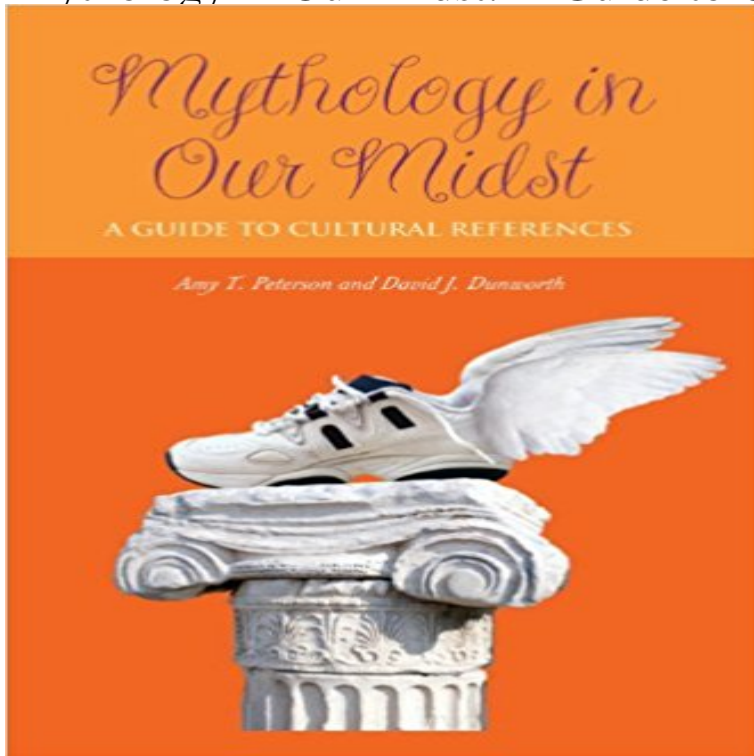


Mythology in Our Midst: A Guide to Cultural References



Though nearly everyone is familiar with such great mythological figures as Hercules, Icarus, and Medusa, one may wonder what relevance these ancient characters, and their stories, hold for modern readers. This unique reference book brings mythology to life for students by exploring the connections between ancient myths and contemporary culture. An introductory essay sets the tone with its overview of the myriad areas of human endeavors—including the arts, science, psychology, language and literature, consumer products, and other aspects of popular culture—that mythology has influenced. The user-friendly volume is comprised of 50 narrative essays that trace the cultural connections and offer a lively retelling of each myth. For example, readers will discover the derivation of Freudian psychoanalysis from the myth of Oedipus, and fans of popular film and fiction may be surprised to learn the mythological inspirations for works like *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Matrix*, or Michael Crichton's *Eaters of the Dead*. This engrossing book is enhanced with 25 original illustrations. Five fact-filled appendices offer glossaries and interesting mythological etymologies of commonplace words in nature, science, and everyday consumer products like Nike shoes and Olympus cameras. Whether for research or pure enjoyment, this accessible and informative book reveals the many unrecognized references to mythology that impact our lives.

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