

The Trickster

In his book, *Trickster Makes This World*, Lewis Hyde describes the role of Trickster in both history and the contemporary world. Trickster discredits the rigid social and political structures through a number of techniques that include creativity, inconsistency, lies, theft, and sometimes violence. He is at once clever and stupid, creative and vulgar. As one reviewer put it, “Trickster is a god of the crossroads, a god on the move with very little baggage, a god free of the shame inflicted by the rules of a locality.” The review continues, “When negotiating between mortals and gods, Trickster is an unreliable ally for both parties. He may steal the fire and give it to the mortals, but he is equally likely to betray mortals’ expectations.”

In Greek mythology Trickster is ever present. Hermes, as messenger for the gods, is entrusted with a sacred task. But he is also a thief and a plunderer, which makes him suspect and the validity of the message questionable.