# Hero's Journey / Monomyth Questions and Answers

Learn about Kal Bashir's 2000+ Stage Hero's Journey And Transformation Through A New World / State at <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>

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#### **Should I Outline My Screenplay Or Novel?**

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There are many advantages to outlining, such as:

- A) It allows you to be more creative you can easily generate lots of ideas and just as easily trash them.
- B) It helps meet deadlines. Waiting for inspiration just will not do in these circumstances.
- C) Reworking an outline is much less work than reworking a first draft.
- D) It helps you structure your story efficiently work out the twists and turns, the placement of your problems, the arc through them etc.

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## When writing a screenpay or novel, what kind of research is required?

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Generally, you'll want to research to make your worlds, characters, their motivations and challenges authentic.

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#### What is the antagonist supposed to do?

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One way to look at it is through the provocation angle: the antagonist's function is to provoke the hero onto the journey and to change.

Digging a little deeper, the antagonist's function is to provoke the hero to find his or her true self / who s/he is.

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#### How many problems does a screenplay solve?

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Screenplays solve at least two problems.

You can look at one as the physical problem and the other as the psychological problem.

For example, in In The Heat of the Night (1967), Virgil and Gillespie have to solve the murder and resolve their own prejudices.

For example, in Jaws (1975), Brody has to kill the shark and overcome his own fear.

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#### Hook the reader within the first ten pages?

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Certainly, hooking the reader in the first ten pages is a good idea.

Hooking the reader on the first page is a better idea.

Hooking the reader on the first sentence is an even better idea.

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#### **Opening Scenes Of A Screenplay**

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One suggestion is to open the story with the problem.

In The 40 Year Old Virgin (2005), we immediately see that Andy is alone, anal retentive etc...that he needs to get laid, loosen up, let go.

In Lord of the Rings (2001), we immediately see that Sauron is the problem.

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Why do so many movies start with a marriage or death?

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Marriage and death are symbolic for change - the departure / loss of the old and the arrival / dawn of the new.

Even when movies do not start with these symbolisms, they tend to be inherent. For example, in In The Heat of the Night (1967), Endicott's old agricultural way of doing things is being replaced by Colbert's factory and new way of doing things.

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#### What's the antagonist's goal? What does the villain want?

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Generally, the hero wants liberty (Freedom To Live, the last stage of Joseph Campbell's version of hero's journey / monomyth).

Generally, the antagonist/villain wants to prevent this, in other words, repression.

The specifics may vary, but that is the underlying goal.

For example, in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, the White Witch wants to rule - but that is a very repressive outcome for the creatures of Narnia.

For example, in The Godfather (1972), Barzini wants to rule, but that is a very repressive outcome for the Corleone family.

For example, in Gladiator (2000), Commodus wants to rule, but that is a very repressive outcome for the people of the Roman Empire.

In sum, the antagonist wishes to maintain the Ordinary State, which by it's very nature is repressive.

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#### How do I write sub-plots?

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Think of subplots in terms of arcs.

Each subplot arcs in the same way that the hero arcs, with the changes occurring in the same phases.

In terms of managing many arcs, know that each arc does not have to be shown in great detail. You can simply show the beginning and end states of the lesser subplots or characters or combine these messages into the larger scenes.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from



#### How do I make writing sequels easier?

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Usually, writers think the first story has solved all problems - that there's nowhere else to go.

But each sequel is a story in it's own right. Each has it's own set of obstacles, limitations, growth, change, arc, situations etc. You just need to create a new set of these.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### How many arcs are there in a typical story?

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Almost everything arcs in a story.

For example, in Dark Knight Rises (2012), Bruce Wayne arcs, catwoman/Selina arcs, Gotham (the world) arcs, Blake arcs, Bane arcs etc...

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### Does the monomyth allow for two or more heroes?

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Of course.

In this case, each hero will likely be each others supernatural aid and provocateur.

For example, In The Heat of the Night (1967), both Virgil and Gillespie provoke each other to change.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### How do I accentuate maturity in a screenplay or story?

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One way is to introduce an innocent archetype.

In Unforgiven (1992), the Schofield Kid grows up as a result of the journey alongside Will Munny and Ned Logan.

In The Magnificent Seven (1960), Hilario grows up as a result of the journey alongside Vin et al.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### On what page should I write the hook of the screenplay?

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Ideally, right on page 1.

A good example is The Hangover (2009). We know right from the start that the boys have to somehow make it back to the wedding.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### What is backstory in storytelling?

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Backstory is the loss of the state of perfection up until the moment the hero is ready to depart to return to it again.

For example, Luke Skywalker's backstory in Star Wars (1977) is everything that's happened to him, his father and his family etc before we meet him in his Ordinary World.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### Do I need to show the hero's backstory?

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Not necessarily. The hero's journey / monomyth and storytelling is about going forward, in general.

You will show states of imperfection in the Ordinary World and State, but you don't need to show their origin.

For example, In The Heat of the Night (1967), we don't see Virgil's backstory - it is only referenced most indirectly through his passing through town to visit his mother.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's

Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Is the hero's journey only applicable to certain genres?

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Not at all. The hero's journey / monomyth is genre independent.

For example, you'll always have an Ordinary World, a First Threshold etc.

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#### How do I show urgency in my film script?

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Usually some form of Time Pressure is indicated. Usually some form of armageddon will result.

Armageddon really means that what once was will shortly come to an end. The world which previously existed, will shortly come to an end. Unless the hero's journey can save the day or somehow allow entry into a new world or dawn.

In Armageddon (1998), the end of the world is literal.

In The Ugly Truth (2009), the end of the world is the end of Abby's show.

In The Heat of the Night (1967), Sparta will die if Mrs Colbert moves the factory, which means solving the crime.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### **How To Create Character Profiles?**

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Before writing character profiles, you want to know what your character has to do - in other words, what functions need to be performed by that character. And that really relates very much to archetypes.

For example, a mentor has to guide, encourage the journey into the new world, assist the transformation and so on. Those requirements will inform the character profile.

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#### **Creating A Good Hook**

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One way to create a good hook is to use the multiple problem strategy.

Raiders of the Lost Ark isn't just about finding the Ark, it's also about Indy overcoming his tendency to always lose to Belloq, which is made clear right at the very beginning, "anything you possess, I can easily take away."

Make the inner and outer problems evident right at the beginning.

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#### The hero's weapons or magical gifts

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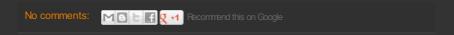
How do you prevent the hero (or antagonist for that matter) from being immediately invincible if s/he possesses the most amazing powers or weapons?

Usually, limitations prevent heroes and antagonists from using their weapons or magical spells - often the story is about overcoming those limitations.

Take the White Witch in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. She has almost unlimited powers from the start but that does her no good until she can find the children. And when she does find them, they are protected by Aslan.

Usually, the antagonist's powers are held in check until the heroes are ready to battle them.

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#### How do I fill empty plot holes?

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The first thing to do is outline. See if your plot line is coherent from beginning to end.

Think in terms of arc. The plot thread starts in one place, ends in another and evolves between the start and the end.

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#### **Superhero Motivation**

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Give me a reason why superheroes would go out and fight crime?

Commonly, some act in their backstory has instilled a sense of moral duty within them. Often, the story is about finding this moral compass.

Spiderman (2012) realizes that with great power comes great responsibility, after his uncle is murdered.

Superman (1978) has a sense of moral duty given to him by loving Earth parents and his Kryptonian father.

In Chronicle (2012), Matt finds his innate sense of right pulled out of him as Andrew goes wild.

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#### How do I change scenes?

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One method is to use border symbolism. For example, going through a tunnel, across a bridge, through a door, gates etc.

Clever scene breaks include such things as musicians stopping playing and then starting again (Titanic, 1997), toilet breaks (12 Angry Men, 1957) etc.

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#### Where is the hero's journey midpoint?

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It's better to think in terms of a midpoint range - the exact point depends on what you include or exclude, where exactly you start on the cycle, the length of the movie etc.

The midpoint is anywhere between the Physical Separation to the Joy of Infancy.

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#### How can the hero's journey be adapted for theatre?

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In the same way that the hero's journey guides the structure of film, so it guides the structure of theatre.

In Act I you'll have the Problem, the Ordinary World/State and encouragement out of it and so on.

In Act II you'll have the movement into the First Threshold, the incremental



change, the deeper change, the return of hope and the emergence of readiness and so on.

In Act III you'll have the return, the overcoming of limitations, the resolution in it's various forms.

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#### Should I Drop A Story Halfway And Start A New One?

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Detailed outlining of each and every story before actually writing it in Final Draft will help you answer this.

If a story stops inspiring you, then you might want to drop it or put it aside.

If however you keep doing this and have more than a few unfinished stories lying around, then that's a problem. Then you might need to set yourself the target of always finishing. Which may help you solve the real problem, like perhaps not knowing how to finish.

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#### **How Do I Know I'm Choosing The Right Plot?**

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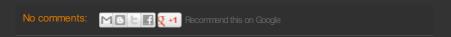
One way is to outline your story in detail from beginning to end.

Outlining isn't just bullet points. It's every in and out of the story, every what where and why, every plot detail.

If you have multiple plots, then you'll have multiple outlines.

The plot to choose is the one where the outline flows from beginning to end, the one you enjoyed writing.

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#### **Character Creating Tips?**

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Characters have various dimensions. And you need to design your characters around them.

They'll perform a function. For example, the supernatural aid tends to encourage the hero into the new world. When you create that character, create someone who can do that.



They'll have inner goals. For example, Indiana Jones needs to get over his losing streak against Belloq as well as find the Ark. When you create character, think of the inner and outer goals.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>

Also the advanced archetypes, in the advanced worksheets section.



## Stories Are About Learning Lessons, So The Hero Shouldn't Die At The End

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It is not uncommon for the lessons to be passed on or for others to learn the lessons through the hero's journey. That's visible in Christ's story, Lord of the Rings (2001/3), Gladiator (2000), the The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005) and many others.

Learn more in the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### How to stop containment / locked up scenes being boring

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One suggestion is to use a Jaws (1975) type technique. When Brody and Hooper join Quint on his boat, they're contained within it. Locked-in so to speak. It's a form of seige. To make the scenes work, there is the conflict between Hooper and Quint, their opposing worlds (working class versus rich college boy), their initial polarization to eventual working as a team.

Learn more in the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Will 'Disturbing' Content Hurt My Story?

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The answer here is to look at The Exorcist (1973). The content is pretty disturbing, but that didn't do the story any harm.

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#### How Do I Develop The Villain/Antagonist?

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Villains arc - they grow to become impossibly intimidating. Whether that's through them becoming meaner or finding the tools to trigger armageddon or them gaining more allies or similar options.

In terms of character, they have layers like the hero or other characters. For example, you could say Hannibal Lecter's shallow goal is to get out of jail, but the deeper goal is to try to order his world according to his rules, which is why he kills the guy in the other cell for being rude.

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#### Does my mythical world need a backstory?

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Not necessarily.

If you want to delve into the hero's backstory (or any character's backstory), you might need to match that backstory with a world which was in a different "state" back then.

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#### How do you create names in stories?

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One method is to use a name which in some way, shape or form, references the traits of the character you're naming. **Aptronym** (also **aptonym**) or **charactonym** is a name aptly suited to its owner.

Examples include Gordon Gekko in Wall Street (1987) or Forrest Gump (1994).

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#### Can childishness or immaturity be a character flaw

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Absolutely.

Any negative trait can be a character flaw.

As the arc is progressed upon, so the character flaw is repaired.

A good example is Bachelorette (2012) - like a teenager, Gena's always on her cellphone, thinking it's cute. She lets go of it as she matures.

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#### What is the character flaw in story?

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The character flaw is physical representation of state and change and repair. In the early state, the character flaw is big and pronounced. As the character changes (becomes more whole and repairs itself), so the character flaw repairs itself.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### First Ten Pages Of A Screenplay

How do I write the first ten pages of a film script?

The exact outline really does depend on what type of story you're trying to write.

Here's a suggestion.

Start with a problem, a bad guy if you wish. Like Lord of the Rings.

Start with a hero who is totally incapable of solving the problem, living in his Ordinary World, like Frodo in Lord of the Rings.

Encourage the hero out of his Ordinary World and create obstacles to leaving the Ordinary World. Then create a reason to leave.

Include other challenges. For example, a Romantic Challenge - a romantic interest which cannot be won over yet.

Include a loyal ally who also has challenges.



Now leave the Ordinary World and grow and learn until your hero is ready to solve the problem.

Remember, when we say "like Frodo" or "like "Lord of the Rings" we are just giving you examples - the same principles apply to crime stories, romcoms or any other type of story.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from <a href="http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html">http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html</a>



#### Doe my hero have to die?

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In Pale Rider (1985), the preacher enters the world, sets it right and then departs.

Jesus Christ is born into the world, sets it right and then dies.

Leaving and departing are effectively the same as birth and death.

Learn more in the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



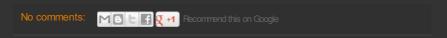
#### Does my hero have to be an orphan?

The orphaned hero is suggestive of many things - loss of the connection to home, loss of the state of perfection, loss of wholeness and so on.

Many successful films incorporate the parent death / parent separation, like the academy award winning best film Slumdog Millionaire (2008).

Others simply refer to it indirectly, like Lawless (2012) where the three brothers live together.

You do not, however, need to demonstrate orphanage. You simply need to provoke the hero to break away from the Ordinary World.



#### How many characters are too many?

This story question usually arises when there are several or a dozen or so, considered to be main, characters.

Movies like Spartacus (1960) have hundreds of characters but only several main ones and only one hero.

It's a question of managing goals.

Your characters arc, so you'll have to consider how you'll show that for each character. You can create before and after worlds where they all show before and after states, for example.

You can group characters into opposing sides, for example, which reduces it



to two entities (and maybe one in the middle, like Die Hard, 1988).

You can have a group of characters assisting main characters, like Ocean's Eleven (2001).

It's all possible, it's just a question of managing goals effectively.

Read the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Does a story need conflict?

A story needs change. Conflict is the result of the tug-of-war between the provocations to change and the resistances to it.

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### Are Hero's Journey stories the same as Rights of Passage stories?

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The hero's journey / monomyth is a story structure.

Rights of Passage is a ritualistic process marking transition from one status to another.

Rights of Passage stories fit into the hero's journey structure, as do all other story types.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



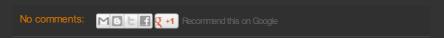
#### What are we doing in ACT II?

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Becoming whole is one way of putting it.

You go into Act 2 unwhole and you leave it whole.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



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Finding Nemo (2003) story structure: www.youtube.com/watch? v=NLyqhXG\_iV4



More at www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### What's the difference between antihero and antagonist?

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The antihero is a hero archetype whom we follow on the journey.

The antagonist has a specific provocation function - it pulls and pushes on those archetypes whom we follow on the journey.

Antagonists pull/push/provoke the antihero.

The antagonist may itself be a character whom we follow on the journey. Hence, there may be multiple antagonisms.

This is answered in more detail within the 2000+ stage Hero's Journey/Transformation/New World, which you can purchase from www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Do Heroes In The Hero's Journey Have To Be Heroic?

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Not at all. It's not really about courage or similar "heroic" type attributes.

It's about the process. Woody Allen's Annie Hall is a hero's journey story.

This is answered in more detail at www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Is Call To Adventure the same as Call To Action?

No.

Call To Action is a generic term describing various pushes / encouragements or similar.

Call To Adventure is specific to the Ordinary World and the encouragement out of it.

This is answered in more detail at www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html



#### Is The Hero's Journey / Monomyth Male Centric?

Not at all.

The journey is a process and is gender independent.

Every movie with every female lead follows it.

