Nathan Kress

Chapter 3 Test

1. What lead to Joseph Campbell's interest in comparative mythology?

As a kid, he visited the Natural History Museum and became fascinated with Native American culture which led to a lifelong passion for myth and storytelling.

1. How did Joseph Campbell become the world's foremost scholar on mythology? How did the Great Depression benefit his education?

He tried to study Sankrit and Medieval literature but after not getting into those programs he withdrew from school. He spent the depression years engaging in intense and rigorous study of cultural stories throughout time reading for nine hours a day.

1. What is considered to be Joseph Campbell's most important teaching?

The importance of “following your bliss” and living the life you always wanted to by doing that.

1. What is the primary factor that decides what types of stories a storyteller will decide to tell? What are storytellers "a product" of?

Where someone came from and every experience they have gone through in life should come through in the story. We as storytellers are a product of the environments we were raised in and still live in today.

1. Describe why myths are important. What are "stories", as defined in the context of this chapter?

Myths are important because they are metaphors for the trials and tribulations of a particular culture. The chapter states that stories are the collected dreams of millions of mythmakers.

1. Explain how you will discover your own myths.

I will take experiences from my childhood and see how they might relate to other people’s experiences to find the stories to tell.

1. Why is it important to understand the history of your art?

To be more than an amateur you must know the history of your art and the genres you work in. It is important to know what has been done so you can craft your own way of storytelling.

1. Describe the difference between an antihero and an antivillain.

An antihero blurs the distinction between hero and villain. An antivillian can be more noble or heroic than an anti-hero though their means are often considered unjust or evil.

1. As a storyteller, following countless other storytellers before you, how do you plan on keeping your stories FRESH and UNIQUE? How do you achieve freedom from the "monomyth?"

I think knowing the history of what has been done will allow me to pave my own way and keep things fresh and unique. I think achieving freedom from the monomyth can be achieved by not sticking to a set way of things when crafting your story.

1. Explain what you think is the best way to utilize the "hero's journey" without it becoming stale and predictable.

Finding new ways to tell the story in different circumstances. The hero’s journey doesn’t have to follow the set formula but should contain many if not all elements of it.

1. What separates real storytellers from those who just want to play storyteller? What is the most important trait you must possess to achieve your goals?

Creative discipline and hard work will set you apart. I think discipline and a good work ethic is key to achieve your goals.

**Chapter 3 - The Hero with a Thousand Faces - Essay**

1. Choose one film from the 12 films you watched that you enjoyed the most, were inspired by, want to steal from, etc, and break down the archetypes in the film using the Christopher Vogler book as a guide. The film you choose should also be what you see as most similar in tone to the film you hope to eventually make.

Of the films, I watched I think the most similar tone would be Donnie Darko. The protagonist in my film will be going through a similar internal struggle thinking he is crazy when he first receives these visions from the future. Then, as he buys in and realizes these are visions of future events, he must make himself a prominent world figure to stop the aliens from coming in the first place. Donnie’s vision of the end of the world didn’t turn out that way but my character must stop it instead.

1. Watch the films "Burden of Dreams" and the DVD supplement "Werner Herzog Eats his Shoe"
2. Write a 1 page paper on what you believe Herzog's "philosophy of film" to be. How does it relate to guerilla filmmaking? How does his method of filmmaking differ from other filmmakers?

I think Herzog’s philosophy was simple, go out and do it. He said he was a filmmaker because he knew he could do that and didn’t know how to do anything else. He was very into mythology and had a clear vision of what his film needed to be, even with such big obstacles at every corner. By using the actual locations of the tribes, I think he felt he was tapping into the very root of the history and mythology of the native tribes.

A lot of people would have given up on a film that took nearly 5 years to complete but Herzog was pretty bull headed and pushed forward, even with deaths and injuries to the crew and hired tribes people. He showed by always pushing forward that this is the work ethic needed to get your picture done. Even being told by an engineer, who walked off the film, that they would never get the boat over the hill, he wouldn’t give up.

I would say this style of filmmaking is very much like guerilla filmmaking in the way things were handled but very different in that he seemed to have multiple funders and a decent budget for his picture. The obstacles were huge with other tribes even trying to kill them, so they pretty much had to make changes on the fly to get things done. It was very much an uphill battle from start to finish.

I think Herzog had a clear picture of what he wanted his film to be from the beginning, and so he wouldn’t compromise on the locations, even when they had to change often. It was practically an impossible task, but I don’t think he ever looked at it that way. He just got started and kept plugging away until he got the shots he felt the film absolutely needed.

I have seen other filmmakers who kind of go with the flow and work with what they have or with what comes easy but I think to be a great filmmaker you need to have a clear picture of what your piece needs to be, which is step one, then you need to work out exactly how you will get it done. That’s where the real challenge lies in filmmaking. That and being willing to put your life on the line for something that you believe in as Herzog was in his film.