Spring 1-15-2003

ENG 3009G-003: Myth and Culture

Daiva Markelis
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2003

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2003/97

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2003 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2003 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
"We tell ourselves stories in order to live."
-- Joan Didion, The White Album

Purpose of the Course
The emphasis in this class will be on the persistence of myth. We will examine not only how similar stories manifest themselves in different cultures, but also how myths and their remnants are transformed over time to influence our ways of understanding the world today. In one section, for example, we will read Sophocles’ Oedipus the King, then move on to Freud’s interpretation of the myth in his formulation of the Oedipus Complex, then finish with a study of the film Minority Report. In addition to studying the major Greek myths, we will explore Eastern and Native American mythologies. By the end of the semester, I expect you to have a better understanding of how myths function in shaping communal and individual belief systems, including your own.

Books
Black Elk Speaks by John Neihardt
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
The Life of Milarepa, translated by Lhalungpa
The Odyssey by Homer, translated by Robert Fagles
Oedipus the King by Sophocles, translated by
Primal Myths: Creation Myths Around the World by Barbara Sproul
Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth, edited by Alan Dundes
Siddhartha by Herman Hesse

Requirements
1. Write three essays on various aspects of myth
2. Submit ten short typed responses to questions and/or readings (2-3 paragraphs)
3. Take four quizzes
4. Read the assigned material by the assigned date and participate in class discussions

Attendance
We need your input 100% of the time because absences disturb the work of the whole class. In addition, many of the ideas used in your papers will be generated in class discussions or in-class writing, which is why it is vital that you come to each class session. I realize, however, that emergencies do occur. The attendance policy for this class, based on a point system, should allow for these emergencies. You get 5 points for attending every class session. Five multiplied by 30, the number of classes, equals 150 points.
NOTE: It is your responsibility to contact me or a fellow student to find out what you’ve missed.

**Grade Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response papers (10 in all, 30 points each)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four quizzes (25 pts. Each)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance 5 pts. per day</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>901-1000</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801-900</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>701-800</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601-700</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-600</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation of Essays**
There will be particular criteria tailored to each assignment; we will discuss these in class. All final versions of written work must adhere to the conventions of Standard Written English, follow the format for papers outlined below, and have been carefully proofread.

**Format for Papers**
Type your assignments on standard-size paper. Double-space. NO extra spaces between paragraphs, please, and NO oversized fonts. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, type your name, your instructor's name, course, and date. In the upper right-hand corner of the following pages, type your last name/page number. Staple or paper-clip pages together.

**Response Papers**
Response papers will take the form of either answers to specific questions or the analysis of certain aspects of a work or passage. They should be short (2-3 paragraphs), typed (double-spaced is fine), and are due on the assigned dates. If circumstances prevent you from turning in a response paper during class, you may email it to as an attachment no later than 10PM that day. Late response papers will not be accepted.

**Plagiarism**
Here is the English Department policy on plagiarism:
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

**Writing Center**
The Writing Center, located in room 301 of Coleman Hall, gives you the opportunity to talk with a tutor about your writing, especially if you are having problems beginning a paper or know that you are weak in certain areas.
CLASS SCHEDULE

#1 T 01/14 Introductions/In-class writing
TH 01/16 “The Problem of Defining Myth” (p. 41) and “The Flexibility of Myth” (p. 217) in Sacred Narrative

#2 T 01/21 The Odyssey, Book 1 (RP #1 due)
TH 01/23 The Odyssey, Book 5, Book 8, pp. 191-199.

#3 T 01/28 The Odyssey, Books 9 and 10
TH 01/31 The Odyssey, Book 11 (RP #2 due)

#4 T 02/04 The Odyssey, Books 19 and 21
TH 02/06 The Odyssey, Books 22, 23, and 24

#5 T 02/11 James Joyce handout, Tennyson handout (RP #3 due)
TH 02/13 Quiz 1

#6 T 02/18 Oedipus the King
TH 02/20 Oedipus the King (RP #4 due)

#7 T 02/25 Oedipus the King
TH 02/27 Film, Essay #1 due

#8 T 03/04 Freud’s concept of the Oedipal complex (handout) (RP #5 due)
TH 03/06 Quiz 2

SPRING BREAK March 10 – March 14

#9 T 03/18 Siddhartha
TH 03/20 Siddhartha (RP #6 due)

#10 T 03/25 Siddhartha
TH 03/27 Excerpts from The Life of Milarepa (RP #7 due)

#11 T 04/01 Excerpts from The Life of Milarepa
TH 04/03 Excerpts from The Life of Milarepa (RP #8 due)

#12 T 04/08 Quiz 3, also, readings from Primal Myths
TH 04/10 Film, Essay #2 due

#13 T 04/15 Readings from Primal Myths
TH 04/17 Excerpts from Frankenstein (RP #9 due)

#14 T 04/22 Excerpts from Frankenstein
TH 04/24 Excerpts from Frankenstein (RP #10 due)
FINALS WEEK  Tuesday, May 6th -- Essay 3 due

I may make some minor changes to this syllabus in order to better accommodate your needs. Any changes will always be announced in advance.

“Myths are the daydreaming of the human race.”
--Sigmund Freud