

TUTORIAL 100.15
The Hero's Journey
Fall, 2003

Dennis Hughes
ARH 311A; tel. x3056
email: hughes@grinnell.edu
Office hours: MW 11-12; TTh 2-3,
and by appointment

Course Description:

This will be a course in comparative heroic poetry. Through exercises in writing, spoken presentation, and discussion we shall study and analyze various aspects of five epic poems, in particular the portrayals of the hero(in)es and conceptions of the heroic in four (very) different cultures. Among topics to be addressed are the narrative patterns of quest and journey (spatial and spiritual), the role of religion and the divine, the role of women, and the diverse cultural value systems reflected in the poems. Particular attention will be paid to the organization of papers and the effective expression of ideas in writing.

Required Texts:

Beowulf. A New Verse Translation, trans. S. Heaney (New York, 2000).
The Epic of Gilgamesh, trans M. Gallery Kovacs (Stanford, 1989).
Homer, Iliad, trans. S. Lombardo (Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1997).
Homer, Odyssey, trans. R. Fagles (New York, 1996).
Virgil, The Aeneid, trans. R. Fitzgerald (New York, 1984).

On Reserve in Burling Library:*

K. Atchity, R. Hogart, and D. Price, eds, Critical Essays on Homer (Boston, 1987).
J. Griffin, Homer on Life and Death (Oxford, 1980).
S. Schein, The Mortal Hero (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1984)
T. Van Nortwick, Somewhere I Have Never Travelled. The Second Self and the Hero's Journey in Ancient Epic (New York, 1992)

*Several additions will be made to the reserve shelf over the course of the semester.

Provisional Course Outline (subject to adjustment and reordering):

WEEK

1	AUG. 28	Introduction
2	SEPT. 2/4	Iliad
3	SEPT. 9/11	Iliad; library presentation: Rebecca Stuhr (Tues.)
4	SEPT. 16/18	Iliad
5	SEPT. 23/25	Iliad; library presentation: Rebecca Stuhr (Tues.)
6	SEPT. 30/OCT. 2	Iliad; Gilgamesh
7	OCT. 7/9	Gilgamesh
8	OCT. 14/16	Odyssey

9	OCT. 28/30	Odyssey
10	NOV. 4/6	Odyssey
11	NOV. 11/13	Beowulf; preregistration
12	NOV. 18/20	Beowulf; Aeneid; preregistration
13	NOV. 25	Aeneid
14	DEC. 2/4	Aeneid
15	DEC. 9/11	Aeneid

Assignments:

The reading assignments will be largely in the primary texts (in translation), though there will be some assignments in secondary scholarship (articles or chapters of books). There will be at least four papers, with some additional short written assignments (such as outlines), and one or two formal oral presentations, in addition to several other oral assignments (e.g., leading class discussion, reading the poems aloud). At least one paper will be revised, and any paper deemed unsatisfactory by the instructor will have to be rewritten with significant improvements; and all students will be encouraged to make use of the Writing Lab at least once during the semester. There will be no research paper; rather, the essays will involve your own responses to and interpretations of the texts.

Class and Attendance:

A significant portion of your grade will be based on your participation in class discussions: you are therefore expected to attend every class session and to arrive on time—and alert and with something to say. Each avoidable absence (i.e. without a valid and verifiable excuse) will result in a 5% diminution of the final grade.

Tests and Grade:

I am thinking of having a midterm (if only as a "practice test"; date to be announced). But if attendance, preparation, and participation in class are good, we may forego the final exam (scheduled for 2:00 pm, Tuesday, Dec. 16). Your grade will be based on the quality of your papers, your spoken presentations, your attendance and participation in discussions, and (possibly) exams. **N.B.** The minimum requirement for credit is the completion of all assignments.