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Mythology and the Movies, Vol. 1

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WHAT IS MYTHOLOGY AND THE MOVIES?

Myths are powerful symbolic stories that shape how we understand, feel about, and act upon the world around us. They have been important throughout time and across all cultures. Traditional myths contain accounts of supernatural events and experiences, and the traditional mythological subjects of creations, hero quests, and gods and monsters are found in most of the non-Western, non-industrial cultures that anthropologists usually study. But we can also see similar tales in our own contemporary American culture, especially through the popular movies that have become so much a part of our daily lives. This cross-cultural occurrence of mythic themes is a major concern of this class.

This course looks at mainstream Hollywood movies as a form of mythology that people use to interpret, organize, react to, and make sense of the world around them. It applies theories from anthropology and mythology as well as analyzes the incorporation of movie mythology into everyday life through fan culture, merchandise, advertising, spoofs, and related media. It also considers the concept of “participatory culture,” the idea that popular culture invites active participation in these narratives rather than just a passive reception of them.
INTRODUCTION: THE ASSIGNMENT

Students in the Fall 2009 University of Pennsylvania course "Mythology and the Movies" (Anthropology 160 and Cinema Studies 106) were required to produce a comic book as part of their exploration of the fan cultures associated with the Harry Potter world and the phenomenon of Twilight.

Their instructions were to choose either Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (Year 5 book and movie) or Twilight (first book and movie) and to use both the book and the movie in their project.

Next they had to pick only one of the mythological themes that we were analyzing in class: chaos and order, the quest, fertility, origins, creation, the "other," time, metamorphosis, or difference. Using the characters, storylines, dialogue, settings, and visuals from their movie/book choice, they had to write and illustrate an original myth. The myth had to demonstrate the mythological theme they had chosen.

The comic book had to be only 4 pages long and had to be produced in the program "Comic Life" (plasq.com) which was available in the campus computer labs or as a free 30 day download. A set of templates was provided so that production choices were simplified.
Volume 1

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Title: How Stubby Got His Groove Back...
Theme: Quest

Author: Carol Xu
Title: Treelight
Theme: Metamorphosis

Author: Jason Wald
Title: Luna Lovegood Hits the Dating Scene
Theme: Quest

Author: Olivia Witte
Title: Rosalie’s Appetite for Humanity
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How Stubby Got His Groove Back

By: Jasmine Lee

Harry

As your Godfather it is my duty to tell you a deep dark secret of mine...

In the 1980s I used to go by the name Stubby Boardman in the band, The Hob Goblins
OH THOSE WERE THE GOOD DAYS... UNTIL SOMEONE THREW A TURNIP AT US AT ONE OF OUR CONCERTS!

THE BAND WAS NEVER THE SAME EVER SINCE AND WE SPLIT UP... I HAVEN'T PLAYED GUITAR FOR OVER 20 YEARS!

I'LL HELP YOU SIRIUS!

...BUT WHERE DO WE FIND THIS GUITAR?

NOW HOGWARTS HAS INVITED ME TO HOST A COMEBACK CONCERT...

AND I NEED TO FIND THE MAGICAL GUITAR SO THAT I CAN REGAIN MY FORMER GLORY!

OH WHAT WOULD YOU TWO DO WITHOUT ME...

IT'S HIDDEN IN THE MINISTRY OF MAGIC! DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING?

WE MUST GO TONIGHT HARRY! BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

THE CONCERT IS TOMORROW!

I SHALL BE STUBBY ONCE MORE!
CRACK!

BLOODY HELL SIRIUS! YOU COULD HAVE AT LEAST WARNED ME THAT WE WERE APPARATING!

SORRY HARRY! BUT THAT GUITAR IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO ME RIGHT NOW! LET’S GO!

CRASH!

WHAT WAS THAT?

SOME ONE IS TRYING TO TAKE THE GUITAR! IT’S VOLDEMORT!

ACCIO GUITAR!

YES IT IS MINE! HAHA I BEAT YOU STUBBY!

I SHOULD’VE TOLD YOU HARRY... VOLDEMORT USE TO BE ONE OF MY BAND MATES...

..SO HE’S TRYING TO BEAT YOU TO GETTING THE GUITAR!

THAT GUITAR IS MINE! I WILL NOT LET YOU OVERTAKE ME AGAIN!

EXPPELLIARMUS! ACCIO GUITAR!

ZOOM!

HUH? NOOOOOO!
Quick Harry! We have to get back to Hogwarts. The concert starts in 10 minutes! Hang on!

Meanwhile... Students at Hogwarts were awaiting Stubby's great return.

Suddenly, fireworks could be heard in the hallway.

I'm back! Ready to rock and roll??!!!

Then Stubby appeared!!

During the concert...

Amazing!

Whooooo!

Stubby's definitely back!

Look it's Stubby! He's back!

And that is how Stubby got his groove back.
SOMETHING DEEP IN THE FORESTS OF FORKS, WA...

EDWARD, WHAT...?

I'M SORRY BELLA, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER IN OUR RELATIONSHIP.

DO YOU TRUST ME?

YES.

BELLA, MY FAMILY AND I...WE'RE NOT LIKE OTHERS.

WE'RE NOT HUMAN.
NOT...

NO, WE'RE DESCENDED FROM...

SPIDER MONKEYS.

BUT YOU LOOK HUMAN TO ME...

MY PEOPLE HAVE MANAGED TO IMITATE HUMAN FORM.

IT'S ALL AN ILLUSION.

WE ALMOST BLEND IN EXCEPT FOR ONE FACT:

WHEN WE REACH ADULTHOOD, WE DEVELOP AN IRRESISTIBLE URGE TO CLIMB TALL TREES.

THIS MARKS OUR TRANSFORMATION INTO OUR TRUE SPIDER MONKEY SELVES.

AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO CHANGE.
I'm sorry I couldn't tell you earlier.

Because you smell like bananas.

I was so scared of losing you.

It was love at first scent.

But why me?

I wouldn't never want to hurt you, Bella.

I'll only ask you this once:

But I can't stop my transformation either. So I'm going to let you make your own choice.

Will you come with me?

I fell in love with you, Edward.

All of you.
YOU DIDN'T JUDGE WHO I AM, I WON'T JUDGE YOU, EITHER.

PLEASE TAKE ME WITH YOU.

HOLD ON TIGHT THEN.

PLUS, IT'D BE KIND OF COOL TO LIVE IN A TREEHOUSE. THE VIEW MUST BE INCREDIBLE.

AND OUR KIDS WOULD NEVER HAVE TO TAKE THE SCHOOLBUS.

ARE YOU AFRAID?

NO, I'VE DATED WEBRDER GUYS.

OF COURSE NOT. WE'RE NOT VAMPIRES OR WEREWOLVES, YOU KNOW.

THANK YOU FOR ACCEPTING MY NEW LIFE, BELLA.

SO... CAN YOU TURN ME INTO A SPIDER MONKEY, TOO?

CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW AWKWARD IT WOULD BE IF WE WERE?
I know I'm a little spacey...

...but even I can't miss the growing romances amongst my classmates.
I've realized; I'm lonely and I long for a connection.

HARRY, I feel lonely. How do I find a boyfriend?

Oh! Um, I guess just put yourself out there and try dating? You're a great girl Luna and I'm sure you'll find a boy quickly... maybe don't talk about Nargles so much though.

Erm... I didn't mean me. Please let go.

Oops. Thought I was getting a sign. Sorry.

So after my initial flub I took Harry's advice. This proved more difficult than anticipated.
I tried a boy from the da...

...thought maybe we could study together after practice one night?

Hehehehe!

(shut up neville!) sorry loony, but I'm just not into you like that.

...but he lacked a certain...maturity.

Ms lovegood, I am most definitely not your type.

...but I must've been missing something because he was not receptive.

Professor dumbledore seemed older and more mature...

Would you care to care to grab a butterbeer some time headmaster?

...and definitely overshoot that goal...

I love your mask, it's so cute!

In desperation I went cliche and sought out a "bad boy"...
But my persistence finally paid off.

Luna, are you talking to that Thestral?

Of course not. I was talking to my new boyfriend Dave. He's invisible.

...And over the holiday we can visit the Quibbler offices. You'll love it!

She's crazy!

Harry, meet Dave, the boy who makes me the happiest girl in the world! He's awful shy Harry, sorry about that.

...Right. Well see you Luna...Dave

Bye!

That's alright. Shall we go to dinner?

I'm sorry luv, you know how I get tongue tied.

The end.
Rosalie's appetite for humanity

By: Olivia Witte

Baby, what's wrong?

You know it's not that I don't like Bella. To be honest, I'm just jealous of the way she is...

I know, hun.

You know what I need? A break from vampires...something human...
I've decided to enter the hot dog eating contest!

Haha... what?

You do realize we don't eat?

Yes, I need this. I'm going to do it.

Baby, are you sure about this?

I'll show them I can be just as human...
THE DAY OF THE CONTEST...

ROSALE CULLEN IN THE LEAD!

WHERE IN GOD'S NAME IS ALL OF THAT GOING?!

I'VE NEVER SEEN A GIRL HER SIZE EAT LIKE THAT!

WE HAVE A WINNER!!

CONGRATULATIONS ROSALIE!

IT COULDN'T BE HUMANLY POSSIBLE FOR SOMEONE LIKE HER TO CONSUME THAT MUCH.
DID YOU HEAR??

ROSALIE, CALM DOWN. WHAT HAPPENED?

THEY'RE SAYING I CHEATED!!

I'M SO SORRY ROSALIE. YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THOUGH... IT WAS A STRETCH...

WHAT WAS I EVEN THINKING? I KNOW I CAN'T BE LIKE THEM.

BESIDES, I'M HAPPIEST RIGHT HERE.

BELLA SHOULD BE JEALOUS....
The Change In Neville

BY: KEITH RUSH

In the summer before his fifth year, Neville Longbottom was involved in a terrible accident...

He was near a nuclear meltdown while out collecting samples. This turned the unassuming Neville into a...
Superstrong incredible Neville!!

He returned to school with his secret still intact.

Let’s see Snape mess with me now...

But it could not remain so for long.

As soon as he was angered by classmates...

He began to transform!!!

They would soon regret treating him badly...
NEVILLE WRECKED HAVOC ON THE SCHOOL

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?

DUNNO... I'M HUNGRY

BUT ONLY HIS TRUE FRIENDS WERE CONCERNED FOR HIM

YOU'RE A STAIN ON THIS SCHOOL!!!

WHERE THEY TRIED TO TEACH HIM SELF-CONTROL

DUCK! ITS NEVILLE!

AFTER WORD GOT OUT THAT HE HAD SENT HALF OF SLYTHERIN HOUSE TO THE HOSPITAL WING, SOME LOVED HIM, SOME FEARED HIM...

THEY BROUGHT HIM TO AN EMPTY CLASSROOM

R R R R R R R R R R R

OAAAAAAAAAA

SMASH

IT FAILED SPECTACULARLY... AT FIRST
In true Gryffindor fashion, they kept working.

And he got better and better...

I can do it!!!

Bellatrix Lestrange!!!

Nice job Longbottom...

Until he could finally control himself, once and for all.

Now the entire school respected him... even Snape.

Yes!

He had gained the self-confidence to step into his families' legacy.

And of course it didn't hurt with the ladies either...
Dawn of the Gleeful

A young girl's wish to fit in...

By: Andrea Serrano

Phoenix is so sunny and warm, and Forks is so... not!

I don't want to move to middle of nowhere, USA!

Too bad! I want to enjoy life with my new hubby, so, you're out of here!
AND IT'S OFF TO FORKS!

JUST SO YOU KNOW, I PLAN ON HATING IT HERE, AND BROODING INTENSELY

WELL YOU BETTER FIND SOME WAY TO FIT IN, 'CAUSE I'M NOT DEALING WITH A MOODY TEENAGER!!

FINE, BUT I'M ONLY DOING THIS SO MOM CAN LIVE A FRIVOLOUS LIFE!

OK, WHATEVER...

WELL GET SOME REST KIDDO, SCHOOL TOMORROW.

GREAT, SCHOOL. ONE MORE THING TO BROOD ABOUT

GREAT, I'M LOST!

WHAT A NOOB.

HEY! YOU MUST BE THE NEW KID! I'M ERIC!
You're going to love it here! How do you know that?

Because everyone loves it here! Now run along to gym class!

Hi! I'm Jessica! You should meet my friend Mike!

Are all you guys always so cheerful?

Brrrrring!!

You bet! Say, you should join our Glee club!

That's a great idea!!

Oops! Let's talk this over at lunch!

Hahaha! You're so funny! He meant "Glee", as in "happy".

Ok, but I'm not a very good singer...
ANGELA, BELLA’S GOING TO JOIN OUR GLEE CLUB!

SO WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO JOIN??

ALL YOU NEED IS A SUNNY DISPOSITION!

THAT’S NOT SO BAD!

WHO ARE THEY?

LOOKS LIKE THE GLEE'S HAVE A NEW VICTIM. SHE SMELLED BETTER AS A BROODER.

MMM HUMANS...

BROODERS, THEY’LL SUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU!

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

SO, HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY?

GREAT! I JOINED THE GLEE CLUB! I LOVE FORKS!
Bella Does Not Taste Like Dinner

BY: KRISTEN AIGELDINGER
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS OFFER ME APPLES?

AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY, RIGHT?

SO DOES BEING A VAMPIRE.

Bella...

FINE. YOU EAT THE APPLE THEN.

WHAT, ARE YOU AFRAID OF A BIT OF FOOD?

NO, BUT WHAT'S THE POINT?

YOU KNOW FOOD TASTES LIKE DIRT TO ME.

MAYBE IT'LL BE GOOD FOR YOU TOO SOMEHOW.
APPLES HAVE DONE ALL KINDS OF THINGS.

YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?

MAYBE THEY DO SOMETHING FOR VAMPIRES.

EVE ATE THE APPLE...

ALL BUT THE LAST OF THOSE THINGS ARE BAD BELLA.

ERIS STARTED THE TROJAN WAR WITH AN APPLE...

THEY KEEP PEOPLE HEALTHY...

BUT POWERFUL. TRY IT.

FINE. BUT ONLY FOR YOU.

YOU'RE...

WARM.
HUMAN... BUT I WAS KIDDING ABOUT THE MYTHS THING.

WELL APPARENTLY YOU WERE RIGHT.

YOU KNOW, YOU AREN'T NEARLY AS ATTRACTIVE NOW.

WHY THANKS.

OR GRACEFUL.

I'VE NOTICED. MY FEET ACTUALLY FEEL HEAVY.

CAN YOU READ ANYONE'S MIND?

NO.

DO I SMELL LIKE YOUR DINNER?

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'VE WAITED

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?

WHAT?

LET'S GO...
Harry, we're glad to have you back, but I'm afraid we have a bit of a problem...

Feed me.

Problem? What kind of problem?

Well, Harry, you see...

It's my mum.

I'm serious about this feeding thing.
FILTH! SCUM! HALF-BREEDS! BLOOD TRAITOR! ETC! ETC!

SHE'S JUST CRABBY BECAUSE IT'S BEEN NEARLY HALF A CENTURY SINCE SHE'S HAD HER FIGGY PUDDING.

I'M NOT TERRIBLY FOND OF YOU!

MOM, IF I BROUGHT YOU YOUR DAMN FIGGY PUDDING, WOULD YOU KINDLY SHUT UP FOR ANOTHER FIFTY YEARS?

IT'D BETTER BE AN EXCEPTIONAL FIGGY. I EXPECT CREAMINESS AND DELICIOSITY!
ONE HOUR LATER...

SIRIUS, ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHERE THE FIGGY PUDDING IS HIDDEN?

OF COURSE I AM! AT LEAST, I THINK I LEFT IT AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE...

HONESTLY, I MEAN, I'M A REASONABLY GOOD BAKER, WE SHOULD JUST GO BACK AND--

AHEM!

LOOKING FOR THIS, POTTER?

LUCIUS!

I HAVE WHAT YOU WANT, AND I'M GOING TO STAND HERE MENACINGLY AND GLOAT ABOUT IT FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS BEFORE BEING INTERRUPTED BY--

CURSES!

EXPPELLIFICIUS!
NO!!!

I'll just go ahead and leave now...

It's okay, Harry...

Leaving...

See you guys

It wasn't?

The pudding was never the important part in the first place.

I'm very goal-oriented, I have a hard time determining these things.

It's the quest that matters. Learning who your friends are, who your enemies are, the excitement of escaping the everyday--

But... your mum...

Will make excellent firewood this winter

Haahahaaha!

The end
Late at night, during a D.A. meeting deep within the Room of Requirement at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry...

Ermm... so I was thinking... you guys have learned enough to try some first-hand experience...

Oy Harry, we've got just the thing!

Death Eaters?

Um... no...

Latest from the Weasleys! Bewitched Muggle inventions!
Yeah, Hermione! Stop being such a mom!

I dunno... This already sounds dangerous...

Oh stop being such a prefect...

They're just some stupid Muggle toys.

GOT 'EM ALL RIGHT IN HERE

*RATTLE*

BOOM

CLUNK

CLINK

A toaster!

What's a *dofer*?

No you *doofus*, a toaster is a Muggle contraption to warm toast!

Stop arguing! Something's happening!

Stupefy!

OW! Is this supposed to be happening?

It's a Snorkle-back horn!
IT'S A FAN!

WHATCHU TALKIN' ABOUT? I AM NOT A FAN OF THAT!

NO, YOU DIMWIT, A FAN IS A MUGGLE...

WE'VE GOT TO STOP THIS TORNADO!

LET ME GET THIS... STUPEFY! STUPEFY!

HARRY, STOP TALKING IN CODE!

NOW THERE'S A VACUUM CLEANER!

RON, STOP USING STUNNING SPELLS, YOU'RE MAKING IT WORSE!

I'VE GOT IT! AQUAMEN...

NOOOOO!!
RON, YOU COULD HAVE JUST KILLED US ALL!

WATER DOESN'T MIX WELL WITH ELECTRICITY! AND DON'T CALL MUGGLES STUPID!

WHAT'S "ELEFISIBEE"?

KILL? I'M THE ONE WHO'S TRYING TO SAVE EVERYONE FROM THESE STUPID MUGGLE...

STOP ARGUING! I'VE GOT IT!

WOAH HARRY, HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

RON, WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO REALIZE THAT YOU CAN'T USE MAGIC TO CONTROL EVERYTHING?

...OOPS

YEAH... MY BAD.
Harry Potter and the Order of Chaos

BY: LILI VALENTINE

FROM THE STRENGTH OF A SERPENT...

AND THE BLOOD OF A SERVANT...
THE DARK LORD'S CREATION IS COMPLETE!

YOU MUST STEAL THE ORBUS CONTROLLUS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MYSTERIES

NO!!

Voldemort's seeking to increase his power

A demoness has been wreaking havoc in London!

You can not control me!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN SHE REFUSED?!

WE'LL GO OURSELVES...

...WE NEED THE ORB TO CONTROL THE CHAOS WE'VE CREATED

NO! IT'S THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX!

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

YOU DARE TRY TO CONTROL ME?!

NO, GO HOME! YOU KIDS WILL ONLY CAUSE MORE CHAOS!

OH, NO! SHE'S BACK!
IS THIS WHAT VOLDEMORT'S AFTER?

GIVE IT HERE, POTTY!

NO! IMAGINE THE POWER TO CONTROL CHAOS - TO IMPOSE YOUR OWN ORDER ON THE UNIVERSE...DON'T YOU WANT THAT?

NEVER! I'LL DESTROY IT FIRST!

POTTER SMASHED IT!

THE DEMONESS IS DEAD! AND THE DEATH EATERS WERE BLOWN AWAY!

WELL DONE, HARRY. BY DESTROYING THE ORBUS CONTROLLUS, YOU RESTORED CHAOS TO ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR LIVES. REMEMBER THAT SOMETIMES THE FORCE OF CHAOS CAN ACTUALLY CREATE ORDER...

I GUESS I WAS WRONG ABOUT THE KIDS - EVERYONE NEEDS A LITTLE CHAOS FROM TIME TO TIME...
SAY IT!

ARE YOU AFRAID?

NO!
THEN SAY IT! OUT LOUD!

WEREWOLF!
NO! TRY AGAIN.

SPIDERMAN!

SUPERMAN!

JACKSONVILLE!

JACKSONVILLE?
Bella, you're killing me! Please try!

How many letters?

Seven.

Vampire!

You don't know how long I've waited...
ADDITIONAL PROJECTS FROM STUDENTS IN DR. KRASNIEWSICZ'S CLASSES CAN BE VIEWED AT:

HTTP://WIC.LIBRARY.UPENN.EDU/FACULTY/ANTHCINEMA2008.HTML
DESIGNED AND EDITED BY LOUISE KRASNIEWSZ

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THIS COMIC BOOK PRESENTS THE WORK OF STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA. THESE WORKS WERE CREATED IN THE CONTEXT OF AN ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENT IN A CREDIT COURSE. 48 STUDENTS CREATED COMIC BOOKS; 43 OF THESE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE 4 VOLUMES IN THIS SERIES. PROJECTS WERE ALSO PRODUCED BY THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS: AUBREY MOORE, MELISSA URFIRER, MELANIE ZHAO, ALEXANDRA OLSMAN, AND EMMA RATHE.

THIS COMIC BOOK IS NOT FOR SALE AND IS PRESENTED AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE USE OF VISUAL MEDIA ASSIGNMENTS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WRITING ACADEMIC PAPERS.

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