**Notes on Aristotle’s version of the Tragic Hero**

Aristotle’s Tragic Hero: is a literary character who makes an error in judgment that inevitably leads to his/her own destruction.

Characteristics: Aristotle claims: “A man does not become a hero until he can see the root of his own downfall.”

1. Nobility (of a noble birth) or wisdom (by virtue of birth).
2. Flaw or error in judgment.
3. A reversal of fortune brought about because of the hero’s flaw.
4. The discovery or recognition that the reversal was brought about by the hero’s own actions.
5. The audience must pity and/or fear the character.

There is balance in the hero’s character – he is no better or worse than we are. He falls from great heights by having made an irreversible mistake. He eventually dies a tragic death that he accepts courageously and with honor.

Other Common Traits:

1. Suffers more than he deserves.
2. Is doomed from the start, but bears no responsibility for possessing the flaw.
3. Is noble in nature, but imperfect so we can see ourselves in him.
4. Must see and understand his doom.
5. Must be physically and/or spiritually wounded by his experiences, resulting in his death.
6. Must be intelligent so he can learn from his mistakes.
7. Must have a weakness.
8. Must be faced with a very serious decision.
9. The suffering of the hero must have meaning.