be. The conflict is wild because both parties seem to have developed their own strong position. Mr. Harper is really surprised when he comes face to face with the stubbornness and strength of opinion of his student. But he seems to stay hung on his own belief and tradition the way he believes it is right to do. So their conflict reminds of the conflict between Antigone and Creon so many centuries ago. The immediate similarity between the two plays is the nature of conflict. This is a conflict between the cosmic, political power and authority and the power of one's personality. It is a conflict and fight which takes place within the socio-historical and cultural context of one person who seems to hold and develop a different way of thinking compared to the status -quo. Sophocles' Antigone fought for her right to freedom, for her innate right to choosing how to treat the persons she loves. Judy fights for her own Antigone, for her right to read and interpret a literary work in the way she feels is best. Judy uses the figure of Antigone form then and brings it to nowadays so that the figure of Antigone can be transformed into the vehicle which will give her wings to fly and freely express her opinion.

Conclusion

If authenticity is to impose limits on people then no principles ought to exist. It seems that A. R. Gurney wishes to express his own point of view towards authenticity and imposition of rules without trying to criticize anything else

but the modern way of life and its ridiculous - according to his opinion - rules and supposing principles. Therefore ' Another Antigone' is the figure of nowadays Antigone who ought to stand her personality and demand her freedom of speech and action as long as this freedom does not put limits or destroy the freedom of others.

A. R. Gurney inspired by Sophocles wishes to give his own message as far as free will is concerned. his message is given through humor and irony but it is equally important to the message given by Sophocles.

The play ' Another Antigone' wants to alert people towards the problems which occur when free expression and will are suppressed. Most of times this kind of pressure may simply be the result of people denying to open their horizons to something new and innovative. Since attention is required in cases of new ideas, A. R. Garney approaches the matter with extreme caution highlighting that new ideas are welcome as long as they are talking to people's hearts according to their era's demands.

Works cited

Gurney, A. R. ' Another Antigone', (1987) Dramatists Play Service, Inc. 1988 edition (1988)

Sophocles, ' Antigone' (442 B. C.), Prestwick House, Inc.; 2005 edition (2005)