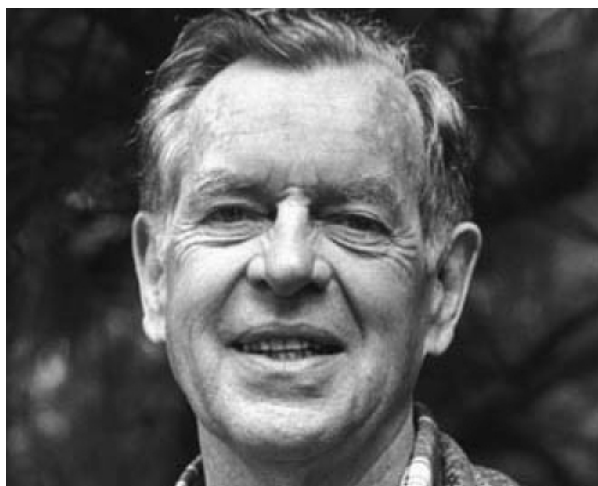
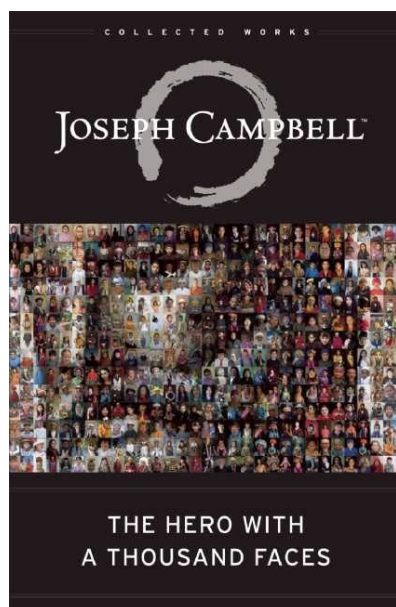


MIKEY D'S STORYTELLIN' BLOG

2020/08/29 BY ORIGMIKEYD

Superheroes are the new mythology

The reason for and sustained success of superhero films is no fluke. Their stories and characters follow plots and use tropes and archetypes that are as old as time. Every Marvel movie follows The Hero's Journey, a story structure made famous by Sarah Lawrence College professor Joseph Campbell in his 1949 book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.




This post will show how the Hero's journey works, but I will talk about tropes and archetypes in future posts.




Joseph Campbell's Hero Journey.

While Joseph Campbell's version of The Hero's Journey used seventeen steps, the modern Hero's Journey made famous by Writer's Journey author Christopher Volger uses twelve steps.

The HERO'S JOURNEY - Joseph Campbell



Watch on 

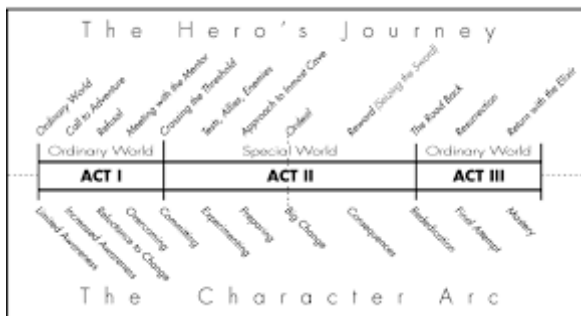
They are 1. The Ordinary World, 2. Call to Adventure. 3. Meeting the Mentor. 4. Refusal of the Call. 5. Crossing the Threshold. 6. Tests, Allies, and Enemies. 7. Approach to the Inmost Cave. 8. Ordeal. 9. Reward. 10. The Road Back. 11. Resurrection. 12. Return with Elixir.



Christopher Vogler

Christopher Vogler's book The Writer's Journey

Christopher Vogler "The Hero's Journey"



Christopher Vogler's distillation of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey.

Campbell's Hero's Journey.

Using Christophe Volger's simplification, I will explain how the Hero's journey works in Captain America: The First Avenger.



Ordinary World

A Hero's Ordinary World is their status quo, their "everyday life." It shows what our protagonist's life is like before the story kicks off. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, we meet Steve Rogers, a man who wants to enlist in the Army and fight in World War II.

Call to Adventure

A Hero's Call to Adventure is the event that kicks off his journey. In screenwriting lingo, this step is also known as the "inciting incident." In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers sees that the United States needs recruits for the war.

Refusal of the Call

A Hero may refuse to go on his adventure, or someone can deny them the opportunity to go on their journey. In Captain America: The First Avenger, the Army rejects Steve Rogers because he is physically too weak.

Meeting the Mentor

When a Hero meets a Mentor, they meet someone who will guide them on their journey. In Captain America: The First Avenger, Steve Rogers meets the scientist who invented Super

Soldier Serum. His name is Dr. Abraham Erskine.

Crossing the Threshold

When a Hero “crosses the first threshold,” they dedicate themselves fully to their adventure. In Captain America: The First Avenger, Steve Rogers receives the Super Soldier Serum.

Tests, Allies, and Enemies

In the Tests, Allies, and Enemies phase of the story, a Hero explores the new world they've entered. In many cases, they meet friends and make foes who put them through the wringer. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers meets his arch-enemy, the Red Skull. He learns about and has his first encounter with H.Y.D.R.A. His mentor, Dr. Abraham Erskine, dies. He meets his allies Peggy Carter (love interest), Bucky Barnes, Howard Stark, and Colonel Phillips.



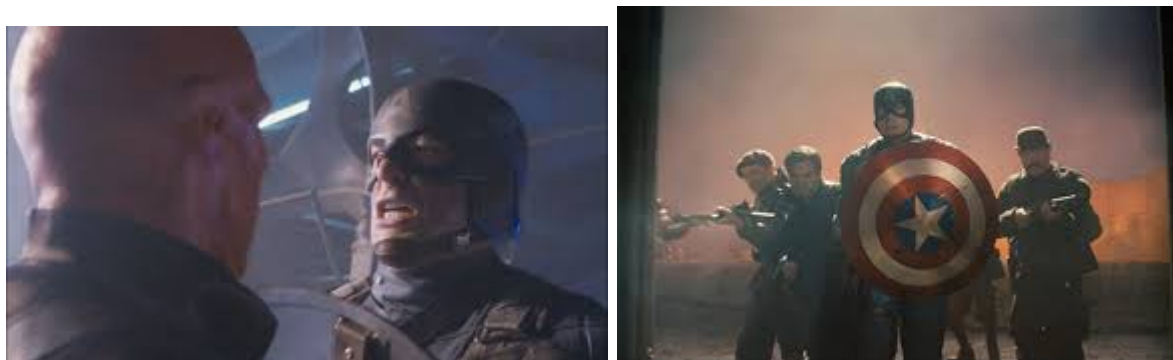
Approach to the Inmost Cave

The Hero nears the middle of the story in their special world. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers is now famous as Captain America. He goes to Hydra's main base to stop Red Skull from using the Tesseract to control a bomber and bomb several U.S. cities.



Ordeal

The Hero faces their biggest challenge. Many times he dies and is reborn. Death and rebirth may happen both physically and/or metaphorically. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers and his troops fight Red Skull so that Red Skull doesn't bomb any U.S. cities.



Reward

The Hero experiences the effects of the Ordeal. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers saves the U.S., defeats Red Skull, but loses the Tesseract because it disintegrates Red Skull. The Tesseract melts a hole into the plane before falling into the Atlantic.

The Road Back

The Hero returns to their Ordinary World or forges ahead in their journey. In Captain America: The First Avenger, Steve Rogers, low on fuel, sacrifices himself by flying the plane into a glacier so America will stay safe.

Resurrection

Vogler argues this is where the Hero “experiences a final moment of death and rebirth.” In Captain America: The First Avenger, Steve Rogers wakes up in a 1940’s hospital listening to a broadcast of a baseball game he attended. A nurse calls in S.H.I.E.L.D agents, but Steve escapes.

Return with Elixir

The Hero comes back with something that will help the Ordinary World. In *Captain America: The First Avenger*, Steve Rogers escapes only to find that he is in present-day New York City. He'd been frozen in the glacier for seventy years. He meets Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D.

In conclusion, the Hero's Journey works with all stories but has helped turn superhero stories into modern myths. This video is from my favorite trope channel on YouTube. It's *Overly Sarcastic Productions'* take on the Hero's Journey.



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