

Achilles vs. hancock essay sample



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Achilles

Like most ancient Greek heroes, Achilles was known as a figure in ancient Greek literature namely, a heroic character of the Trojan War in Homer's famous epic, Iliad. And like most Greek heroes like Hercules, Achilles is also a religious figure. This association with the gods often accounts for ancient heroes' supernatural powers. Achilles was the son of Thetis who was a nymph. Nymphs are non human. They are spirits of nature who are nevertheless mortal. As a leader, Achilles also descends from nobility as he was the son of Peleus, the king of the Myrmidons. (McCarty, 2008)

Achilles is not only skillful in battle but more importantly, he was invulnerable to the sword. He was almost immortal because his mother dipped him in the river Styx. Despite his spitefulness and hostile relationship with King Agamemnon, who led the Greeks to the Trojan War, he joined the Greek invasion in search for human carnal desires for honor, glory and fame. Enraged to avenge the death of his cousin, Patroclus, he charged to Troy alone and killed the famous protector and hero of Troy, Prince Hector.

Hancock

Played by Will Smith, one of most admired and versatile contemporary actors of our time, Hancock is superhero that became known from the most popular media of modern society, the film. And just like most of our famous comic-based modern heroes like Superman, Batman Spiderman and Iron man, that all came to life through the motion picture, Hancock came to save mankind from disasters and criminal elements. However, unlike other superheroes, he was despised by many people for his human flaws i. e. alcohol vice and

careless tricks that cost a lot of money in the course of saving people's lives and fighting crime. (Dargis 2008)

Analysis and Conclusion

The essential feature of being a hero through time is the possession of skills and power that is beyond human i. e. super human strength. To distinguish them from Gods, however, they are fated to have weaknesses or limitations. And these weaknesses are part of their nature. Achilles' heel is vulnerable to injury and harm. Hancock loses his powers when he comes close and intimate to his wife. Superman becomes helpless when exposed to Kryptonite.

While being heroes essentially means becoming super humans, superhero stories often highlights the human side of the heroes that often results to their frailty. Achilles' love affair with Briseis softened his violent and aggressive character but his fury for his cousin's death led him to his eventual doom. Hancock on the other hand must maintain his distance from his wife and love so that he won't lose his powers and continue to serve mankind. The same predicament goes with Superman and Xmen's Rogue. Spiderman on the other hand is caught in the dilemma between his selfless interest of serving people because great power comes with great responsibility and love interest with Mary Jane and relation with his best buddy, Harry Osborn.

Unlike ancient heroes who often derived their power through their association with the Gods, the origins and creation of modern heroes are more secular making them more scientifically realistic and universally

acceptable. Heroes like Hancock and Superman are not humans but are believed to come from other planets. On the other hand, the existence of Spiderman, Hulk and all X men resulted from scientific mutation or evolution of man due to certain scientific manipulation and circumstances.

Incidentally, many modern heroes are scientists such as Batman and Iron man, and their adventures highlight a display and demonstration of their scientific inventions and gadgets.

Finally, modern superheroes follow a more universal theme unlike ancient heroes, who by virtue of being literary figures are bound by certain cultural factors. Modern heroes for instance, fight crimes under the mantra of universally acceptable themes and values – good vs. evil. The concept of morality is quite vague in ancient Greek because the Gods themselves are subjected to moral mistakes.

References

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