

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:	
HHU 2202 Electr(a)fying Passions: the Transformations of the Electra Myth from Antiquity to Contemporary Culture Same as HHS 2202 (Honors Seminar) Spring 2013	
US CREDITS: 3/0/3	
PREREQUISITES:	WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing and Ethics
CATALOG DESCRIPTION:	<p>An interdisciplinary course focusing on the ancient myth of Electra and its transformations from antiquity to contemporary culture, combining textual analysis of ancient and modern texts, study of contemporary performance traditions and of filmic, musical, and popular representations of the myth in 20th century culture. The course offers students the opportunity to visit selected ancient sites in and around Athens (Ancient Theatre of Dionysus, Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, Mycenae, Ancient Theatre of Argos, Ancient Corinth). It will appeal to students of theatre, music, classics, ancient history and cultural studies, since it examines the theme of Electra from different points of view and reaches theoretical and practical conclusions applicable to many different disciplines.</p> <p><i>This course fulfils either the General Education Humanities or Social Science requirement.</i></p>
RATIONALE:	<p>The myth of Electra is probably one of the best known and important narratives from ancient Greek mythology, and one of the ancient dramatists' favourite storylines, probably due to the recurring motifs of violence, obsession, and revenge. Starting off with a thorough examination of the three surviving ancient tragedies featuring Electra, the course will investigate the early formations and gradual transformations of the character in antiquity. Apart from the textual analysis of the specific tragedies, the course will address the tradition of ancient Greek drama as a whole, and present specific case studies of contemporary performances that offer unique visions and interpretations both of the myth and of the genre. The course will move on to study the re-birth of the Electra myth in modern culture in the contexts of psychoanalysis and literature, but also in film, music theatre, and pop culture.</p>
LEARNING OUTCOMES:	<p>Upon completion of the course, students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in depth with a variety of material, ranging from ancient Greek tragedy to film and comic books.

	<p>Creative project 40% The creative project for this course consists of two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual travelogue each student keeps during the visit to the archaeological sites. The travelogue needs to include responses to the visit to the specific sites, personal impressions and contemporary visions of space and location, connecting threads between the myth of Electra and the sites, as well as personal recollections of the experience as a whole. The portfolio can be submitted either as a hard copy or as a web-based archive, e.g. blog, website etc and can include a variety of media (texts, sound, music, video, photography etc.). • A presentation of the individual or group projects focused on the myth of Electra. Students need to present a project (individually or in a group) that converses with the myth of Electra in daring, new ways. The project can be a performance, a poem, photography, art, video, music, sound, multimedia etc. The projects will be presented in the Creative Project Week throughout the campus, organized exclusively by the students, creating in this way a multiple, site-specific artwork for the entire community of the college. <p>Participation 20% Each student will be evaluated according to his/her contribution in the class, the preparation of the material and his/her critical ability. Furthermore, each student will be assessed in regards to his/her participation in group activities and discussions that will arise throughout the course.</p>
<p>READING LIST:</p>	<p>Required Material: Aeschylus, <i>The Oresteia</i>, trans. Robert Fagles, Viking Press, New York, 1975. Euripides, <i>Electra</i>, trans. James Morwood, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998. O'Neill, E., <i>Mourning Becomes Electra in Three Plays of Eugene O'Neill</i>, Viking Press, New York, 1958. Sophocles, <i>Electra</i>, trans. Frank McGuinness, Faber and Faber, London, 1997.</p> <p>Films</p>

	<p>Angelopoulos, T., <i>The Travelling Players</i> (1975) Nichols, D., <i>Mourning Becomes Electra</i> (1947)</p> <p>Opera – Music Theatre Strauss, R., <i>Elektra</i> (1909) Xenakis, I., <i>The Oresteia</i> (1966)</p> <p>Comic Books Miller, F., <i>Daredevil : Visionaries</i>, Marvel Comics (2000) Miller, F., <i>Elektra Assassin</i>, Marvel Comics (1986)</p>
<p>RECOMMENDED MATERIAL:</p>	<p>Bennet, S., <i>Tragic Drama and the Family: psychoanalytic studies from Aeschylus to Beckett</i>, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1998.</p> <p>Black, S., <i>Eugene O'Neill: Beyond Mourning and Tragedy</i>, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1999.</p> <p>Bois, M., <i>Iannis Xenakis: The Man and his Music</i>, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1980.</p> <p>Budelmann, F., <i>The Language of Sophocles: Communal, Communication and Involvement</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000.</p> <p>Gilliam, B., <i>Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and his Work</i>, Duke University Press, Durham, 1992.</p> <p>Goldhill, S. and Osborne, R., <i>Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.</p> <p>Goldhill, S., <i>Aeschylus: The Oresteia</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004.</p> <p>Griffin, J. (ed.), <i>Sophocles Revisited</i>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.</p> <p>Horton, A. (ed.), <i>The Last Modernist: The Films of Theo Angelopoulos</i>, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1997.</p> <p>Horton, A., <i>The Films of Theo Angelopoulos: A Cinema of Contemplation</i>, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1997.</p> <p>Kennedy, M., <i>Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.</p> <p>Kerrigan, J., <i>Revenge Tragedy: Aeschylus to Armageddon</i>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996.</p> <p>Lebeck, A., <i>The Oresteia: A Study in Language and Structure</i>, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA), 1971.</p> <p>Mackinnon, K., <i>Greek Tragedy Into Film</i>, Croom Helm, London, 1986.</p> <p>Mark, R., <i>Electra and the Empty Urn: Metatheatre and Role Playing in Sophocles</i>, University of North Carolina Press,</p>

	<p>Chapel Hill, 1998.</p> <p>Miliora, M. T., <i>Narcissism, the Family and Madness: A Self-Psychological Study of Eugene O'Neill and his Plays</i>, P. Lang, New York, 2000.</p> <p>Murray, G., <i>Aeschylus: The Creator of Tragedy</i>, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964.</p> <p>Powell, A., <i>Euripides, Women and Sexuality</i>, Routledge, London, 1990.</p> <p>Puffet, D., <i>Richard Strauss: Elektra</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989.</p> <p>Steele, R., <i>Freud and Jung: Conflicts of Interpretations</i>, Routledge, London, 1982.</p> <p>Sullivan, S. D., <i>Euripides' Use of Psychological Terminology</i>, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2000.</p> <p>Wiles, D., <i>Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000.</p> <p>Wiles, D., <i>Tragedy in Athens: Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning</i>, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997.</p> <p>Wohl, V., <i>Intimate Commerce: Exchange, Gender and Subjectivity in Greek Tragedy</i>, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1998.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</p>	<p>With the exception of in-class activities, all written work must be word-processed on Word and adhere to MLA guidelines for manuscript format and documentation.</p>
<p>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</p>	<p>Microsoft Office, Microsoft Powerpoint</p>
<p>WWW RESOURCES:</p>	<p>The course will use a number of on-line materials which will be available to the students on Blackboard. Indicative www resources:</p> <p>http://academic.reed.edu/humanities/110tech/theater.html</p> <p>http://lacan.org/mourning-queshi</p>
<p>INDICATIVE CONTENT:</p>	<p>The course will examine a variety of topics directly or indirectly linked to the myth of Electra as presented in ancient Greek theatre and as transformed in modern and contemporary culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formations and transformations of the Electra myth

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The aesthetics and performance traditions of ancient Greek drama• Ancient Greek drama, myth, and the issue of character• The myth of Electra in various media• Electra and contemporary culture
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Course Outline

<p>WEEK 1</p>	<p>The Electra theme: an introduction to myth and theatre An overview of the birth and development of Greek drama, revenge tragedy; introduction to the myth of Electra</p>
<p>WEEK 2</p>	<p>Aeschylus: <i>The Libation Bearers (Choephoroi)</i> A detailed analysis of the second part of the <i>Oresteia</i>, the only surviving trilogy from antiquity, and an examination of the formation of the Electra character</p>
<p>WEEK 3</p>	<p>Sophocles: <i>Electra</i> A study of Sophocles' interpretation of the Electra myth, with specific emphasis on psychology, language, and temporality Conference with instructor</p>
<p>WEEK 4</p>	<p>Euripides: <i>Electra</i> An approach to Euripides' play through the prism of violence</p>
<p>WEEK 5</p>	<p>Ancient tragedy / Modern Stages Comparative presentation of key contemporary stage interpretations of Greek tragedy</p>
<p>WEEK 6</p>	<p>Electra on the couch: myth, psychoanalysis and the Freud Vs Jung controversy An introduction to the influence of ancient Greek mythology in psychoanalytic thinking and an examination of the concept of the <i>Electra complex</i> Outline of Critical Essay due</p>
<p>WEEK 7</p>	<p>Hysteria, modernism and opera: The Strauss/Hoffmanstahl <i>Elektra</i> A study of one of the most important transformations of the Electra myth in the 20th century Group meeting about creative project presentation</p>
<p>WEEK 8</p>	<p>Eugene O'Neill and <i>Mourning Becomes Electra</i> An examination of O'Neill's adaptation of the <i>Oresteia</i> into a unique psycho-drama and of its film adaptation by Dudley Nichols (1947)</p>
<p>WEEK 9</p>	<p>Celluloid Electra: <i>The Travelling Players</i> by Theo Angelopoulos and the question of history An analysis of Angelopoulos monumental adaptation of the Greek myth, and of the correlation between ancient myth and contemporary history</p>

<p>WEEK 10</p>	<p>Experimenting with the Ancients: <i>The Oresteia</i> by Iannis Xenakis An overview of the influence of Greek myth in contemporary experimental art, with specific emphasis on Xenakis' unique musical vision of the <i>Oresteia</i></p> <p>Individual travelogue due</p>
<p>WEEK 11</p>	<p>Electra as Assassin: Marvel Comics, the birth and death of a heroine A study of Electra's resurrection as a ninja assassin in the world of comics</p> <p>Critical essay due</p>
<p>WEEK 12</p>	<p>Creative Project Week A week dedicated to the work of students, during which the students will present their creative project in a multi-faceted event open to the whole college.</p>