

The oppressive
husbands. power is
the ultimate



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The struggle for power is an age old one, indeed. Opposing nations vying for control of a province, officials seeking powerful positions against equally cunning rivals, and the fight for dominance in a household are all examples of this struggle. It is a mental and physical battle, fought on many different sides at once by many different means.

As a species, humanity seems predisposed to seeking the upper hand, even over those they may deem allies. Advancement in science and technology gives certain nations dominance on a military and economical level. Moral issues are fought in courtrooms, in churches and on the streets.

Families are torn apart as wives try to break free of the chains of oppressive husbands. Power is the ultimate attainable goal for most, perhaps not on a surface level, but at least subconsciously. It is known that people in power change the world, and who wouldnt want to be the one to shape their own destiny, rather than leaving it in the hands of people who dont understand their situation? Might is right is a mantra that may not be just, but certainly has been the rule rather than the exception in many cultures. Galileo held the power to change the world through his discovery, or at least peoples perception of it. He held a truth that was dangerous, to himself and those around him, as it threatened to undermine the most fundamental teachings of both science and religion simultaneously. It was truth, indeed, but at what cost? What does one do with such power in their hands? Similarly Prospero, Shakespeares fictional sorcerer from the play *The Tempest*, held power that one might consider god-like power to call upon storms, and speak to muses.

His was a might that was awe-inspiring, but at the same time, he isolated himself to devote himself to his art and to science. He must have known the danger of his power, and thus reveled in it instead in solitude. What does one do when they have the power to warp reality itself? These two characters serve to provide a basis off of which their respective authors, Bertolt Brecht and William Shakespeare, can make commentary on the use of power and its danger. After all, both Galileo and Prospero abandon their power at the end of both works, although admittedly for different reasons. And while there seems like more benefit to be extracted from the power Galileo wields, both characters serve as a model for the question: What is the price of power, and can humanity bear that cost? In the first chapters of the book of Genesis, a utopia in the form of the Garden of Eden served as the shelter for man and woman.

This paradise was supposed to last an eternity, unless they ate fruit from a tree that was said to bestow knowledge. Human curiosity being what it is, the fruit was eaten, and paradise, destroyed. Even in this early religious literature, it seems that knowledge is portrayed to be powerful enough to destroy an ideal and ruin human existence.

If Genesis were to be believed, then the suggestion is that perhaps there are just some things that should not be revealed to man in general. It seems that Galileo skirted on such ground himself with his discovery about the placement of the earth in relation to the sun. He knew conclusively that no longer was the sun in orbit of earth, the center of the universe, but in reality itself was the epicenter of the solar system, with the significantly smaller earth taking a proportionately smaller role in the workings of that system.

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How could this be, when all religious doctrine and astronomy were based off the seemingly obvious assumption that the earth is stationary? A monk in Brechts Galileo demonstrates this kind of perplexity when he protests Galileos claims. He seems to think that because the earth is not the center, it is not special, and therefore not protected my God. Nobody has planned a part for us beyond this wretched one on a worthless star. There is no meaning in our misery.

Hunger is just not having eaten. It is