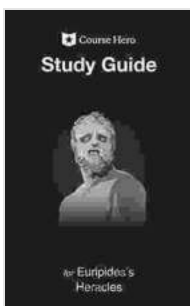


# Study Guide for Euripides' Heracles: A Comprehensive Guide to the Tragedy

Euripides' Heracles is a tragedy that tells the story of the Greek hero Heracles, also known as Hercules. The play opens with Heracles returning home from his twelve labors, only to find that his wife Megara and his children have been killed by Lycus, the new king of Thebes. Heracles is driven mad by grief and rage, and he kills Lycus and his family in revenge. However, Heracles' madness does not end there. He also kills his own children, thinking that they are Lycus's.

When Heracles finally comes to his senses, he is horrified by what he has done. He is exiled from Thebes and wanders the earth, haunted by guilt. In the end, Heracles is reconciled with his father, Zeus, and he is taken up to Mount Olympus to live among the gods.

**Heracles:** Heracles is a complex and tragic figure. He is a great hero, but he is also deeply flawed. He is capable of great violence and cruelty, but he is also capable of great love and compassion. Heracles' madness is a manifestation of his inner turmoil. He is a man who is torn between his desire for revenge and his desire for redemption.



## Study Guide for Euripides's Heracles (Course Hero Study Guides) by Course Hero

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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**Megara:** Megara is Heracles' wife. She is a strong and courageous woman, but she is also a victim of Heracles' violence. Megara represents the innocent victims of war and violence.

**Lycus:** Lycus is the new king of Thebes. He is a cruel and tyrannical ruler. Lycus represents the corrupting power of power.

**Amphitryon:** Amphitryon is Heracles' father. He is a wise and compassionate man. Amphitryon represents the voice of reason and morality.

**Iolaos:** Iolaos is Heracles' nephew. He is a loyal and devoted friend. Iolaos represents the importance of friendship and loyalty.

**Madness:** Madness is a central theme in Euripides' Heracles. Heracles' madness is a manifestation of his inner turmoil. He is a man who is torn between his desire for revenge and his desire for redemption.

**Family:** Family is another important theme in the play. Heracles' relationship with his wife and children is a complex one. He loves them deeply, but he is also capable of great violence against them. The play explores the tensions between love and hate, and the bonds of family.

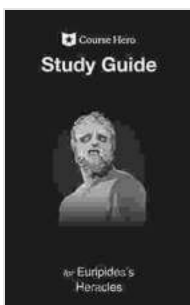
**Revenge:** Revenge is a powerful force in the play. Heracles is driven by a desire for revenge against Lycus for killing his family. However, revenge only leads to more violence and bloodshed. The play explores the destructive consequences of revenge.

**Justice:** Justice is a complex issue in the play. Heracles kills Lycus in revenge, but is he justified in doing so? The play explores the different perspectives on justice, and the difficulty of finding a just solution in a world where violence is commonplace.

**Morality:** Morality is another important theme in the play. Heracles' actions are often morally ambiguous. He is a hero who saves people from danger, but he is also capable of great violence. The play explores the complex nature of morality, and the difficulty of making ethical choices in a world where good and evil are not always clear-cut.

Euripides' Heracles was written in 416 BC, during the Peloponnesian War. The play reflects the political and social turmoil of the time. The Peloponnesian War was a devastating conflict between Athens and Sparta, and it led to the deaths of many thousands of people. The play explores the themes of war, violence, and revenge, which were all relevant to the audience of the time.

Euripides' Heracles is a powerful and moving tragedy. It is a play that explores the complex nature of human beings, and the destructive consequences of violence and revenge. The play is still relevant today, and it continues to be performed and studied around the world.



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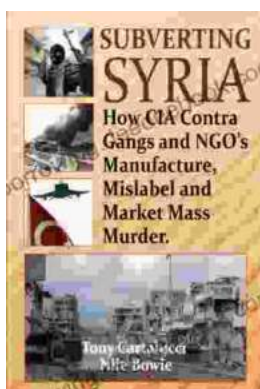
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