Joel Gordon, "Entry on: Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (Series, S06E01–08) by Sam Raimi, Robert Tapert, Christian Williams ", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1022. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Sam Raimi , Robert Tapert , Christian Williams

Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (Series, S06E01–08)

United States of America/New Zealand (1999)

TAGS: Amazons Antigone Aphrodite Ares Creon Gods Hephaestus Hera Heracles Hercules Hero(es) Iolaus Oedipus Tartarus Thebes Titans Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (Series, S06E01–08)
Studio/Production Company	MCA Television, Renaissance Pictures
Country of the First Edition	New Zealand, United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States of America, New Zealand, Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1999
First Edition Details	Season 6, Episode 1. *Be Deviled*. Directed by Mark Beesley; Written by Paul Robert Coyle. USA, Syndicated (MCA); September 27, 1999. 44 mins. Season 6, Episode 8. *Full Circle*. Directed by Bruce Campbell; Written by Alex Kurtzman & Roberto Orci. USA, Syndicated (MCA); November 22, 1999. 44 mins.
Running time	44 mins
Format	TV; subsequently DVD and digital streaming.
Date of the First DVD or VHS	DVD July 12, 2005
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, B films, Mythological fiction, Television series
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Joel Gordon, University of Otago, joel_gordon@hotmail.co.nz

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Creators



Sam Raimi by Gage Skidmore. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CCBY-SA 2.0 (accessed: December 30, 2021).

Sam Raimi , b. 1959
(Producer)

Sam Raimi is an American filmmaker, actor and producer. He was born in Michigan (USA), to a conservative Jewish family, and attended Michigan State University. His career has been closely linked with that of Robert Tapert. Although Raimi intended to major in English, he chose to put his studies on hold in order to work on the feature film *The Evil Dead* (1981), after the success of his first co-operative production with Robert Tapert, *The Happy Valley Kid* (1977). Raimi is a co-founder of both Renaissance Pictures and Ghost House Pictures (see above). His solo-directorial work (distinct from productions with Tapert) include the original *Spider-man* trilogy (2002–2007) starring Tobey Macquire, and, most recently, *Oz the Great and Powerful* (2013). His most recent solo-producer role was for the crime-thriller, *Don't Breathe* (2016). As an actor, Raimi has appeared in many of his own films as minor characters – such as his cameo appearances in *The Evil Dead* and its sequels. Raimi turned to television during the 1990's, working together with Tapert as a producer for the franchises *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Young Hercules* and *Spartacus.*

Bio prepared by Joel Gordon, University of Otago, joel_gordon@hotmail.co.nz



Robert Tapert by Cooltv. Retrieved from Wikipedia, licensed

Robert Tapert , b. 1955
(Author, Producer)

Robert Tapert is an American actor, producer and writer. Born in Royal Oak, Michigan (USA), he attended Michigan State University where he first began experimenting with filmmaking under the influence of Sam Raimi. During this time, they both worked on the film *The Happy Valley Kid* (1977) in which Tapert also starred in the

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leading role. Following the success of this venture, the pair began work on their first feature film, *The Evil Dead* (1981) – directed by Sam Raimi and starring Bruce Campbell – and, in order to assist with its production, Tapert, Raimi and Campbell (along with Irvin Shapiro) co-founded Renaissance Pictures in 1979. This trio have since worked together on numerous successful films – particularly in the horror genre – including: *Crimewave* (1985), *Easy Wheels* (1989), *Darkman* (1990), *Lunatics: A Love Story* (1991), *Timecop (*1994), *30 Days of Night* (2007) and *The Gift* (2015). In 2002 Tapert and Raimi co-founded Ghost House Pictures known for, among others, the film franchises *The Grudge* (2004, 2006, 2009) and *Bogeyman* (2005, 2007, 2008). Tapert's involvement in television began during the 1990's with his most notable productions being the franchises of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (1995-1999), *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995–2001) and *Young Hercules* (1998–1999) – all of which included both direct-to-television movies and television serials spanning several seasons. It was during this period – in 1998 – that Tapert married New Zealand actress Lucy Lawless (the star of *Xena*), with whom he has since had two children. More recently, his interest in antiquity and television has returned with the serials *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* (2010), *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena* (2011), *Spartacus: Vengeance* (2012) and *Spartacus: War of the Damned* (2013) and plans for a Xena reboot for NBC. (see further, his official website, accessed: August 16, 2019).

Bio prepared by Joel Gordon, University of Otago, joel_gordon@hotmail.co.nz



Christian Williams by Pacunagonz. Retrieved

Christian Williams , b. 1943
(Author, Producer)

Christian Williams is an American journalist and television writer from Brooklyn, New York. His career in the news industry began in 1972 as an assistant editor (Style Section) for *The Washington Post.* It was during his early years at the *Post* that Williams was given a unique insight into the film/television industry, serving as the editor on a behind-the-scenes exclusive when Robert Redford used the *Post*'s

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newsroom to research his film *All the President's Men* (1976). In 1984 Williams became a reporter in Bob Woodward's investigative team which led to his second interaction with the film/television industry: in 1986 Woodward's team (Woodward, Williams and co-journalist Richard Harwood) wrote and featured in an ABC movie, *Under Siege*, which was based upon the group's reporting on domestic terrorism. Williams then continued to dabble in the television industry, co-writing (alongside Woodward) an episode of the television drama series *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987), before formally leaving journalism for a career as a television writer – specializing in one-hour drama television shows. He went on to co-create (alongside David Milch) the drama *Capital News* (1990) before assisting in the creation of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* franchise (which began with the five direct-to-television films). Unlike Tapert and Raimi, however, Williams was not directly involved in the production of the *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* serial beyond the pilot films. Williams went on to continue writing for television, for example as the co-executive producer of the drama *Six Feet Under* (2001–2005), until he retired in 2010. He has since turned his interests to authoring books and sailing.

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Additional information

Casting

Main Cast:

Hercules: Kevin Sorbo,

Iolaus: Michael Hurst.

Supporting/Recurrent Cast:

Aphrodite: Alexandra Tydings,

Ares: Kevin Smith,

Antigone: Paige Moss,

Autolycus: Bruce Campbell,

Cesca: Jodie Rimmer,

Creon: Stelios Yiakmis,

Deimos: Joel Tobeck,

Discord: Meighan Desmond,

Evander: Joseph Main,

Hera: Meg Foster,

Lilith: Susan Brady,

Nemesis: Kimberley Joseph,

Oedipus: Mick Rose,

Queen Nefertiti: Gabriella Larkin,

Ramses: Toi Iti,

Serena: Sam Sorbo,

Vlad the Impaler: Jeffrey Meek,

Zeus: Charles Keating.

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Adaptations	See entry: "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys TV Series: Season 1".
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	See entry: "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys TV Series: Season 1".

Summary

This final, sixth, season of *HTLJ* has a much shorter run than any prior season with only 8 episodes. With the ancient evil Dahak having been defeated at the end of season 5, these final episodes focused on returning to the original formula of the show (see below and analysis) in order to wrap up the narrative arc of the serial (this is hinted at by the title of the final episode: *Full circle*). Promotional material for the show referred to this season as "the last Legendary Journey" and the final episode sees Zeus, Hercules and Hera reconciled to one another, concluding with Hercules and Iolaus wandering off into a sunset, implying that the world was now at peace.

While E1, *Be Devilled*, retains season 5's interest in exploring non-classical mythologies (here, Hercules is tempted to accept power from a figure named Sin – a being clearly playing upon the figure of the Devil/Serpent (i.e., who tempted Eve in the garden of Eden) from Biblical tradition – but to the detriment of his humanity), the remainder of the season returns to the original mix of Greco-Roman/fantastical source material (see further below). In addition, the individual narratives of these episodes are much more self-contained than those of recent seasons, returning to the structure made popular by the franchise's initial season(s). Thus, in each episode Hercules has a clear wrong that must be righted/a problem that must be fixed during the 40 minute run-time: i.e., in E2, Hercules must restore order to the Amazon warriors who have been enchanted by a heart-broken Aphrodite; E3, Hercules must convince the unwilling Antigone to take up the throne of her father Oedipus before the tyrant Creon assumes power in Thebes; E4, Hercules must battle vampires (here, named Strygoia) before they turn humanity into the undead; E5, Hercules must once again return to the courtroom, this time to defend his friend Autolycus who has been (wrongly) sentenced to death for a crime he did not commit; E 6, Hercules must solve an assassination

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plot against Queen Nefertiti of Egypt in order to solidify her alliance with Greece; E7, Hercules must help Seska, the daughter of his friends Lilith and Jason, who is struggling with making (positive) friendships while, for his trouble, Hercules must defend himself from the charge of being a warlock; and E8, Hercules must prevent Zeus from inadvertently destroying the world when he seeks to be reunited with Hera and to restore her to Olympus.

Analysis

This season's heavily reduced length is indicative of the waning popularity of the show, including among members of the show's cast with Kevin Sorbo (i.e., Hercules) having gone on record stating that he had grown tired of production. The more popular spin-off/companion serial, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, would continue until 1999 (concluding in its sixth season) with Sorbo's Hercules returning for the odd cameo appearance even after *HTLJ* had concluded (e.g. *XWP* S5E12 *God fearing child*). In addition to its reduced length, season 6 of *HTLJ* is recognised by fans as being the darkest of all the seasons (i.e., containing the most amount of mature content). At the same time, however, it is also returned to the original mix of action-comedy and fantastical-mythological roots that had made the earlier *HTLJ* films and seasons so popular with audiences. For example, it is particularly notable that goddess Hera, who had been absent since season 3, is now reintroduced as a character (e.g., in E1, *Be Devilled*, Hercules must obtain a magical talisman/weapon known as the 'sword of Hera' before it falls into the wrong hands; while in E8, *Full circle*, Hera is finally released from Tartarus), revisiting the complex nature of the relationship between the goddess and Hercules that had driven much of the narrative of the original five films and the first two seasons of the television serial.

Further, this season drew more heavily on ancient Greek mythological and literary sources for inspiration than comparable recent seasons: for example, episode 2, *Love, Amazon style*, explores the complexities surrounding the marriage of Aphrodite and Hephaestus (cf. Hom. *Od.* 8); episode 3, *Rebel with a cause*, has Hercules resolving claims to the kingship of Thebes and interacting with figures such as Oedipus, Antigone, and Creon (thus loosely based on Sophocles' Theban trilogy – although with plenty of anachronisms such as the inclusion of 'bombs' and 'mines'); while episode 8, *Full circle*, explores the mythology surrounding the Titanomachy and opposition to Olympian

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	rule (cf. Hes. *Theog.*). This mythological material is handled in a relatively conservative manner most similar in tone to the five pilot films (i.e., season 0) and seasons 1–2 of the serial (see relevant entries) – in which the 'modern' characterisation of Hercules and various anachronisms (driven by the expectations of popular culture) create novel narratives while retaining a sense of familiarity for those fans acquainted with figures, themes, and places from Greco-Roman history/mythology. This is not to suggest that fantastical elements/influences are absent as, for example, in E4, *Darkness visible* Hercules must battle against Vlad the Impaler (i.e., Dracula) and his army of vampires. The episode goes to great lengths to differentiate these vampiric beings from any ancient source: not only are they associated with the pseudo-historical figure of Vlad the Impaler and located outside of Greece (i.e., in the land of Dacia where Vlad rules) but the episode stresses that these are completely different figures to the Bacchae – vampire-like figures who had made an (earlier) appearance in the *Young Hercules* serial (cf. E19, see relevant entry) and with whom the god Dionysus/Bacchus and mystery initiations were associated during antiquity.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Amazons Antigone Aphrodite Ares Creon Gods Hephaestus Hera Heracles Hercules Hero(es) Iolaus Oedipus Tartarus Thebes Titans Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Adversity Character traits Child, children Christianity Coming of age Conflict Death Emotions Family Freedom Friendship Good deeds Good vs evil Heroism Historical figures Humour Journeys Judgement Justice Life Loss Love Magic Magic powers Memory Parents (and children) Past Peers Punishment Reconciliation Relationships Revenge Romance Sacrifice School Supernatural creatures (non-classical) Teenagers Values Violence Witch
Further Reading	See entry: "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys TV Series: Season 1".

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