Allison White, "Entry on: Theseus and the Minotaur: Birth of a Hero by Anna Manolatos, Frank Sikalas", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/707. Entry version as of September 14, 2026.

Anna Manolatos , Frank Sikalas

Theseus and the Minotaur: Birth of a Hero

Australia (2017)

TAGS: Aegeus Aethra Ariadne Minos Minotaur Poseidon Theseus

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

General information	
Title of the work	Theseus and the Minotaur: Birth of a Hero
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Country/countries of popularity	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2017
First Edition Details	Frank Sikalas, *Theseus and the Minotaur: Birth of a Hero*. Brisbane: Frank Sikalas and InHouse Publishing, 2017, unnumbered 35 pp.
ISBN	9781925497977
Genre	Myths, Picture books
Target Audience	Children (Intended for young children)
Author of the Entry	Allison White, University of New England, awhite55@une.edu.au
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au Daniel A. Nkemleke, University of Yaounde 1, nkemlekedan@yahoo.com

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators

Anna Manolatos (Illustrator)

Manolatos is an illustrator based in Brisbane, Australia. In 2005, she completed a degree in design at the Queensland College of Art. She uses mixed media and is recognised both nationally and internationally.

Source:

Official website (accessed: March 19, 2019)

Bio prepared by Allison White, University of New England, awhite55@une.edu.au

Frank Sikalas , b. 1982
(Author)

Frank Sikalas, born in 1982, grew up in Brisbane, Queensland. Since a very young age, Sikalas has always enjoyed reading, and was particularly keen on reading R. L. Stine's Goosebumps while he was in primary school. As he was growing up, he had often been drawn to writing and self-expression and relished any type of mythological stories, whether Greek, Norse, or Egyptian. He completed a degree in Ancient History and Mythology at the University of Queensland in 2012. Sikalas has published several comic books including: *Icarus Rising #1* (2017) *Athena Warrior Goddess* (2018) and *Warriors 3* (2018).

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Sources:

Frank Sikalas, correspondence: 2019.

See also: antipodeanodyssey.wordpress.co (accessed: March 19, 2019).

Bio prepared by Allison White, University of New England, awhite55@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Summary

In this picture book version of the Theseus Myth, Theseus is a young man born of Princess Aethra and King Aegeus but also the son of Poseidon. He has incredible strength (being a demi-god) and is able to lift large boulders with one arm. When he turns 16, Theseus must remove his father's sword and sandals from under a large rock, which have been hidden there until he is old enough to meet his father, King of Athens. Once he has obtained them, Theseus sails to his father's kingdom. Upon arrival, he notices seven young Athenians bound and waiting to be sent to Crete to be fed to the Minotaur. This troubles Theseus, and he offers to take the place of one of the Athenians so that he can try to slay the minotaur. He sails to Crete and meets Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, who gives him a sword and a clew (thread). He ties the clew to the entrance of the Labyrinth and ventures into the maze with the other young Athenians. Theseus finds the Minotaur and after a long battle, uses all his strength to throw the monster into a black hole in the centre of the maze. He uses the clew to escape the maze, and once they reach the outside, Theseus, Ariadne and the Athenians flee to a ship and with the help of Poseidon, sail back to Athens.

Analysis

This is a retelling of the classic myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. It is written for a younger audience, and has been adapted so that there is very little violence. According to Ovid (*Met*. VIII 152-82) and Plutarch (*Life of Theseus* XVIII), Theseus kills the Minotaur by slaying it with a sword. In this children's book, however, the monster knocks the sword out of Theseus' hand and he instead throws the monster into a hold in the Labyrinth – this recount being more age appropriate for young readers. Likewise, the story diverges from Plutarch's and Ps-Apollodorus' account where Theseus desires to travers to Athens by foot – a much more dangerous route than that of the sea. He encounters more violence on this path than the voyage that he takes on the sea in *Theseus and the Minotaur*. The story is told with bright, vivid colours. When Theseus is at home or in Athens, the pictures are coloured with pale blues, greens and yellows – giving an innocent and fairy-tale ambiance. When he reaches Crete, the colours change to predominately black, greys and dark blues. The story here feels dark and dangerous, with the images of King Minos and the Minotaur appearing evil and frightening. This book is a vibrant, highly enjoyable

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

	read and serves as an excellent introduction to the Theseus myth for young children.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aegeus Aethra Ariadne Minos Minotaur Poseidon Theseus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Character traits Coming of age Family Good vs evil Heroism Journeys Masculinity Water Youth

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.