Tikva Schein, "Entry on: Have a Hot Time, Hades! (Myth-O-Mania, 1) by Kate McMullan ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/669. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

Kate McMullan

Have a Hot Time, Hades! (Myth-O-Mania, 1)

United States of America (2002)

TAGS: Aphrodite Apollo Ares Artemis Athena Campe Cerberus Cronus / Kronos Cyclops / Cyclopes Demeter Dionysus / Dionysos Gaia / Gaea Hades Hera Hermes Hestia Muses Olympus Poseidon Rhea Titans Typhon / Typhoeus / Typhaon Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Have a Hot Time, Hades! (Myth-O-Mania, 1)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	English-speaking countries
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2002
First Edition Details	Kate McMullan, *Have A Hot Time, Hades!* Mankato: Stone Arch Books, 2002, 176 pp.
ISBN	10: 1434234371, 13: 9781434234377
Official Website	capstonepub.com (accessed: February 21, 2019)
Genre	Humor, Mythological fiction, Novels, Teen fiction*
Target Audience	Crossover (Children and young adults: 9–13 years; reading level: grades 4–8)
Author of the Entry	Tikva Schein, Bar-Ilan University, tikva.blaukopf@gmail.com
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Creators



Photo courtesy of Kate McMullan.

Kate McMullan , b. 1947
(Author)

Grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, but now lives in Sag Harbor, New York. McMullan began her career as a teacher after which she studied Early Childhood Education. She worked as a teacher in Los Angeles and an American Air Force base in Germany. She is married to and works with the illustrator Jim McMullan.

She has commented: "As soon as I could, I began reading my way through the Children's Room shelves at our local public library in St. Louis, Missouri. I carried my books home, settled in with a cat or dog or my guinea pigs on my lap, and read for hours. My favorites were Greek myths, Nancy Drew mysteries, Pippi Longstocking, and animal stories, but only if the animals didn't die. I also read *Little Women* (it was sad but acceptable if people died) and *The Borrowers*, about tiny people who lived behind the walls of houses. I loved comic books, too, and *Mad Magazine*. When asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, I answered, "A reader."

"After college, I taught fourth grade in an inner-city Los Angeles school and on an American Air Force base in Germany. Every day after lunch I read to my students, and in time I started to wonder if I could write books like the ones I read to my class. I tried, but after a day of teaching, I had little energy left for writing, so I moved to New York City, where I'd heard writers lived, and took a job in publishing, which was less tiring than teaching."

"And I kept writing – stories about Fluffy, the Classroom Guinea Pig (who will never die), a Greek Mythology series, books set in a medieval school for dragon-slaying, and picture books with art by my favorite illustrator, Jim McMullan." (source, see here, accessed: February 21, 2019).

Since she started writing, McMulland has published over 100 children's books. Her book *Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day* was a Geisel Honor Book, and her book *I Stink!* was a Boston Globe-Horn Book Award Honor Book.

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Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at penguinrandomhouse.com (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at harpercollins.com (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile at amazon.com (accessed: February 21, 2019).

Bio prepared by Allison Rosenblum, Bar-Ilan University, allie.rose89@gmail.com and Tikva Schein, Bar-Ilan University, tikva.blaukopf@gmail.com

Questionnaire

1. What drew you to writing / working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?
I have always loved the ancient Greek myths, even as a child. I write books for kids, and thought it would be fun to retell some of the myths with a bit of twist, and what I came up with was using Hades as my narrator. In some versions of the myths, Hades is Zeus's older brother, and I thought having his little brother be the ruler of the Universe would annoy Hades quite a bit, so I figured that would make his retelling funny and engaging for kids.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?
I believe it's because the dieties are, for the most part, depicted as very human, with great character flaws as well as the capacity to do great good. I think humans connect with these gods and goddesses because of they show different aspects of the human heart.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?)
NO.

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4. What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?
I used the *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths* and *Theoi.com* as well as various other sources. Although I wasn't telling the myths in the traditional way, I did try to stay faithful to the way each myth is usually presented.

Prepared by Allison Rosenblum, Bar-Ilan University, allie.rose89@gmail.com

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Additional information

Summary

Have a Hot Time, Hades comprises seventeen chapters plus a prologue and epilogue, from the perspective of Hades, detailing his birth and the genesis of his conflict with Zeus.

The prologue introduces Hades as the ruler of the Underworld and shows his distrust in myths and his readiness to set the record straight as they are all biased against him and he knows best.

Chapter One, *Hothead Dad*, narrates the genesis of the Olympians from Mama Gaia who gave birth to Cronus, the Titan. Cronus in turn had children with Rhea, another Titan. However, Cronus swallowed all his children live because he was afraid of a coup (as had been prophesied). Cronus swallowed five children until Rhea decided on a plan to prevent him. She gave him a stone to swallow instead of swallowing the fifth child, Zeus. In Chapter Two, *Ultrabright Mom*, Cronus vomits up his children and Zeus, who has grown up outside Cronus' stomach, proclaims himself as their saviour. Hades takes a dislike to his swaggering. Rhea tells Zeus off for taking credit for himself. Hades, as the eldest, is adjured by his mother to look after his other siblings.

In Chapter Three, *He's Toast*, Hades suggests overthrowing their father, which they do. In Chapter Four, *Sun Spot*, Zeus takes everyone to Mount Olympus. They each find their place and eventually become estranged from Zeus, who spends a lot of time with mortals. In Chapter Five, *Family Fireworks*, Athena, Hermes, Apollo, Artemis, Dionysus and Aphrodite, Zeus' children, are sent to live on Mt Olympus and cause a disturbance. More continue to follow. Zeus tries to get himself voted in as leader of all the gods but then Cronus returns with an army to try to take control. In Chapter Six, *Hotfooted Gods*, the Olympians are chased off Olympus. They find another place to stay but need to come up with a plan. Meantime, they invent the Olympic Games as a way of defeating the Titans through sporting contest.

In Chapter Seven, *Olympic Torch*, Hades defeats his father in the long jump, due to his father's cracking up in laughter and missing the direction of the jump. In Chapter Eight, *Bright Idea*, Hyperion the Titan helps the Olympians think of an idea to win at kick ball, at which both sides were tying. The Olympians go in search of the Cyclopes. In

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Chapter Nine, *Hot Dog!*, the Olympians travel to the Underworld. In Chapter Ten, *Shiner and Co.*, Hades is the one to choose the correct key to open the prison gate. The Cyclopes offer the gods gifts to help them. In Chapter Eleven, *T-Bolt Attack!*, the Olympians use some of their gifts and Pan's scream sends the Titans into a panic, which the Olympians use to their advantage.

In Chapter Twelve, *Red-hot Olympians*, the Olympians chase the defeated all the way down to the Underworld, thus winning the whole competition and regaining their right to live on Mt Olympus. In Chapter Thirteen, *Great Balls of Fire!*, as the gods are on their way to Mt Olympus, they are attacked by the monster Typhon. The panic of the moment induces the gods to use their powers to morph into other shapes and beings. Zeus runs away from fighting and Hades takes charge. Typon captures Zeus and Hades goes to rescue him.

In Chapter Fourteen, *Fire Escape*, Echidna, Typhon's wife helps Hades rescue Zeus. Hermes rethreads Zeus' sinews which Typhon had removed. In Chapter Fifteen, *Star Wars*, Typhon comes back for a fight. Hades takes charge again as Zeus is not up for much. They defeat Typhon, trapping him under a mountain, creating the volcano, Mt Etna. In Chapter Sixteen, *Smokin' Granny*, Granny Gaia reprimands the gods and tells them how to comport themselves as gods. Zeus relays that Gaia wants one of the six siblings to be appointed as leader of the universe. Hades realises Zeus has no intention of playing fairly. In Chapter Seventeen, *Have a Hot Time, Hades*, Hades chooses the domain of the Underworld as his kingdom. He introduces "Phone Home, Persephone".

In *King Hades's Quick-and-Easy Guide to the Myths* at the end of the book, McMullan gives a glossary to the terms in the story, which is followed by a standard retelling of the myth of Hades, and another glossary, this time of standard English words. There are points for discussion and writing stimuli at the end of the work.

Analysis

"The more I read, the madder I got. The stories were all wrong. Not a single one was told the way it really happened" (p. 9). The opening of the book presents the ability to look at myth from different perspectives and engages the reader with the concept of myth creation. The perspective of Hades gives the readers an understanding of myth as multi-valent narrative. It also raises

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questions of credibility and veracity of any narrative, something which is educational for any reader to grapple with.

The story is made accessible to the reader in a number of ways. The illustrations provide visual relief. The short chapters make it easy for the early reader to dip into the book, chapter by chapter.

By having “Lord Hades” penned as the “borrower” of the book from the “Underworld Library” (p. 2) as a way of framing the publishing information, the protagonist Hades is identified both inside and outside the narrative as veracious and the mythological slant is given a little liminal twist. Suddenly the publishing information is coloured with the same mythological brush as the story itself and the boundaries between the two are not as clear as one might have expected. After all, how is the reader to discern between fact and fiction or our world and the world of the book? Indeed, I assert that one is not meant to distinguish between these two worlds with great confidence.

The story opens with a soliloquizing Hades. The first person narrative enables the reader to jump right into identifying with the opinionated Hades. This perspective provides an interesting angle on the nature of myth and its function as even within this story we see the layerings of opinion and myth. For example, as is stated on p. 8, “I knew all the stories, of course…I couldn’t believe the nonsense I was reading”. McMullan’s presentation allows for thought on the pliability and flexibility of myth and indeed, the way in which readers, society, culture can be influenced by the myth-source – in this instance, “Lord Hades”. Even the nomenclature of “myth-o-maniac” that is bandied around for Zeus (“That’s old Greek speak for 'liar'” (p. 9)) is amusing given that the title of this series is “myth-o-mania”, raising questions as to the credibility of any of what we’re reading – Zeus’ side, Hades’ side or anything else. Objectivity is experientially shown to be null and void in the matter of myth here.

The soliloquy is speckled with modern references (“Channel Earth and HB-Olympus” (p. 8)) making this mythological rendering very much one of reception with the contemporary era. As a result of being presented as partly in the same world as the reader, Hades appears much more accessible to the imagination. The reader does not need to make as much of a leap of belief in order to partake of the story. This includes merely using a modernist lexis, e.g., “I felt I had CEO written all over me” (p. 49).

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	The map on page 4 provides a cartoon image of the bare geographical basics needed for this story. Such paring down of details gives the reader an option to engage with the historical elements without overburdening, yet it's obvious it's for illustrative purpose, not educational due to the immense simplicity. Presenting the gods as having embedded rivalry already from their first meeting – as is stated on p. 14, for example, "It was paradise, until Zeus ran over and started yakking on about himself" – in a sense sets the aetiology as somewhat irrational and therefore – arguably – beyond mortal comprehension anyway. Despite Hades giving multiple reasons for his distaste of his brother – as Hades states on p. 27, for example, "What did those nymphs in that cave teach you, Zeusie? That it's alright to lie? To be a myth-o-maniac?"; the feud is seen as a personal one and not objectively balanced. This entry into sibling rivalry creates a relatable association. The risible "'ONE OF YOU CAN BE GOD OF FRENCH FRIES, FOR ALL I CARE,' Granny Gaia went on. 'SOMEONE ELSE CAN BE THE GOD OF STANDARDIZED TESTING. YOU SIX GET TOGETHER AND FIGURE IT OUT. BUT NO FIGHTING, GOT THAT?'" (p. 145) shows all characters as anthropomorphically characterised and thoroughly accessible for the younger audience.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aphrodite Apollo Ares Artemis Athena Campe Cerberus Cronus / Kronos Cyclops / Cyclopes Demeter Dionysus / Dionysos Gaia / Gaea Hades Hera Hermes Hestia Muses Olympus Poseidon Rhea Titans Typhon / Typhoeus / Typhaon Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Childhood Fairy tale references Family
Further Reading	Review at librarianarika.wordpress.com (February 21, 2019)

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