



Myth: A Very Short Introduction

Robert A. Segal

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A survey of the past 300 years of theorizing on myth, this book takes into account the work of such prominent thinkers as Albert Camus, Claude Lévi-Strauss, C. G. Jung, and Sigmund Freud. It focuses on different approaches to myth, from all of the major disciplines--including science, religion, philosophy, literature, and psychology. Robert Segal considers the future study of myth, and the possible function of myth in the world as the adult equivalent of play.

In order to analyze the different theories of myth, Segal focuses on the fable concerning the fate of the preternaturally beautiful Adonis. Where one theory does not work, he substitutes another myth, showing that, for all their claims to all-inclusiveness, certain theories, in fact, only apply to specific kinds of myths. A uniform set of questions is provided to elucidate both the strengths and the weaknesses of the conjectures.

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