

OEDIPUS REX In the story of Oedipus Rex, Sophocles portrays the main character, Oedipus, as a good natured person that has bad judgment and frailty. Oedipus makes a few bad decisions and is condemned to profound suffering because of his pride. I agree with Aristotle that he brings it all on to himself because of his own personal pride. One day Oedipus finds out that there is a prophecy that depicts him killing his father and marrying his mother. The prophecy may have been proven untrue if he wouldn't have put himself on such a high pedestal. It all started one day when he met up with King Laius: Seated in it. The groom leading the horses Forced me off the road at his lord's command; But as this charioteer lurched over towards me I struck him in my rage...I killed him (1.2.764-772). Oedipus met the King Laius on a bridge and was too proud to let him pass first, and then the King pushed him out of the way. In a fit of rage, Oedipus killed him. All the while, an old man, Teiresias, knew that it was King Laius that Oedipus had killed. Oedipus didn't even know that it was King Laius that he killed. In the future, when Teiresias tries to convince Oedipus that he is the killer, Oedipus turns him away and calls him a liar and blames it all on him: And I'll tell you what I think: You planned it, you had it done, you all but killed him with your own hands: if you had eyes, I'd say that the crime was yours, and yours alone. (1.2.331-334) Teiresias is a blind prophet, and it is possible that if Oedipus had listened to him in the first place, his internal suffering may have been much less severe. He should have accepted what he had to say as fact no matter how unbelievable. Oedipus I think that I myself may be accursed By my own ignorant edict. Jocasta You speak strangely. It makes me tremble to look at you, my King. Oedipus I am not sure that the blind man cannot see, But I should know better if you were to tell me--- (1.2.700-704) The prophecy also stated that Oedipus will be damned in marriage. He marries Jocasta and he rules as the King of Thebes and is well respected by all of his people. Once Oedipus realizes that he has married his own mother and killed his own father and took his throne, he goes into a great depression. He can no longer look into the eyes of the people that have entrusted him for the last few years, so he stabs out his eyes: Ah god! It was true! All the prophecies! ---Now, O light, may I look on to you for the last time! I, Oedipus, Oedipus, damned in his birth, in his marriage, damned, Damned in the blood he shed with his own hand! (2.4.1115-1124) All of the suffering that Oedipus encounters is brought on by himself because of his immense pride. Aristotle's theories seem to hold true. If he wasn't so proud, he would have never killed King Laius and told Teiresias that he was a liar. In the beginning, Teiresias was simply trying to ease him slowly into the truth. Oedipus was too proud to see any truths and he refused to believe that he could be responsible for such a horrible crime. He learned a lesson about life and how there is more to it than just one person's pride. Work Cited Sophocles. Oedipus Rex. World Literature. Orlando: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1993. 307-367.

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