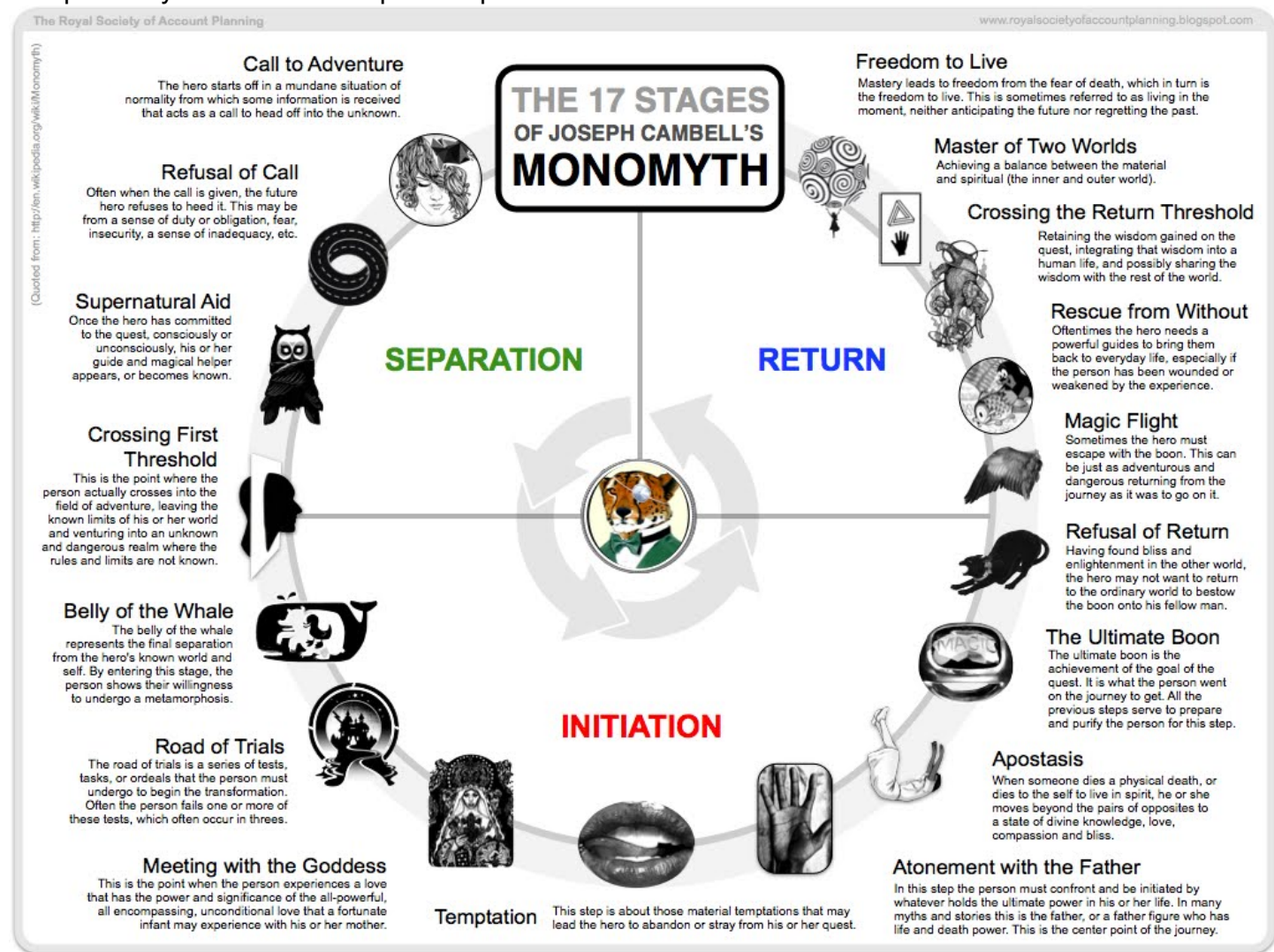


Alternative Final Instructions

A Story of Emergence

Your Origin Story

You probably remember Joseph Campbell's model from earlier in the term.



The basic elements of Campbell's model:

"The Hero's Journey" is not a "one size fits all" model for myths, cultures, and storytelling. It is also not a literal device for understanding history. It is, however, a useful tool for understanding what Campbell called "the poetry, not the prose" of ancient literature. For Campbell, it was the connotative, implicit meaning that shone through these stories that gave them their meaning, not trying to determine if they "actually happened or not." To face one's demons, to go into the belly of the beast, to slay dragons, to navigate the dark night of the soul, these were all metaphors for the inner and outer struggles people faced to become fully human and centered in the ground of being of their own lives, their own cultures, their own families. It is not important that you memorize every single smaller aspect of the complex model Campbell is trying to establish in his work on mythology,

religion and the epic traditions. But the basic pattern is one we will be exploring for this alternative final exam.

- **Separation**

What was the beginning of this journey you are telling us about? What kicked it off? What was the spark?

- **Descent**

Once this awareness was awakened in you, where did you go? What did you do? How did you begin to dig into the idea that your life might be about to change forever? Or, if it happened in a flash, how did you piece it together after the fact? The descent is the beginning of the emotional terror that comes from the realization that life as you knew it before is gone forever and that what comes next is not entirely known. It is a feeling of falling without knowing entirely when or where one will land. What was this period like for you? Was it long, short? Did it come in stages? What was lost to clear the way for the new lessons, experiences, and wisdom to be gained?

- **Ordeal**

The ordeal is, well, the order. The big dance. The substance of the life-changing event. You may be in the middle of the ordeal now or you still be in the decent. Some have come through the full initiation of their emerging new self and are already on the other side. But this is the period of change itself. The stages and states of consciousness begin to align to become the new person. This is the "time away" spent in the hard work of transformation. The descent and the ordeal, together, can be seen as the period of "initiation."

- **Return**


The return is not always a literal return, as with Odysseus to Ithaca. Sometimes the return is a psychological one. An emotional or spiritual return. This is the period of reintegration. You have returned from this journey into yourself and are not the same person you were when the journey started. But you are not entirely different either. Part of the "old you" will always remain but it is now living with the new you. How will these various versions of you get along? The return is a period of integration where the self realigns (as much as possible) into a new, solitary "I." You are all the versions of yourself that you have ever been and will ever be. The journey is never over and never fully realized. It is aspirational but also very practical. We make a thousand of these hero's journeys in a lifetime. Some change us fundamentally and profoundly and others in small, often unnoticeable ways. ***Use this final project as a way to express the meaning and metaphor of the personal emergence story you choose to share.***

- **Watch** the following video: [Joseph Campbell & The Myth of the Hero's Journey](https://youtu.be/4288NRq1vVc) < <https://youtu.be/4288NRq1vVc>>

- **Watch** the following video: [The Hero's Journey](https://youtu.be/GNPcefZKmZ0) < <https://youtu.be/GNPcefZKmZ0>>

- **Now**, finally the assignment:

- **Create your own origin story about a significant event or aspect of your life** that

- you think you can retell in the basic Campbell model we have been exploring all term.
- This can be a 2-4 page traditional essay.
 - A 2-5 minute short video (**Kaltura Video** , as long as it meets the full assignment requirements).
 - A 10-plus slide Powerpoint Presentation.
- Using the rough outline of the Campbell model, retell a story of a significant event or set of events in your life that have made you the person you are today.
 - This is not a simple essay about where you grew up and what your major is. Nor is this a chance for you to try to write a Homeric poem with yourself as Arjuna or Penelope or Achilles. Rather, this is a chance for you to apply all you have learned this term about the way mythic stories create and communicate meaning, identity, and purpose to your own life and share it in a way that is meaningful and integrative for you and the person you wish to be in the world.
 - Maybe you wish to tell a story about how you converted into, or out of, a particular religion.
 - Maybe you wish to tell a story about your time in the military.
 - Maybe it's about your journey into gender fluidity, emergent identity, and, perhaps, reassignment.
 - Maybe it's about how you or your family are surviving COVID.
 - Are you a member of the police force? A member of the protest community? Both?
 - Did you move across the world to follow your dreams?
 - Does your origin story center in a sense of place? The beach? The desert? The mountains? Tribal lands?
 - Have you become a vegan? Did you get married? First person in your family to go to college? What?
 - Pick something that you feel is essential to the person you most deeply are. Your project is not about answering all of the above questions but rather about selecting some fundamental aspect of your story that you feel fits well enough into the Campbell model of myth progression and can be presented in a way that displays the evolution of meaning, identity, and purpose with regard to some aspect of who you feel you most deeply are.
 - When you have selected the event(s) or story you wish to tell, and the medium in which you will tell it (essay, video, PowerPoint, etc.) spend some time arranging the key events, persons, symbols, etc. according to the rough outline given above (separation, descent, ordeal, return).
 - Conclude your project with a summary of where you've been, what you've learned, and how you are incorporating the value of the new you into the world in which you live.
 - Please reach out with any questions you have about formatting, technology, or available options for this project.
 - **Submit your final project in the assignment dropbox no later than the last day of the term 11:59PM.**