

A king's collapse essay



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A King's Collapse Unfortunately, in about every person's life either a tragic event or a series of tragic events can be found and in some cases more than others. To many people a tragic hero could be defined as someone who performs a heroic act, but dies in the process. Nevertheless, this statement is wrong, but instead a tragic hero needs five elements. To be a tragic hero one would need noble stature, a tragic flaw, free choice, excessive punishment and increased awareness. When discussing the play Antigone, a perfect example of a tragic hero would be Creon.

Though many people might argue Antigone to be the tragic hero, but she is missing the element of increased awareness. Imagine finding out that your father married your grandma and your brothers killed each other over power. Then your uncle steps in to be king and declares that one of your brothers will get no burial because he was a trader. This information starts off a tragic play called Antigone. In the play, Creon must have noble stature in order to be the tragic hero. One way Creon has noble stature is that he is the king which gives him power over the people.

Antigone voiced this when she told Creon, " They share my views, but they keep their mouths shut just for you. " (Sophocles 12) Even though Antigone was telling Creon that his people did not share his views, what she said showed that Creon still had power over them. Another two ways Creon has noble stature are that he creates the laws and Creon's decisions affects everyone. This is shown when Creon states, " It's impossible/ to really know a man, to know his soul,/ his mind and will before one witnesses/ his skill in governing and making laws. (L 198-201) This statement shows that Creon thinks everyone knows him because he is the one governing and making the

laws. Creon may be the king of the Thebes, but Creon does have a tragic flaw. Flaws can be found in every single person that has lived either in the past, present or will live in the future. Though there are many people, like Creon, who believe that they have no flaws. This was just a side affect of Creon's tragic flaw which was excessive pride. Creon's excessive pride leads him to not taking any sort of advice from anyone, especially women.

This is shown when Antigone tried persuading Creon and Creon replied with, " No woman's going to govern me- no, no- not while I'm still alive. " (L 599-600) This not only shows his excessive pride, but also that he has absolutly no respect for women. Creon may have especially not listened to women, but he had the same communication level with everyone else, too. This is proven when the chorus leader tries reasoning with him then finally tells him, " Old man you're like archers shooting at me. " (L 1149) This states that Creon had excessive pride, but he also was persistent and stubborn.

Creon may of had excessive pride as his tragic flaw, but he also had the free choice when making his decisions. With both Creon's excessive pride and him being the King of Thebes, he created a proclamation. This is one of the many unfortunate events that lead up to the tragic ending in Antigone. With this proclamation Creon was very forceful when making sure everyone knew it and the consequences they would apprehend if broken. Ismene restates, " For Creon this matter's really serious. / Anyone who acts against the order/ will be stoned to death before the city. (L 41-43) This was the punishment for anyone who would betray him by breaking the proclamation which showed he had his own free choice on what the punishment would be. He also had the free choice on who to forgive and who to punish. This was shown when

Creon claims, " An enemy/ can never be a friend, not even in death. " (L 598-599) When Creon says this it shows everyone that Creon has no respect for traitors at all and they will be punished no matter who they are. Creon's noble stature, tragic flaw and free choices have all lead up to Creon's excessive punishment.

To be completely truthful excessive punishment could be a lot of different things, but the most common one is probably death. Though in Antigone death is not Creon's excessive punishment. Instead, Creon's excessive punishment for everything he had done was the loss of his son and wife. In Antigone, Creon had changed his mind about his actions and went to go fix them, but in the end he still lost his wife and son. Creon made it clear that he was going to fix things by saying, " Alas- it's difficult. But I'll give up. I'll not do what I'd set my heart upon. / It's not right to fight against necessity. " (L 1236-1238) This shows that Creon was finally persuaded into not killing Antigone and burying Polyneices. Creon may of finally changed his mind, but he was too late to save anyone from death. Then after Antigone, his son and his wife he finally admits, " I killed you, my son, without intending to,/ and you as well, my wife. How useless I am now. " (L 1479-1480) This statement shows exactly what Creon's excessive punishment was which included losing his family.

Creon's actions and his excessive punishment lead to his increased awareness of what he had done and the consequences he would now have to face because of them. The last element one needs to inquire before being classified as a tragic hero concludes to be increased awareness. Through all Creon had done, in the end, he finally realized that he should not have been

so selfish nor stubborn. Creon lastly voiced the truth as he stated, " Alas for me... The guilt for all this is mine- /... I, and I alone... / I murdered you... I speak the truth. (1463, 1465-1466) This comes to show that Creon comprehended that even though his son and wife killed themselves, he still was the reason in which they killed themselves. For any one person, with is awareness that you comprehend there has to be guilt that follows. His regret is stated as, " Oh the profanity of what I planned. / Alas, my son, you died so young- / not your own foolishness but mine. " (L 1410-1412) In this quote it explain not only that Creon made mistakes or that he regrets it, but it also shows that Creon realizes that he made foolish mistakes that he would expect someone much inexperienced to make.

Mix this five elements: noble stature, tragic flaw, free choice, excessive punishment, and increased awareness together and one would result with a tragic hero. Since almost everyone in the world has experienced or seen some type of either tragic event or a series of tragic events in their lifetime it can be concluded that each person has their own definition of a tragic event. In many cases the established definition can be dependent on how severe the tragic event happens to be. The same thing happens when defining what a tragic hero consists of being.

The correct definition for what one needs to be a tragic hero states that a person should need five elements: noble stature, a tragic flaw, free choice, excessive punishment, and increased awareness. Creon from the tragic play Antigone could be considered to be a perfect example of a tragic hero. Now many people might beg to differ that Antigone is the real play, but in all actuality Antigone missed one of the elements in the play. The element that <https://assignbuster.com/a-kings-collapse-essay/>

allowed Creon to be the tragic hero instead of Antigone was that Antigone had no increased awareness in the end.