Fall 8-15-1997

ENG 3009-001-004: Myth and Culture

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Course Description.

Myth and Culture is an introduction to comparative mythology. This course will expose you to a range of texts, reflecting diverse ways in which human beings have understood themselves and their relation to the cosmos and to each other. We will approach these texts from a number of perspectives—structuralist, historical, and literary-critical among them—as we attempt to define what makes each distinctive and how each contributes to the underlying unity (if there is one) of the human imagination.

Texts.

Buck, The Mahabharata.
Chatwin, The Songlines.
Easwaran, The Bhagavad Gita.
Fitzgerald, The Odyssey of Homer.
Humphries, Ovid: The Metamorphoses.
Lhalungpa, The Life of Milarepa.
Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks.
The New English Bible.
Powers, Yuwipi.
Rahula, What the Buddha Taught.
Richards, The Iliad of Homer.
Sanderson, The Epic of Gilgamesh.
Schneider, Street Zen.
Zolbrod, Dine Bahane.

Packet of photocopies.

Requirements and Evaluation.

Regular attendance and participation. (You will be allowed 2 absences. I will lower your final grade by one letter for each unexcused absence thereafter.)

Weekly response-papers and quizzes (25% of grade).

Midterm and final examinations (50% of grade).

7-page final paper on an approved topic (25% of grade).

You must complete all course requirements punctually to receive a passing grade in the course.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Schedule.

August 25-29, Preliminaries, Black Elk Speaks.
September 3-5, Ponting, from A Green History of the World.* Yuwipi.
Sept. 8-12, Dine Bahane, Kluchohn, The Navaho.*
Sept. 15-19, The Songlines, Shuster, Spencer and Ryan.*
Sept. 22-26, Gilgamesh.
Sept. 29-Oct. 3, Genesis.
Oct. 6-10, The Iliad.
Oct 13-17, Midterm examination, conferences.
Oct. 20-24, Ovid, Screening and discussion of Black Orpheus.
November 3-7, Mahabharata, Screening and discussion of The Mahabharata.
Nov. 10-14, Mahabharata, cont'd, Bhagavad Gita.
November 17, Final paper topic due.
Nov. 17-21, What the Buddha Taught.
Nov. 24-28, Thanksgiving Break.
December 1-5, Milarepa.
December 8-12, Street Zen, Shuster.*
Dec. 12, Final paper due.

* Photocopied reading(s).