Power Trips Essay, Research Paper

2. In many ways, the plot of Antigone had to do with power. Which of these do you think Sophocles favors most strong in Antigone? POWER TRIPS In the play, Antigone, written by Sophocles, Antigone and Creon battle a philosophical war dealing with moral versus political power. In essence, Sophocles demonstrates that divine will is more powerful than that of the state.Antigone’s side of the conflict is a more heavenly approach as opposed to the political venue taken by Creon. Antigone feels that Creon is disregarding the law of the gods through his edict which prevents the burial of Polyneices, her brother. Her reasoning is set by her belief that if someone is not given a proper burial, that person would not be given the rights of the other spirits in the underworld. Antigone is an extremely religious person, and acceptance of her bother by the gods is important to her. Furthermore, she feels Creon is directly attacking her family and her beliefs: “That is what, they say, the worthy Creon has proclaimed for you and me – for me, I tell you” (182). Antigone takes Creon’s order personally. She truly feels that his edict invades her family life as well as her dedication to the gods. The loss of a brother is great to Antigone; it is greater than the loss of any other kind. She states that “If my husband were dead, I might have had another, and child from another man, if I lost the first. But when father and mother both were hidden in death no brother’s life would bloom for me again” (216). Thus, she has an undeniable reason for wanting to bury and mourn her brother.Antigone knows that if she buries her bother, Creon will sentence her to her death. Upon weighing the two sides, Antigone finds that death is the lesser consequence: “But if I dared to leave the dead man, my mother’s son, dead and unburied, that would have been real pain. The other is not” (198). Again, she shows that her religious beliefs are superior to anything that Creon decrees even though he is the ruler of the kingdom.

After she is captured and brought to Creon, Antigone tells him “I did not believe your proclamation had such power to enable one who will someday die to override God’s ordinances, unwritten and secure” (198). Antigone’s staunch opinion supports the gods and the law of heaven. After all, “The god of death demands these rites” (201).An important ideal in Ancient Greece was the belief that the government was to have no control in matters concerning religious beliefs. In Antigone’s eyes, Creon betrayed that ideal by not allowing her to properly bury her brother, Polyneices. She believed that the burial was a religious ceremony, and Creon did not have the power to deny Polyneices that right. Antigone’s strong beliefs eventually lead her to her death by the hand of Creon. Never, though, did she stop defending what she though was right. As Creon ordered her to her death, Antigone’s final words are “see what I suffer and who makes me suffer because I gave reverence to what claims reverence” (217).Sophocles puts the final touches on his theme that divine will is more powerful than that of the state when he causes plague and sorrow to come upon the house of Creon. Creon is warned by Teiresias to let Antigone go and to bury Polyneices, but Creon is too late. His son and his wife kill themselves, and Creon is left alone to realize his error in thinking that he had the power to disobey the gods’ wishes.