

CLASSICS 191. Capstone Seminar. Winter 2018  
*Madness in the Ancient World*

Class Hours and Location: Wednesday 2:00-4:50 p.m.

Instructor:

Professor Kathryn Morgan

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3 pm, Wednesday 10-11 am.

Texts:

Esposito, S. (ed.) *Euripides: Medea, Hippolytus, Heracles, Bacchae*. (Newburyport, 2004)

Golder, H. & Pevear, R. (trans.) *Sophocles. Aias* (Oxford, 1999)

Nehamas, A. and Woodruff, P. *Plato. Phaedrus*. (Indianapolis, 1995)

Peck, J. & Nisetich, F., (trans.) *Euripides. Orestes* (Oxford, 1995)

Wilson, E. (trans.) *Seneca. Six Tragedies*. (Oxford, 2010)

Class Objectives.

This seminar will explore a range of topics relating to the ancient concept of madness. Our focus will mostly be on the ancient Greek world, although we will also explore manifestations of this theme in the Roman period. The subject of madness will expose us to a variety of literary genres and will enable us to explore some of the central issues in the ancient world: In what does sanity or madness consist? Who decides who is sane and who is mad? Are particular character types more prone to madness? Are women? How does our perception of what makes up a coherent human personality play into constructions of madness? To what extent are our ideas about madness culturally determined? My aim is to help your intellectual exploration and to expose you to a variety of ancient texts and modern scholarship centering on this issue. Moreover, our seminar will also focus on your skills in oral presentation and in written analysis. This will culminate in your production of a (15-20 page) research paper on a topic of your choice

Grade Breakdown.

Attendance	10%
Participation and Preparation	10%
Oral Report	10%
Written report on book or article	20%
Paper	
[topic to be decided by week 5; outline by week 7, first draft by week 9]	50%

FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASSICS OFFICE DODD 100 MONDAY MARCH 26 BEFORE NOON (12 PM): NO EXTENSIONS, NO EXCUSES

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## Syllabus

### Week 1 (January 10<sup>th</sup>). Orestes I

Reading: Aeschylus, *Oresteia*  
Padel, *Whom Gods Destroy: Elements of Greek and Tragic Madness*.  
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). Introduction, Chapters 4, 8  
(pp. 78-81), 18 (all on website).

### Week 2 (January 17<sup>th</sup>) Orestes II

Reading: Euripides, *Orestes* (Link on website)  
Euripides, *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* 238-339 (Orestes' madness).  
  
Padel, *Whom Gods Destroy*: Chapters 11, 18, 20  
Glenn W. Most, "The Madness of Tragedy." In W.V. Harris (ed.) *Mental Disorders in the Classical World* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 395-410. (Link on website)

### Week 3 (January 24<sup>th</sup>) Ajax and Heracles

Reading: Sophocles, *Ajax*  
Euripides, *Mad Heracles*  
  
Goldhill, S. *Reading Greek Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. Chapter 7, "Mind and Madness." (pdf on website)  
Padel, *Whom Gods Destroy*: Chapters 5, 7, 14, 19  
[optional] T. Papadopoulou, "Madness and the Gods." Chapter 2 of *Heracles and Euripidean Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. (pdf on website)  
Riley, Kathleen, *The Reception and Performance of Euripides' Herakles: Reasoning Madness*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Chapter 1, "'No Longer Himself': The Tragic Fall of Euripides' Herakles." (pdf on website)  
[optional] Simpson, M. 1969, "Sophocles' Ajax: His Madness and Transformation." *Arethusa* 2 (1969): pp. 88-103. (Link on website)

### Week 4 (January 31<sup>st</sup>). Passion: Io, Phaedra ("Mad about you")

Reading: [Aeschylus] *Prometheus Bound* 561-886. (The madness of Io) (Link on website)  
Euripides, *Hippolytus*  
Fragments of Archaic Lyric (pdf on website)  
  
Padel, *Whom Gods Destroy*: Chapters 10, 11, 15.  
Toohey, P. "Love, Lovesickness, and Melancholia." *Illinois Classical Studies* 17 (1992): 265-86. (Link on website)

Week 5 (February 7<sup>th</sup>). Dionysus

Reading: Euripides, *Bacchae*

G. Devereux, "The Psychotherapy Scene in Euripides' *Bacchae*." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 90. (1970), pp. 35-48. (Link on website)

[optional] Albert Henrichs, "Greek Maenadism from Olympias to Messalina," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82 (1978), pp. 121-160. (Link on website)

[optional] William Sale, "The Psychoanalysis of Pentheus in the *Bacchae* of Euripides." *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972): pp. 69-82.

Bennett Simon, *Mind and Madness*, pp. 113-121 (pdf on website)

Y. Ustinova. *Divine Mania: Alteration of Consciousness in Ancient Greece*. (New York: Routledge, 2017). Chapter 3, "*Bakcheia*." (Link on website)

Week 6 (February 14<sup>th</sup>). Medicine and Madness

Reading: Aristotle, *Problems*, Book 30, section 1. The "melancholy" of the talented. Translation by W. S. Hett in *Aristotle. Problems II*. Loeb Classical Library 317 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965). (Link on website)

[Hippocrates] *Diseases of Women* I.7; II.123-127. Translation by Ann Hanson (by permission of the author) and [Hippocrates] *On Diseases of Young Girls*. Translation by David Blank (by permission of the author). (pdf on website)

[Hippocrates] *The Sacred Disease*. Translation by W. H. S. Jones in *Hippocrates II. Prognostic. Regimen in Acute Diseases. The Sacred Disease. The Art. Breaths. Law. Decorum. Physician (Ch. 1). Dentition* Loeb Classical Library 148 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1923). (Link on website)

Helen King, "Blood and the Goddesses," [optional for whole class] and "Once Upon a Text. Hysteria from Hippocrates." In *Hippocrates' Woman. Reading the Female Body in Ancient Greece* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) pp. 75-84 and 205-24.

Roberto Lo Presti, "Mental Disorder and The Perils of Definition: Characterizing Epilepsy in Greek Scientific Discourse (5th–4th Centuries BCE)." In W.V. Harris (ed.) *Mental Disorders in the Classical World* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.195-222. (Link on website)

Padel, *Whom Gods Destroy*: Chapter 6

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Week 7 (February 21<sup>st</sup>). Plato and Madness

Reading: Plato's *Ion*  
Plato, *Phaedrus* (concentrate on the first half, up to 257c)

- Padel, Chapter 8, pp. 81-89, Chapter 9 (pdf on website)  
[optional] Bennett Simon, *Mind and Madness*, pp. 157-212  
K. M. Vogt, "Plato on Madness and the Good Life." In W.V. Harris (ed.)  
*Mental Disorders in the Classical World* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.177-  
192. (Link on website)  
[optional] Y. Ustinova. *Divine Mania: Alteration of Consciousness in Ancient  
Greece*. (New York: Routledge, 2017). Chapter 8, "The Philosopher's  
*mania* and his Path to Truth." (Link on website)

Week 8 (February 28<sup>th</sup>). Madness and the *Aeneid*

Reading: Vergil, *Aeneid* (esp. Book 7)

- L. Fratantuono, "You also, dying." Chapter 7 of *Madness Unchained. A  
Reading of Virgil's Aeneid* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007), pp. 205-  
232. (pdf on website)  
[optional] Wright, M.R. 1997. "Ferox virtus: Anger in Virgil's *Aeneid*." In  
Susanna Morton Braund and Christopher Gill (eds.), *The Passions in  
Roman Thought and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,  
1997), pp. 169-184. (pdf on website)  
[optional] D. Hershkowitz, *The Madness of Epic. Reading Insanity from  
Homer to Statius*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Chapter 2. "Vergil's  
*Aeneid*: the Romans and the Irrational."

Week 9 (March 7<sup>th</sup>) Senecan Tragedy

Reading: Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, *Phaedra*

- C. Gill, "Passion as Madness in Roman Poetry." In Susanna Morton Braund  
and Christopher Gill (eds.), *The Passions in Roman Thought and  
Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 213-241.  
(pdf on website)  
[optional] Thalia Papadopoulou, "Herakles and Hercules: The Hero's  
Ambivalence in Euripides and Seneca." *Mnemosyne* 57: (2004): 257-283.  
(pdf on website)  
[optional] Kathleen Riley, *The Reception and Performance of Euripides'  
Herakles: Reasoning Madness*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University  
Press, 2008. Chapter 2, "'Let the Monster be Mine': Seneca and the  
Internalization of Imperial *furor*." (pdf on website)

## Week 10 (March 14<sup>th</sup>) Mad Emperor?

Reading: Seneca, *De Ira*, 1.20, 3.18-3.19  
Suetonius, *Caligula*,  
Philo of Alexandria, *On the Embassy to Gaius*, Chapter 13  
Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* XIX.1.13

M. Beard, "Caligula's Satire." Chapter 14 of *Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures, and Innovations*. (pdf on website)

[optional] D. Thomas Benediktson, (1989). "Caligula's Madness: Madness or Interictal Temporal Lobe Epilepsy?". *The Classical World* 82 (1989): 370–375. (Link on website)

[optional] D. Thomas Benediktson, (1991). "Caligula's Phobias and Philiias: Fear of Seizure?". *The Classical Journal* 87: 159–163. (Link on website)

Barbara Sidwell, "Gaius Caligula's Mental Illness." *The Classical World* 103 (2010): 183–206. (Link on website)

[optional] A. T. Sandison, "The Madness of The Emperor Caligula (Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus)." *Medical History*, 2:3 (1958): 202-209. (Link on website)

### **Abstracts**

Kimberly Alvarez: "The Madness of a Warrior"

We often think of epic heroes as people who are glorious and victorious. This paper, however, shows that some epic heroes still suffer after those glorious and victorious battles. The paper discusses how citizens in Ancient Greece were expected to be fierce warriors but the effects of war could often cause episodes of madness during and after the battle. The effects of being a warrior in literary sources are seen in Homer's *Iliad* and Sophocles' *Ajax*, where Achilles and Ajax have episodes of battlefield madness such as mental instability and PTSD symptoms in and off the battlefield. This paper also discusses how the *Iliad* and *Ajax* could have affected the real-life warriors watching the plays and epics and how warriors watching the play could have related to the madness in the both the *Iliad* and *Ajax*. Additionally, this paper differentiates between fighting in epics (one-on-one) and fighting outside of epics (phalanx formation). I also demonstrate how battle causes fear and panic for warriors, which ultimately leads to short/long-term trauma. Although madness is often seen as a bad trait, there are different forms of madness where the good kind of madness allows for the warrior to do anything that is necessary to defeat the enemy. Finally, I explore the madness of Ajax and Achilles and how they do not have madness because of gods, but because of the events that occurred during or after battle. I also explain how PTSD is seen in both Achilles and Ajax.

Mary Anastasi: “When Love Begins to Die: Concepts of Madness in Propertian Love Elegy”

Propertius’ love elegies, written during the height of the Augustan era, in many ways exemplify the attributes of the elegiac *amator*: largely resourceless but for his ability to write poetry, uninterested in civic life, and—very often—driven out of his mind by passion for his beloved. Indeed, madness characterizes Propertius’ mindset much of the time, signaled by words such as *furor* and *demens*. This paper focuses on the way that Propertius as elegiac narrator experiences insanity throughout the course of the four books. Scholars have explored how Propertius’ madness partially stems from his connection with Amor; the idea that love itself is an illness characterized by insanity is equally established. However, the notion of Propertius’ madness as a punishment for transgression against the divine is less well-mapped throughout scholarly discourse; to this end, the paper reframes Propertius’ attempts to escape his love, and therefore flee divinely-appointed fate, as an error that results in his continual episodes of madness. Ultimately, this cycle of transgression and punishment comes to a critical point in 4.7 and 4.8, and it becomes clear that the only way for Propertius to regain his rationality is to reaffirm his relationship with Cynthia and to undergo a purification ritual at her hands at the end of 4.8. After this point, Cynthia and insanity cease to be mentioned in the remainder of his poems; therefore, it may be concluded that Propertius’ only means of saving himself is through full acceptance of his divinely-appointed role as Cynthia’s lover, to stop struggling against Amor once and for all.

Leah Bayers: “The Misogyny of Madness”

Women in ancient Greece were thought to be the inferior sex and as such, they were subjected to gender roles and expectations that dictated their behavior. When women in ancient Greece acted in ways that violated their prescribed gender roles, they posed a threat to the social order. In order to minimize this threat, madness could be employed as a possible explanation for their behavior. The diagnosis of madness was informed by physiological understandings of the time that determined that women had weaker bodies than men. As an extension of this logic, the weakness of the body implies a weakness of the mind that left women more susceptible to becoming mad. By examining the female characters of Clytaemnestra and Cassandra in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* and Agave in Euripides’ *Bacchae*, one can observe the way in which social, physiological, and religious mechanisms of antiquity allowed men to classify irregular female behavior as mad and thus maintain a misogynistic social order.

Kayla Beckman: “Two-Faced Furor: Considering Rage and Madness in Greek and Roman Conceptions of Heroism”

This paper concerns itself with questions regarding the relationship between heroism and madness in antiquity, such as: is the classical conception of heroism particularly susceptible to madness? Are all heroes eventually driven mad as a result of their efforts? Further, how do we understand the role of *furor* in epic, defined equally as “rage” and as “madness”? Beginning with a study of Euripides’ Heracles, I first consider how Euripides dramatizes Heracles’ madness, and the ways in which Heracles’ actions during insanity are fundamentally similar to the actions he undertakes when sane. From there, I look at representations of Heracles in the *Aeneid*, considering both the

mythic and narrative parallels between Heracles and Aeneas, and the aspects of their characterizations which Vergil deliberately contrasts. By comparing Heracles' and Aeneas' separate approaches to heroism, the conclusion is that Aeneas is distinguished from Heracles through his *pietas* — the quality of loyalty towards family and state which earns him the epithet *pius Aeneas*. After establishing those ways in which Heracles and Aeneas differ, I then look at the violent actions undertaken by Aeneas in the latter half of the poem, particularly Books 10 and 12 — actions which bring his *furor* and his *pietas* into direct conflict, with his *furor* routinely proving the victor. Given the underlying relationship between madness and *furor* to the heroic acts of both Heracles and Aeneas, the conclusion is that madness is an unavoidable consequence for those who pursue a heroic legacy in antiquity.

Dita Cole: “Hadrian and Antinous: Undying love or madness and obsession?”

In the early 2nd c. CE, the Roman emperor Hadrian met a young Bithynian boy, Antinous, and the two fell madly in love with each other. Their relationship was considered normal due to many factors in Roman society, and the two were inseparable. However, in 130 CE, Antinous drowned in the Nile, and the Emperor was inconsolable. Cities, statues, monuments, and cults were erected throughout the Empire to commemorate his lost love, and the city of Rome was covered in Antinous' image. Mourning the loss of a loved one is normal, but the extent to which Hadrian mourned his lover was considered extreme, and on the edge of “madness” in ancient Rome. Not only was the extent of mourning extravagant, but many ancient authors believe that Hadrian had more to do with his lover's death than was originally let on. What was it that made this youth irresistible to the Emperor? Why would he risk the opinion of his people in order to remember such a loved one? By looking at Hadrian's behavior before, during, and after the death of Antinous, and the ideas of what makes madness and melancholy in ancient Rome during the 2nd c. CE, there can be a real discussion as to what happened that one fateful night in the Nile.

Kira Coyne: “*Sola dosis facit venenum*: Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae*”

Dionysus is the key that unlocks human destructiveness in Euripides' *Bacchae*; he is the underlying current which intoxicates Thebes, the orchestrator of a tragic bloodbath. Through a mortal disguise as “The Stranger,” he is able to exercise his divine might, enacting a physical and nonphysical ploy for revenge against the house of Cadmus. His material presence alone aggravates Pentheus to a place of such emotional extremes that his sanity falters. Casting a shadow over Thebes, Dionysus embeds himself as a god deserving of worship, whom the maenads hail as the cure for human suffering. When Pentheus returns to Thebes he is met with constant accusations of madness in denying a foreign god who seems to have possessed the entire city. Even his mother Agave, is consumed by the god's presence, blinding her to the world around her. Cadmus dispels Agave's frenzied mind, luring her back to sanity by reminding her that she is not alone, she is not a monster. Contrarily, Pentheus is singled out as a fool who denies a god; he is alone, he is mad, he is the monster. This paper will examine the ways in which Dionysus distorts his identity, masks his appetite for revenge, and ultimately satiates his bloodlust for Thebes.

Eddie Figone: “Emperor Commodus and the Perceptions of Madness”

This paper is focused on the underlying causation of the perceived insanity of the Roman Emperor Commodus during his 12-year reign. Through various ancient and contemporary sources Commodus’ actions reveal a deliberate disregard for Roman societal norms. This rebellion against societal expectations manifests itself in his gladiatorial fights, beast hunts, lifestyle of excessive luxury, unabashed *hubris*, and his tendency to violence. The cause of these acts of rebellion range from an ecstatic escape from a mundane reality, not unlike the Bacchic Rites, to a desire to be a champion of the people. Insanity plays no part in his seemingly erratic behavior, though incompetence often does. A large portion of Commodus’ perceived madness, in fact, comes from not being properly understood by his contemporaries.

Danny Golde: “*Pietas* and *Furor* in the *Aeneid*”

In my essay I discuss the agency Turnus, Aeneas, and Dido have as they descend into madness in Vergil’s *Aeneid*. I judge the degree of agency each mortal has by analyzing the different forms of divine intervention that compel Aeneas, Turnus, and Dido to act in a certain way. In order to accomplish this, I argue that the divinities who inspire madness in the *Aeneid* have the ability to alter the human *animus*. The motives of the two most prominent gods are at odds: Jupiter watches over Aeneas to make sure he fulfills his destiny; Juno uses her mortal followers, Turnus and Dido, to obstruct the destiny/*fata* Jupiter has prescribed. These disparate divine motives affect the way in which each god interacts with their mortal followers and influences moral contemplation in the mortal sphere. I use the words *pietas* and *furor*, and their associated vocabulary, to track the internal battle between out-of-mindedness (*furor*) and right-mindedness (*pietas*) in the souls of Aeneas, Turnus and Dido. All three characters become subdued by *furor* at some point in the *Aeneid*. I posit that Aeneas is the most culpable because he falls victim to his internal urges (*furor*) without undergoing the sort of divine manipulation Turnus and Dido suffer.

Joseph Han: “Release and Restraint: The Cultural and Literary Significance of Dionysus”

The god of wine and ritual madness, Dionysus, bears strong associations with duality in Greek culture and myth. In the *Bacchae*, Euripides explores the interconnected nature of the primal and the rational that is innate to human beings. Dionysus imparts the message that society must create space for the irrational to flourish or, like Pentheus, we risk rendering our very demise. In order to understand this idea of balance, it is important to explore Dionysus along with his natural counterpart Apollo. Dionysus is represented as the intoxicating and abounding fury of nature, whereas Apollo serves to harness those Dionysian tendencies with truth, prophecy, and order. But Dionysus is likewise developed in the notion of a god who promotes civilization and peace. Along with his personal retinue of satyrs and maenads, accumulated throughout his wanderings in Asia, Dionysus conquers his enemies and teaches them the cultivation of the vine and worship of the gods. He establishes new towns and inscribes permanent laws among the people he subjugates and consequently civilizes. When Greek drama departs from its conventions of dithyrambic choruses, he would become regarded in places like Athens and Delphi as the god of tragedy and protector of theatre. Greek society seemed to be keen to these paradoxical notions of Dionysus. This rather

ubiquitous concept of duality, explored in the *Bacchae* in terms of the reciprocal relationship of release and restraint, has resonated well into the modern era among thinkers like Nietzsche and Jung. This essay will examine the historical, cultural, and literary significance of this fundamental concept embodied by Dionysus.

Christine Hirata: “Prophetic Madness and How to Exploit It: The Duality of Madness in Greek Society”

Madness in the Greek world is generally regarded with fear and suspicion, though there is one type of madness that the Greeks would consider “good” or “useful”: prophetic madness. The duality of madness in Greek society seems clear-cut and simple upon first inspection. Upon further study, it’s found that even prophetic madness is split into “good” and “bad”, depending on who is prophesying and how they do it. The cause of this distinction can be found in the cultural norms and traditions of the Greek world. In this paper, I argue that cultural and societal norms inform and create the duality of madness and the distinction between “good” prophetic madness and “bad” prophetic madness. To examine this duality of madness and distinction between “good” madness and “bad” madness, I have focused on three prominent prophets in Greek literature and culture: Cassandra, Tiresias, and the Delphic Oracle. Each prophet poses challenges to the blanket label of “madness,” and the way Greek literature and society interact with each prophet reveals how cultural and societal norms ultimately inform this distinction between “good” and “bad” madness.

Max Mommsen: “Connections Between Wine and Madness in Ancient Greece”

What was the attitude toward drunkenness in Ancient Greece? How did they view it? This question has the potential to allow us to better understand attitudes towards not only drunkenness, but also towards madness as a whole within Ancient Greek society. To better understand their possible connections, I compare literary and visual depictions of madness, as well as examine the god Dionysus, and the prescriptions for drinking (looking at wine mixing, prescriptions for how much wine one is to drink, when one is allowed to drink). The evidence points to the idea that to the Ancient Greeks, drunkenness was a type of madness, albeit one that was self-inflicted, and was safe to experience only by utilizing specific parameters of control. This is important for understanding not only literary descriptions of both madness and drunkenness in Ancient Greek, but also the role of the god Dionysus in Greek culture, opening the doors for further research.

Taylor Pech: “The End of a Dynasty: Emperor Nero’s Descent into Madness”

Madness is prominent throughout antiquity. It is a theme in much tragic literature, and is discussed by many philosophers of the time. In Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates discusses that a tyrannical ruler becomes that way “when either his nature or his habits, or both, lead him to drink, lust and madness.” Emperor Nero made a gradual descent into madness throughout his life due to his increased need to fulfill his wanton lust for power, sex, and revenge. Nero was not always a mad tyrant. In the beginning he abhorred killing, and desired to be a great emperor. However, he is forced into a world that rewards cruelty through disingenuous praise and loyalty. Nero experiences

the unchallenged power that comes with being Emperor and is emboldened. He embraces the dark madness that accompanies the fulfillment of lustful behavior. Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Suetonius all present historical accounts of Nero's madness. Additional glimpses into the dark madness that consumed Nero can be found in Seneca's tragedies, *Hercules Furens* and *Oedipus*. As a philosopher and writer in ancient Rome, Seneca was also tutor and advisor to Nero. Seneca defines madness in *De Ira*, as a frenzy and loss of control of the mind which leads to reason no longer playing a role. Nero lived his life fulfilling his lustful desires, feeding his need for revenge and giving into unrelenting anger. Madness consumed Nero, which led to the end of a dynasty.

Rebekah Smith: "The Case of Commodus: The Young Emperor's Search for Identity"

The emperor Lucius Aurelius Commodus received his imperial position by birth, inheriting sole rule of Rome at 18 years old following the death of his father Marcus Aurelius. Commodus is famously known as the 'gladiator-emperor;' he fought as a gladiator in the colosseum, and frequently depicted himself as the semi-divine hero, Hercules. By doing this, he gained the resentment of two Roman historians, Cassius Dio and Herodian of Antioch, who labelled him a 'madman' and condemned his unorthodox actions. Despite these writer's opinions, Commodus' behavior appears normal in the context of adolescent identity development theories and studies of sibling bereavement. Primary sources and archaeological remains, coins and statuary, reveal the gladiator-emperor's struggle with both his personal expression, and image as a Roman emperor. This report argues the possibility that Commodus suffered from sibling bereavement at a critical stage of adolescence, which ultimately affected his identity development.

John Hoyle Rymer: "*Oistroplexia*: The Homeric Imagery of Madness in *Prometheus Bound*'s Io Scene"

The question of whether the gadfly is literal or figurative in *Prometheus Bound*'s Io scene has sparked interest in the gadfly motif, its origin, and its appearance elsewhere in tragedy. There is strong textual evidence that the author intended the motif as an allusion to *Odyssey* 22.297-301 because of its conspicuous overlap in content with the Io myth and its efficacy at depicting frenzy effectively. At the center of both scenes lies the key term *οἴστρος*, which Aeschylus and Homer demonstrably understand to denote an insect. However, the Io scene's gadfly-related language also permits, even demands, a figurative understanding of the word itself, while the Homeric language does not. A survey of Greek literature through the end of the fifth century reveals that, although the distinct possibilities for translating *οἴστρος* and interpreting its context in the Io scene can be independently corroborated in other authors, *Prometheus Bound*'s usage is unique for its coherent multidimensionality. Showcasing *οἴστρος*' developing semantic range, the gadfly motif masterfully portrays the corporal, psychological, and sexual layers of Io's suffering, and exhibits lexical features both physical and abstract, of both body and mind.

Morgan Schmeer: "Rationale of Filicide: The Heroism of Euripides' Medea"

Is Medea mad? The convenient answer to this question is yes; any mother who kills her own children must be mad. What this paper proves, however, is that Medea's behavior in Euripides' tragedy is motivated not by madness, but by the traditional, and male-dominated, concept of heroism. Her filicide is an act of vengeance against her unfaithful husband, and yet Medea's motivations and actions do not align with those of tragedy's scorned female lovers, nor with the other mad, filicidal characters of tragedy. Instead, Medea's character is better understood within a heroic framework, one that is ruled by the idea of *arete* and honor, and the fear of the consequences that arise when these qualities are at stake. Any moments in which Medea acts in a stereotypically female manner are meant to manipulate the other characters or show that she has not completely lost her humanity. Furthermore, her heroism stands in contrast to Jason's lack of heroic qualities, proving that she is supposed to be the hero of this play. The audience may try to reconcile her behavior in other ways, such as blaming her barbarian status, but any such explanation does not stand up to scrutiny. What the audience must face is that Medea's filicide, when looked at through the heroic code by which she lives, is not only rational, but even makes her the quintessential hero, to the point of near deification at the end of the play.

Marianne Simpson: "Love as Madness for Medea and Dido"

Love and madness are both emotions spurred by passion, and that passion can become detrimental when mixed with anger and betrayal. When love and anger converge, love manifests into a type of madness that causes a person to do irrational things outside of the normal social norms. Feelings of love, for Dido and Medea, towards Aeneas and Jason respectively, develop slowly as an illness that culminates in a state of madness. The madness of Dido and Medea is not induced by divine intervention, as in many Greek tragedies, but rather their descent into madness is driven by their own actions. Though their feelings of love are the work of Venus and Aphrodite, their choices as a result of that love are their own, and those choices become progressively more irrational as their love progresses and they are betrayed. By looking closely at the relationships of these two women in their respective literature, we see how their feelings of love, though originally sparked by godly intervention, affects them as a sickness and induces pure madness as a result of their own choices.

Victoria Tan: "Euripides' Medea: A Female Hero in Androcentric Greece"

Medea is a controversial figure in Greek mythology. Some view her life as a proclamation of female strength; others perceive her as cruel and "barbaric". The purpose of this paper is to rationalize her unconventional behaviors. Medea is not a madwoman; there is always a reason behind Medea's shocking action. Medea's madness is not from within but from without. We, as readers, may view her actions as "madness" by our logic. Yet, Medea's characters and motives will demonstrate the rationality behind her cruelties, even in the murder of her own children. The problem is that Medea has the qualities of a hero, but her heroism will never fit in the male-centered Greek world, nor in our world. This paper focuses on Euripides' *Medea* and compares Euripides' version with other ancient sources on Medea.

Chelsey Young: "Madness in Plays of Antiquity: A Tool to Take Society's Temperature"

This paper is an analysis of the madness featured in the *Hippolytus* by Euripides, and the *Phaedra* by Seneca. Both plays are adaptations of the same myth, but there are differences in the way that madness is portrayed. These differences can be attributed to the difference in the locations and times in which they were written. The causes of the madness, and the influence the madness has on the actions of the afflicted characters give insight to the social norms or ideals during the times of Euripides and Seneca. Upon examination it has been determined that in the *Hippolytus*, it is Hippolytus who is to blame for Phaedra's madness, due to his rejection of Aphrodite and her association with sex. This tells us that abstinence was considered to be a mad thing for a man living in Greece during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. In the *Phaedra*, Hippolytus is the victim of Phaedra's madness, for her madness is through no fault but her own. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE the abstinence of Hippolytus was seen as stoic thing, at least to those who subscribed to the philosophy of stoicism.