

## Homer, Sophocles, Plato

I'm excited to be offering three continuing education (non-credit) courses this Spring at the Santa Fe Community College. The SFCC catalogue neglects to include course descriptions for these courses and classifies them as "leisure" (which would, ironically, in the Ancient Greek sense, "scholé," be accurate). These works are endlessly intriguing, even now enlightening, and incredibly fun to read with others. I would love to see you there to enjoy these splendid texts with one another. If you go to [sfcc.edu/continuing-education/](http://sfcc.edu/continuing-education/) or drop by the college, it's pretty easy to enroll—and pretty cheap. Please call me if you like: Paul Mannick (505) 577-1224

### Homer's Odyssey

For a few hundred years, Greek bards orally refined rhythmic songs and stories. Then, in about the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Homer's Odyssey was written down. The Odyssey is an epic song of adventures, loves, lies, ironies, myths, horror stories, violence, and constant lyrical beauty. It describes a radically changing Ancient Greek world with a wily and dangerous kind of hero called Odysseus. Splendid recent translations absorb and delight, with or without knowledge of Greek. The Odyssey is incredibly fun to read and talk about. I will lecture a bit at the beginning of each two hour session and then open the class for discussion.

<b>Homer's Odyssey</b>	Start 2/12	End 3/19	Thursdays	10-12	Rm 607
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### Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannos

Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannos (Rex in Latin) is a cold-case murder mystery in which the detective discovers that he himself committed the crime. The title itself begins a monstrous tangle of ironies since a Greek "tyrannos" tends to mean a non-hereditary usurper, but Oedipus turns out to be the son of the king he killed and replaced, engendering brothers and sisters as children in his own mother's bed. As Sophocles plots the story, the play becomes a penetrating inquiry into human psychology (Freud's Oedipus complex being a pale shadow), the inevitable tragedy of political life, and the limits of reason. All that aside, Oedipus is enormously fun to read, especially with others.

<b>Oedipus Tyrannos</b>	Start 2/16	End 3/9	Mondays	10-12	Rm 570
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### Plato's Republic

The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead remarked that the western philosophical tradition is "a series of footnotes to Plato." Of Plato's Republic, Jean-Jacques Rousseau called it "the most beautiful educational treatise ever written." By contrast, I wrote obscenities in red ink across several entire pages. Sometimes I still feel that way. But the Republic is a brilliant and unparalleled work of philosophical literature that draws us into the most enlightening kinds of utter political confusion. The argument abounds in myths, allegories, and drama. The dialogue's temporal setting precedes the unfolding Athenian dramas that put Socrates to death in 399 BCE. Short lectures and open discussion.

<b>Plato's Republic</b>	Start 2/11	End 3/16	Wednesdays	10-12	Rm 570
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