

19976 Price Avenue
Cupertino, CA 95014
February 12, 1996

Dear FUHSD Board Member:

Students today have to be prepared for the future. In order to live and to interact well in the world, they have to be taught the values and morals that make up our society. Studying mythology is an excellent way for students to gain insight into the origins of our culture and beliefs. Mythology is not just the study of entertaining stories that are outdated; these stories are the building blocks that our present and future is built upon.

The purpose of many ancient myths was to give models which men could follow. One can learn from myths what is right and what is wrong, what one should do and what one shouldn't do, and of course, the consequences that result. Since many of the morals and values of the past continue to be important today, the messages that myths give prove to be very relevant in today's society. For example, one theme from myths is violence and war. Reading myths can expand a student's knowledge on such subjects and the consequences of these actions.

Myths depict behavior and problems common to all human beings. They explore the nature of man. Since human nature has not changed significantly and will not change, we can learn from the recurring patterns that occur in myths. A greedy, disrespectful, violent person would not be able to survive in the ancient cultures just like they would not be tolerated in the present. Mythology is a way to explore the basic nature of mankind.

Of course, myths are also entertaining. Myths have to be entertaining for people to read, remember and retell the myth. But the true value of myths is the content of the stories. We might think that myths are just simple stories that aren't true, but the meaning of these myths is what has kept these myths alive for thousands of years. These myths have formed a foundation for our culture. For example, an awareness of mythology is essential to understanding poetry and literature which use

references to mythology. Understanding mythology is the key to understanding others.

Understanding mythology is also useful in explaining the origins of some familiar things in our culture. Besides the abundance of products that have borrowed names or images from mythology, many present customs have originated from ancient mythical beliefs and practices. Marriages in June go back to the Romans, where June was named for the Roman goddess Juno, the patroness of the young and goddess of marriage. To be married in Juno's month was a sign of coming prosperity. The lasting effects of this belief can be seen today as there are more marriages in June than in any other month.

Studying mythology is like studying who we were, who we are, and who we will become. The lessons that can be learned from myths are truly important since they permeate throughout our society. All students should have the opportunity to learn and experience the richness of past cultures and the origins of our present culture through mythology. Mythology reveals the truths about mankind that will remain true all through the future.

Sincerely yours,

Austin Che