

Literature 203
Professor Lewis

Response Paper 13

1. Why doesn't the poem end with Book XII? If the point of the poem is for us to learn something valuable by watching Odysseus pass through his trials, haven't we already learned our lesson by the end of Book XII? Why can't Odysseus just go home and live happily ever after? Why do we need **another twelve books** about his adventures at home in Ithaka? What are these second twelve books about? Do they just reinforce and repeat the themes of the first twelve books? Is something new going on?
2. What role does destiny play in the fate of the suitors? Watch in particular for **Amphinomos** (who appears in Book XVIII and then again in Book XXII). Why are some suitors spared and others not? What makes one guilty and another innocent? Does the fate of the suitors bear out the judgment of the narrator on their badness? Do they all deserve their fate?