My essay will explore the extreme masculinity in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Odyssey* as well as the diction and imagery that creates it. Alongside that, I will also be talking about how masculinity and femininity often work against each other in the narratives. Both stories are dominated by male characters who display extreme masculinity; Characters like Odysseus and Titus, who share many of the same qualities, feel a need to be aggressive, violent, dominant. They also feel a need to prove themselves by making difficult sacrifices, such as Titus insisting that his hand be cut off to pay his sons’ ransom. This also plays into a quality Odysseus has, which is a need to make a name for himself—for example, when he unnecessarily tells the Cyclops his name in a moment of ignorant arrogance. Even young Telemachus, who is younger than Odysseus or Titus and displays less extreme masculinity, upholds the idea that bravery and aggression are needed to appear “manly.” The imagery of the aforementioned scenes and the words chosen to describe the men

I will also explore the source of the male characters’ power. In *Titus Andronicus* especially, many of the men gain their power by actively defiling women or through the simple fact that the women hold less power than them. For example, a key scene I will discuss is the rape of Lavinia, where the divide between male and female power is very evident. I will be bringing two scholarly essays into my argument: one about the rhetoric of masculinity in
Homer’s work, and one about the roles women fulfill in *Titus Andronicus*. They will supplement my main argument: both *Titus Andronicus* and *The Odyssey* use violent imagery and words of praise to glorify the power behind extreme masculinity.
Annotated Bibliography


This essay discusses the etymology of some of Homer’s language surrounding masculinity, which I will use to heavily supplement my analysis of diction in The Odyssey. This essay discusses masculinity in all of Homer’s literature and how it closely relates to heroism. I will also use this source to develop my discussion of Telemachus as a male hero.


In my essay, I will mostly be using The Odyssey to look mainly at Telemachus and Odysseus as masculine characters. The language used to describe the male characters as well as the imagery of their aggressive actions will be a large piece of my argument. I will also talk about the treatment of women by men, such as the suitor’s treatment of Penelope and Odysseus’ treatment of the maids, as it relates to power.


In my essay, I will focus on the divide between male and female characters in Titus Andronicus. I will look at how masculinity is conveyed through imagery of violence and sacrifice, while femininity is conveyed through imagery of submission and sexualization.

This essay discusses the role of women in Titus Andronicus in several different contexts: their role as victims, as revenge-seekers, as subjects of male fantasy, and more. I plan to use this source to contrast Lavinia and Tamora’s presence in the novel to the presence of the male characters, showing how masculinity and femininity tend to work against each other in the play.