Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Get Lost, Odysseus! (Myth-O-Mania, 10) by Kate McMullan , Denis Zilber", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/688. Entry version as of November 04, 2026.

Kate McMullan , Denis Zilber

Get Lost, Odysseus! (Myth-O-Mania, 10)

United Kingdom (2014)

TAGS: Athena Calypso Cerberus Circe Hades Hermes Odysseus / Ulysses Penelope Persephone Polyphemus Poseidon Telemachus Zeus





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

General information	
Title of the work	Get Lost, Odysseus! (Myth-O-Mania, 10)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United States
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2014
First Edition Details	Kate McMullan, *Myth-O-Mania: Get Lost, Odysseus!* Mankato: Stone Arch Books, 2014, 240 pp.
ISBN	9781496500410 (E-book)
Genre	Humor, Mythological fiction, Novels, Teen fiction*
Target Audience	Crossover (Children and young adults; 8–13)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

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Creators



Photo courtesy of Kate McMullan.

Kate McMullan , b. 1947
(Author)

Grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, but now lives in Sag Harbor, New York. McMullan began her career as a teacher after which she studied Early Childhood Education. She worked as a teacher in Los Angeles and an American Air Force base in Germany. She is married to and works with the illustrator Jim McMullan.

She has commented: "As soon as I could, I began reading my way through the Children's Room shelves at our local public library in St. Louis, Missouri. I carried my books home, settled in with a cat or dog or my guinea pigs on my lap, and read for hours. My favorites were Greek myths, Nancy Drew mysteries, Pippi Longstocking, and animal stories, but only if the animals didn't die. I also read *Little Women* (it was sad but acceptable if people died) and *The Borrowers*, about tiny people who lived behind the walls of houses. I loved comic books, too, and *Mad Magazine*. When asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, I answered, "A reader."

"After college, I taught fourth grade in an inner-city Los Angeles school and on an American Air Force base in Germany. Every day after lunch I read to my students, and in time I started to wonder if I could write books like the ones I read to my class. I tried, but after a day of teaching, I had little energy left for writing, so I moved to New York City, where I'd heard writers lived, and took a job in publishing, which was less tiring than teaching."

"And I kept writing – stories about Fluffy, the Classroom Guinea Pig (who will never die), a Greek Mythology series, books set in a medieval school for dragon-slaying, and picture books with art by my favorite illustrator, Jim McMullan." (source, see here, accessed: February 21, 2019).

Since she started writing, McMulland has published over 100 children's books. Her book *Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day* was a Geisel Honor Book, and her book *I Stink!* was a Boston Globe-Horn Book Award Honor Book.

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Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at penguinrandomhouse.com (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at harpercollins.com (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at amazon.com (accessed: February 21, 2019).

Bio prepared by Allison Rosenblum, Bar-Ilan University, allie.rose89@gmail.com and Tikva Schein, Bar-Ilan University, tikva.blaukopf@gmail.com

Questionnaire

1. What drew you to writing / working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?
I have always loved the ancient Greek myths, even as a child. I write books for kids, and thought it would be fun to retell some of the myths with a bit of twist, and what I came up with was using Hades as my narrator. In some versions of the myths, Hades is Zeus's older brother, and I thought having his little brother be the ruler of the Universe would annoy Hades quite a bit, so I figured that would make his retelling funny and engaging for kids.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?
I believe it's because the dieties are, for the most part, depicted as very human, with great character flaws as well as the capacity to do great good. I think humans connect with these gods and goddesses because of they show different aspects of the human heart.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?)
NO.

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4. What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?
I used the *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths* and *Theoi.com* as well as various other sources. Although I wasn't telling the myths in the traditional way, I did try to stay faithful to the way each myth is usually presented.

Prepared by Allison Rosenblum, Bar-Ilan University, allie.rose89@gmail.com



Photo courtesy of Denis Zilber.

Denis Zilber , b. 1962
(Illustrator)

Denis has a diploma in Advanced Character Animation Studies and has won the following awards for his freelance work as illustrator and character designer: “CG Choice” award of CGSociety.org (3 times), Animation Mentor Showcase 2009, *Frontpage Exellence* award of 3DTotal.com (twice). He has publications in *Expose 4 – Finest digital art in the known universe* by Ballistic Publishing, Australia, as well as in *2D Artist magazine* and *CGWorld magazine*.

Source:

Official website (accessed: May 29, 2018).

Bio prepared by Allison Rosenblum, Bar-Ilan University, allie.rose89@gmail.com

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Additional information

Summary

This is the tenth book in the Myth-O-Mania series. In this series, Hades is the narrator who promises to tell the whole truth about the Greek myth; he claims that his brother Zeus, is a myth-o-maniac (that is, a liar) and that he fabricated the myths and wrote his version so that he and his children will appear noble and praiseworthy.

In this book, Hades narrates Odysseus' voyage. Hades claims that Zeus wrote down that it was he who helped Odysseus get home after the Trojan War. Hades claims that this is part of Zeus' lies and that in fact Zeus hindered Odysseus. The story begins with Hades and Poseidon spending time together, when suddenly Poseidon is notified that Odysseus blinded his son, Polyphemus. Angry Poseidon then promises to avenge his son and cause Odysseus grave troubles on his way home and also at home (if he manages to return to Ithaca). Hades needs to swear he will not help Odysseus (directly), or Poseidon will cause damage to his underworld kingdom as well. Hades then visits Odysseus who tells him how he outsmarted Polyphemus. Next Odysseus' crew open the bag of winds he received from king Aeolus and they drift far from Ithaca again. The story of Odysseus unfolds via the mechanism of Hades' visits. Hades visits him every once in a while and then he hears about his adventures or encounters him during one (for example, he meets him on a cannibals' island and on Circe's island). Thus Hades follows Odysseys along his long voyage (with intervals when he needs to go back to his kingdom). Next Hades discovers that Odysseus and his crew entered the underworld following Circe, in order to meet Tiresias. After receiving Tiresias' guidance and warning, Odysseus continues; he successfully avoids the perils of the sirens, Charybdis and Scylla. Then his crew harms the sacred cattle of Helios and are punished by Zeus' thunderbolt. Odysseus is then stranded on Calypso's island for seven years and when he is freed he arrives at Phaeacia. When he finally returns to Ithaca, with the help of Athena, he defeats the suitors and reunites with his family.

Analysis

Throughout the series, the author criticises the misconduct of the gods. This book is no exception. Hades states that Odysseus resembled the gods, since he was arrogant, fearless and he took credit for his plans. He had a big ego – like the gods. And on top of it, as

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Hades claims, Odysseus was a liar (like Zeus). These qualities help him survive and Hades admits that he was doing fine on his own, even without Hades' assistance. Since Odysseus resembles the gods, he needs little assistance from them, although he is helped by Hermes and Athena. Yet he manages to overcome many obstacles on his own. This could be why the author chose to leave the story as is and not change it too much.

This time, we learn of Odysseus' adventures along with Hades who plays a less significant role in the events (since he vowed not to help Odysseus directly so he asks other gods for help). Hades is the narrator but also the all-knowing god who is familiar with the strange people and creatures Odysseus encounters. The story in itself is full of wonders enough, so the author probably felt less need to interfere with it, since it was an adventure story with a successful conclusion for Odysseus. There is no mention of anything too sexual of course, but the author follows Odysseus' story quite closely.

The surprising happy conclusion is that Cerberus, who was felling lonely at the underworld, receives a friend to play with – the ghost of Odysseus' dog, Argos. Thus, the author does manage to alter the story a bit and make a truly happy finish the young readers would appreciate.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Athena Calypso Cerberus Circe Hades Hermes Odysseus / Ulysses Penelope Persephone Polyphemus Poseidon Telemachus Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Death Journeys Love Punishment Revenge
Addenda	The review refers to the ebook edition

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