The 2007 Undergraduate is dedicated to Barry Horwitz, one of the Undergraduate's founding fathers, the Man Behind the Magazine for seventeen years...
A special thank you to all the students whose fine work was submitted to the Newman Awards Contest, to the instructors for their nominations, to the judges for their time and work in choosing our essays, and to the Collegiate Seminar program and the School of Liberal Arts for supporting the Undergraduate and the Newman Writing Awards.

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A View of One's Own

Jera Nyberg

Fall semester seemed relatively calm, with not much for the staff of the to do but review last year's copy and wait for new essays. I'd never really thought about it, but fall semester hundreds of essays must have been written for their various seminars. From these, more than 80 essays were submitted, sorted, and then sent to our Newman judges to evaluate. Not an easy task. By January we finally had our finalists, and it was time for the Undergraduate staff to get to work.

This year I was both cursed and blessed with a relatively small staff (with only two editors, besides Torbie). This created a large amount of work that needed to be done by all of us, and between the tedious editing of the very first scans to the final formatting on the computer, it was a long and drawn out process. However, I see at least two advantages: working with Shannon has been a great pleasure; even though we endured many long sessions of editing on the computer and seemingly endless dead ends, she would always be upbeat and never willing to admit defeat. She was invaluable during this process, and I know the Undergraduate would lack so much if Shannon had decided not to work with us this year. And, of course, Torbie Phillips—our leader in the trenches—was always willing to work with us as well as understand that we did have other classes on top of this! Not many bosses seem to get that. And that brings me to this year's essays.

At first I was not really reading the essays, as I was far more concerned with fixing the many errors that invariably come with converting a paper into electronic
format. However, once that stage passed and I actually began reading what students had written, I was inexorably drawn into each essay. The discussion of loyalty and servitude in "Loyalty in Odysseus' Life," which points out that loyalty is in fact a virtue, not a commodity to be traded, was a strong addition to the Undergraduate this year. "Development of Justice in Ancient Greek Society" tells us how we might learn from The Odyssey and all the other great Greek works how a people came to "understand abstract concepts such as justice and morality," something which undoubtedly has helped shaped Western civilization.

Equally strong in the Greek essays this year was "Cleon: Absurd Yet Convincing," which makes it clear that the political debate of ancient Greece is not all that different from our modern day version. Also we see a rare defense of Creon in "Creon's Complicated Kinship," which seeks to prove that Creon is an "honorable king" who is simply trying to live up to his own expectations and undo his mistakes.

While the Greek essays seemed particularly strong this year, the 19th and 20th Century essays were not to be outdone. "Weber's Theory of Economic Morality as Portrayed by Ibsen" is a concise look at what it means to be capitalist in the Victorian age. And my personal favorite from this year's batch of essays was "The Time is Now: Living the Fight for Freedom," a powerful account of how two very different men passionately voiced their minds about the unjust system with which they were faced.

These essays do honor to a long line of Undergraduate essays and I only hope that students in the future, myself included, can learn from them to improve our own essays and make them truly exemplary.
The Development of Justice in Ancient Greek Society
Elisa Darner

In nearly all modern societies, the law determines what is considered "just." The law can be thought of as being based on that which is morally right; however, morality is a very subjective concept. Many people's view of morality is based upon their religious beliefs. In ancient Greek society, what one considered moral or just was based largely upon the gods. Over time, however, the beliefs the people held about the gods slowly began to change. As Greek society progressed, the beliefs held about the role that the gods played in judging one's life changed; this evolution can be traced through the changing justice systems and beliefs about justice in Greek society.

In Homer's "The Odyssey," one of the first accounts of ancient Greek life, the concept of justice is strongly tied to the gods. There is no mention of an organized justice system - the gods are thought to punish or reward a person based on his or her actions. One's fate is seen as the result of his wrongdoings or successes: Athena asserts that Odysseus "will still come home—it is
decreed. He’s never wronged the gods in any way” (Homer 4.907-08). The gods are thought of as concrete beings who take part in everyday life on a very regular basis, and the people trust them to mete out justice. Ancient Greek society still had much to discover about how the world works; therefore misfortune was looked upon as punishment from the gods, and good fortune was seen as the gods rewarding one for good behavior. Ancient Greeks used this to determine what was “just” and what was not; it was assumed that mortals did not need to participate in such judgment, for it could be left up to the gods. In the case of Odysseus, it seems as though justice is served, for Odysseus survives his plight because he has “never wronged the gods.” While the people of Odysseus’ time may have believed this to be true, it is almost as though the opposite occurs: the people of ancient Greece accept and believe that Odysseus never harmed the gods based on the fact that he lives through his journey. They assume that justice is fairly dealt by the gods regardless of what the action one takes is and what the punishment or reward they receive is. Thus one’s action does not dictate the just consequence for it so much as the consequence itself dictates to the ancient Greeks whether the action was good or bad. In Homer’s time, there was so much faith placed in the gods that there was no need for a real system of justice — a person’s fortune in life was seen in terms of how the gods administered justice.

The gods continued to be a driving force in determining justice into the 400s BC, in which Euripides wrote “The Bacchae.” At this time, the gods were still fairly concrete beings; in “The Bacchae,” Dionysus comes down to earth disguised as a man in order “to refute that slander spoken by [his] mother’s sisters” and to punish all those who doubted his existence as a god (Euripides 156).
As is apparent by Dionysus' descent to earth in order to administer justice, ancient Greeks still used a tangible form of the gods to decide and deal out the appropriate consequences for one's actions. However, the judgment dealt by the gods is slightly different in "The Bacchae" than it is in "The Odyssey," for Dionysus is disguised as man in his dealings with mortals. This suggests the beginnings of a shift toward mortal control over justice in the society: while the god Dionysus decides the consequences of mortals' actions, a mortal form ultimately carries them out. It seems as though people are beginning to understand that the criteria for justice comes from that which is divine, but that on earth it must be administered by humans.

As society progressed, people slowly turned away from relying only on the gods to deal with justice; it is in "The Eumenides," that the Greek gods are personified for the last time. In this story by Aeschylus, Orestes is put on trial for the murder of his mother, which he committed in revenge after she killed his father. Because the murder of one's mother is deemed to be "too large a matter...for
mortal men to judge,” the goddess Athena presides over Orestes’ trial (Aeschylus 252. 484-85). The people of ancient Greece are beginning to move toward criminal trials – the basis of an organized system of justice. However, they are still in need of some sort of divine presence to help with their court proceedings, so that they can understand where their ideas about that which is just and moral are coming from. Their decision will ultimately be based upon what they see as ethically right, and this opinion is based upon their beliefs about the gods. As Athena prepares for the trial, she speaks directly to the citizens of Athens, who are the ones voting for the verdict of the trial: “And while this court of judgment fills, my city, / silence will be best. So that you can learn / my everlasting laws” (256. 576-78). It is almost as if Athena is teaching the people of Athens how to judge justice for themselves. The city’s laws will be based upon what they feel are the “laws of the gods,” and Athena is present in tangible form in Athens’ early court of law as a symbol of the great influence that the divine has in the justice system. The people of ancient Greece now recognize that justice cannot be left up to the gods – society must take a proactive role in setting standards for what is right and wrong.

As a justice system developed, the role of the gods lessened to some extent; their presence in the mortal world became more abstract. The gods no longer walked the earth as people do, but they still had a great influence over issues of morality and justice. In Sophocles’ “Antigone,” one can see how religion impacted adherence to the law: Antigone goes against the king’s laws and buries her brother’s body, for she feels that it is what the gods would want. She declares that she “shall be a criminal – but a religious one” (Sophocles 164). Antigone recognizes society’s laws – she knows that in disobeying...
them she will be considered criminal. However, she chooses to break the law, for she feels that she should be more loyal to what she thinks the gods would want. Antigone asserts "it was not Zeus that made the proclamation; nor did Justice, which lives with those below, enact such laws as that, for mankind" (Sophocles 178). In Antigone's view, justice still belongs to the gods, or "those below." Societal rules are recognized but not adhered to if they are not found to be in accordance with the laws of the gods. There is still a strong belief among people of this time that justice should come from the gods, that the gods know what is morally right better than the people, and that the gods will look kindly upon those who follow their religious guidelines, regardless of whether they are breaking society's laws. As the people try to find separation between the system of justice and their religious beliefs, they encounter the dilemma of deciding between the two: Antigone asks the king "what law of God [she has] broken" in burying her brother's body (196). The people are recognizing that there needs to be some sort of distinction between the gods and their justice system, but they have yet to reconcile the two and are stuck with two separate and at times conflicting sets of rules.

By Socrates' time, there is a very different take on how justice should be decided. The society has a newly founded democracy, and societal rules are highly revered. In Plato's "Crito," a jury has sentenced Socrates to death for corrupting the youth of Athens. Although he feels that his punishment is unjust, he feels that he must die to uphold the laws; he states "the laws of the underworld will not receive [him] kindly, knowing that [he] tried to destroy [the laws on earth]" (Plato 57). Contrary to Antigone, Socrates does not see the laws of the gods as separate from the laws of society. He instead thinks that
the gods look kindly upon those who follow societal rules, regardless of whether they are morally right. Although Socrates does not think that his punishment is just, he so reveres the government’s system of justice that he feels the gods must believe in society’s laws too; he does not consider the fact that societal rules rely on mortal men and the collective conscience, which is sometimes in opposition to what a single person may feel is ethically right. Socrates does not feel that the gods determine what is right and wrong, but that the gods must agree with men as to what is right and wrong.

Greek society was still developing new ways of thinking after Socrates’ time, and this once again changed the way that justice was seen. In Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, the author seems to finally reconcile societal rule with morality. While Aristotle, like Socrates, has a high reverence for the law, he recognizes that “not everything unlawful is unfair” (Aristotle 116). Aristotle is able to see the flaws in man’s laws, which is something Socrates could not see. He understands that while societal rules are important to hold a society together and are just for the most part, there are circumstances under which the law is unjust. Aristotle writes that “the great majority of lawful acts are ordinances which are based on virtue as a whole” and that they are often what is best for most cases when determining justice. However, he also feels that “being a good man is perhaps not the same as being a good citizen of some particular kind of state, whatever it may be” (117). Aristotle recognizes that what is ethical and just is integrated into the law for the most part, for one’s religious and moral beliefs influence the laws that one makes. He also sees, however, that in some cases, there is something greater than the law; sometimes the conscience of the majority does not agree with what one
knows to be just. It is cases such as these in which one must be a "good man" rather than a "good citizen."

The society of ancient Greece went through many changes; as people learned more about their world and sought to understand abstract concepts such as morality and justice, their dependence on the gods as physical beings lessened, but their need for some higher power as guidance did not. Even in the later part of ancient Greek society, it was recognized that there is something beyond mortal men, something that makes one a "good man" rather than just a "good citizen," as Aristotle says. This belief has carried through even into modern justice systems, for we are to this day still striving to create harmony between our moral beliefs and societal laws, and in doing so, making our society more just.
Works Cited


This essay was written for Professor Rendon's Greek Thought Seminar.
Loyalty in Odysseus' Life

Ashley Prescott

In Homer's *The Odyssey*, loyalty plays a major role, especially concerning the main character Odysseus, his family, and their future. Within the kingdom of Odysseus, a select few remain loyal to their beloved king while many others put the kingdom in jeopardy through disloyalty. *The Odyssey* is held together by both the loyalty of Odysseus to the gods and the relationship between the Achaeans and the gods. The loyalty of the Achaeans in Ithaca to king Odysseus creates a conflict between the suitors in pursuit of Odysseus' wife Penelope and those who remain loyal to him. Although it can be argued that Fate ultimately controls the lives of the Achaeans, loyalty within the characters is shown as a crucial virtue rooted in free will.

Within the family of Odysseus, his son Telemachus and his wife Penelope remain loyal to him, as he does to them. When Telemachus "was a boy and lighthearted— / [he] urged [Penelope] not to marry and leave [her] husband's house," showing his loyalty to both Odysseus and what his father left behind (19.597-98). Telemachus, despite never having met his father, honors him and shows his loyalty by going out in search of information to determine if his father is alive or dead. Once his father returns to Ithaca, Telemachus "throws his arms around his great father, sobbing uncontrollably" (16.443-44). Telemachus, despite his doubt in Odysseus' plan to kill all the suitors, takes "his stand by a chair that flanked his father" while "girding his sharp sword on, clamping hand to spear," prepared to take on the suitors with his father (21.482-3).

Penelope's loyalty to her husband after twenty
years of his absence, not knowing whether he was even still alive, makes her the prime example of companion loyalty. Before Odysseus left to fight in Troy, he told Penelope "once you see the beard on the boy’s cheek / you wed the man you like, and leave your house behind" (18.303-04). Loyal to her husband’s wishes, she "set up a great loom in the royal halls / and she began to weave...and she would lead [the suitors] on...but by night...she would unravel all she’d done" so that she would not have to marry one of her numerous suitors (2.102-04,117). Her loyalty is further illustrated when Odysseus reveals himself to her after his return and she accepts that he is in fact still alive. Called the "soul of loyalty," she rushes to the arms of her husband. (23.261). Through her undying commitment to her husband, Penelope remains loyal to Odysseus through her own free will, making her virtuous. Agamemnon declares, "The fame of her great virtue will never die. / The immortal gods will lift a song for all mankind, / a glorious song in praise of self-possessed Penelope" (24.216-18).
Throughout his journey, Odysseus remains loyal to Penelope despite his experiences with the seductive Calypso and Circe. Odysseus succumbs to these temptations as he goes to bed with the nymphs, but the nymphs "never won the heart inside of [Odysseus], never;" even when Calypso "vowed / to make [him] immortal, ageless, all [his] days" (9.37, 7.295-96). Throughout his journey he frequently laments his situation with a "heart that longs to be home" (10.533). Being far from home for so long, he could have easily become infatuated with one of the many temptations or given up hope, but instead he stays true to his love for Penelope as well as his kingdom in Ithaca. "Ithaca... Heart racing, Odysseus that great exile / filled with joy" when he heard Athena say it as he reached his native ground of the land he loves (13.284-85). Through Odysseus' steadfast loyalty to his wife and home, his virtue shines.

Of those living in Odysseus' kingdom, only the swineherd, cowherd, nurse, and a few servants actually remain loyal during the twenty-year absence of Ithaca's king. When Odysseus finally arrives in Ithaca disguised as a beggar, Eumaeus, the swineherd, takes him in
unknowingly and describes to him the greatness of the King Odysseus, whom he remembers. Eumaeus believes that Odysseus left a "broken heart / for loved ones left behind, [but] for me most of all" (14.159-60). The swineherd honours Odysseus as an "old friend, far away as he is..." and remarks he "can scarcely bear to say his name aloud, / so deeply he loved me, cared for me, so deeply. / Worlds away he is, I call him Master, Brother!" (14.168-71). Calling him 'brother' speaks volumes for the relationship that must have existed between Odysseus and his swineherd, showing loyalty on both ends. Eumaeus cares so much for his king that he prays "to all the powers, 'Bring him home, our wise Odysseus, home at last!'" (14.478-79). Not only does his heart break for Odysseus, but also for the family of his king: "How I grieve for him now, I can't stop—Odysseus' son, / Telemachus" (14.201). Eumaeus proves his loyalty through these elaborate praises of Odysseus without being prompted or suspecting that he is in the presence of Odysseus

Like Eumaeus, the cowherd honours and loves Odysseus as his king; his "eyes still brim with tears, remembering him, / Odysseus" (20.225-26). The cowherd "wept...when he saw his master's bow," which Penelope brought out for the suitors to try to string (21.96). His loyalty rings true as he cries out "if only Zeus would make that oath [the prophecy of Odysseus returning] come true— / you'd see my power, my fighting arms in action!" (20.263-64). His love for King Odysseus is so strong he is willing to fight for him. Both the swineherd and cowherd show their loyalty when Odysseus reveals himself and they "threw their arms around their master...kissing his head and shoulders, / and so Odysseus kissed their heads and hands" (21.250-52). The men fight alongside Odysseus and Telemachus to kill the suitors; each took
"aim at the ranks, all four let fly [their weapons] as one / and the lances struck home..." as each lance killed a suitor (22.278-79).

Within the palace, Odysseus' nurse, Eurycleia who had "suckled [Odysseus herself] / at [her] own breast," remains loyal to Odysseus and not just while he has been away (19.545-46). She recognizes the scar on his knee while he is dressed as a beggar and "joy and torment gripped her heart at once, / tears rushed to her eyes—voice choked in her throat" as she exclaims "the body of my king!" (19.533-34, 19.538). Odysseus, careful to protect himself, replies "Quiet! Not a word to anyone in the house. / Or else, I warn you—and I mean business too—/ if god beats down these brazen suitors at my hands / I will not spare you—my old nurse that you are / when I kill the other women in my house" (19.550-54). In loyalty, she replies "You know me—...I'll keep still as solid rock or iron" and keeps this promise, not even telling Penelope, who regards Eurycleia more as a friend rather than a nurse, that her beloved husband is alive and home (19.557-59). Eurycleia also tells Odysseus to "take [her promise] to heart.... / If a god beats down these brazen suitors at [Odysseus'] hands / [she] will report in full on the women in [his] house: / who are disloyal to [him], who are guiltless" (19.559-62). Despite the fact that each assumes the role of loyal subject to the king, Eumaeus, the cowherd, and Eurycleia do their duty in remaining loyal to their king beyond expectation. Thus, they are virtuous in their free will, while other subjects in Odysseus' kingdom use their free will to betray their king.

Loyalty may tie Odysseus' life together, but disloyalty tears it apart. Odysseus' crew, who have been sailing with him since they set sail for Troy twenty years earlier, are supposed to be the men he trusts the most and
who are most loyal to him. However, when they are almost home, one of his crewmen, suspicious that Odysseus is taking home treasure while those "who went through slogging just as hard, / go home empty-handed," breaks open the sack from Aeolus and the winds push their ship back to sea (10.46-7). Swayed by suspicion and aspersion, the crew falls victim to temptation, feeling righteous in the grip of greed. Though the crew did not know what was to come when the sack was opened, their disregard for the man who had brought them through the greatest hardships and within reach of home shows disloyalty in their actions. Eurylocus, one of the crewmen, later decides that it is best to disobey Odysseus' command to refrain from slaughtering Helio's ox and ram and instead convinces the rest of his brothers in hardship to "slaughter them to the gods who rule the skies up there" (12.371). Odysseus' "mutinous crew undid [him]" again out of greed and disloyalty (10.74).

Odysseus stays loyal to his crew despite the fact that they betrayed him twice, partly out of dependency on them to get home and partly due to his fatherly forgiveness. When they become stranded on Circe's island, Odysseus pleads to her that his "heart longs to be home, / my comrades' hearts as well" taking the responsibility for his crew and himself (10.533-34). When Odysseus sees Elpenor, a crew member who had died from falling off Circe's roof, in the Kingdom of the Dead, he "wept to see him...pity touched [his] heart" and he promised to "plant on [Elpenor's] tomb that oar / [He] swung with mates when [he] rowed among the living" (11.61, 11.86-7). Even when Odysseus is betrayed, he tries to lead his crew through Helios' Cattle of the Sun successfully, but when all of his crew are killed as prophesized by Tiresias, Odysseus still refers to his crew as his "loyal shipmates" (7.289).
The disrespectful suitors who lust after Penelope and plan to "seize [Odysseus'] estates and worldly goods / carve them up between [the suitors], share and share alike" are the epitome of disloyalty to the king, living and feasting in his halls (16.425-26). Antinous, Eurymachus, and Eupithes are the primary suitors who believe that "even if Odysseus of Ithaca did arrive in person...little joy would his wife derive from his return / with all her yearning. Here on the spot he'd meet / a humiliating end" (2.276, 2.280-82). When Odysseus arrives at his palace, still disguised as a beggar, one of the suitors "flung [an ox hoof] straight at the king" as if they held authority in the palace (20.335). When Odysseus reveals himself in his palace and prepares to kill all the suitors, Melanthius the goatherd betrays his king by sneaking into the storeroom, stealing the hidden weapons, and giving them to the suitors to fight Odysseus. The suitors' disrespect for the king and his family, "the man whose house [they] waste, scot-free / whose wife [they] court, whose son [they] mean to kill" and Eupithes' prayer that "Zeus will never make [Telemachus] king of Ithaca, / though by [his] father's crown is no doubt [his] birthright" show the extreme of disloyalty within the kingdom (16.477-78, 1.443-44). The suitors choose to be disloyal and disrespectful to Odysseus through their words and actions, illustrating their true vices.
The aspect of loyalty that lies between the Achaeans and the gods is significant in that all Achaeans are loyally devoted to the “all powerful gods,” and the gods have a certain amount of loyalty that they offer to humans. Achaeans all over the world constantly pray and make enormous sacrifices to many different gods for different purposes and in return expect to receive from the gods some protection from sorrow and curses in their lives. On the day that Penelope is supposed to remarry, “through the streets / heralds passed, leading the beasts marked out / for sacrifice on Apollo’s grand festival day” (20.306-07). When Telemachus reaches him, King Nestor tells Telemachus to “say a prayer to lord Poseidon [as] his is the feast you’ve found on your arrival [and] all men need the gods” (3.48-9, 55). King Menelaus is told that he should have “offered Zeus and the other gods / a handsome sacrifice, then embarked, if he ever hoped / for a rapid journey home,” exemplifying the importance of respect and loyalty to the gods (4.530-32).

Odysseus’ past offerings to the immortal gods contributes to his future as Athena, Hermes, and Leucothea all help him on his journey home. Throughout the poem, Athena guides Odysseus and inspires Telemachus, while Hermes helps Odysseus when he arrives on Circe’s Island by giving him the flower and dictating his plan of action to “have her swear the binding oath of the blessed gods / she’ll never plot some new intrigue to harm you” (10.331-32). Leucothea, the sea nymph, lends Odysseus a scarf and instructs him to “take this scarf, / tie it around [his] waist,” which helps him reach the Phaeacian shores with Athena’s help in calming Poseidon’s winds (5.381-82). Odysseus tells his nurse to “keep her tales to [herself] / Leave the rest to the gods” as he knows Athena will stay true to her word in assisting him (19.567). He also knows that the gods “won’t hold off
long from the cries and clash of battle, / not when...the suitors put our fighting strength / to proof in [his] own halls” (16.299-301). When Odysseus arrives in Ithaca, Athena “broke into a smile and stroked [Odysseus] with her hand,” that “Pallas Athena, daughter of Zeus—who always / stands beside [him], shields [him] in every exploit” (13.325-26, 13.341-42). Through consistent self-willed loyalty to Athena and other gods, Odysseus is consistently virtuous, and in respect for Odysseus’ wisdom, Athena returns the loyalty as she comes to love him and takes action to stop his suffering.

By the conclusion of the epic poem, each character’s loyalty or disloyalty to Odysseus has been resolved. Homer illustrates the importance of loyalty when he uses Odysseus, Zeus, and Poseidon to either punish or reward those who are disloyal or loyal. Consequently the suitors, disloyal servants, and crew lose their lives while the loyal, virtuous servants and family members are rewarded by finally reuniting. In the words of Odysseus, “clearly doing good puts bad to shame” (22.396). Any type of man can be loyal, from the mighty King of Ithaca to his lowly swineherd. It is the practice of loyalty that makes these characters virtuous. Loyalty is significant because it serves as a virtue in human life and sustains relationships.

Work Cited


*This essay was written for Professor Dow’s Greek Thought Seminar.*
Cleon: Absurd Yet Convincing

Jill Nelson

In Thucydides' "The Mytilenian Debate," some of the citizens of Athens want to reconsider their original decision to execute all the male citizens of Mytilene as a punishment for their rebellion against the city of Athens. Cleon, a powerful politician who supported the original decision of punishing the rebellious people, also strongly opposed reconsidering it. When he hears the Athenians' demand to reassess their conviction of the Mytilenian people, he is shocked and enraged. Cleon goes on to make a brilliant speech addressing the Athenian assembly, making his points clear, concise, and convincing. Although Cleon's speech is littered with absurdities and contradictions, his is still an oratorical masterpiece in which he uses subtle reversals of psychological perspective to gain the trust and admiration of the Athenian people.

Cleon, the son of Cleaenetus, highly respected and knowledgeable in the ways of politics, was listening in the crowd. When the people of Athens demanded a re-evaluation of their initial verdict towards the Mytilenians, Cleon stood up and began his speech saying, "Personally, I have had occasion often enough already to observe that a democracy is incapable of governing others..." (29) Since the democracy mentioned is the Athenian assembly itself, Cleon's first sentence implies that the assembly is either too incompetent or inconsistent to govern well. But he then immediately contradicts himself, as he continues "...states are better governed by the man in the street than by intellectuals" (29). If Cleon first claims that the assembly, or the "[men] of the street," were "incapable of governing others," his second claim obviously contradicts it, arguing that the common man knows better...
than the intellectual and the states should be ruled by these "common" men. But even though the second point directly contradicts the first, Cleon's dictum and word choice are already subtly persuading the people of Athens to listen and accept his view.

Cleon follows with another paradox that also eloquently contradicts itself, yet no one seems to notice. He states, "...the people who are not so confident in their own intelligence are prepared to admit that the laws are wiser than they are...." (29). This direct reference to the stupidity of the Athenian people to their faces reveals the immense confidence Cleon has in his persuasive powers, because, although the absurdity of this line is obvious, the baffling fact is that no one challenges it. Did Cleon not just claim that these "[men] in the street" should be governing the state? But if they admit that the laws are wiser than they are, how can they be expected to compose and enforce them? These people cannot be ruling Athens if they are too incompetent to make the laws and execute them, but somehow Cleon makes this nonsense seem perfectly "logical."

Cleon's next point presents another view, one that seems both to support his argument that the common man should run the state, and yet contradicts his first point that they are incapable of it. He states, "[intellectuals] are the sort of people who want to appear wiser than the laws...[and] very often bring ruin on their country." The paradox posed by this declaration in apparent. A state that is not in chaos and falls into the hands of the intellectuals will come to ruin. But if a state should be and is governed by the common man, will good order follow in spite the common man's inferiority to the laws?
Cleon's logical contradictions and the "disorder" of his speech are not noticed by his audience. He is carefully balancing his speech between the appearance of rationality, criticism, and praise. The shifting and "contradictory" perspectives persuade the assembly to trust him and to be both intimidated and empowered at the same time. Although the logical absurdities may be overwhelming, Cleon's speech shows that a facade of reason, combined with clever shifts between praise and blame are a dangerous and powerful combination. Even if one is completely wrong, who will challenge such persuasive power?

Cleon's alternation between praise and blame is also a brilliant shifting of his own role between teacher and student. When playing the teacher, Cleon criticizes the Athenians saying they cannot govern properly and that the law is wiser than them; he even goes so far as to say, "What you do not realize is the your empire is a tyranny...your leadership depends on superior strength and not on any goodwill of theirs" (29). This insulting speech addresses the Athenians as if they were ignorant children, not an assembly of adults. Cleon cuts them
down further, saying “The blame is yours, for stupidly instituting these competitive displays [of speeches],” and so gives them no room to defend themselves or challenge Cleon’s attack of their desire to reconsider their decision about the Mytilenians.

But even before they could have responded to his attack, he cleverly shifts back to the role of a student, praising the people, saying that the assembly ran the state better, since they knew the real problems and were not out for personal gain like the politicians.

This marks another high point of logical absurdity, as Cleon now switches his criticism from the assembly before him, to the politicians of the city. Irony drips from his lips as he condemns the politicians, generalizing all the while to avoid any personal harassment, seeing that he is a prominent politician himself. He claims, “We statesmen, too, should try to be more like [the common men], instead of being carried away by mere cleverness and a desire to show off our intelligence...” (29). With this statement, he depicts himself as a ‘student’ of the assembly, building up their confidence and trust in him. So he continues to alternate between criticizing their actions and decisions, and glorifying them and their intelligence. But it is always Cleon giving the advice, telling them what to think and how to act, and then challenging them, putting himself back on the pedestal as the ‘teacher’, making the Athenians too fearful to question his claims.

A further example of paradox and absurdity comes when Cleon anticipates the argument of others that the rebellion of Mytilene “is really a good thing for us...”
He claims:

It is obvious that anyone who is going to say this must either have such confidence in his powers as an orator that he will struggle to persuade you that what has been finally settled was, on the contrary, not decided at all, or else he must have been bribed to put together some elaborate speech with which he will try to lead you out of the right track (30).

The absurdity here is that a thoughtful audience might wonder if Cleon is speaking ironically of himself. Wasn’t Cleon’s own argument an “elaborate” and well practiced speech, designed to convince the assembly to confirm their original decision to execute the Mytilenians? Isn’t Cleon “confident in his powers” (29)? Is it not even possible that Cleon himself was bribed by other powerful authorities to prevent a change in the original decision?

Cleon even adds a final ironic remark, telling the assembly that “…you rely not so much on the facts… as on what you have heard about them in some clever piece of verbal criticism” (30). All these statements might apply to Cleon and his speech, but no one questions his
authority or bats an eye, even when he suggests the answers, cleverly hidden in plain view.

Cleon's speech then is "logically" confusing, throwing off the "common man," even though it maintains a simple structure. His clever psychology, his use of shifting perspective, and role changes between 'teacher' and 'student' baffle the audience. They don't know whether to regard him as a superior or an equal.

While Cleon's speech is ambiguous and inconsistent, few in the assembly doubt his allegations or challenge his claims. He is convincing and confusing: the perfect politician.

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This essay was written for Professor Smith's Greek Thought Seminar.
Creon’s Complicated Kinship
Kyle Pounder

In Sophocles’s "Antigone," Creon, the king of Thebes, defines an honorable king as one who accepts counsel for the benefit of his city. As king, Creon punishes Antigone, who goes against his orders, and buries her dead brother, Polynices. Soon after, Haemon, who is Creon’s son, and the prophet Tiresias challenge Creon to undo Antigone’s punishment, advising him that punishing her wrongly will enrage the Furies and bring devastation upon Thebes. Although Creon is reluctant to heed their advice, he eventually seeks to undo Antigone’s punishment. Thus, he accepts counsel for the betterment of his city and stands an honorable king.

At the beginning of the play, Creon boldly provides a basis for judging a person. He argues that "it is impossible to know any man - / ... his soul, intelligence, and judgment - / until he shows his skill in rule and law" (173-75). Creon believes that three important qualities of a man - his intelligence, soul, and judgment - can be seen in the way he rules. For example, "a man supreme ruler of a whole city / [who] does not reach for the best counsel for her... / [is] the worst of any" (176-77, 179). Whether or not a king reaches for advice for his city begs these questions: Is concern for the safety of his city in his soul? Is he intelligent enough to identify sound advice? How skilled is he at judging what is right for the city? Creon believes that, in addition to seeking counsel, a king must also look out for the safety of his people. He vows "not [to] be silent / if [he] [sees] ruin, not safety, on the way / towards [his] fellow citizens" (184-86). In particular, when Thebes is faced with the prospect of danger, Creon will not risk the safety of his people; instead, he will seek safety so that they do not perish. Moreover, Creon
believes that a king’s best friend should be his city (182). Thus, Creon will treat Thebes like he would a best friend, acting as both its protector and its caretaker. This speech is made when Creon is calm, before he finds out that Antigone has defied his authority, and thus is likely consistent with what Creon believes about the standard for an honorable king. Creon’s character can be scrutinized to see if he lives up to his definition of an honorable king, or if this speech mistakenly arms the city with reason to consider him shameful.

When Creon first decides to punish Antigone, he sees her burial of Polyneices as a personal affront to his authority. He “swear[s] that [he is] no man and she the man / if she can win this and not pay for it” (484-85). In Creon’s mind, Antigone’s burial of Polyneices initiated a power struggle between them. Will Antigone challenge his authority and still live, thereby proving she is more powerful than the king; or will she lose her life, exhibiting Creon’s great power? Thus, Creon punishes her in order to prove his superiority; she will die to show that he is a powerful man. Some may argue that he is merely upholding the law, which is necessary to maintain order in Thebes. If he were to let Antigone get off scot-free, it would seem that he does not value adherence to the city’s laws. However, his focus on proving his own superiority over Antigone suggests that his main motivation behind punishing her is not to preserve the safety of the city, but rather to win the power struggle between them. At this moment, it seems that Creon has fallen short of his standard for an honorable king by letting his struggle for pride and power dictate how he rules. Such a king will value his own pride and power more than his city’s safety and thus cannot be an honorable ruler.

However, the way that Creon punishes Antigone shows that he does care for the safety of his city. Although
he is motivated to punish her in order to prove his strength, he simultaneously cares for his city's safety. He hides her in a cavern, but he also gives her "just enough... food... / for... bare expiation, [so] that the city may avoid pollution" (774-75). One might wonder why Creon is concerned about the way he punishes Antigone, given his desire to win the power struggle between them. It seems that Creon might have considered Antigone's reason for burying Polyneices; she argued that "the god of death demands [burial] rites for both [men]" (519). Antigone's argument is powerful because she contests that she is doing what the gods expect, even though it is contrary to Creon's order. Thus, Creon might wonder how the gods would react if he were to punish Antigone harshly. By giving her enough food, he believes he will not anger the gods by rash punishment, and thus, Thebes will avoid the gods' wrath. He balances his desire to punish Antigone with his desire to keep his city safe; even in her punishment, he meets his standard for an honorable king: one who looks out for the safety of his city.
After Creon punishes Antigone for defying his authority, Haemon comes to Creon to challenge his father's judgment and to counsel him. He reminds his father that the city believes Antigone acted “glorious[ly]” (695). He also argues that she “merits / ... golden honor” because she did not allow her brother to be desecrated, even though Creon ordered that Polyneices remain unburied (698-99). Passionately, she clings to what she believes the gods will honor: respect for the dead. Since he feels his father has punished Antigone in error, Haemon does not want his father to stubbornly stand by Antigone’s punishment. He counsels his father further: “A man who thinks that he alone is right, / or what he says, or what he is himself, / unique such men, when opened up, are seen / to be quite empty” (707-10). Haemon cautions his father against being close-minded and continuing to justify Antigone’s punishment. He fears Creon will be unable to acquire wisdom from his peers. He tells his father to consider the example of trees during the winter: “trees that yield preserve their branches safely, / but those that fight the tempest perish utterly” (714-15). If Creon clings to his stubbornness, he and the city will not survive the winter; yet if he yields to the will of the people, Thebes will be spared. This advice echoes Creon’s definition of an honorable king: a man who accepts counsel for his city.

Creon, though, is not willing to listen to his son’s words and seems to condemn himself by denying counsel. He does not believe that men “[his] age [should] learn wisdom / from young men” (726-27). He believes that since he is old and has had much experience, he cannot learn from a young person, who has not lived as much. He arrogantly rejects judgment of his rule: “Is not the city thought to be the ruler’s?”
He believes that the city belongs to the king, meaning he has no obligation to take input on how to rule. Since he would take all blame for Thebes’ ruin, he can rule as he pleases. Creon said that an honorable king never denies counsel which would benefit his city, but he disregards Haemon’s wisdom. So why is Creon failing to heed his own advice? If Creon were to let Antigone go unpunished, she would win their power struggle; he would appear to be a wavering king who does not uphold his own laws. Thus, Creon acts out of character in order to appear strong and to retain his reputation as a powerful king. In this instance, we do not see the real Creon who believes that an honorable king always accepts counsel for his city.

Creon has another chance to avoid self-condemnation when Tiresias, an old blind prophet, visits later to counsel him. Tiresias rebukes Creon for “thrust[ing] one that belongs above / below the earth, and bitterly dishonor[ing] / a living soul by lodging her in [a] grave” (1066-68). This further challenges Creon’s actions — both the city’s common people and a wise prophet believe Antigone has acted honorably. Tiresias goes on to warn Creon that as punishment, the Furies will “lie in ambush for him” and “all the cities will stir in hatred / against [him]” (1075, 1080-81). It is best for Creon to undo Antigone’s punishment in order to save his life and to avoid local unrest. Thus, Creon is at a crossroads: if he heeds the advice of Tiresias (which echoes that of Haemon) and frees Antigone, he is an honorable king because he acts out of concern for Thebes’ safety, which the Furies threaten to disrupt if Antigone remains unjustly punished. On the other hand, if he rejects their advice, he is a dishonorable king, upholding Antigone’s punishment only so that he seems forceful and unwavering to the citizens of Thebes.
After Creon has time to review his situation, he gives in to the pressure and heeds the advice of Haemon and Tiresias. His stable emotional state allows him to act rationally and to consider how he can best be an honorable king. After the chorus instructs him to save Antigone from her punishment, Creon confesses that "it is ill to fight / against what must be" (1106-7). He must return Antigone from her punishment to avoid bringing ruin upon himself and the city, for he is their ruler and best friend. Creon sets his stubbornness aside by granting her amnesty, saying: "as I bound her myself, I will free her" (1112). Creon frees Antigone because it will spare Thebes of the Furies' wrath; he acts as his city's best friend, making him an honorable ruler.

By undoing Antigone's punishment, Creon shows that he cares for the safety of the city; by freeing her, the gods will not be angered. The question remains as to whether or not he is ever also convinced by the morality of the situation — does he ever believe that Antigone did not deserve punishment by death? It seems that Creon never actually comes to this opinion because in the end he seems only to regret his decision because it angers his son and wife enough that they commit suicide. As a result of Antigone’s punishment, "God... sprung on [his] head... a vast weight... overturn[s] his joy... and [causes] pains" (1272, 1274-75). He regrets punishing Antigone because of the anguish he suffers due to his family’s suicide; however, he never admits that her punishment is unjust. He is merely upset with the consequences of punishing Antigone, not the act of punishing her.

When Creon defines an honorable king, he establishes a standard by which one can determine his honor, as both a king and man. Soon after giving the
standard, he falls short of it by letting his power struggle with Antigone motivate his decision to punish her. Although he looks out for the city's safety by being careful when punishing her, he soon goes against his standard for an honorable king again by not listening to Haemon's advice. However, it seems he behaved out of character by not listening to Haemon because he was furious with Antigone's affront to his authority. However, Creon ultimately realizes that his selfish desire to punish Antigone will only bring trouble upon his city, so he attempts to undo Antigone's punishment. Creon narrowly avoids condemnation by heeding the advice of Haemon and Tiresias, and by doing what is best for Thebes. Even though Creon is never convinced that Antigone's punishment is unjust, he sets aside his stubbornness and anger and frees Antigone. By accepting counsel for Thebes, he stands an honorable king.

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This essay was written for Professor Miller's Greek Thought Seminar.
Weber's Theory of Economic Morality as Portrayed by Ibsen

Taylor Klein

Where "doing one's job" cannot be directly linked to the highest spiritual and cultural values—although it may be felt to be more than mere economic coercion—the individual today usually makes no attempt to find any meaning in it... The pursuit of wealth, divested of its metaphysical significance, today tends to be associated with purely elemental passions, which at times virtually turn it into a sporting contest. (Weber 121)

In "The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit of Capitalism,'" Max Weber contrasts Protestant and Capitalist economic morality to Puritan and traditionalist principles. In doing so, he reveals how the "Spirit of Capitalism" emerges from the transition from traditionalist economics to Protestant ethics. The characters depicted in Ibsen's *A Doll House* exemplify
both the Protestant and Puritan morality discussed in Weber’s essay. Specifically, Mrs. Linde represents the traditionalist thought, which rests on spiritual and cultural values; Torvald Helmer, driven by the pursuit of wealth, is the product of Protestant capitalism.

According to Weber, Puritans disapprove of unnecessary wealth because it leads individuals astray from God. Puritans believe that “the wealthy man should not be compelled to mortify the flesh, but he should make use of his wealth for necessary and practically useful things” (Weber 116). Individuals are instructed to live comfortably by purchasing absolute necessities and refusing superfluous luxuries. Money tempts humans to revel in earthly pleasures while they should be focusing on God. In fact, Puritans hold that everyone “must give an account of every penny, and it is at the very least dubious whether he should expend any of this money for a purpose which serves not God’s glory, but his own pleasure” (115). This Puritan philosophy condemns selfish behavior by promoting responsible financing, and religious followers are encouraged to make only enough money to be able to purchase what is essential.

Mrs. Linde shares this morality of wealth. In A Doll House, she admits that she had to “scrape up a living with a little shop and a little teaching and whatever else [she] could find. The last three years have been like one dedicated to others. Rather than earning money merely to become wealthy, she has moral intentions for working so hard. Furthermore, Linde suggests that there is meaning beyond merely working in order to gain money: she finds solace and peace in being selfless.

Mrs. Linde displays the frugal Puritan morality of wealth.
Weber contrasts this Puritan stance on economics with the emergence of capitalism. He states that Protestant Ascenticism "has the effect of liberating the acquisition of wealth from the inhibitions of traditionalist ethics; it breaks the fetter on the striving for gain not only by legalizing it, but seeing it as directly willed by God" (Weber 115). Weber explains that Protestants believe that they are called to work by God and are held responsible for optimizing their wealth. Therefore, riches are not evil if they can be accounted for by this moral reasoning. Weber cites Benjamin Franklin's principles of capitalism. Such tenets include being "beware of fall your own that you possess, and of living accordingly .... You will discover how wonderfully small, trifling expenses mount up to large sums ... and may for the future be saved" (10). Franklin's theory depicts the spirit of capitalism; he instructs individuals to live prudently with the money that they earn by avoiding debt and over-indulgence in consumerism. Franklin also reminds that "money is of the prolific, generating nature. Money can beget money, and its offspring can beget more, and so on" (10). He warns that saving and investing money is more economical than
spending the funds as soon as they are earned. Weber reveals that the Protestant Ethic promotes striving for monetary gain when the means are sensible and practical.

Torvald Helmer of *A Doll House* presents this practical view of economics. He derives his morality of wealth directly from Weber’s description of Protestant principles. Indeed, Helmer reprimands his wife’s tendency as a spendthrift by scolding, “No debts! Never borrow! Something of freedom’s lost-and something of beauty, too—from a home that’s founded on borrowing and debt” (Ibsen 444). Helmer adheres to Franklin’s advice to not spend all the money that he makes. He recognizes that in order to become wealthy, he must deal with his earnings sensibly; therefore, he rejects his wife’s wishes to waste money through her unnecessary consumption. Helmer’s wife, Nora, further reveals his capitalistic standard of living. While visiting with Mrs. Linde, she admits that years ago, “there was no chance of promotion in [Helmer’s] office, and of course he needed to earn more money... He took on all kinds of extra work that kept him going morning and night. It wore him down, and then he fell deathly ill” (50).

Nora’s description of Torvald Helmer exposes his dedication to success and prosperity; this drive for earning money even begins to endanger his health. Nonetheless, Helmer strictly abides by the Protestant work ethic described by Weber: he strives to optimize his time in order to maximize his earnings. Ibsen’s characters, Mrs. Linde and Torvald Helmer, typify the contrasting economic moralities held by Puritans and Protestants, which Weber describes in his essay. Through these characters, Ibsen is able to address in his play, the effects and consequences of adhering to different values concerning wealth. While both Linde and Helmer reject consumerism and advocate prudent practices with money, their purposes in gaining wealth conflict. Mrs. Linde works in order to provide her feeble family with the bare
necessities. She assigns more importance to moral values, such as family, friendship, and self-sacrifice. Helmer, in contrast, works merely to become wealthy. His rejection of extravagant and reckless spending is the product of his interest in fiscal morality. These two characters portray Max Weber’s theory that traditional, Puritan economics gradually waned as the Protestant ethic generated the “Spirit of Capitalism.”

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*This essay was written for Professor Singh’s 19th and 20th Century Thought Seminar.*
The Time is Now: Living The Fight for Freedom
Stefanie Ordoveza

Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, two of the most influential leaders of the Civil rights movement, dedicated their lives to the fight against segregation in hopes of improving the welfare of all blacks in America. Through their countless demonstrations, inspiring words and heroic actions, King and Malcolm X exemplified to both ends of society that they could not longer wait for freedom. Both men believed that if society wanted change, the time was now. And though the means by which King and Malcolm X proposed to make that change were different, both men will always be remembered for giving themselves to the same great cause: to end injustice that resided in our nation, so that all individuals, regardless of color, would be treated as equal human beings.

In his “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” King sends a new message to the world, one meant to create immediate change by finding sympathy in that hearts of all those who read it. During a time of violence, oppression, ignorance, and hatred, King’s words strike the individual in a different way. He moves the heart to listen while simultaneously muting the rest. He writes,

I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say wait. But when you have vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim ... when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro ... when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of “nodbiness”— then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait (84).
Offering a glimpse of what the black community goes through every day, Martin Luther King delivers a powerful statement: "[now] is the time to lift [the] national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity" (88). More importantly though, it becomes increasingly difficult to ignore that people of every color are human beings with families, feelings, cares, and hopes of their own.

King inspires all people, both blacks and whites, to understand the severity of the situation and stop expecting time to fix the problem. He writes, "It is the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of neutral. It can be used either destructively or constructively" (87). Therefore, King immediately calls both the white and black community to be constructive by taking action now and joining in his legendary approach of nonviolent direct action.

According to King, nonviolent direct action "seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored" (82). However, before one can join King in this courageous approach, one must first undergo what he calls "a process of self-purification," in which one must question his or her ability to react nonviolently no matter how unjust the consequences (82). Irrespective of how harsh the beating, how excruciating the dog mauling, or how painful the water hoses, King demands his followers to retaliate without ever physically striking back. He writes,

Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths ... we must see the
ne*d of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood (82-3).

Therefore, nonviolence is used as a means to expose the "hidden tension that is already alive" and demand awareness to it in a manner that is disciplined and civilized (87).

Malcolm X, on the other hand, encourages "action on all fronts by whatever means necessary" (95). The well-known instigator of "black nationalism," reveals in his speech, "The Ballot or the Bullet," that in order to create change now, the black community must "wake up" (98)! They must wake up to the political "hypocrisies" and "conspiracies" that surround them and have continued to only oppress them further (98).

Like King, Malcolm X also challenges his followers to undergo a time of self-purification, only in a slightly different sense. Rather than reflecting on how to react to the white authority, he urges his followers
to reflect on how to react towards one another within their own community. He proclaims “I’m not here to argue or discuss anything that we differ about, because it’s time for us to submerge our differences and realize that it is best for us to first see that we have the same problem, a common problem—a problem that will make you catch hell whether you’re a Baptist, or a Methodist, or a Muslim, or a nationalist” (95).

Malcolm X explains that in order to fight the injustices of the “white man,” the black community must first learn to reconcile their own differences. However, they are further challenged to create this sense of understanding quickly and without hesitation, for just as King expressed, Malcolm X, too, exclaims, “It isn’t that time is running out—time has run out” (96).

With this call for immediacy comes the need for the black community to finally understand what they can do to make a noticeable and lasting difference. According to Malcolm X, every member of the black community must, first and foremost, understand his right to vote. He must realize his power in being able to make an impact on elections, and thus influence the outcome of his own destiny. Malcolm X states, “It’s time now for you and me to become more politically mature and realize what the ballot is for; what we’re supposed to get when we cast a ballot; and that if we don’t cast a ballot, it’s going to end up in a situation where we’re going to have to cast a bullet. It’s either a ballot or a bullet” (100).

Here, in this radical approach which advocates the use of violence as a means to be heard, lies the possibility of increased hostility, chaos, and bloodshed. Nonetheless, Malcolm X assures the white populace that if violence is ever used as a means to end his fight,
he will not hesitate to use violence as retaliation. He states, "...you should never be nonviolent unless you run into some nonviolence ...[but] when you drop that violence on me, then you've made me go insane, and I'm not responsible for what I do" (103). This extreme mentality displays Malcolm X's yearning to end segregation. He can no longer exist in this state of restriction and now is the time for change. In an outburst of militancy, he declares, "It'll be liberty, or it'll be death" (109).

Although King entirely devoted himself to ending segregation, even also to the point of death, King dreamt not of a world of increased violence and hostility but one of dialogue and understanding. In his letter, he describes a hopeful future for both communities. He writes, "Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty" (94). King's promising vision of the future rests in the ability of both communities to tear down the walls of resentment and look through new eyes of brotherhood and love. In this way, both sides can finally work together to create a situation where they can live in peace and unity.

Malcolm X's philosophy of "black nationalism," on the other hand, runs contrary to King's notion of integration with the white populace. In fact, he approaches a totally different extreme, one that demands the black individual to completely separate himself from the "jurisdiction" of the white man by creating a society of his own. Malcolm X explains:

This radical approach advocates the use of violence as a means to be heard.
Black nationalism means that [we] should control the politics and the politicians in [our] own community ... we should control the economy of our community... [and] we ourselves have to lift the level of our community ... so that we will be satisfied in our own social circles and won’t be running around here trying to knock our way into ... where we’re not wanted (106-7).

This vision, unlike King’s, lacks a period of negotiation with the white power structure, and instead calls the black community to stand up alone on a new level of independence. It is only this way that the black society can ever gain a sense of power and live a life absent of injustice and oppression.

Because of these two different visions, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X have been regarded as believers of two completely opposite extremes. However, it may, in fact, have been the presence of these two “extremes” that made the Civil Rights Movement as successful as it was. And though there still is a long way to go before our society can truly claim itself as “just,” these men gave the nation something new to think about and made a lasting difference in the lives of many. So, in a sense, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X were really not all that different. Both men wanted the best for their people. Both men called it upon themselves to lead those people. Most of all, both men dedicated their lives to this cause because they wanted the same thing: to be regarded as who they were—human beings.
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This essay was written for Professor Peterson's 19th and 20th Century Thought Seminar.