Proving Odysseus Guilty

The use of language played a significant role in "The Odyssey" towards the end of the epic. Odysseus can be proved guilty based on his actions when he was away from Ithaca and when he finally returned home. In the beginning, Odysseus's goal is was to get himself and his crew back home. His goal may have never changed but he did not meet it completely and got distracted along the way. Due to the evidence in the story, Odysseus can be confirmed as a criminal using ethos, pathos, and logos. The first event that displayed Odysseus's lack of ethics was the adultery he commited with Circe and Calypso. When Odysseus left Ithaca for the Trojan war he was married to Penelope. He was also married to Penelope the whole time he was trying to make his way back home. During this time Odysseus met a witch named Circe and then a nymph named Calypso. Circe was the first woman that Odysseus was unfaithful with. She helped reverse the spell that turned Odysseus's men into swine but that was not good justification for him to sleep with her. After that Odysseus traveled to Calypso's island. Not only did he cheat with Calypso in addition to Circe, but he stayed on her island for seven years until Zeus ordered her to release him. To furthermore exhibit Odysseus's ethical inadequacy, is the incident that happened with the Cyclops. Although the Cyclops was wrong and cruel to Odysseus, that did not give Odysseus permission to be the same way with the Cyclops. While trying to escape from the Cyclops's cave, Odysseus sharpened a wooden beam and forcefully stuck it into the Cyclops's only eye. This did allow Odysseus and his men to escape, but there could have been a less malicious way to go about it. It was unethical of Odysseus to cause pain to the Cyclops in the way that he did. One of the last ways Odysseus showed that he was an unethical person was by being responsible for the massacre of killings that occured at his home on the night of his return. The men that were killed that night were suitors of his wife and he did not kill them all by himself. However, they had commited no crime and it was Odysseus's idea. Additionally, everyone back at home in Ithaca assumed that Odysseus was dead considering he had been gone for twenty years. It must have pained Odysseus to see men in his home vying for his wife's attention, but they did not deserve to die because of it. Pathos, or the feeling of compassion, also did not cross Odysseus's mind when he was having affairs with Circe and Calypso. Clearly, he did not have compassion for his wife who had been awaiting his return for so long. If he did, he would have thought about his family back home before he laid down with the two women. Not only did he have an absence of empathy for his spouse, but his son also. Telemachus most likely woul not have approved of his father's infidelity. He would have wanted his father to be focused on getting home to him and nothing else. Secondly, Odysseus did not have mercy for Cyclops when he injured him with the weapon he and his men created. Had he cared, he would have thought about Cyclops's potential misery before the attack. He spent a substantial amount of time cogitating the scheme but did not consider his feelings in the process. However, Odysseus is not the only one who did not have sympathy for the giant. Along with Odysseus, his crew members contributed to assailing the cyclops. They aided Odysseus with making the weapon because he could not have done it on his own. Altogether, at that point in the epic, no one had compassion for Cyclops. The last demonstration of pathos was the event that took place at Odysseus's home on the night of his homecoming. Odysseus did not have compassion for the many men that died at his home that night. He should have thought about their families and the people that were close to them who would miss them when they were gone. At that moment Odysseus was in a selfish state of mind and only thinking about himself. Moreover, he brought his swineherd and his son into the murderings also and they may have not wanted to participate in what Odysseus ahd started.

Throughout the epic, Odysseus goes back and forth between logical and illogical. Collectively, his decisions were illogical. The first choice Odysseus made that was ilogical was cheating on his wife. He already had a good woman at home who did not give in to the suitors and stayed faithful to him. Plus, he was supposed to be on a journey that would return him to his wife. Instead, he made the wrong decision to cheat on her with women that could not compare to his wife.

The next judgement he made included the cyclops. It might have been a smart way of escaping from the monster’s cave but had he pondered the situation more carefully, he could have established a better plan that did not cause Cylcops harm. Considering he had more men with him at the time, they could have devised a better plan together. The only logical component of this part in the story was telling Cyclops that Odysseus’s name was “Nohbody” so he could not identify would assualted him. However, this does not cancel out the fact that their escape could have been carried out in a better way.

Lastly, it was very illogical for Odysseus to slay all those men at his place that night. He did not gain anything from their death that would have benefited him. Also, he would not have lost anything if he let the men live. The men who were at risk that night even made Odysseus a deal stating they would supply him with his needs and more if he spared them. In the end, Odysseus did not spare any and killed them all. The only thing that left Odysseus with was a mess to clean up. He easily could have let them go and celebrated being home once again.

Even though Odysseus did good things during his travels and tried to get his men back home safely, many of the things he did were unethical, selfish, and illogical. The main crimes he committed were adultery, assualt, and murder. He could have made it home safely if he did not cause harm to people along the way. However, he chose to go the opposite way. Odysseus can successfully be proved an adulterer, assualter, and murderer.

Citations

[www.my.hrw.com](http://www.my.hrw.com)

[www.cliffnotes.com](http://www.cliffnotes.com)

www.thesaurus.com