Everything on here is meant to provide some background to the plays of Sophocles. The myths are worth studying in their own right, and the historical material is worth knowing. But this is not meant as a burden and will not in any way eclipse our study Oedipus and Antigone. While I expect you to know this and will quiz you on the material, the assessment will be very small in comparison to the assessment for writing on Oedipus. Also almost everything on here will be covered in class. The items marked with an asterick require no knowledge before they are covered in class. As noted elsewhere you must read Oedipus and Antigone outside class. We will read Oedipus in class together dig into it as a second read.

Mythology connected to Oedipus

1. What is meant by mythology?
2. Who was Zeus? How was he born? How did he defeat his father? Who was his wife? What is one relation he had with a mortal woman?
3. Who was Hera? What was she goddess of?
4. Who was Hades? What was he god of?
5. Who was Hermes? What was he god of?
6. Who was Apollo? What was he god of?
7. Who was Dionysus? What was he god of? Why might he be the appropriate god for a festival involving performance of plays?
8. Who were the Moirai? What is the Greek conception of fate?
9. What does the story of Artemes and Acteon suggest about the Greek idea of transgression and punishment?
10. What is one mythical significance of Corinth?
11. What was the Oracle at Delphi?
12. Thebes: Who was the founder of Thebes? How was the city founded?
13. Who was Cadmus?
14. Who was Laius?
15. Sphinx: What was the Sphinx? What is its riddle and solution?
16. What are the stories surrounding Tiresias? How did he become blind? What did he get in exchange?
17. What is the myth of Oedipus? Consider that there are many versions.

Greek Civilization and theater

We will go over in class some ideas such as:

The measure of man is man

Know yourself

All things in moderation

Outside class, look up and have a very basic knowledge of ancient Athens:

One good source of a quick summary is <http://www.ancient.eu/Athens/>

Another is <http://history-world.org/athens.htm>. And the brief summary in World Literature will mostly suffice. In fact, we had time to read that in class, and I will quiz you on nothing that could not be gotten from that reading.

Be sure to know:

Why Athens is called Athens

The Greco-Persian Wars

The Delian League

The Golden Ago of Athens

The Acropolis

Peloponnesian War

Pericles

Greek Theater

For information on Greek theater go to:

http://www.watson.org/~leigh/drama.html

Origin of Tragedy

Satyr Play

Festival of Dionysus

Aristotle’s Poetics\*

Skene

Chorus

Deus ex Machina\*

Hamartia\*

Four playwrights: Rough dates of productive life and what they are most noted for.

Sophocles

Aeschylus

Euripides

Aristophanes