

The true myth

Description

Books are extremely important to me, and they have been ever since I learned to read.

When my parents taught me (and my twin brother, Daniel), we took to it slowly, like a nervous cat testing the water. It took a while to get my brother and me interested in reading – for a long time, we were content being read to before bed.

But as my Dad has said numerous times since: “Once you started reading, you didn’t stop.”

As I started to read, I began to devour books so fast that my parents could not stock my bookshelf fast enough. So, I would re-read books over and over again, until the new shipment came in.

At school, I would plead with my parents to purchase a bunch of books from the book order forms for me, take books out of the library by the cartload and purchase books at the bookstore every time I was within running distance of one (which was often).

The more I read, the more I wanted to continue reading. I loved the escapism inherent to being transported to another world or life, the “aha!” moment of a mystery novel, the well-crafted pun, etc. I became a reading machine.

In fact, I started reading adult books long before anyone in my class moved beyond The Babysitter’s Club and Goosebumps. My very first adult book was, naturally, Jurassic Park. And the books only got bigger and more complicated – such as Clan of the Cave Bear, Stephen King’s It and more. I started to experiment with different genres, narrative styles and themes, but always returned to two types: horror and science.

I relished the challenge of trying to understand what was going on in the universe that was created within my mind, and I honed my reading skills to the point where I became an extremely fast reader.

My passion for the written word could explain why I decided to go into journalism and why I am currently working on two very different novels and a short story in my spare time.

But it was not until university, where I took an English class on a whim, that I really learned what it was to investigate literature.

In that class, all about Gothic literature (naturally), we explored three types of horror stories – vampires, werewolves and witches. We carefully dissected one of my favourite books, Dracula by Bram Stoker, and the hidden literary agenda slowly began to unfurl. Suddenly, a red flower was not simply an ornamental thing, but it served a purpose. The random encounter with a character was part of a greater plan. The path of the hero was written out long beforehand. And while the characters, events and situations differ, a large majority of stories shared a similar structure – known as “The Hero’s Journey” (or the “monomyth”).

Iâ€™ve been wanting to write something about â€œThe Heroâ€™s Journeyâ€ for a while, but could not think of a â€œnovelâ€ way to do it (if youâ€™ll pardon the pun). Then, I found a video on YouTube, and I realized that I could not do it any better, or in a more original way, than this video did with puppets.

Itâ€™s more common than you think â€“ from Star Wars to the French Connection, from Harry Potter to Happy Gilmore. Watch and see!

Category

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