

English 215
Thursdays 1600-1845
Fall 2010
Professor Nancy P. Stork
Office Hours: T 800-900, R 1230-1330, 1500-1600 and by appointment
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Because the field of mythology and symbolism is so vast, we will limit ourselves to texts in the Western tradition, broadly defined (Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, Roman, Norse, Anglo-Saxon, Celtic). Our main themes are Creation, Angels and Eros. I have selected critical readings to represent major 20th-c. schools of thought on mythology.

Please come to class having read both the assigned texts and the critic for that day. I will present Birenbaum's and Frazier's theories in class, but the other critics will be assigned to two students each. One student will be responsible for presenting the critic's argument and the other for presenting objections to this argument. Each student should prepare a brief, one page handout outlining the major ideas or objections. With this approach, I hope to stimulate a lively debate over varying approaches to the criticism of mythology.

Our final class will consist of brief presentations of your final paper topics. Though these will last no more than 10 minutes, they should be of the quality of a paper presented at an academic conference, i.e. with attention to textual evidence and previous scholarship supporting your thesis.

Grading:

Oral report on 20th-century critic	20%
Final presentation	20%
Class participation	20%
Final Paper	40%

Texts:

Tatar, Maria, ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*, Norton Critical Editions
Lewis, C. S. *Till We Have Faces* (any edition is fine)

Schedule of Readings:

- August 26 Creation Stories Genesis. John (other Gospel openings).
Critic: Birenbaum (texts supplied in class)
- Sept 2 Creation Stories: Gnostic Gospels (Nag Hammadi Library):
On the Origin of the World, The Thunder Perfect Mind
(www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhlalpha.html)
Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book One
(etext.virginia.edu/latin/ovid/trans/Ovhome.htm)
Critic: Frazier, *Golden Bough*

- Sept 9 Creation: Finish Ovid as needed. Hildegard, Montaigne, Aldhelm, Voluspá (handout)
Critic: Malinowski
- Sept 16 Angels: Gregory the Great (handout)
Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book VII (any edition is fine)
Critic: Eliade
- Sept 23 Eros: Song of Songs (any translation is fine) and Egyptian Love Songs
www.humanistictexts.org/egyptlov.htm
Critic: Campbell
- Sept 30 Red Riding Hood: Readings and Criticism from Norton Critical Edition
- Oct 7 Beauty and the Beast: Readings from Norton
Critic: Turner
- Oct 14 Snow White: Readings from Norton
Critic: Tolkien
- Oct 21 Bluebeard: Readings from Norton
Critic: Frye
- Oct 28 *Wife of Bath's Tale* (www.librarius.com/canttran/wftltrfs.htm)
Tam Lin (tam-lin.org)
Critic: Geertz
- Nov 4 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*, Adlington, Translator
(www.sacredtexts.com/cla/cap/index.htm.)
Critic: Levi-Strauss
- Nov 11 Veteran's Day - no class
- Nov 18 *Till We Have Faces*
Critic: Barthes
- Nov 25 Thanksgiving - no class
- Dec 2 *Till We Have Faces* (finish if needed)
Begin student presentations
- Dec 9 Student presentations

Papers Due: Friday, December 17, by NOON