FS 101: Academic Discourse I
Section 23: “In Our Image”
Fall 2008
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Home page: http://cs.allegheny.edu/~rroos/fs101F2008/
or http://cs.allegheny.edu/wiki/fs101F2008

Assignment 3: Short Paper—Myths

1. We have looked at a few ancient myths that have to do with the construction of “artificial beings” — the golden servants of Hephaestus, the bronze giant Talos, the animated statue made by Pygmalion, and others. We also looked at the legend of Prometheus (which we will refer to again when we read Frankenstein). Write a one-page paper that relates one of the myths we’ve examined to some facet of contemporary life — modern culture, or current events, or some other aspect of daily life. This should not be a personal paper (i.e., not relating directly to an experience in your life), but rather a more general one.

This paper serves as a writing sample for me, so you should write in your best formal style.

Grading rubric:

- met the content requirements: one page, relates one of the myths to contemporary life (A/C)
- concise — every word counts (A/B/C)
- no gross errors in grammar or spelling (A/B/C)

2. Begin reading the short article “The Uncanny Valley” (link on class web site). Look at the four short video clips under “Web Exercises” (Aibo, Pleo, robot child, Actroid). On the Web, look up the story “The Sandman” by E.T.A. Hoffman. I won’t ask you to read the whole thing (but it is linked on the course web site). However, you should be able to find several online synopses of the story. Skim through the Freud article on “The Uncanny” (it is very long and much of it is not directly of interest to us — concentrate on sections referring to Jentsch’s definition of uncanny and the character Olympia).

3. Continue reading Edison’s Eve.