

**Deconstructing Traditional Gender Roles in Ancient and Modern Literary
Texts: A Study of Greek Goddesses**



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DECLARATION

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CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
Chapter 1	Postmodern Feminism In Percy Jackson And The Olympians Pentalogy : A Theoretical Framework	5
Chapter 2	A Theoretical Approach : Greek Goddesses In Ancient And Modern Literary Texts	12
	Conclusion	23
	Works Consulted	25

Introduction

Postmodern feminism is a body of scholarship that questions and rejects traditional essentialist practices, as established in and by modernity. Helen Cixous, Luna Irigaray and Julia Kristeva are the most prominent writers of postmodern feminist philosophy (“Feminism : Helene Cixous I Ecriture Feminine I Julia Kristeva I in Hindi I Tutorial”). A meta narrative which is a narrative which concerns narratives of historical meaning, experience or knowledge and offers legitimation of such through the anticipated completion of some master idea; a grand story that is self-legitimising is subverted, and it becomes a postmodern content. Postmodernism criticises and disbelieves in metanarratives and focuses on mini/local narratives or petit recits. A related aspect of the rejection of grand narratives is that rather than searching for a theoretical approach that explains all aspects of society, postmodernists examine experiences of individuals and groups and emphasise differences over similarities and common experiences.

A feminist post-structuralist perspective offers an alternative paradigm for the study of gender bias in History texts. It focuses on multiple perspectives and open interpretation, opens up space for female voices of the past and present, and deconstructs realist historical narrative. Feminism shares with post-structuralism a concern for power: its manifestations, its appropriation, its positioning, its consequences, and its language. Both reject rigid totalizing theories that rely on system over experience.

Feminism is a range of socio-political movements and ideologies that aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal, and social

equality of the sexes. Feminism incorporates the position that society prioritises the male point of view and that women are treated unjustly in these societies. Postmodern feminism is a later form of feminism that critiqued some of the assumptions of earlier feminist thought through combining both post-modern and post-structuralist theory. Postmodern feminists reject essentialism, which is the belief that there is necessarily an inherent difference between men and women. Julia Kristeva's postmodern feminism theory challenges traditional feminist approaches that focus solely on gender oppression and patriarchal structures. Instead, she argues that feminist theory must consider the ways in which power operates through language, culture, and subjectivity.

Greek mythology continues to be a significant element of Western legacy and language and has had a significant impact on Western culture, the arts, and literature. Greek mythology has served as a source of inspiration for authors throughout history, and ideas from classical mythology have gained contemporary meaning and relevance. Throughout the project we can see how the six Olympian Greek goddesses are considered and their power and characters of feminism are portrayed in both ancient literary text and modern literature. The works taken to show the example of the ancient Greek goddesses are Homer's the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and also Hesiod's *Theogony*.

Homer is the Greek poet who is credited as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, two epic poems that are foundational works of ancient Greek literature. According to the 5th-Century historian Herodotus, it was Homer, with the poet Hesiod, who “described the gods for the Greeks”, and who also

gave them human characters – the characters that shape the Olympian gods we recognise today (“Birth of the Greek Gods | Hesiod’s Theogony | Greek Mythology Explained”). Most significantly, the Iliad changed the way people worshipped. According to the ancient texts the first God in Greek mythology was Chaos. Gaia, the personification of the Earth, emerged shortly afterwards, along with Tartarus and Eros. Gaia then produced Uranus, which is the sky. Their offspring were the Titans. And the children of titans were called the Olympians who were worshipped as the principal gods of the Greek pantheon. The Olympians are a group of 12 gods who ruled after the overthrow of the Titans. All the Olympians are related in some way. They are named after their dwelling place Mount Olympus. In the project we focus on the Greek Olympian goddesses and there are six of them; Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Athena, Artemis and Aphrodite. These goddesses are looked at from a postmodern feminist approach.

The modern literary text used for this is the pentalogy *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series by Rick Riordan. This pentalogy places the Greek gods in the modern-day scenario and it applies the ancient Greek archetypes in the world that we live in today. Riordan is trying to show us how these Greek Gods guide this world forward, and is still culturally prevalent among humans. While reading through the pentalogy we can see how Riordan has mixed the Greek cultural myth with the modern world which creates a humorous background to the whole novel series. Riordan uses a simple and casual language which makes the readers feel comfortable and engaged with the story. His writing style is easy to understand, even for the younger readers. And the use of modern-day language by the gods is funny and creative, as it

makes the reader feel that the gods are still there on top of the 600th floor of the Empire State Building, where modern-day Mount Olympus is located. The novel series also provides an insight of how the goddesses are powerful, and rule over the world. It also shows how they are treated. We can also see that the male God Zeus proclaimed superiority above all of them and they had to obey their brothers most of the time. But we can also see how they fight back on their own at times when they are in need of doing so. We can see how the gods wanted Hestia, the eldest goddess to marry but she refused. She didn't want anything to do with marriage or having children, but that didn't mean that she was cruel and ruthless; she was depicted as gentle in both ancient and modern texts. In the Percy Jackson series Rick Riordan says he even wanted her to remain a cool aunt who loves and cares for all her nieces and nephews. He says that she considered marriage to be dangerous because of the trauma she had, as her father, the Titan king Kronos devoured her as soon as she was born because he feared that he'll be overthrown by his kids just like he did to his father Oranos. In this project we will see in detail how powerful and brave the Greek Goddesses are, and also their insecurities, and how they are neglected of certain privileges just because they are born female even though they are Gods (“Birth of the Greek Gods | Hesiod’s Theogony | Greek Mythology Explained”).

Chapter 1

Postmodern Feminism In Percy Jackson And The Olympians Pentalogy: A Theoretical Framework

Postmodern feminism is a broad term that refers to a range of feminist theories and approaches that have developed since the late 20th century.

Postmodern feminist theory is a school of thought that emphasises the importance of social and political factors in understanding gender. Postmodern feminists believe that gender is not determined by biology, but rather by culture and society. Helen Cixous, Luna Irigaray and Julia Kristeva are the most prominent writers of postmodern feminist philosophy. The relation of postmodernism to feminism is exemplified in the deconstructing approach of the radical feminism that began from the second wave shown in their individualist views on sex, sexuality, motherhood, childbirth, and language institution. It is characterised by a rejection of grand narratives and universalizing theories, and an emphasis on the importance of context, subjectivity, and individual experience in shaping one's understanding of the world. It often involves an interrogation of the ways in which gender and other forms of identity, such as race and class, intersect and shape one another.

Postmodern feminists challenge the idea that there is a single, universal experience of womanhood, and argue that all forms of identity are socially and culturally constructed. They also critique the idea that there is a single, correct way to be a feminist and argue that there are many different ways to resist and challenge patriarchy and other forms of oppression. Postmodern feminists often use deconstructive and critical approaches to examine and challenge

power dynamics, and they often reject the idea that there is a single, unified theory of feminism that can be applied universally. Instead, they emphasise the importance of acknowledging and addressing the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the feminist movement.

Postmodern feminists argue that the category of "woman" is not a fixed or essential identity, but rather a social construct that is shaped by a variety of factors such as race, class, and culture. They believe that traditional feminist theories, which often rely on essentialist assumptions about the nature of women, are inadequate for understanding and addressing the complexity of women's lives. Julia Kristeva points it out in her book *The Kristeva Reader*, "Feminism must reject the idea of a fixed, essential female identity, and instead embrace the fluidity and multiplicity of gender and sexuality."

Postmodern feminists are critical of grand narratives and universalizing theories, and focus on the importance of local and contextual knowledge. They often use theories and methods from postmodern philosophy and cultural studies to analyse and critique power structures and systems of oppression. Postmodern feminism is not a unified movement, and there are a range of perspectives within it. Some postmodern feminists are critical of the mainstream feminist movement and its focus on issues such as equality and liberation, while others seek to build upon and expand traditional feminist theory.

Julia Kristeva is a Bulgarian-French philosopher, psychoanalyst, and feminist theorist who has made significant contributions to postmodern feminism theory. She is known for her work on the semiotic and symbolic aspects of language, the abject, and the maternal. Kristeva's postmodern

feminism theory also includes the concept of the abject, which refers to those things that are excluded from the symbolic order and are considered disgusting or repulsive. The abject includes bodily fluids, waste, and the maternal body. Kristeva argues that the abject is a site of potential resistance to the patriarchal order, as it disrupts the symbolic order and challenges the boundaries of subjectivity.

Postmodern Feminism offers a useful framework for understanding the ways in which the Greek goddesses have been represented and interpreted over time, and the cultural and historical contexts that have shaped these representations. It can help to reveal the complex and nuanced ways in which these goddesses have been used to express and reinforce cultural values and beliefs about gender, sexuality, and power, and to challenge traditional interpretations and assumptions about these goddesses. Postmodern Feminism is a branch of feminist thought that seeks to challenge and complicate traditional understandings of gender, power, and identity. It is characterised by a scepticism of grand narratives and a focus on the ways in which power is constructed and maintained through language and discourse. Kristeva explores the intersections of language, subjectivity, and power, and she argues that feminist theory must embrace the complexity and ambiguity of these issues in order to challenge dominant discourses and social norms.

Postmodern feminism acknowledges that gender is not a natural or biological given, but rather a social and cultural construct that is produced and reproduced through discourses, practices, and institutions. It recognizes that gender identity is not determined solely by biological sex or anatomy, but is also shaped by social norms, values, and expectations. As such, postmodern

feminism rejects the idea that there is a single, universal, and fixed definition of femininity that applies to all women, but rather recognizes the diversity of women's experiences and identities. Kristeva's statement "The 'feminine' is not a fixed or essential category, but rather a cultural construct that is constantly being redefined and renegotiated." from her book *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* challenges the essentialist view of femininity that has dominated traditional feminist thought. Essentialism is the belief that there is a fixed and unchanging essence or nature that defines a particular category, such as gender. Essentialism tends to reduce complex and diverse identities to a single, fixed essence, and can lead to exclusion and marginalisation of those who do not fit the norm. Postmodern feminism, on the other hand, recognizes that identity is fluid and contingent, and that there are multiple and intersecting factors that shape our sense of self.

Postmodern Feminism can be applied to the study of Greek goddesses by examining the ways in which these figures have been constructed and represented in different cultural contexts. For Example, a postmodern feminist analysis might examine how the goddesses of Greek mythology have been depicted in art, literature, and other cultural productions, and how these representations have been shaped by historical, political, and social factors. Postmodern feminism could also be applied to the study of Greek goddesses in Greek mythology by its emphasis on the fluidity and constructed nature of gender. Many of the goddesses of Greek mythology are depicted as powerful and influential figures, but they are also often depicted in ways that reinforce traditional gender roles and expectations.

A postmodern feminist analysis might explore the ways in which these depictions of the goddesses have been used to reinforce or challenge traditional gender norms, and how these representations might change, as cultural attitudes towards gender evolve over time. Overall, a postmodern feminist approach to the study of Greek goddesses would seek to complicate and challenge traditional understandings of these figures, and to examine the ways in which they have been constructed and represented within different cultural contexts. Postmodern Feminism can be applied to the study of Greek goddesses by examining the ways in which these goddesses have been represented and interpreted by different cultures and historical periods. Throughout this project we can see a postmodern feminist approach on the Greek goddesses in the book *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* which is a series of five fantasy novels written by American author Rick Riordan.

We will examine the ways in which these goddesses have been portrayed as strong and independent women in some contexts, while in others they have been depicted as subservient to male gods or as a symbol of patriarchal power. We will be looking at the various ways in which the Greek goddesses have been represented and the different contexts in which these representations have emerged. A postmodern feminist could seek to understand how these goddesses have been used to reinforce or challenge traditional gender roles and expectations. We will also see how these goddesses have been used to represent different ideals of femininity and sexuality, and how these ideals have changed over time. A Postmodern Feminist approach could seek to understand how Greek goddesses have been used to shape and reinforce cultural norms around gender and sexuality.

Writers have made use of mythology as a connection between past and present, and in this paper we will also see the significance of Greek mythology in this modern world and how it is reimagined by the American author Rick Riordan in his pentalogy, *Percy Jackson and The Olympians Series*. The novels are set in a world with the Greek gods in the 21st century, and follows the life of the protagonist Percy Jackson, a young demigod who must prevent the Titans, led by Kronos (Cronus), from destroying the world. The first book was adapted into a film titled *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* in 2010, which was commercially successful, but received mixed reviews from critics and the audience as it has very few similarities to the book. An adaptation of the second book, titled *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters*, was released in 2013, also to receive mixed reviews. A TV series based on the novels is currently in production for Disney+.

Perseus "Percy" Jackson is a fictional character, the title character and narrator of Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson & the Olympians*, a pentalogy series. Development of the character Percy Jackson began when Rick Riordan started inventing stories for his son Haley Riordan, who was diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia in the spring of 2002. When Haley was in second grade and he was studying Greek mythology, he asked his father to tell him bedtime stories based on those myths. When his father ran out of ideas, Haley suggested that he make up new stories that combined existing mythological characters with new ones. This led Riordan to create the fictional character of Percy Jackson. Riordan has said that Percy Jackson's original character was "inspired by my son's own struggle" at school. Haley and Percy have been cited as the "same age" and share several character traits, though they are by no means the same

person. Riordan has also stated that Percy has "[his] sense of humour" and is also "based on many of the students [he has] had in the past ". In the story, Percy Jackson is portrayed as a demigod, the son of the mortal Sally Jackson and the Greek god Poseidon. He has ADHD and dyslexia, allegedly because he is hardwired to read Ancient Greek and has inborn "battlefield reflexes". His personality is described as "changeable like the sea" and hard to predict — with the important exception that he is dangerously loyal to his friends and family. The goddess Athena describes this as his fatal flaw or hamartia.

The Percy Jackson and The Olympian series consist of five books; *The Lightning Thief* is the first book in the series and was released on June 28, 2005. *The Sea of Monsters* is the second instalment in the series, released on April 1, 2006. *The Titan's Curse* is the third book in the series. It was released on May 11, 2007. The fourth instalment in the series, *The Battle of the Labyrinth*, was released on May 6, 2008. The fifth and final book in the series, was released on May 5, 2009; titled *The Last Olympian*. Rick Riordan also wrote *Percy Jackson and the Greek Gods* which is a collection of stories from Greek mythology told from the demigod Percy Jackson's point of view. The book talks about the origins of the Olympian gods (and of their ancestors) and other stories from their lives. The book was released on August 19th, 2014.

Chapter 2

A Theoretical Approach : Greek Goddesses

In Ancient And Modern Literary Texts

In accordance with the Greek mythology goddesses, postmodern feminism can be seen as a celebration of the multiplicity of female identities and experiences. Postmodern feminism recognizes and celebrates the diversity of female identities and experiences, just as the Greek goddesses embodied different aspects of femininity. It rejects the idea of a single, universal female experience, and instead acknowledges the intersectionality of gender with other social identities, such as race, class, and sexuality.

In ancient Greek religion and mythology, the twelve Olympians are the major deities of the Greek pantheon, Zeus, Poseidon, Hera, Hestia and Demeter, Hades, and later on Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Athena, Hephaestus, Aphrodite and Ares. Over the years, the Demi-god Dionysus became part of their group on Olympus. It is very common to refer to the Greek pantheon as “the 12 Olympian Gods”. In this paper we focus on the comparison of the Postmodern Feminist analysis on the six Olympian goddesses in both ancient literature (such as Homer’s the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* and from The *Theogony* by Hesiod) and the *Percy Jackson and The Olympians* Series by Rick Riordan. The Greek goddesses were complex and multifaceted, representing different aspects of femininity and womanhood (“Greek Myths: Five Goddesses of Mt Olympus”). For example, Athena was the goddess of wisdom, strategy, and warfare, while Aphrodite was the goddess of love, beauty, and sexuality. Hera

was the goddess of marriage and family, while Artemis was the goddess of the hunt and wilderness.

Hestia is the eldest child of the Titan King Kronos. She is a goddess in Greek mythology who is associated with the hearth, home, and family. She is generally depicted as a gentle and nurturing goddess.

"Hestia, first and last, I pray to you, goddess of the hearth. Keep this house safe from harm, and grant that all within it may be blessed with peace and prosperity" (Book 2, Lines 394-397). In this quote, Odysseus is praying to Hestia for protection and blessings for his home and family. Hestia's role as a guardian of the hearth and home suggests that she is a symbol of nurture and support, which could be seen as reflecting feminist values of care and compassion.

"I am the eternal flame, the hearth of the home, the source of warmth and comfort" (from *The Sea of Monsters*). In ancient Greek literature, Hestia is the virgin goddess of the hearth, home, and domestic life. She is often depicted as a calm, nurturing, and peaceful goddess, who is responsible for the well-being of the home and its inhabitants. Hestia is also associated with the sacred fire that burned in every home, which was considered a symbol of the goddess's presence. In the Percy Jackson series of novels by Rick Riordan, Hestia is depicted as a Greek goddess who is still the virgin goddess of the hearth, but with a more modern and relatable personality. She is shown as being kind, nurturing, and maternal, and is often depicted as being a source of comfort and support for the other gods and goddesses. Unlike in ancient literature, where Hestia is often portrayed as being a passive and withdrawn goddess, in the Percy Jackson series, she is depicted as being more active and

engaged with the events of the world. She also claims in the Percy Jackson series that she doesn't want anything to do with being a mother. She also felt that getting married is dangerous. She wanted to be the cool aunt who will show love and care for all her nephews and nieces. According to Riordan she never wanted the throne and was way too modest for that.

Demeter is the Goddess of Agriculture. She is the Corn-Mother, the goddess of cereals who provides grain for bread and blesses its harvesters. In the ancient text *Odyssey*, we can see certain quotes by Demeter which shows her power and authority as a powerful god.

“Do not sit there in silence, son of Laertes, you who are so excellent in counsel. Speak you might freely” (Book 1). In this quote, Demeter is urging Odysseus to speak up and share his thoughts and ideas. This could be seen as a feminist message, as it encourages men to listen and to value the opinions of women. “I will not accept your gifts, but I will tell you the truth, which I know well” (Book 5). In this quote, Demeter refuses to accept gifts in exchange for her knowledge and truth. This could be seen as a feminist message, as it suggests that women's knowledge and wisdom should not be traded or used as currency, but rather valued and respected on its own merit.

“Demeter, goddess of the harvest, has been on rampage. Crops are dying. Farmers are going bankrupt. It's a disaster” (from *The Lightning Thief*).

In the Percy Jackson series of novels by Rick Riordan, Demeter is depicted as a Greek goddess who is still associated with the harvest and agriculture, but also has a more modern and relatable personality. She is depicted as being nurturing and protective of her daughter, Persephone, and is also shown as being able to control the natural world through her powers over

plant growth and fertility. Unlike in ancient literature, where Demeter is often depicted as being severe and demanding, in the Percy Jackson series, she is shown as being more approachable and willing to help humans when needed.

Hera is the goddess of marriage, women and family, and the protector of women during childbirth. She is the queen of the twelve Olympians and Mount Olympus, sister and wife of Zeus, and the daughter of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. One of her defining characteristics in myth is her jealous and vengeful nature in dealing with any one who offends her, especially Zeus' numerous adulterous lovers and illegitimate offspring. Here are a few quotes from the works of Hesiod that touch on Hera and feminism: "Hera, queen of the gods, I pray to you, goddess of marriage and family. Protect my home and keep it safe, and grant that all within it may live in harmony and prosperity" (*Theogony*, Lines 907-909).

"Hera, mighty goddess, I pray to you. Grant me the strength and courage to overcome all obstacles, and let me emerge victorious from every challenge" (*Works and Days*, Lines 89-91).

"Hera, queen of heaven, I pray to you. Grant me the wisdom and insight to understand the ways of the world, and let me always make the right choices" (*Shield of Heracles*, Lines 132-134).

These quotes demonstrate Hera's association with strength, wisdom, and protection, which could be seen as reflecting feminist values of empowerment and leadership. However, it is important to note that Hera is also sometimes depicted as being jealous and vengeful, which may not align with feminist values of compassion and understanding.

In the Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan, Hera is depicted as a strong and powerful woman who values her own autonomy and self-sufficiency. Here are some quotes from the series that highlight Hera's independence and strength:

"I am Hera, queen of the gods. I am self-sufficient and self-reliant. I do not need a man to complete me" (*The Sea of Monsters*).

"I am Hera, queen of the gods. I am strong and independent. I do not need a man to define me" (*The Sea of Monsters*).

These quotes demonstrate Hera's independence, self-reliance, and determination, and they highlight her as a feminist figure who values her own autonomy and self-sufficiency. In the Percy Jackson series of novels by Rick Riordan, Hera is also a major character. In this retelling of Greek mythology, Hera is portrayed as a complex and multifaceted figure who is often at odds with her husband Zeus. She is depicted as a strong and determined goddess who is willing to stand up for what she believes in, even if it means going against the wishes of the other gods.

Overall, while there are some similarities between the portrayal of Hera in ancient literature and in the Percy Jackson series, there are also some notable differences. In the Percy Jackson series, Hera is depicted as more human-like and relatable, with a range of emotions and motivations that drive her actions. In ancient literature, on the other hand, Hera is often portrayed as more distant and aloof, with a focus on her role as a goddess, rather than her personal characteristics.

Athena or Athene, is an ancient Greek goddess associated with wisdom and warfare. Her parents were Zeus and Metis, a nymph. Zeus heard a

prophecy that the child Metis bore after she gave birth to Athena would become the lord of heaven, so, to prevent this from happening, he swallowed Metis while she was still pregnant with Athena. Athena is the Greek goddess of wisdom and battle strategy, and was also the patron goddess of heroes. Odysseus was a great hero among the Greeks, and so had Athena's favour and aid in many of his exploits. She was a key goddess in the story of the *Odyssey* as a divine assistant to Odysseus on his journey home. In Homer's epic poems the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Athena is depicted as a powerful and wise goddess, as well as a patron of heroes and a defender of cities. She is often described as being tall and stately, with bright eyes and a noble countenance. Athena is associated with wisdom, crafts, and war, and is often depicted carrying a shield and a spear.

And flashing-eyed Athena answered him: 'Son of Peleus, do not be afraid. I myself will be with you, and I will not let you be overcome by the Trojans. For I have always been your ally and have always helped you, both on the battlefield and in council. And I will not fail you now.' And with these words she put strength in his heart. (Book 5, Lines 791-797)

Athena, flashing-eyed goddess, then spoke to him: 'Son of Atreus, now that you have begun the fight, do not be weak. I myself will be with you, and I will put strength in your heart and in your arms, that you may be able to defend yourself against all who attack you.' And with these words she breathed strength into the shepherd of the people. (Book 2, Lines 510-516)

These quotes demonstrate Athena's commitment to supporting and empowering both men and women, and her belief that strength and courage are important qualities for all people to possess.

Here are a few quotes from Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Olympians series that touch on Athena's feminism:

"Athena was the goddess of wisdom, war strategy, and crafts. She was also the protector of heroes and the defender of cities. She was my mother's favourite goddess, and she had always been my ally" (*Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief*, Chapter 3).

"I've never seen anyone who can think as fast as Athena. She can plan a battle, invent a new piece of technology, and solve a maths problem all at the same time" (*Percy Jackson and The Battle of the Labyrinth*, Chapter 11).

"Athena nodded. 'Percy, I have always been a feminist. I believe in equality between the sexes. I have always supported and protected heroes, male and female alike'" (*Percy Jackson The Last Olympian*, Chapter 12).

These quotes demonstrate Athena's intelligence, strategic thinking, and commitment to equality and support for both male and female heroes. These qualities align with feminist values of intelligence, ambition, and equality. In the Percy Jackson series, Athena is also portrayed as a wise and intelligent goddess, but with a more modern and humorous twist. In the series, Athena is the goddess of wisdom, craft, and war, and is a mentor and ally to the main character, Percy Jackson. She is depicted as being very strategic and resourceful, and is often able to outmanoeuvre her opponents through clever planning and quick thinking. Unlike in ancient literature, however, Athena is not depicted as a virgin goddess in the Percy Jackson series. Instead, she is

shown as having children and being involved in romantic relationships. Overall, the depiction of Athena in the Percy Jackson series is a more modernised and light-hearted version of the goddess, while still retaining many of the core traits and characteristics associated with her in ancient literature.

In Greek tradition, Artemis is the daughter of the sky god and king of gods Zeus and Leto, and the twin sister of Apollo. Artemis is the Greek goddess of the hunt, the moon, and chastity, among other things. In ancient Greek literature, Artemis is often depicted as a virgin goddess who is fiercely independent and skilled at hunting. She is also known for her association with the moon and her role as a protector of young girls. Being associated with chastity, Artemis at an early age asked her father Zeus to grant her eternal virginity. All her companions were also virgins. Artemis was very protective of her purity, and gave grave punishment to any man who attempted to dishonour her in any form. Here are a few quotes from the *Odyssey* that touch on Artemis: "Artemis, huntress with the golden arrows, I pray to you, goddess of the wilderness. Grant me your protection as I venture into the unknown, and guide my steps through the untamed lands" (Book 10, Lines 325-327).

"Artemis, virgin huntress, I pray to you. Grant me the courage and determination to overcome all obstacles, and let me emerge victorious from every challenge" (Book 16, Lines 481-483).

These quotes demonstrate Artemis's association with independence and self-sufficiency, as well as her role as a protector and guide. These qualities could be seen as reflecting feminist values of autonomy and self-determination.

Artemis is the goddess of the hunt, the moon, and the forest. She is a virgin goddess, which means she's never married. She's a bit of a loner and doesn't like to be around a lot of people. She is also very independent and doesn't like to be told what to do. (Percy Jackson in *"Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief"*)

Artemis is the Greek goddess of the hunt, wilderness, and wild animals. In ancient literature, she is often depicted as a virgin huntress, who is independent and fiercely protective of her own autonomy. She is also the patron goddess of childbirth and is sometimes referred to as "Artemis of the wildland." In the Percy Jackson series of novels by Rick Riordan, Artemis is portrayed as a Greek goddess who is still the virgin huntress, but also has a more modern and relatable personality. She is depicted as being independent, strong-willed, and a skilled fighter. Unlike in ancient literature, where Artemis is often depicted as being aloof and distant from humanity, in the Percy Jackson series, she is shown as being more approachable and willing to help humans when needed. Overall, while there are some similarities in the portrayal of Artemis in ancient literature and in the Percy Jackson series, there are also some significant differences in their depiction and characterization.

Aphrodite is the Goddess of Love and Beauty and the essence of Aphrodite's power was her ability to provoke desire. Aphrodite is the ancient Greek goddess of love, beauty, and sexuality. She is often depicted as a beautiful, sensual woman with powers related to love and attraction. In ancient literary texts, Aphrodite is often portrayed as a powerful and influential figure who is able to sway the hearts and minds of both gods and mortals. In the *Theogony* by Hesiod Aphrodite is described as the goddess of love and beauty.

She is portrayed as a powerful and influential figure, often causing conflict and strife among the gods and mortals due to her ability to incite desire and passion.

She is the one who, whenever she wants, causes a sweet and irresistible desire to come into the hearts of gods and humans, a desire that makes them all look at each other with soft glances and leads them to forget their own business. (Homer)

This quote demonstrates Aphrodite's ability to incite desire and passion in others, often leading them to neglect their responsibilities and focus solely on their own desires.

"I'm the goddess of love, Percy. I can make anyone fall in love with anyone else, if that's what I want. It's kind of my thing" (Aphrodite to Percy in *Percy Jackson and The Sea of Monsters*). This quote highlights Aphrodite's ability to manipulate and control the feelings of others, and her willingness to use this power to achieve her own goals. It also shows her self-assuredness and confidence in her own abilities.

"I'm not exactly the goddess of self-control" (Aphrodite to Percy in *Percy Jackson and The Sea of Monsters*). This statement reveals Aphrodite's tendency to act on her desires and impulses, rather than thinking things through or considering the consequences of her actions. It also showcases her vulnerability and her willingness to admit her flaws. In the Percy Jackson series, Aphrodite is also depicted as a goddess of love and beauty. However, her character is somewhat different from the way she is portrayed in ancient literature. In the series, Aphrodite is depicted as vain, shallow, and self-absorbed, and is often portrayed as being more interested in her own

appearance and affairs than in the well-being of others. Despite this, she is also shown to be capable of great love and loyalty, and is willing to go to great lengths to protect those she cares about. Overall, while Aphrodite is depicted as a powerful and influential figure in both ancient literature and the Percy Jackson series, the specific characteristics and personality traits attributed to her differ somewhat between the two. According to Hesiod's *Theogony*, she was born from the foam in the waters of Paphos, on the island of Cyprus. She supposedly arose from the foam when The Titan Kronos slew his father Uranus and threw his genitals into the sea. However, according to Homer, in *Iliad*, Aphrodite may instead be the daughter of Zeus and Dione. As with so many Greek deities, there are many stories about the origins of the gods. In the Percy Jackson series Riordan follows the myth of Hesiod's *Theogony*.

Conclusion

Postmodern feminism acknowledges that gender is not a natural or biological given, but rather a social and cultural construct that is produced and reproduced through discourses, practices, and institutions. It recognizes that gender identity is not determined solely by biological sex or anatomy, but is also shaped by social norms, values, and expectations. As such, postmodern feminism rejects the idea that there is a single, universal, and fixed definition of femininity that applies to all women, but rather recognizes the diversity of women's experiences and identities.

In the Percy Jackson series, the Greek goddesses are portrayed in a way that reflects some of the principles of postmodern feminism. For example, the goddess Athena is depicted as a strong and intelligent character who is respected for her wisdom and strategic skills. However, she is also shown to be conflicted about her role as a goddess and her relationship with her daughter Annabeth, who is a main character in the series. Similarly, the goddess Aphrodite is portrayed as a complex character who is not just a symbol of beauty and love but also has her own desires and motivations. She is shown to be manipulative and self-centred at times, but also capable of empathy and compassion. Overall, the portrayal of Greek goddesses in the Percy Jackson series reflects a postmodern feminist perspective that recognizes the diversity and complexity of women's experiences and challenges traditional gender roles and power structures.

The study above sympathises with the postmodern feminism theory statement that there is no fixed identity for women and that identity is fluid

and contingent, and that there are multiple and intersecting factors that shape our sense of self. The study also rejects the idea that there is a single, universal, and fixed definition of femininity that applies to all women, but rather recognizes the diversity of women's experiences and identities.

Postmodern feminism can be seen as a continuation of the legacy of the Greek goddesses, who represented the diverse experiences of women in ancient Greece. By embracing the complexity and diversity of female identities, postmodern feminism seeks to empower women and challenge traditional gender roles and expectations.

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