

# Bobby king

[Literature](#), [Drama](#)



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Argumentative 05 December, 2012 Theater and Our Modern Theater/Film

Industry Where would our film industry be without having the roots of Greek

theater and drama? Of course western civilization has been greatly

influenced by the Ancient Greeks and their many amazing and great

creations, but we have been especially influenced by their theater arts,

dramatic arts and classical stories of tragedy, comedy, love, and satire.

Without the influence of traditional Greek Theater, our modern drama would

not be where it is today. The Greeks set a great foundation for us to build our

theater and drama upon. Where did Greek theater come from, you ask?

Greek theater and dramatic arts came from stories that were staged and

rehearsed for either religious performances or matters, or for celebrations

very divine and dear to the Greeks, such as the great celebration of

Dionysus, the God of Wine and Fertility (Gross). The first recorded playwright

was none other than Aeschylus himself. Aeschylus claimed that Dionysus

came to him in his dreams and ordered him to write and create stories and

plays for his entertainment (Fuentes). This is why the Greeks specifically

performed during the great ceremony of Dionysus, to please him (Gross).

The idea eventually caught on and Aeschylus came to become one of the

world's most memorable and classic playwrights of all time. If the Greeks did

not possess the passion and fondness that they did for their expressive

theater, drama would definitely be way less entertaining and motivating. It is

because of them that we have the great entertainment and cultural

influences that we do (Ancient Greece Influence on America). First came

acting and role playing originally from the Greeks playwrights and actors;

without the Greeks actually not creating the stage or stories, we may come to wonder where our modern drama and theater arts would originally be today. The Greeks took their entertainment and enjoyment of entertainment very seriously (Shah). It is clear that many used drama as a way of investigating and acknowledging the world around them in which they lived in and were from. Drama and theater helped the Greeks to understand what it meant to be human, and what it meant to have feelings and emotions. The Greeks allowed actors and performers to be broad, exciting, and gave them an excuse to be different, to be someone else, to be somebody they could never be in their real lives. It helped them to open more doors to variety, differences, and opportunities that made all the difference (Damen). There were three different types of genres of Greek theater, all strong enough to become, and stand up alone as their own categories of entertainment. There was Tragedy, Satire, and Comedy (Myth : Myth and History). The most important and influential to the Greeks though, was Tragedy. Of course they loved Satire and Comedy because Satire was always critical of the thoughts and actions of others. It made the subject seem comical as well as critical. They also loved Comedy because, like society today, everyone loves to have a good laugh once in a while (Guderson). Most of all, the Greeks absolutely loved Tragedy because it not only told a story (or more within one itself), it also was able to get deep under the emotions of the audience, pulling at their heart strings and feelings regarding tragedy. Tragedy has been such a great influence and has been so successful in both bringing in good money for the performers and industry, as well as successfully engaging the emotions and feelings of the audience (Finger). Tragedy survives up to this

day. Whether it be big or small, it appears in almost all actions movies, romance movies, and especially on almost all live performances. It comes and appears in many forms, therefore, it has been the most successful of genres to this day (Cinema Statistics). In the time of the Greeks, there were no such things as electrical technology capable of recording and collecting sound, but now in our time, we do have such products. These products have allowed us to record stories, actions, emotions, thoughts, sounds, and so on (Admin). Although having such products seem to take away the real "being-there" feeling, the emotions and thoughts of the actors and actresses are still being understood and seen by the audience (Gunderson). This way, a story can be told without the audience actually having to be physically sitting in a theater. Greek theater has made such a great impact on our modern lives because many do not seem to realize where "acting" and "role-playing" actually came from (Shah). Without Greek theater to influence us as a society, we would definitely not have the great movie and entertainment videos that we do now. Greek theater and drama has definitely influenced our film industry (Cinema Statistics). We can thank the Greeks for creating the entertaining works that they did; without their work, we probably would not have the great movie industry that we do. Although many are not positively sure as to how the earliest days of theater in the Western world came to be, it is definitely arguable that many of the surviving stories and plays came from none other than the Greeks themselves. Great classical movies such as Titanic, Beauty and the Beast, The Notebook, and 300 have been extremely influenced by Ancient Greek Theater (Damen). Whether it be the story line or the acting, the Greeks have influenced these

movies and many like these (Shah). For example the characters of The Notebook, the two main characters are lovers who cannot be together because of their differences and financial opposition (Joe). The two are Allie Hamilton, played by the gorgeous Miss Rachel McAdams, and Noah, played by eye candy Ryan Gosling. In the story, the two fall deep in love with one another and are separated and pushed to go their separate ways when familial issues and financial differences in class arise. The two only meet privately, until the character of Allie goes and gets married to a wealthy man whom her parents approved of (Shah). There were also stories that came from traditional Greek theater such as "Tristan and Isolde," which influences our tragic and sad, yet heart wrenching and bittersweet love stories nowadays (Gunderson). Although the two are two different storylines, the particular movie of The Notebook reminds me a bit of the story of Tristan and Isolde. The Notebook reminds me of their tragic love romance because of how they had to be kept apart due to their differences, as well as their secret love affair after many years, especially when Isolde's character marries Tristan's uncle in order to unite the different and opposing kingdoms (Joe). This is just a heart-wrenching storyline that definitely makes the audience feel the love and passion shared between the two characters (Finger). You cannot help but feel a sense of pity for them. This is a great example of how Greek tragedies have influenced our modern romance movies. The everyday storyline of Romeo and Juliet find their roots in Greek creations, such as Tristan and Isolde. Although movies are entertaining and personally satisfying to many Americans now, there really is nothing better than going to a play and watching one from start to finish. Actually sitting in

a play and physically seeing live actors triggers a unique feeling that can only be felt if one is really actually sitting there, taking in the action. “ Theater is an art. Going to theater isn't just watching a story, it's being in it. By sitting in a theater with live actors you become part of the drama and/or comedy. You are in the moment with real, live humans. That's primal attention-getting stuff that projections (no matter how 3D they are) can't match. Theater is not just live -- it's alive. Margaret Edson, Pulitzer-winning author of the amazing play *Wit*, gives a lecture wherein she describes this singularity of theater. To put it in a simply summary: At any given performance of a live play, there will never be another time like the one you're in. When the vibrations from this actor's throat hit your ear a unique moment comes to be when you and the entire audience share space and time and human presence. And that, dear friends, is LIVE theater. Because it's not just story that entertains and inspires us, it's experience. Theater feels different because there's space, time, human connection, and existence to actually feel" (Gunderson). There is nothing like actually taking a seat in a cozy theater with some friends who appreciate it just as much as you do. The feeling of physically being there in a live play in real time is a fascinating experience. The “ theatricality” of a live play brings about a feeling of really being able to experience the characters feelings and emotions. As Lauren Gunderson writes: “ Theater is so much more than jazz hands, I think of theatricality as the aspect of theater that encourages the impossible. Angels can break through ceilings (Kushner's *Angels in America*), ghosts may walk and talk among us (*Hamlet*), people spontaneously sing and dance in unison (any and every musical you see). With music,

movement, design, symbol, satire, metaphor, poetry, dramatic structure, self-reference, and a little slight-of-hand theater has very simple (no CG required) tools to blow your mind. Basically, if we say that a character is a ghost, they are. Done. No need for rabid special effects to entrance or surprise you. Theatricality works just on the basis of shared imagination -- the imagination of the playwright, director, designers, and audience all converging in the now. That kind of artistic freedom allows theater to plunge into all kinds of fantasy without losing human scale and emotion"

(Gunderson). To elaborate of how great our theater now in modern days is, Gunderson really persuades her target audience to move towards visiting more plays and real performances. These performances have been classic great plays such as The Phantom of the Opera and Walt Disney's The Lion King (Gunderson). Without the influence and dramatization of older performances in Ancient Greek plays, we surely would not have the dramatizations we do in our modern plays. For example, the animals in The Lion King are portrayed in human ways, also known as personification (The Hellenic Times). The Greeks taught us what personification is, how it happens, and how it came to be. To put it simply, if there was no Greek theater, we would not have any type of theater or drama today. It is simply the reason why we have theater arts today. As written by a Professor of Classical History at the University of Sydney Union: " It's said that theatre started the moment a member of the Greek chorus stepped out from the other and sang on his own. So much of the theatre that is done today is meant to hark back to the time when the art was just beginning to be created. The Greeks where also the first to use the wagon on stage, not to

mention they had the ability to fly people onto and off of the stage using a giant crane. We also have a hard time mastering the acoustics of a Greek theatre. In a lot of ways, we are still trying to be as good at theatre as the Greeks where. Most importantly we still use the Greek plot structures in the plays that are written today" (Damen). Here, Damen brings up the first time a bigger prop than just a regular piece of clothing or a small dagger, is used. Damen talks of the Greeks and how they were the first to use a wagon onstage as a full-on real prop. In our modern day society, we now use almost anything we want or desire in our plays or movie productions. For example, we now use cars, trees, live animals, and even hydraulics to entertain the audience and make our scene/situation seem more real (Gunderson). These techniques are used in full-length movies and especially action movie films. But, our technology is so far advanced now than during the Ancient Greek times, we (as in, modern film industries) have the capability to produce a stage with props made specifically just to blow up or move in certain ways (Shah). The Greeks were the mothers and fathers of our modern day theater and dramatic arts. Theater is still a very popular scene to be on, even primary and secondary schools have their own theatrical arts division or department (Day). High schools and colleges have these departments as well as groups and associations, know usually called the giddy " Glee Club" or the original and classic " Drama Club. " Ancient Greek theater has set so much for us we should thank it if we could. Greek theater has opened so many doors and opportunities for people all around the world, due to its capability to be wide-ranged and full of variety. It is our foundation to modern dramatic arts: " Greeks were thought to be the first to create theater, starting with



Shakespeare. It flourished in c 500 and c 220 BC. It mainly started in Athens. Simply put, Greek theatre is truly the reason we have theatre today. It's said that theatre started the moment a member of the Greek chorus stepped out from the other and sang on his own. So much of the theatre that is done today is meant to hark back to the time when the art was just beginning to be created. The Greeks where also the first to use the wagon on stage, not to mention they had the ability to fly people onto and off of the stage using a giant crane. We also have a hard time mastering the acoustics of a Greek theatre. In allot of ways we are still trying to be as good at theatre as the Greeks where. Most importantly we still use the Greek plot structures in the plays that are written today" (Eco. CUEB). The film industry has given many people around the world a job, a career, and an opportunity to put anything in mind, on a set (Shah). And we have the Ancient Greeks to thank for that. Without their influence on our modern theater, we probably would not even have a film industry that supports of economic in the United States of America. Many probably will not admit it, but the film industry has played a huge role in our financial impact. A good film, is a memorable one with an authentic and awesome storyline. Studies show that during a pinch in the economy, more fantasy and sci-fi movies are being made and released, in order to help consumers and audiences " relax" and " enter a world" that is not having the actual problems in real life (EmbodyHealth). Movies and theaters allow the audience to enter a world where there are no worries, except for the ones that are going on in the story or play. We can " escape" the realities of life, by simply living in a movie or play for a few hours, and then we can check back into reality: " This is simple: Advertising is down or

at least advertising revenue. People are losing their jobs. Many are going unemployed and have nowhere to go, or nothing to do, so they stay home. As more people stay home, in the long run you'll see more ads for cooking at home, TVs, DVD players, etc., and ad revenue increases again. As I'll say in my summary, this is all cyclical and as times get better, the industry 'holds back' on upcoming films and holds them until harder times fall on consumers again. We saw this happen when the tech market imploded and with 9/11: "The double-whammy that was felt around the world" (McKnight). Personally, this is a true statement, especially taught in the Fashion Industry of the United States. On a recent visit to the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) in San Francisco, I learned the fact that when stocks are down and the economy is horrible, or goes downhill, big top-notch movie producing companies such as Universal, Walt Disney, DreamWorks, Marvel Universe, and D. C. Comics, release "out-of-this-world" movies that the audiences just seem to fall in love with (Cinema Statistics). Movies like these are released in order to help viewers and audiences leave their real lives behind, and live in a fantasy world for a few hours. This is something that the Greeks sure aimed for: to make their audiences feel the fantasies. Greek theater and dramatic arts has changed our lives today in many ways. It has set the standards for modern film making and story building. The Greeks wrote plays and stories about their gods and goddesses and the fantasy ways that they lived upon our earth and in the skies. In modern days, we write stories and plays of sci-fi animated characters like Spiderman and Wolverine, also characters that many audience members look up to. Like animated characters, the Greeks put their gods and goddesses on pedestals

that proclaimed their fantastic ways (Astma). Our film industry would definitely not be where it is today in modern times, if it were not for the Ancient Greeks and their influences. They have made such a great impact on our society in so many ways, such as architecture, government structure, and so on, but they have surely made one of the biggest impacts on our theatrical arts (Greek Mythology in Modern Society). Many of our great classics come from older Greek stories and plays, whether it is the influence of the characters or the storyline itself. We can trace back many, almost ANY story whatsoever, and be able to find some sort of story or play that was written by the Greeks, that would be extremely close to it somehow in some way (Greek Mythology in Modern Society). Not only are just real-time movies with real human actors and props made in this way, but cartoons and animations. The Greeks have taught us how to escape the harsh realities of life using theatrical arts and drama (Gunderson). They have opened not just one window, but many windows of opportunities for careers and jobs in the film industry, influenced by their earlier works. If you ask me, we would not have the successful film industry that we do today, without the influence of theatrical and dramatic arts created by the much respected Ancient Greeks themselves. They have left us a legacy. Works Cited Admin. " Innovative Technology : Technology for the NextGen." Innovative Technology RSS. TheSource, 20 July 2012. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. " Ancient Greece Influence On America." Ancient Greece Influence On America. HistoryKing, 2007. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. Ancient Greece Influenced Theatre Today. Eco. CUEB, n. d. Web. 01 Dec. 2012. Astma, Aaron. " Hesiod's Family Tree of the Greek Gods." Greek Gods & Goddesses. Theoi. com, 2007. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. " Cinema

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