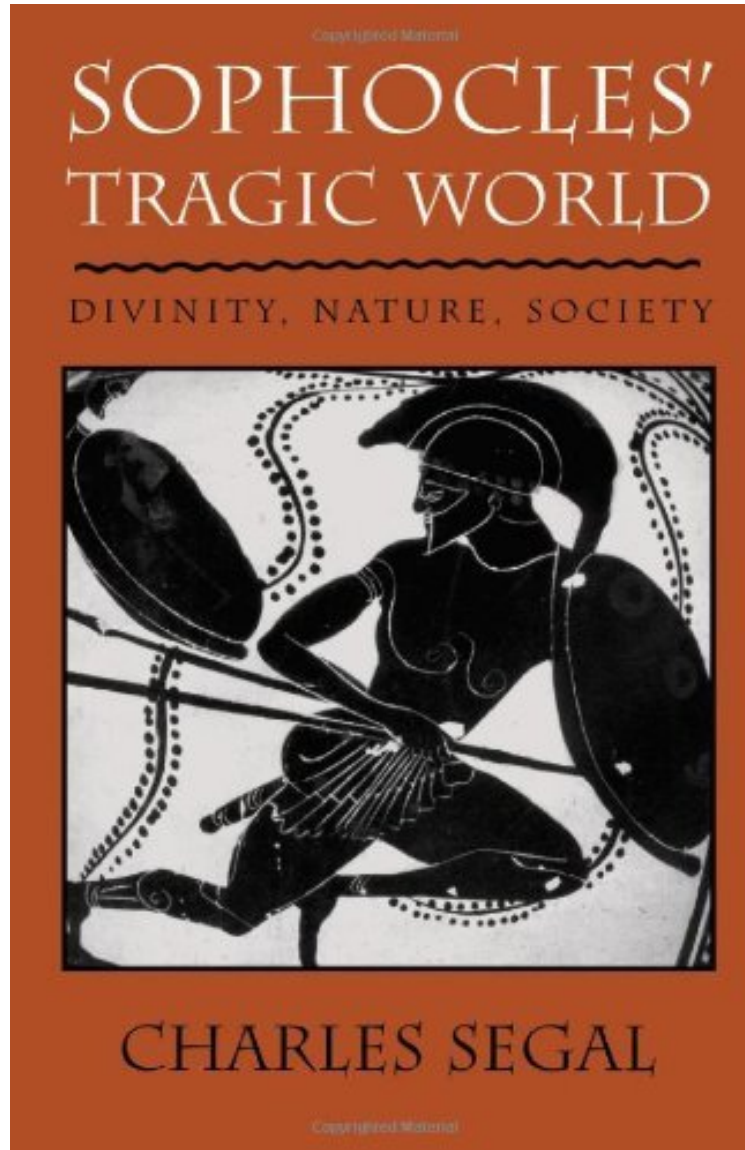


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Sophocles' Tragic World: Divinity, Nature, Society

Charles Segal

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Charles Segal : Sophocles' Tragic World: Divinity, Nature, Society before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sophocles' Tragic World: Divinity, Nature, Society:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Diverse Important CollectionBy DanThis is a traditional "collection of essays" as opposed to an ordered and sustained argument. As such, I find it invaluable. Indeed, there are multiple essays on Oedipus Tyrannus that everyone should read. I was particularly taken by his analysis of the Chorus. His (loosely) psychoanalytic reading of lament in Antigone is also, I think, something every scholar must at least be aware of. And he even tackles Lacan in what I found to be an unusually dense text for Segal. The subject itself is quite

abstract, and as far as applying it to classical studies goes, I think Segal makes sense of Lacan without appropriating him. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Segal is uniquely unique

By C. E. Franklin
I am a scholar of Ancient Greek Tragedy and as such an expert I can say that Charles Segal has the most unique opinion of Oedipus in particular, although his book covers various Sophoclean heroes, that I have come across in recent years. This text is fresh, and suprisingly clear and easy to understand. He leaves no rock unturned, no theory unaddressed. If you are looking on a guide to Oedipus, Antigone, Ajax, or Trachinian Women, you have come to the right place. Buy this book, it's good.

Much has been written about the heroic figures of Sophocles' powerful dramas. Now Charles Segal focuses our attention not on individual heroes and heroines, but on the world that inspired and motivated their actions--a universe of family, city, nature, and the supernatural. He shows how these ancient masterpieces offer insight into the abiding question of tragedy: how one can make sense of a world that involves so much apparently meaningless violence and suffering. In a series of engagingly written interconnected essays, Segal studies five of Sophocles' seven extant plays: Ajax, Oedipus Tyrannus, Philoctetes, Antigone, and the often neglected Trachinian Women. He examines the language and structure of the plays from several interpretive perspectives, drawing both on traditional philological analysis and on current literary and cultural theory. He pays particular attention to the mythic and ritual backgrounds of the plays, noting Sophocles' reinterpretation of the ancient myths. His delineation of the heroes and their tragedies encompasses their relations with city and family, conflicts between men and women, defiance of social institutions, and the interaction of society, nature, and the gods. Segal's analysis sheds new light on Sophocles' plays--among the most widely read works of classical literature--and on their implications for Greek views on the gods, moral life, and sexuality.

Sophocles' Tragic World is...a lucidly written work of great theoretical sophistication and learning, offering many new insights into the fundamental meaning of the plays. (Victor Bers Bryn Mawr Classical) [Segal] refutes reductionist attempts to derive from a Sophoclean tragedy a unitary moral or message. The dramas, Segal argues, present insoluble dilemmas that require the audience to engage with the situations the characters face, the choices the characters make, and the consequences of those choices...This book will be of interest to anyone who wants a fuller appreciation of Sophocles' dramatic art. (Andrew Szegedy-Maszak New England Classical Journal) Segal's strengths as a critic are sensitivity to detail, breadth of cultural reference, and open-mindedness; these qualities make his writing rich...This is a book which could enhance any reader's understanding of Sophocles. (Greece and Rome) A fine collection of nine essays...A richly rewarding collection amply illustrated with specific detailed reference to the texts that one always tries to inculcate in one's pupils: for them, this will be invaluable. (Jim Neville JACT) Sophocles' Tragic World is an organized collection of nine essays (plus introduction) on five plays, Ajax, Trachiniae, Philoctetes, Antigone, and--especially--OT, to which four of the chapters are devoted. The introduction and three of the essays (one on Ant., two on OT) are new; the others are revisions of published articles, dating originally from 1976 to 1993. For several decades now, [Segal] has been so articulate about Greek tragedy, and so productive in his articulations, that one has acquired an unusually sharp sense...of the changing shape and direction that his readings have taken over the years. (M.S. Silk Classical) Charles Segal has written a superb critical study of five of the seven extant plays by Sophocles...Segal's analytical interests go beyond the usual discussion of the nature of heroic greatness of tragic stature. He is principally concerned with the 'tragic world' which Sophocles depicts...Segal writes in a lucid, jargon-free prose that is also dramaturgy of the highest order...Segal's strength as a critic issues directly from a wide-ranging sensitivity to the epic tradition and a nuanced awareness of the dramatic use of temporal shifts and poetic displacements. Segal's terrific, lucid book should also be required reading for anyone interested in the tragic stature of women in Greek tragedy. His complex thinking on the subject gives justice to the basic intractability of Sophocles' views on the nature of feminine sensibility. (Randy Gener New York Theatre Wire) This work includes five previously published essays and four new essays. Once more, Segal brings his considerable scholarship to bear on the plays of Sophocles, addressing five of the seven extant tragedies. (Choice) From the Back Cover Much has been written about the heroic figures of Sophocles' powerful dramas. Now Charles Segal focuses our attention not on individual heroes and heroines, but on the world that inspired and motivated their actions - a universe of family, city, nature, and the supernatural. He shows how these ancient masterpieces offer insight into the abiding question of tragedy: how one can make sense of a world that involves so much apparently meaningless violence and suffering. In a series of engagingly written interconnected essays, Segal studies five of Sophocles' seven extant plays: Ajax, Oedipus Tyrannus, Philoctetes, Antigone, and the often neglected Trachinian Women. He examines the language and structure of the plays from several interpretive perspectives, drawing both on traditional philological analysis and on current literary and cultural theory. About the Author Charles Segal was Walter C. Klein Professor of the Classics at Harvard University.