

Urban Legends II

Introduction - repetition

Urban legends are stories that a friend of a friend of the storyteller claims to have experienced or acquired from some more or less reliable source. The background may be true, but details have often been changed considerably.

Initially the story is often told by a person whose *friend knew a girl whose brother had the following happen to him...*The origin may be a newspaper article, a radio or TV program, or even something that has really happened to the storyteller or someone he or she knows.

Urban legends say a lot about us and the lives we lead. Urban legends feed off our fear of diseases, accidents, animals and also our fear of the unknown, our fascination of the supernatural and our prejudices. The flow of urban legends never seems to end. And why should it? Word of mouth takes care of that. The common denominator is that they're constantly reshaped into new versions around the world, whether they're found in the United States, Australia, Germany, Sweden, or elsewhere. Nevertheless, some stories are more or less specific for one country or culture.

Today's assignments

Now you will read several urban legends. Select three urban legends you particularly like.

You will now analyze each of the three urban legends you have selected and write answers on the computer or a piece of paper. Explain what the urban legend is about. Shortly describe the main characters, the places and the events.

Explain the turning point at the end? What did you think of the turning point?

What makes each urban legend a typical urban legend? Look at the examples in the introduction on the first page.

Prepare an oral presentation of the text. You will present your analyses in small groups next week. Find pictures to present the characters, places and events in each urban legend. You are *not* supposed to do a power point presentation. Only print suitable pictures.