

The Hero's Journey in Narrative Media: The Female Model

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Summary

This thesis has two parts: a treatise proposing a narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey; and an original film script written in accordance with this new narrative structure. The exegesis elucidates how this new narrative model, devised through my research, was overlaid upon my original feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, to tell the story of an authentic Female Hero's Journey. This methodological approach to research-enabled screenwriting practice produces two outcomes. First, it builds a new narrative structure that can be applied to feature-length narrative screenplays. Second, it creates a feature-length screenplay that demonstrates the new narrative model while showcasing a Female Hero as protagonist. There is ample evidence that numerous blockbuster films have made use of Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative model. My research is significant in that it illuminates previously-obscured mythological elements of the new Female Hero's Journey. It also demonstrates, through its original creative component, a fresh narrative structure that, following Campbell's model, has the potential to support the box office success of female-protagonist-led films.

My doctoral research fills a gap in the existing literature relating to the Female Hero's Journey narrative model. It contributes to the field of creative practice screenwriting research, within the research field of narrative structure in fictional media narrative. It does so by creating a socially constructive, culturally resonant narrative model for the contemporary, mythologically-based Female Hero's Journey in screen narrative. As has been demonstrated through my original creative artefact/screenplay, this innovative narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey can be directly applied to narrative screen texts, not just in feature film, but in a variety of genres and screen formats, including long-form series storytelling, transmedia and television narrative, and game design.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

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Introduction

What are the features and rationale for the narrative stages of a newly revised and updated female equivalent of Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative structure? Ideally, that new model should be directly applicable to heroic female protagonists in screen narrative. Can this newly devised Female Hero's Journey narrative model be demonstrated as an effectual narrative structure for media texts by testing its efficacy in a screenplay for feature film? These research questions are respectively answered in the exegesis and creative artefact of this two-part doctoral thesis, in which the newly defined Female Hero's Journey narrative model proposed in the exegesis is verified in the creative artefact through the exemplification of its narrative structure in *Little Bit Long Way*, an original feature-length screenplay.

Those who regularly attend the cinema will find it unsurprising that screen heroines often die by the end of the film. Comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell, citing Nietzsche who coined the phrase 'the Hamlet experience', describes this phenomenon as the bowing down to the masculine father principle, which declares: "Ophelia, you can go drown yourself" (2013: 87). Having internalized the patriarchal need to punish the female hero, she thus becomes the 'sacrificial heroine' (Crosby 2004: 171, 155; Edwards 1984: 9). Yet, if they say "No" to convention, female heroes are traditionally perceived as transgressive character types (Chinen 1996: 50; McCarthy 2016: 191; Redenbach 2015). From *Joan of Arc* (1948), to *Thelma & Louise* (1991) and Satine in Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* (2001), societal norms have acted to limit the expression and agency of female heroes on screen. Baz Luhrmann contends that, due to Joseph Campbell's influence, the power of myth and storytelling is embedded in his work on many levels (Guardian BFI 2001). Yet, although his film *Moulin Rouge!* is derived from

Puccini's *La Bohème*, it is primarily shaped on the myth of Orpheus whose wife Eurydice dies tragically (Campbell, J. 2008 [1949]: 178), echoing the dead heroine theme.

Still, a rectifying trend is now apparent in contemporary blockbuster films, as exemplified in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) and *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens* (2015), which feature more evolved interpretations of the female hero. Departing from previous portrayals in cinematic productions, these screen heroines do not die. Instead, now bestowed with agency, they help to restore their worlds. An explanation of this representational shift might be seen in the context of what Joseph Campbell describes as the radical split in the history of civilizations and mythologies between the masculine principle of the Old Testament, which is given all power, and the female principle of the older Great Mother Goddess, which is deprived of it. Campbell maintained that "where the male [mythological principle comes in], you have division, while where the female comes in you have union" (2013: 86). In contemporary screen narrative, these emergent female heroes do more than just survive until the end of the film. When faced with a broken realm, like heroic goddesses of the ancient world, these female heroes exert considerable force towards restoring their worlds to wholeness and unity (Campbell 2013: 86; Chinen 1996: 166).

Most screenwriters have at least some familiarity with Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative structure, or monomyth, which, among its many other usages in popular culture, has been widely applied to the narrative structure of films. Nevertheless, Campbell's seventeen-stage narrative model for the mythological Hero's Journey has been applied, almost exclusively, to masculine heroes in the passing generation of blockbuster films. Some examples include: the early *Star Wars* trilogy (1977; 1980; 1983), *The Lord of the Rings* films (2001; 2002; 2003), *Rocky* (1976), *Superman* (1978), *Mad Max* (1979), *The Matrix* (1999), *Gladiator* (2000) and

Spider-Man (2002). This may be explained in that the three major parts of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative model, like Vladimir Propp's character functions (1968 [1928]: 25), are not only regularly cited in the humanities, but are easily adaptable to the three-act screenplay structure. Yet although Campbell posited in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* [THWATF] (2008 [1949]) that the narrative pattern for the mythological hero produced by his research is not exclusively masculine, his universal narrative model has customarily been applied to male heroes on screen.

However, I argue that a transformed version of Campbell's seventeen-stage narrative model may be effectively applied to female heroes in film narrative. Film heroes like Furiosa in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) and Rey in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) along with earlier cinematic examples found in *Alien* (1979), *Thelma & Louise* (1991), and more recently in *Wonder Woman* (2017) and *Captain Marvel* (2019), have helped show that Campbell's so-called 'masculine' hero narrative model can be employed—with specific modifications—in the writing of heroic female protagonists. Indeed, the narrative structure of *Wonder Woman* finds correspondences within both Christopher Vogler's twelve-stage Hero's Journey pattern (1985) and Maureen Murdock's Heroine's Journey model (1990). As the daughter of Hippolyta, the narrative journey of Diana of Themyscira combines both the Hero's and Heroine's Journey character arcs. Yet, as already observed, there is a problem for heroines featured in films from the past. Just as in their final scenes, *Joan of Arc* burns at the stake (1948) and *Thelma and Louise* fly over a cliff in a Ford Thunderbird (1991), many female protagonists do not survive the film. Unless they are warriors, appearing in post-millennial films, women are frequently portrayed on-screen as prostitutes, wives, villains or victims; often disposable. Countless female characters seem to appear on screen merely to support male characters; offering help, comfort, love and lust until they are dumped, divorced or assaulted (van Laer 2018).

There is not, to date, any ‘settled’ narrative model for the specifically Female Hero in narrative media. In other words, recent heroic female-protagonist-led films may be dismissed as ‘one-off’ female hero narratives, as was *Thelma & Louise* (1991), or merely the substitution of a female actress into the male hero role in Campbell’s Hero’s Journey narrative arc. Director Patty Jenkins describes her *Wonder Woman* as a “complex and compelling character at the helm of a universal hero’s journey” (2017: 6). Yet, the characters of Diana, Furiosa and Rey are all female warrior-hero archetypes. They are exceptional in that they do not reflect the lived experience of the ordinary women seated in cinema audiences around the world. Not all women are warriors, nor need they be. Yet any human being is capable of becoming a hero. So, clearly, there is a need for more authentic female heroes to be effectively portrayed in contemporary screen narrative.

Various attempts have been made within diverse fields of research to define the features of the Heroine’s Journey narrative structure. Few are easily adapted to the purposes of writing screen narrative. With the exception of archetypal female-warrior characters, there is scarce evidence to date that a credible female equivalent of Joseph Campbell’s mythological formula for the Hero’s Journey (2008 [1949]) has been effectively applied to the narrative structure of a screenplay. This draws us to the questions which focus my research. Can the narrative features of the mythological Female Hero’s Journey be clearly defined and crafted into a well-designed narrative model for use by contemporary screenwriters? Is this new narrative model able to be further demonstrated as a functional dramatic structure for writing a screenplay showcasing a female hero as protagonist in a feature length film? So far, scant media research has addressed these specific research questions through creative practice.

My research fills a gap in the existing literature associated with the emerging Female Hero's Journey narrative structure. It contributes to the field of creative practice screenwriting research, within the research field of narrative structure in fictional media narrative. It does so by creating a culturally resonant, socially constructive narrative model for the mythologically-based Female Hero's Journey in contemporary screen narrative. As my original creative artefact/screenplay demonstrates, this unique narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey can be directly applied to narrative screen texts, not just in feature film, but in multiple screen formats and genres, including long-form series storytelling, transmedia and television narrative, and game design.

Joseph Campbell and Mythic Structure in the Field of Screenwriting Research

While academic works on screenwriting have been published within the field of film and screen studies (Boon 2008; Corliss 1975; Macdonald 2013; Murphy, J. J. 2007; Stempel 1991), scope remains for further research. The research field of Screenwriting Studies has been defined as: "The study of the origins, development and expression of screen ideas; and the discourses and institutions that surround them" (Macdonald 2013: 217). Screenwriting Studies provides a point of reference to investigate a plurality of discourses, which may include: paradigms of practice in conjunction with the poetics constructed to explain them; specific individuals and associated texts as products of belief systems which inform their practice; comparisons between mainstream or industrial practice and non-standard practice; and screenwriting as a process of conceptualization of the screenwork (Macdonald 2013: 217). In their research, Baker et al. (2015) accentuate scholarly works, (many Australian-based) published in recent years, which are engaged in historical studies on screenwriting (Maras 2009; Nelmes 2013; Price 2010; 2013); the screenplay as object of research (Nelmes 2010); and critical studies of screenwriting practice (Batty 2011; Lee 2013; Millard 2014). It is

claimed that the formation of the Screenwriting Research Network (2006) and the *Journal of Screenwriting* (2009) have given rise to greater recognition of screenwriting as a serious field of research (Baker et al. 2015). This, according to Sternberg, has given screenwriting a “more sustained and diversified theorization under various framings, such as history, authorship, culture, philosophy and poetics” (2014).

In recent years, scholarly research on screenwriting has emphasised the importance of the screenwriting industry, the role of the screenwriter and the screenplay itself. The significance of screenwriting research through practice can be demonstrated in the way it reveals subjective insight normally unavailable to the academic analyst (Batty 2019). Beyond the technical benefits of contributing new techniques, tools and methods, screenwriting practice as research discloses important insights gained from them (Macdonald 2013: 221). Thus, the emergence of screenwriting as a research discipline has seen the field expand beyond comparisons of literary studies and creative writing to include a focus not just on the screenplay, but on screenwriting itself (Baker et al. 2015), an area still under-represented within the academy.

Similarly, Joseph Campbell’s body of work, a creative, interdisciplinary academic output generated over nearly half a century, has to date been largely dismissed from the scholarly literature on narrative analysis. His mythological narrative structure appears to have more in common with philosophies concerned with the unity of the individual and Jungian analysis than with theories of narrative analysis. Such narrative theories sit within an acknowledged tradition of Russian formalist, structuralist and poststructuralist canons of scholarly literature. Indeed, Joseph Campbell remains outside more established linguistic approaches to understanding the way “aesthetic manipulation of language produce[s] the interpretive

cooperation of the addressee” (Eco 1979: vii) or the formation of cultural meaning and identity through the analysis of narrative structure (Lévi-Strauss 2001 [1978]; 1976; 1963).

Nevertheless, it is evident that Campbell’s Hero’s Journey narrative structure, or ‘monomyth’, has been widely applied by screenwriters beyond the academy, particularly in blockbuster films, including those made by highly successful filmmakers such as George Lucas (*Star Wars* 1977) and George Miller (*Mad Max* 1979). Because the stories told by these filmmakers have had such powerful cultural influence, Joseph Campbell’s thinking on mythological narrative structure has also had a substantial, albeit indirect, impact on contemporary culture. Further, Joseph Campbell’s theories represent the genesis for the development of a newly-emerging paradigm from within his heroic narrative structure to include the recognition of a Female Hero’s Journey narrative model (Kobacker 2016). Because of this, and since Campbell’s mythic narrative structure remains highly influential for screenwriters and filmmakers alike, further research and analysis of his ideas by the academy, in the context of emergent narrative structures within the fields of screenwriting research and film and screen studies, is justified.

Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey

Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), Professor of Literature at Sarah Lawrence College, New York, is credited with positing the idea of the ‘monomyth’, a concept that all myths across all cultures follow a common narrative pattern. After analysing hundreds of mythological hero narratives worldwide, Campbell defined a narrative pattern for the Hero’s Journey:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder; fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow human beings (2008 [1949]: 23).

Yet the hero archetype, which represents “the ego’s search for identity and wholeness” (Vogler 2007 [1998]: 29), can be portrayed by a protagonist of any gender in fictional narrative. A “hero or heroine...has found and done something beyond the normal range of achievement and experience...someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself” (Campbell and Moyers 1988: 123). Thus, Campbell does not restrict his definition of the Hero’s Journey to the masculine domain, declaring that the hero “is a man or woman who has been able to battle past his [or her] personal and local historical limitations” (2008 [1949]: 14).

Nevertheless, Joseph Campbell’s mythological Hero’s Journey narrative structure has been repeatedly interpreted and applied by theorists and film practitioners alike as being distinctly masculine. Campbell once acknowledged that in mythology, “woman...represents the totality of what can be known. The hero is the one who comes to know” (1993: 97). This statement appears to position man as active questor and woman as passive goal. But, it should be recognised that Campbell sourced and analysed myths from a pool of texts within an existing patriarchal canon of literature (Stephens and McCallum 2013: 63-64). Moreover, the majority of myths Campbell selected for his 1949 monograph were of the male Hero type, wherein the outcomes of this narrative type have historically privileged the status of male protagonists (Plant 2012: 104). Such narratives are embedded in and hence serve to perpetuate patriarchal ideologies. Thus, although it is understandable that Campbell has been subject to strident feminist criticism (Frankel 2010), entrenched patriarchal attitudes encompassing many of Campbell’s chosen mythological texts, as well as the historical period in which his analysis was penned, must also be considered (Nicholson 2011: 187; Stephens and McCallum 2013: 78). I do not dismiss important feminist critiques of Campbell and concur there is a great need for a new mythological narrative structure for the female hero. In my assessment, Campbell’s

mythological narrative model, while valuable as a foundation, merits being revised, updated and reconstructed to reflect more inclusive, contemporary social values.

Contemporary audiences yearn for identification with the characters in modern retellings of the mythological hero narratives now propagating across our screens, as evidenced in fan fiction, where “fans own the characters” (Schultz 2001; cited in Doherty 2001: 168). Doherty submits that the classical study of myths might benefit from an examination of the way folk tale narratives show us that the ‘same’ story can be narrated in completely different ways towards different ends, thus highlighting mythology’s “simultaneous persistence and changeability” (2001: 164). There is a correlation between the modern desire to reinterpret classical mythology and the original hero stories from Greek mythology. “Historically, these characters belonged to all the storytellers within that community” (Jenkins, H. 1992: cited in Doherty 2001: 169). Recent box office returns have begun to reflect an agreement among today’s cinema audiences that the narrative formula for the masculine hero monomyth is fully ripe for reinterpretation and retelling from the contemporary female hero’s point of view.¹

Mythology, Heroes, Blockbusters and Media Narrative

The monomyth is essentially a narrative template or structure which Joseph Campbell perceived as apparent in all myths (1949). Numerous blockbuster films have successfully exploited the principal elements of Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey, or monomyth, to support the hero’s narrative arc,² resulting in repeated box office success.³ Bill Moyers, who interviewed Campbell for *The Power of Myth*, gave a simplified explanation of mythology as:

¹ See IMDb (1980-Present), Action Heroine, Online: Box Office Mojo.

² *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (1977) and *Mad Max* (1979).

³ *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens* (2015) and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015).

“an interior roadmap of experience, drawn by people who have travelled it” (1988: xvi). After studying thousands of myths, Lévi-Strauss, the renowned structuralist and mythologist, discovered that they share a limited number of basic structures that profoundly shape cultural life. He declared, in *Myth and Meaning*, that mythological stories reappear all over the world (2001 [1978]: 9), supporting Campbell’s findings. Campbell affirmed that myths are metaphorical of spiritual potentiality in the human being (1988: 22). Myths are deeply related to our social and human concerns (Warner 2003: xiv). They teach us how to live by providing a model to guide us on the journey towards psychological and spiritual growth (Biallus 1986: 29). It has been observed that the oldest expression of who we are as human beings is contained within ancient myths (Eliade 1974: 19). This accounts for the recurrence of the mythological hero archetype throughout history, art, literature, philosophy, psychology and anthropology (Neumann 1963; 1970; Pearson, C. and Pope 1981; Segal 2000), as well as in film.

That the hero archetype has proliferated across contemporary mass media reflects its enduring power. In *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, C. G. Jung states that archetypes “do not in any sense represent things as they are in themselves, but rather the forms in which things can be perceived and conceived.’ They are ‘*a priori* structural forms of the stuff of consciousness” (1963: 347; cited in Le Guin (1982 [1979]): 81). Ursula Le Guin describes an ‘archetype’ as not a thing or an object, but, as Jung explained, a psychic modality (81). Representations of the powerful, specifically masculine archetypal hero have featured prominently in commercially successful cinematic texts. Yet, although Joseph Campbell did not elaborate on archetypes in the Jungian sense, in *THWATF* (2008 [1949]), George Miller, Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, John Boorman and Francis Ford Coppola are all said to have employed Campbell’s mythological hero’s journey narrative structure for the archetypal heroes portrayed in the enormously successful films they have directed (Vogler 1985: xxxi, 3).

Due to their high cultural impact on broad international audiences, the narrative structure of blockbuster films is of particular interest in my research. The cultural impact of such films is the consequence of their interactive, participatory nature, wherein people re-watch them multiple times as a way to join in the discussion with a widespread audience united in a “common cause” (Shone 2004: 37). Michael Eisner, President and CEO of Paramount Pictures (1976-1984) and The Walt Disney Company (1984-2005) defined blockbuster films as “the super-grossers [...] that become cultural phenomena” (Shone 2004: 28). Blockbusters don’t usually win Oscars (39) but have sired “a small cottage industry of academic analysis devoted to [their] subtextual nooks and semiological crannies,” such as the Feminist, Marxist and Freudian debates generated by the 1979 film, *Alien* (94). Whereas ‘narratives’ can be seen as story-telling mechanisms that help audiences make sense of their world, the narrative construction of blockbuster films frequently reflects mythological structure. In fact, the popularity and almost universal appeal of film narratives that employ mythological structure can be evidenced in their blockbuster status. That Joseph Campbell’s mythic structure is regularly evidenced in the narrative construction of blockbuster films is of significant interest.

Film texts in popular culture, like myths and fairy tales, are capable of articulating universal human fears, hopes and desires (Jung and Von Franz 1971; Stephens and McCallum 2013). In fact, the visual medium of film provides a natural expression for mythology, since “myth is a picture language” (Campbell 1990: 33). Through their narrative exposition, films, like myths, demonstrate ways to overcome obstacles to achieve a goal or complete a quest (Eliade 1974: 2). Like myths, movies can provide audiences with narrative archetypes for ways of living (Stephens and McCallum 2013: 62), just as heroic stories can teach us how to live (Pearson, C. S. 1991: 7). By positioning the viewer’s identification with the main protagonist, such texts

both reflect and construct social actions (Stam et al. 1992: 149). This includes their capacity to be exploited by hegemonic powers. Former actor, US President Ronald Reagan, whose government won a copyright dispute against director George Lucas over the rights to name his Strategic Defense Initiative after the 1977 film *Star Wars*, said: “It is the motion picture that shows us not only how we look and sound, but—more importantly—how we feel” (Stone 1979: 131-32). Legal action was similarly threatened against former reality television host Donald Trump, who reused intellectual property from screen texts containing heroic narratives, including the film score from *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012; Child 2019), specific title font (Trojan Pro) and analogous visual imagery from the blockbuster HBO television series *Game of Thrones* (2019) in an apparent appropriation of their heroic appeal to the masses, for political purposes.

Media texts in popular culture reflect the dominant values of our society, which, as viewers of such media texts, we internalize (Berger 2014: 123; O'Shaughnessy and Stadler 2006: 305). Audiences unconsciously seek models with which to identify and imitate while viewing screen narratives (Berger 2014: 124) such that media are central to what ultimately represents our social realities (Brooks and Hébert 2006). Annette Kuhn, in her discussion of cultural theory and contemporary science fiction cinema, has noted a widely held belief that social concerns and trends are reflected in mass media and film, and that these popular cultural forms can thus be regarded as a gauge of social attitudes and change (1996: 15). Mythic structure is not only evidenced in popular media narratives, naturally finding attachment with an audience, but “myths are in fact actively sought [by audiences]” (Batty 2011: 44). But what if the preponderance of heroic mythic narrative models consumed by media audiences are based on the masculine warrior-archetype narrative structure?

Media critics contend that mass media narratives consistently assign women to destructive roles (Berger 2014: 122). Moreover, the social impact of privileged gendered media narratives may also be contagious by observational learning and social agreement (Luskin 2012). Thus, such media narratives serve to reinforce the disempowerment of women and girls (Brooks and Hébert 2006; Gallagher 2003). As posited by Feminist scholarship, this in turn discourages female inclusion and women's productive participation in building social, cultural and personal economic capital (Matanle et al. 2014). Indeed, the assumption that the chief protagonists of heroic narratives are male by default "[limits] our understanding of the basic spiritual and psychological archetype of human life" (Pearson, C. and Pope 1981: 4). Pearson and Pope have disparaged the literary concept that "the woman who elects a life of courage, strength and initiative on her own behalf is an exception, a deviant, and doomed to destruction" (1981: 7) and lamented the scarcity of female heroes in contemporary literature and film.

An existing body of scholarship has explored the effects of the portrayal of gender stereotyping and disempowering images of women in popular culture (Tuchman et al. 1978; Weibel 1977). Geena Davis, advocate for the empowerment of women and girls through equitable gender representation in the media, has argued that: "We are in effect enculturating kids from the very beginning to see women and girls as not taking up half of the space" (Smith et al. 2016). Nevertheless, the full extent of the impact on contemporary media-consuming cultures of this absence of equitable gender representation is still being investigated by Davis and others (Hunt et al. 2018; Smith, S. L. and Pieper 2018). Children's advocate, Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund in 1973, is widely noted for the saying, "It's hard to be what you can't see" (Edelman 2015). The absence of an authentic narrative structure representing the mythic Female Hero's Journey—as expressed in popular culture through film

and narrative media—has yet to be fully explored. The Female Hero's Journey narrative model, as proposed in my research, is designed to address this absence.

The masculine warrior archetype has been valorised in a canon of blockbuster films that continually propagate the narrative formula for the male Hero's Journey across contemporary popular culture. Cinematic attempts to insert a female hero into the narrative template of the hero's journey, without altering the narrative structure to reflect an authentic female hero's narrative arc, have been less than convincing. Rarely have they achieved comparable box office success. In the Superhero genre⁴ for example, *Catwoman* (2004) earned ten times less than *Spider-Man* (2002), although a more recent film containing a rare hybrid mythic narrative structure reflecting *both* the hero and heroine's journeys has achieved greater success (*Wonder Woman* 2017). Conversely, the Action Heroine genre has grown substantially at the box office in the past two decades.⁵ Yet the characters of these female protagonists regularly appear as 'kick ass' cinematic objects constructed to serve the pleasure of the heterosexual male viewer (*Atomic Blonde* 2017). Characters written as the site of objectification are diminished in their capacity to carry a credible storyline, particularly from the perspective of female audiences.

Screen narratives, especially those constructed to contain characters with whom audiences can empathise and identify, in combination with vivid images and dialogue, have the powerful ability not only to capture the attention of broad audiences, but to influence their beliefs. Yet, from the point of view of screenwriting practice, the female superheroes, comic book and action heroines that have burst onto our movie screens since the turn of the millennium have largely been written to follow the narrative arc of the masculine warrior hero archetype, as seen

⁴ See *Superhero Genre* IMDb.com (1978-Present).

⁵ See *Action Heroine Genre* IMDB.com (1980-Present).

in Joseph Campbell's monomyth. Because the power of media narratives enables audiences to internalize the dominant values of our society, an important question needs to be asked. Should the female hero in screen media occupy the same mythic narrative structure as the male hero? Or does she merit her own more authentic narrative model? Like others who have asserted that women's stories have a pattern of their own (Hudson 2009; Jacey 2010; Murdock 1990; Rogers 2013), I further posit that the on-screen female hero warrants a distinct narrative structure, sourced from and founded upon female mythologies.

The discourse of this doctoral research thesis, while initially situated within the realm of cultural theory, progresses through a discussion on mythological narrative structures to finally contextualise the practice and theory of the applied doctoral research within the world of cultural myths within cinema. My research sits at the edges of traditional film and literary theory, which, although they have informed my broader research, along with the influence of women writer/directors and approaches to film structure in documentary and non-Hollywood cinema, remain largely outside the scope of this creative practice research project.⁶ Indeed, the discourses imbedded within lineages of Eurocentric theory and practice means that unfortunately, they have often fallen short of being sufficiently inclusive, having often served to marginalise and render voiceless both women and Indigenous peoples and their ways of seeing and being in the world. Thus, such theoretical approaches remain tangential to the focus of this project's screenplay and its corresponding exegesis wherein the hero is not only female but also Indigenous. My approach to this interdisciplinary creative practice research project, sitting at the edges of traditional research fields, echoes the title and theme of the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, an exhibition of the work of more than a hundred artists from thirty-six countries:

⁶ For an expanded discussion of critical approaches to theory and practice in screenwriting; screen production; and creative practice research in the creative and media arts, see Batty & Waldeback (2019); Batty & Kerrigan (2018); and Bell (2019).

Nirin, a word which means ‘edge’ in the Australian Wiradjuri language. As Brook Andrew, the Biennale’s first Aboriginal curator, has said:

Creativity is an important means of truth-telling, of directly addressing unresolved anxieties that stalk our times and ourselves. More importantly, it is a place from which to see the world through different eyes, to embrace our many edges and imagine pride in sociologically and harmonious self-defined futures (Frost 2020).

Indeed, the title of my screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, is itself a play on the notion that while some progress has been made with regard to both female and Indigenous representation in screen media, we still have a long way to go (Lochard cited in Morelli 2017).

Methodology

In the decades since the 1970s, filmmakers and screenwriters have drawn from the foundation provided by Joseph Campbell’s comparative mythological research, which delineated the structure of an archetypal narrative journey for the universal hero (2008 [1949]). However, it should be noted that Campbell’s narrative structure was not originally intended as a road map to be employed by screenwriters. This helps to explain why Christopher Vogler’s modified version of Campbell’s Hero’s Journey (2007 [1998]) is deemed more accessible by the creators of screen works. Unlike Vogler’s abridged version of the Hero’s Journey, Joseph Campbell’s original narrative pattern does not specify character archetypes, a notion originally derived from Jungian psychology. Nevertheless, the three phases of Campbell’s mythological model for The Hero’s Journey—Separation, Initiation and Return—easily adapt to the three-act structure of feature-length screenplays (Field 1984 [1979]). But, as previously asserted, Campbell’s narrative structure has regularly been construed as a single-gendered example of the hero’s narrative pattern. Moreover, with few exceptions, notably McCarthy (2016) and Batty (2011),

as well as Vogler's non-academic approach (2007 [1998]), scholarly research undertaken in the field of the evolving narrative structure of the hero's journey has rarely applied to the writing and production of texts intended for the screen.

My research methodology works with elements from previously drafted screenwriting industry narrative models and with mythic elements from Campbell's Hero's Journey, along with recently proposed Heroine's Journey models and timeless feminine mythologies, to produce a new narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, which can be directly applied to the creation of screen texts.

My research method entails four steps:

1. Write a draft feature-length screenplay for a female hero, based on existing film industry narrative models.
2. Analyse this draft screenplay structure in context with Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage mythological Hero's Journey narrative model.
3. Formulate a new seventeen-stage narrative model that is capable of characterising the Female Hero's Journey, which could also apply to narratives that diverge from the dominant male-warrior hero archetypal structure.
4. Revise the screenplay by overlaying my new seventeen-point narrative template for the Female Hero's Journey onto the first draft of my screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, to arrive at Draft Two of the creative artefact.

The result is applied research, where the resulting creative artefact (Draft Two of the screenplay), constitutes research in that it directly demonstrates the new narrative model that my investigation has produced (Bell, Desmond 2006).

Significance of Research

This creative practice screenwriting research project, which builds on previously conducted theoretical research (Kobacker 2016), critically addresses the central relevance of mythic structure as the basis for establishing an authentic Female Hero's Journey narrative pattern. The new narrative model produced through this research is constructed within the context of Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey (2008 [1949]), in further dialogue with more recently proposed mythologically-based models offered by contemporary female authors, which, coming from the writer's perspective, more closely approach practical application to the writing of narrative media texts. This novel research project, based on research-enabled screenwriting practice, demonstrates the application of a new narrative structure for the mythologically-based Female Hero's Journey in screen media, and thus augments the field of screenwriting research within the discipline of film and screen studies.

My research poses a two-part question: Is it possible to formulate a new narrative structure for the mythological Female Hero's Journey in contemporary narrative media, then demonstrate the application of this new Female Hero's Journey narrative model in a feature-length screenplay? In response to this question, this study contributes an artefact, an original feature-length screenplay, as its creative component, along with a corresponding exegesis. As research-enabled screenwriting practice, this study demonstrates how scholarly research leads

to and also enhances creative work, and in the process, it both expands current understandings and produces new knowledge. The significance of this doctoral research is demonstrated through its development and creative application of a versatile new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey, capable of supporting the box office success of future female protagonist-led films in a variety of screen genres and formats.

Does the application of the new Female Hero's Journey narrative model make *Little Bit Long Way* a better screenplay? I believe it substantially improves the original draft. Nevertheless, the mythological Female Hero's Journey model succeeds in providing screenwriters, working in a range of genres and screen formats, with an alternative to Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative paradigm. It is the kind of narrative model that, as a screenwriter writing heroic female protagonists from a female perspective, I had sought but could not find. This new Female Hero's Journey narrative model makes it possible for screenwriters to write credible female protagonists who possess narrative agency and, in the process of undergoing heroic transformation within the unfolding story, also find their own mythic hero within. These are the stories that the young at heart, especially young girls, need to see on screen.

Summary of Chapters to Follow

Chapter 1 identifies potential beneficiaries of a new narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, especially younger female viewers, and posits that a more balanced representation of gender and diversity in screen narrative is necessary and indeed beneficial. This chapter compares Vladimir Propp's Morphology to Joseph Campbell's Mythological approach to the monomyth or Hero's Journey narrative structure, within the context of the traditional structure of heroic narratives. Chapter 1 further explores the proliferation of the masculine hero archetype

across history, art, literature and film, and how the traditional folktale and mythic narrative models offered by Propp and Campbell in the early twentieth century have highlighted a notable absence of female heroes. Chapter 1 posits that deficiencies in the existing canon of literature from which they drew may partially explain the historic absence of female heroes in media narratives. However, it establishes that Campbell's model, with its emphasis on 'Initiation', contains the potential to be culturally appropriate in narrative representations of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and women. While stressing differences between Campbell's model and the American monomyth, this chapter also considers how Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative structure, later abbreviated by Vogler, has been successfully applied to the three-act screenplay structure of multiple blockbuster films. Chapter 1 concludes by positing the urgent need to update Joseph Campbell's original monomythic narrative structure to accommodate the female hero.

Chapter 2 posits the need for a new narrative model for the mythological structure of the Female Hero's Journey that is directly applicable to screen texts. The proliferation of warrior heroes, preferred by a film industry dominated by male filmmakers, has been valorised in a canon of blockbuster films in which the hero resolves conflict through overt violence. However, this chapter will establish that the narrative journey of the female hero is parallel but different to the male hero's journey. Chapter 2 focuses on the attributes of the female hero archetype and her narrative journey, noting similarities between on-screen representations of Indigenous and Female Heroes. It highlights Campbell's focus on the heroic feminine archetype in mythology through themes of initiation, transformation and consciousness and the heroic role of rescuer. An assessment of previous scholarship exploring mythological keys to the heroic female journey determines that very little has been directed toward the narrative structure of screen texts. Although Murdock's scholarship, influenced by Campbell's, has inspired subsequent Heroine's

Journey models posited by Schmidt, Frankel and McCarthy, Patti McCarthy's nineteen-stage mythic Heroine's Journey narrative model is deemed most relevant because it builds on previous scholarship, including Campbell's, and was created with screen texts in mind. Chapter 2 concludes that since Campbell suggested that a female hero's journey is best written from a female point of view, it resolves that this research-enabled, creative practice screenwriting research project will address this task by conceiving and demonstrating a new mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of my methodological approach to research-enabled screenwriting practice. This approach acknowledges that the practitioner takes an insider's perspective that makes it possible to value their "subjective position because their practitioner account 'gives insights not obtainable from other research conclusions'" (McIntyre 2006: 9 in Kerrigan 2018:25). It can be helpful for screen production research practitioners to detail their methodological approach to their creative practice research so that it can be understood and replicated by others (Kerrigan 2018: 25). Chapter 3 describes my research method for devising an innovative narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey that is directly applicable to screen texts. It argues that, as research-enabled creative practice, this Doctoral thesis—a conjoined exegesis and screenplay as artefact—demonstrates how scholarly research can lead to creative work and in the process, produce new knowledge. Chapter 3 details the four steps involved in my research methodology.

The result is applied research, in that the ensuing creative artefact (the final screenplay) constitutes research as a demonstration of the new narrative model produced by my research. This chapter provides a logline and synopsis for the screenplay and notes that my field research working with camels also assisted in the formulation of a new narrative stage for the Female

Hero's Journey model that stands in answer to Campbell's 'Woman as the Temptress'. Chapter 3 shows that my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts, founded on feminine mythologies, adds to the existing literature by building on the work of previous scholars, particularly the narrative structures of Campbell's Hero's Journey and of McCarthy's Heroine's Journey, while also arising from the emerging narrative of my screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*.

Chapter 4 explores debates around theories of authorship to contextualise and situate my own screenwriting authorship and creative process. Using Jean Renoir and Jean-Claude Carrière as examples, it examines the author-function of screenwriters, exploring notions of collaborative authorship and auteurship within the context of cinema. It observes that although the French New Wave movement championed as auteurs French (and other) directors who wrote individualistic screenplays and made films that bore their creative imprint, including American directors Howard Hawks, John Ford and Orson Welles, female filmmakers like Agnès Varda, the 'godmother of the French New Wave,' and Alice Guy-Blaché were largely excluded from film histories of auteurs. Chapter 4 asserts that although the concept of artist-author was questioned at the intersection of art and industry in the development of cinema, and within the preoccupations of structuralism and semiotics in the twentieth century, more recent scholarship sees individual authorship as the exception to the general rule of collaboration expressed in the 'socialised text'. This chapter upholds that although revered as an artist-author championed by the auteurs, Renoir and later Carrière disrupted such ideas by emphasising the collaborative nature of film narrative creation. Carrière's claim that the French New Wave tossed the screenwriter into oblivion, only to see a return to favour by the late 1960s due to the audience's need for stories, is countered by his own argument that ultimately, the screenplay is annihilated by the film to which it gives birth. Chapter 4 further offers a series of visual metaphors offered

by screenwriters to describe their approach to the creative practice of authorship, including my own. Through an articulation of how my own creative process leads to the creation of story, Chapter 4 enables me to demonstrate that my screenwriting authorship is both single-authored and self-originating. The subsequent textual creation of such creative practice, the screenplay, is then situated as screenwriting practice within academia.

Chapter 5 articulates how, following the initial inspiration for *Little Bit Long Way*, I wrote Draft One of my three-act screenplay after first sketching out a series of narrative beats for my story. It explains that in order to do this, I followed the structural architecture provided in two widely-used film industry narrative models, one of which contains nine points of plot structure, the other containing fifteen beats of screenplay structure. Chapter 5 reveals that the story that arose from the use of the first narrative model produced plenty of action-packed plot points that mirror scores of films that follow narrative models designed by men for male protagonists. This first narrative model was judged deficient in its ability to portray the narrative arc of a female hero, with agency, who is not driven by demonstrable heroics, the urge to dominate, or the philosophy of exceptional individual heroism that is so prevalent in the warrior archetype of the masculine hero's journey. After applying the second industry model to my screenplay structure, Chapter 5 deems that, even with its additional narrative beats to allow room for B-Story relationships, this second structural model again failed to result in a sufficiently authentic, uniquely female hero's narrative arc. As a contemporary screenwriter, I question how well such widely used narrative models designed for and by men, including those influenced by Campbell, suit female protagonists, if at all. Chapter 5 concludes by positing that a more effective approach to screenwriting practice for screenplays that contain heroic female protagonists would be to restructure prevailing film industry narrative models so that the resulting screenplay reflects the reality of an authentic female hero's narrative arc.

Chapter 6 shows how I employed the mythological structure of my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model in the rewriting of my screenplay/creative artefact, to arrive at Draft Two of *Little Bit Long Way*.⁷ As noted in Chapter 3, the final methodological stage of my creative practice research was to revise the first draft of my screenplay by overlaying the seventeen-point narrative design for the Female Hero's Journey upon it. In the process of rewriting, I expanded the existing narrative stages of Draft One of my screenplay, as detailed in Chapter 5, so that Draft Two now encompasses the seventeen narrative stages of my Female Hero's Journey model. Chapter 6 establishes that the seventeen stages of the new Female Hero's Journey, founded upon feminine mythologies and building on previously posited Heroine's Journey models, particularly Patty McCarthy's, is a female version of Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage Hero's Journey narrative structure. The versatility of the new Female Hero's Journey narrative model is demonstrated through an analysis of how it may be applied to the narrative beats of various screenplay structures. This chapter provides greater scrutiny to the narrative stages of the Female Hero's Journey that most diverge from Joseph Campbell's model, since, as discussed elsewhere, the particulars of Campbell's model have been analysed and debated by many other researchers. Chapter 6 lays out, in full, the seventeen stages of the new Female Hero's Journey narrative model, a three-act narrative structure that can be applied to any female hero character in contemporary screen media. This sharing of the final stage of my methodological approach to research-enabled creative practice in Chapter 6 reveals how this process can be replicated by other screenwriters, and simultaneously, how my research constitutes a distinct and significant contribution to knowledge.

⁷ See 'Creative Component: Feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way* – Draft Two', following exegesis.

Chapter 7 concludes that my doctoral research successfully formulates a new narrative model for the mythological Female Hero's Journey in contemporary narrative media, which has been effectively tested by its demonstration in an original feature-length screenplay. This new model can also be applied to various genres of long-form serial storytelling, to include transmedia, game design, and broadcast or streamed episodic television productions. Chapter 7 affirms that this exegesis elucidates how the new narrative structure, created through my research, has been overlaid upon a draft of my original feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, to tell the story of an authentic Female Hero's Journey. This chapter further argues that since the method of my creative practice screenwriting research has involved the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce and then apply the new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey, my research is also embodied in the resulting creative artefact. Chapter 7 contextualises the creative work itself, the screenplay, within the realms of genre convention, intended audience and social critique, but shows how it also disrupts post-apocalyptic themes and psychogeographic idioms of other successful Australian films. In noting the limitations in scope of the current creative practice research project, Chapter 7 proposes a future theoretical research project, to encompass a comprehensive analysis of each of the seventeen stages of the Female Hero's Journey mythological narrative structure in comparison to Campbell's monomyth. Chapter 7 concludes that this doctoral exegesis together with the subsequent creative artefact produced—a research-enabled creative practice screenplay—have effectively resolved the original two-part research question posed by this project. The significance of this doctoral research is thus underlined by its development and creative application of a valuable new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey, based on previously-obscured feminine mythological elements and capable of supporting the box office success of future female protagonist-led films in a variety of screen genres and formats.

Chapter 1

The Quest for the Mythological Female Hero's Journey Narrative Structure: Joseph Campbell and Mythic Narrative Models

The review of the literature that follows is not an attempt to exhaust the available scholarship on narrative representation of female protagonists in screen media. Instead, this chapter, and the next, point to previous research and writing on narrative structures. These contributions to the literature help bring into focus the way Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative model has been successfully applied to the three-act screenplay structure of blockbuster films. Taken together, these scholarly writings have also been selected for their capacity to throw light on the way forward towards the development of a culturally appropriate dramatic structure for the mythic Female Hero's Journey narrative model in screen media, a narrative structure that is capable of further application to screenplays featuring a female protagonist for feature film.

Potential Beneficiaries of the New Narrative Model: Representations of Diversity in Screen Media and Young Female Viewers

As much as anyone, young girls deserve to see themselves represented in films directed at them, especially since the narratives in the movies we watch in childhood often resonate over a lifetime. Film critic, Roger Ebert wrote in his 1995 film review of *A Little Princess* (1995):

Movies like *A Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden* contain a sense of wonder, and a message: The world is a vast and challenging place, through which a child can find its way with pluck and intelligence. It is about a girl who finds it more useful to speak French than to fire a ray gun. (Ebert 1995).

This magical family film is based on a Frances Hodgson Burnett book, whose work also inspired *The Secret Garden* (1993). Ebert found that both films approach their children's characters with calm solemnity and delight. They are placed in wonderfully vast, frightening houses and allowed to discover life lessons there. "Unlike the insipid devices of most family films, Burnett's plots understand that children take stories very seriously indeed, and that all stories are really about the uncertain place of the child in the mysterious world of adults" (Ebert 1995).

There is a lack of a popular narrative archetype for younger children, especially girls, that can be easily marketed by Hollywood studios. This gap has been highlighted by Professor Ian Wojcik-Andrews, author of the scholarly monograph *Children's Films: History, Ideology, Pedagogy, Theory* (2000). Not only is there no 'tried-and-true' genre for pre-pubescent girls in film narrative, "there is no mythological framework for the 11-or 12-year-old child, particularly the girl" (Wojcik-Andrews cited in Jaremko-Greenwold 2016). Yet, it is empowering for young girls to realise that their personal stories can have universal relevance, and that they needn't exist merely as extensions of male characters. Thus, awareness is increasing amongst academics and audiences alike that it is important for young girls to see empowering mythic narratives about themselves on screen.

According to Susan Cartsonis, producer of the films *What Women Want* (2000) and *Where the Heart Is* (2000): "The marketing philosophy in Hollywood is that younger [female] audiences are 'aspirational' and will watch older girls, but that older girls won't 'watch down'" (Jaremko-Greenwold 2016). The result is that younger viewers watch heavily marketed media narratives that feature more sexualised female protagonists. This calls into question whether these cinematic texts have been constructed for the consumption of young girls or to satisfy the

pleasure of the male gaze, as elucidated by Mulvey (2009:19).¹ Jaremko-Greenwold (2016) notes that male film critics gushed in their titillation over the sexualised appearance of Disney's young heroine, Ariel, in the G-rated animated children's movie, *The Little Mermaid* (1989):

[*The Little Mermaid's*] saucy heroine, Ariel, isn't much like Andersen's sad, noble sea-maid. She's a sexy little honey-bunch with a double-scallop-shell bra and a mane of red hair tossed in tumble-out-of-bed Southern California salon style. She has no gills, but, when she smiles, she shows an acre of Farrah Fawcett teeth (Wilmington 1989).

The lack of age-appropriate media narratives in film, combined with media saturation from multiple sources containing sexualised pop-culture messages, can lead to an unhealthy self-image for young girls, who are increasingly sexualised from an early age. Media narratives internalised by young girls, for good or ill, are themes they will carry with them throughout their lives. However, the negative consequences of this pattern may be counteracted by ensuring that younger female characters appear in film narratives of their own (Cartsonis in Jaremko-Greenwold 2016). Wojcik-Andrews asserts that “while movies for older children like *The Hunger Games* regularly draw on tropes from Ancient Rome and King Arthur, there [is] no popular narrative archetype for younger children, especially girls, that Hollywood studios are eager to market” (cited in Jaremko-Greenwold 2016). There is also an existing lack of a mythological narrative framework for pre-pubescent girls (Wojcik-Andrews 2000) which studio executives are willing to market (Cartsonis in Jaremko-Greenwold 2016). Together with greater awareness within society and the screen industries, this can be remedied by employing a structured approach to devising a new Female Hero's Journey narrative model that is not age-specific and can be applied across a broad range of narrative media and screen texts.

¹ “Pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly” (Mulvey 2009: 19).

Culture is concerned with the production and exchange of meanings in which participants themselves provide meaning (Hall 1997: 2-3). Yet, the gender imbalance within contemporary screen culture reflects the historic exclusion of female voices and participation in the production of film culture. French actress Isabelle Huppert, co-hosting a celebration for the 70th anniversary of the 2017 Cannes Film Festival, remarked, “Seventy years of Cannes, 76 Palme d’Or [winners], only one of them has gone to a woman” (Coyle 2017). In 2014, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, together with UN Women and the Rockefeller Foundation, presented the first-ever international study on gender images in global films. The study was conducted by Dr Stacy L. Smith, Marc Choueiti, and Dr Katherine Pieper, for the Media, Diversity and Social Change Initiative at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, USC. It found that fewer than one-third of all speaking characters in films are female, although “films with a female director or female writer attached had significantly more girls and women on-screen” (Smith, S. L. et al. 2014). The study concluded that if more women, especially women of colour, were employed to work behind the scenes of children’s movies [as writers for example], the result would be an increase in characters who better reflect the diversity and makeup of their young audiences.

While a more balanced representation of gender and diversity in screen narrative is indeed beneficial, especially for younger female viewers, it should be recognised that some tenets of contemporary feminist debate may be received as culturally inappropriate by Indigenous women who have undergone instruction or initiation within traditional cultural practices. This has significant implications in the way Australian Indigenous women, in particular, are represented on screen. Initiation ceremonies or rites of passage, from which the male or female initiate returns to the normal world ‘reborn’ (Van Gennep 1909), are found within a variety of Indigenous cultural practices around the world (Brown 1963). The traditional Indigenous

woman has a different role and status from the white woman (Moreton-Robinson 2000). As discussed in *Talkin' Up to the White Woman: Aboriginal Women and Feminism*, evidence for recognition of 'traditional' women's role and empowered status as autonomous and independent can be found in Aboriginal women's ritual domain (ibid.: 85). Anthropologist Diane Bell has argued: "in acting out the responsibilities conferred upon them as women by this [cultural] law, women engage in work which is distinctively theirs. In the past this ensured that they would be recognised as full members of their society" (1993: 179).² Research theory on *Intersectionality* (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016), based on the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination, provides further insight: "When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other" (2).

On the theme of Initiation, Joseph Campbell observed that all the myths deal with transformation of consciousness of one kind or another. "When we quit thinking primarily about ourselves and our own self-preservation, we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness [...]. You have been thinking one way, you now have to think a different way" (Campbell, J. and Moyers 1988: 126). But, just as Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative model—most commonly interpreted in *Bildungsroman* or Coming of Age narrative types—has been applied across a broad demographic of heroic masculine protagonists by filmmakers,³ a newly devised Female Hero's Journey model may likewise be applied across a broad female demographic. Indeed, the new narrative model need not be gender specific at all, except that a working Female Hero's Journey narrative model does not currently exist for application to

² See Moreton-Robinson (2000: 121) and Stringer (2012) for a discussion on the 1989 Huggins-Bell debate.

³ See examples of such film narratives subsequently provided in this chapter.

screen narrative. Yet, Joseph Campbell's monomyth, with its particular mythological emphasis on Initiation as a fundamental stage of the narrative journey, has always contained the potential to be culturally appropriate for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous men *and* women. This is especially pertinent to the evolving contemporary form of Campbell's monomyth, with its capacity to influence and generate culturally aware, emergent narrative structures.

Contemporary Screen Media: Rethinking Traditional Narrative Structure

Vladimir Propp – *Morphology of the Folk Tale* 1928

Propp's Morphological Approach to the Narrative Structure of Folktales

Vladimir Propp's influential analysis of Russian folktales (1968 [1928]) concluded that all folktales are based on a recurring pattern of set characters and plot actions. Although Propp belonged to the Russian Formalist School of literary criticism (1915-1930), his character functions are evidenced in the plot structures of many contemporary screen and literary texts, such as *North by Northwest* (1959), *Star Wars* (1977), and *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997). Propp designated seven spheres of action: villain; donor (provider); helper; princess (or sought after); dispatcher; hero (or victim); and false hero, to correspond with different functions of the *dramatis personae*: (1968 [1928]: 25). Propp distilled into thirty-one constant and limited but recurring functions the six stages of plot structure he identified: preparation; complication; transference; struggle; return; and recognition (Propp 1968 [1928]: 21; Stam et al. 1992: 80). Barthes (1977) and Pavel (1985) are among the literary theorists who have employed Propp's method, especially his character functions. But Propp has also influenced feminist theorists in defining gender codes in both literature and film (Stam et al. 1992: 80; Warner 1995). Yet not all critics agree that morphological analysis of film texts is

appropriate, suggesting that there are no sound reasons for film theorists to conclude that films share an underlying structure with folk tales (Bordwell, David 1988: 16).

The Female Hero – Weaknesses in Propp's Approach

Working with the general assumption that all heroes are male, Propp attempted to verify rather than analyse the narrative pattern he established for the Hero myth (Segal 1999a: 117). While Propp's motif and type indexes are considered indispensable by some, folklorists commonly agree that they are flawed (Dundes 1997; Jorgensen 2014: 17). Although subsequently remediated by Hans-Jörg Uther (2008), Propp's tale types exercised selective labelling which obfuscated the importance of female characters (Lundell 1986: 152). The general assumption that all 'heroes' are male, or fit the masculine tale type in Propp's structural analysis (Holbek 1998: 381), was perhaps excused on the basis that "the folk frequently gave male oriented titles" (Jorgensen 2014: 18-19). Lundell concludes that Propp's motif index focused on male activity while disregarding female activity and overlooked gender identity in its labelling (1986: 150). Thus, when portrayed in folktale narrative, the female hero frequently falls into Propp's donor or provider function (1968 [1928]: 39).

Specifically, Propp privileged the father's role by analysing folktales from his point of view, assigning mothers to villain or donor roles. Further, Propp did not sever the character function of the princess from her father's; instead, he treated them as a single sphere of action. "The princess and her father cannot be exactly delineated from each other according to functions" (79-80). Propp not only reproduced the weight of male power in the folk tale by sending women to the background and fashioning alliances which set women against women, but in so doing, also disclosed the patriarchal nature of traditional marriage (Warner 1995: 238). Joseph

Campbell, however, notes a difference between the narrative goals of protagonists in myth and folktale: “Typically, the hero of the fairy tale achieves a domestic, microcosmic triumph, and the hero of myth a world-historical, macrocosmic triumph” (1993 [1949]: 37-38).

The Science of Morphological Structure vs the Poetry of Mythological Structure

Vladimir Propp, like other formalists, advocated a ‘scientific’ method for studying poetic language to the exclusion of traditional cultural-historical and psychological approaches. His work resurfaced to influence the 1960s structuralists, who were inspired by its representation of a new, objective method of analysing narrative structure – Propp’s 1928 work on formalist structure in folktales having been suppressed by the Soviets. Thus, Propp’s legacy can be seen in the way the formalist model influenced modern literary criticism as it ripened in the structuralist and post-structuralist periods (Stam et al. 1992: 10). Rather than focussing on the representational and expressive aspects of texts, formalists were more interested in the structure of the narrative (10). Propp had faith in the possibility of making “an examination of the forms of the [folk] tale which will be as exact as the morphology of organic formations” (1968 [1928]: xxv), further clarifying:

The word ‘morphology’ means the study of forms. In botany, the term ‘morphology’ means the study of the component parts of a plant, of their relationship to each other and to the whole – in other words, the study of a plant’s structure (1968 [1928]: xxv).

Joseph Campbell’s more Romantic view of mythology stands in opposition to rationalists, for whom myth is the primitive counterpart to science, the scientific model being more exclusively Modern (Segal 1999a: 136). Whereas for rationalists, science can explain the *function* of a myth, Romantics believe their more psychological approach better explains the *content* of myth. There is validity to Campbell’s statement that:

Wherever the poetry of myth is interpreted as biography, history, or science, it is killed. The living images become only remote facts of a distant time or sky. Furthermore, it is never difficult to demonstrate that as science and history mythology is absurd. When a civilization begins to reinterpret its mythology in this way, the life goes out of it, temples become museums, and the link between the two perspectives is dissolved (2008 [1949]: 213).

Whereas mythology is alive and fluid, like poetry (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 213), morphology studied fixed forms in narrative as a science, like biology (Propp 1968 [1928]: xxv). “Myth is an attempt to explain, in rational terms, facts not yet rationally understood” (Le Guin 1982: 73); and when the genuine myth rises into consciousness, its message is always the same: you must change your life (78). A mythological approach to narrative structure, especially in screen narrative, can thus prove more dynamic than a morphological method, myths being ever adaptable to the changing stories and storytelling needs of evolving contemporary cultures.

Joseph Campbell – Mythology and The Hero’s Journey

Campbell’s Influential Monomyth 1949

The masculine hero archetype, found throughout the disciplines of history, art, mythology and literature, (Lord Raglan 2003 [1936]), philosophy, anthropology and psychology (Pearson, C. and Pope 1981; Segal 2000), is now also conspicuously emphasised in popular screen texts, from *Mad Max* (1979) to *The Lord of the Rings* (2001), and *Game of Thrones* (2011-19). The word ‘hero’, derived from the Greek word *hērōs*, means ‘warrior’ and ‘defender.’ A hero is someone who is ready to sacrifice to protect the greater good; who *must* sacrifice in order to transform him or herself and the world he or she is attempting to save, because “the dragon to be slain by him is precisely the monster of the status quo” (Campbell, J. 2008 [1949]: 289). The hero myth, the best-known in the world (Henderson 1964: 110), supports the process of individuation, which helps explain its lasting importance and historic proliferation since classical mythology (Berger 2014: 99). Lord Raglan posited a list of heroic qualities (2003

[1936]: 174-75), applying this pattern of traits to heroes across time, from Oedipus to Robin Hood (175-85). However, taking into account the “male-dominant tradition of literary forms and ideas” (Heller 1990: 11), and considering that the heroines who appeared in nineteenth century women’s fiction were often confined to the domestic sphere, a noticeable “absence of tradition and contexts for female heroes” (11) has meant that surprisingly few genuine female “heroes” have come into existence (6).

Although Joseph Campbell did not make the claim that heroism is an exclusively masculine preserve, feminist revisions of theories that appear to do so have been provided by: Ann Belford Ulanov, *The Feminine in Jungian Psychology and Christian Theory* (1971); Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation* (1973); Carolyn Heilbrun, *Reinventing Womanhood* (1979); Carol P. Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing: Women Writers and Spiritual Quest* (1980); Annis Pratt, *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction* (1981); Carol Pearson and Katherine Pope, *The Female Hero in American and British Literature* (1981); Lee R. Edwards, *Psyche as Hero: Female Heroism and Fictional Form* (1984); and Sarah Nicholson, ‘The Problem of Woman as Hero in the Work of Joseph Campbell’ in *Feminist Theology* (2011).

Characteristic structures associated with the traditional hero and heroism have been described in numerous works, including: Otto Rank, ‘The Myth of the Birth of the Hero’ in: *In Quest of the Hero* (1990 [1909]); Lord Raglan, *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth and Drama* (2003 [1936]); Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2008 [1949]); *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* (1953-1979); especially *Symbols of Transformation*, Vol. 5 (1969 [1956]) and *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* (1959 [1934]); Erich Neumann, *The Origins*

and History of Consciousness (1970); and *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (1963).

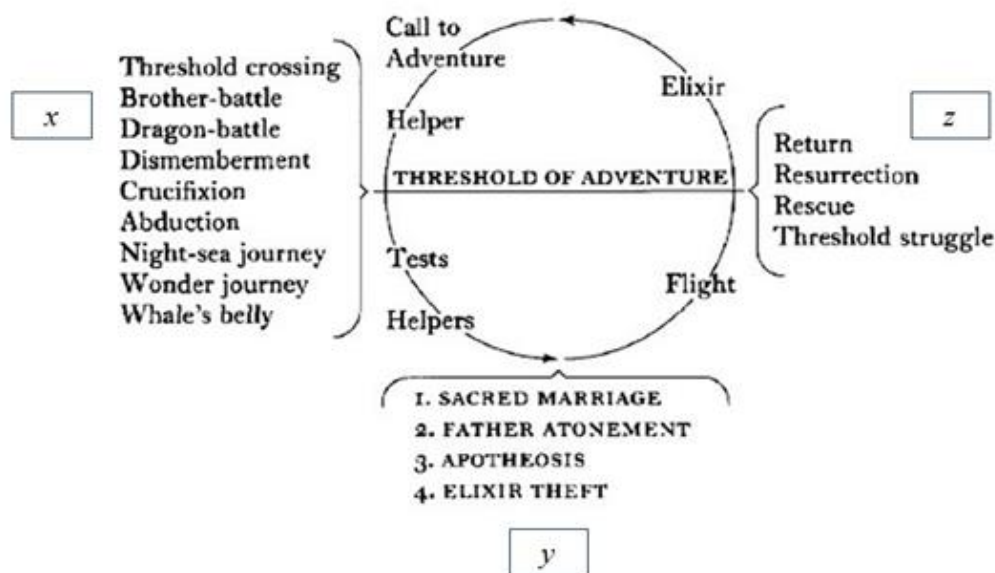
Joseph Campbell explicated the mythic structure of the ‘monomyth’, or hero’s journey, in his persuasive 1949 monograph, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* [*THWATF*] (2008 [1949]). Campbell had borrowed the term ‘monomyth’ from James Joyce for whom he wrote *A Skeleton Key* (2005 [1944]). In *THWATF*, he outlined the basic conditions, stages and results of the archetypal hero’s adventure, and affirmed a single essential pattern of heroic journey that all cultures have shared in their various heroic myths (416). Bill Moyers’ series of television interviews with Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth* (1988), introduced Campbell’s ideas to millions of viewers. Although its sources are centuries old, the narrative structure for Campbell’s Hero’s Journey is widely evidenced in many forms of popular storytelling, including film. Campbell’s own words reflect his universalist approach to mythology:

Mythology has been interpreted by the modern intellect as a primitive, fumbling effort to explain the world of nature (Frazer 1922); as a production of poetical fantasy from prehistoric times, misunderstood by succeeding ages (Müller 1894); as a repository of allegorical instruction, to shape the individual to his group (Durkheim 1961); as a group dream, symptomatic of archetypal urges within the depths of the human psyche (Jung 1959 [1934]); as the traditional vehicle of man’s profoundest metaphysical insights (Coomaraswamy 1916); and as God’s revelation to His children (the Church). Mythology is all of these. The various judgements are determined by the view points of the judges. For when scrutinized in terms not of what it is but of how it functions, of how it has served mankind in the past, of how it may serve today, mythology shows itself to be as amenable as life itself to the obsessions and requirements of the individual, the race, the age (2008 [1949]: 330).

Campbell contends that it “has always been the prime function of mythology and rite to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward” (2008 [1949]: 7). Unlike Propp’s folktale pattern, Initiation is an essential component of Campbell’s narrative model. The hero’s journey is a narrative representation of a rite of passage encompassing three necessary stages: Departure; Initiation; and Return (41, 81, 167).

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder [x]: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won [y]: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man [z] (1993 [1949]: 30).

THE adventure can be summarized in the following diagram:



The Hero's Journey (1993 [1949]: 245)

Campbell has been censured for citing multiple illustrative myths for individual sections of his hero narrative while neglecting to cite one that represents his entire pattern (Segal 1999a: 129) and for “oversimplification and ahistoricism” (Keller 1986: 54). Yet Campbell’s monomyth remains highly influential, because the narrative stages of the Hero’s Journey are easily tailored to the needs of contemporary storytelling, both in film and game design (Schell 2008: 77).

Joseph Campbell's Monomythic Structure applied to Narrative Media

Many science fiction films, including the *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983), reflect Campbell's monomythic narrative structure as described in the preceding graphic.⁴ George Lucas, the first Hollywood writer/director to publicly credit the influence of Campbell's narrative model on his filmmaking, remarked that his story for *Star Wars* (1977) was shaped by ideas described in Campbell's work:

It was very eerie because in reading *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* I began to realize that my first draft of *Star Wars* was following classic motifs...so I modified my next draft [of *Star Wars*] according to what I'd been learning about classical motifs and made it a bit more consistent (Larsen and Larsen 1991: 541).

George Lucas clearly acknowledges that reading Campbell's *The Masks of God* (1991 [1968]) and *THWATF* (2008 [1949]) influenced his *Star Wars* films (McCarthy 2015), which all accentuated individual heroism; a theme that Robert Ellwood states was "dear to Joseph Campbell's heart" (1999: 128). Ellwood perceived that *Star Wars* (1977) contained themes from traditional folklore and mythology made famous by Campbell: "the hero who is of noble blood but doesn't know it (Luke Skywalker), the intelligent robots in the role of companion animal or faithful 'sidekick' like Don Quixote's Sancho Panza" (1999: 128). Ellwood further maintained that the dreamlike quality of the film reflected Campbell's belief that myth, dream and literature "all came from the same place" (129). Indeed, Campbell stressed that the individual heroes of all great stories are symbolic vehicles. Yet, while *Star Wars* is apparently themed around heroic conquests and the cause of individualism against tyranny, according to Ellwood, its narrative premise highlights the "ultimate futility of grasping for power" (129).

⁴ A partial list of such films includes: *The Time Machine* (1960), *Time After Time* (1979), *Escape from New York* (1981), *Tron* (1982), *Dreamscape* (1984), *The Last Starfighter* (1984), *Dune* (1984), *The Terminator* (1984), *Back to the Future* (1985), and *Total Recall* (1990).

Another film director who is also widely cited as having credited Joseph Campbell's influence on his work is Australian director George Miller, especially upon his second *Mad Max* film, *The Road Warrior* (1981), in light of Campbell's theme of the hero's journey. Miller was mystified when his first *Mad Max* (1979) film began to be embraced by non-English-speaking film critics around the world. After becoming aware that Scandinavians were seeing the spirit of the Vikings in his film and a Japanese reviewer had likened his screen characters to Samurai warriors, Miller admitted:

I began to feel that we had struck a lot of mythological chords with *Mad Max*, [as if] we who had put the film together were the unwitting servants of the collective unconscious (Barra 1999).

As he conceived *Mad Max: The Road Warrior* (1981), while living in California in 1980, George Miller went on to read Campbell's *THWATF* (2008 [1949]) to study the Hero's Journey narrative structure, along with the works of Carl Jung (Barra 1999; Douglas 2015). To elucidate Campbell's influence on Miller's *The Road Warrior*, Christopher Sharrett has sign-posted pp. 175-383 of Joseph Campbell's *The Masks of God* (1991 [1968]), which examines the mythology of individuation (1985: 91).

Quotes from Joseph Campbell's writings have been integrated into the cinematic costumes of heroic protagonists (Fussell 2016) in both *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016) and *Wonder Woman* (2017). Wonder Woman's sword is engraved with words transposed from Joseph Campbell's *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*: "Life is killing all the time and so the goddess kills herself in sacrifice of her own animal" (2013). Hidden within the weave of Superman's suit, written in Kryptonian script, is a quote from *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, chosen by director Jack Snyder to reflect the mythic theme of the hero path in relation to the character who wears it (Fussell 2016):

And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world (Campbell, J. 1993 [1949]: 25).

Christopher Vogler (2007 [1998]) has made the claim that dozens of films, from *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984), to *The Lion King* (1994), *Pulp Fiction* (1994), *Titanic* (1997), and *The Full Monty* (1997), reflect the mythic structure represented in Joseph Campbell's hero's journey narrative model. Campbell's monomyth had been sourced by Vogler, a Hollywood story consultant, to create an annotated guide in *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Storytellers and Screenwriters* (2007 [1998]). This guide was designed to assist screenwriters to use the Hero's Journey as a practical framework for narrative structure. Vogler modified Campbell's original seventeen stages of the Hero's Journey to twelve:

1. Ordinary World
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting with the Mentor
5. Crossing the First Threshold
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies
7. Approaching to the Inmost Cave
8. Ordeal
9. Reward (Seizing the Sword)
10. The Road Back
11. Resurrection
12. Returning with the Elixir

(2007 [1998]: 8)

Although Vogler's model has been criticised as being over-formulaic, it succeeded in making Campbell's work more accessible. While some screenwriters may balk at the idea of using narrative models as a guide, Vogler himself notes that the order of the stages as presented is just one of many possible variations. "The stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power" (Vogler 2007: 19-20). Still, Vogler's model can be viewed by screenwriters as condensed mythic structure, and because so many video games

are themed around heroic action, it is also relevant in application to narrative game design (Schell 2008: 273).

The chart below shows the seventeen stages of Campbell's monomyth in application to the structure of *Star Wars* (1977) and *The Matrix* (1999). Although originally the work of Kristen Brennan,⁵ this chart was reprinted with permission in the monograph, *David Perry on Game Design: A Brainstorming Toolbox* (Perry and DeMaria 2009: 78-79), and appears here slightly modified for clarity.

Joseph Campbell's Narrative Model	<i>Star Wars</i> (1977)	<i>The Matrix</i> (1999)
I: Departure		
1. The Call to Adventure	Princess Leia's message	"Follow the white rabbit"
2. Refusal of the Call	Luke must help with the harvest	Neo won't climb out window
3. Supernatural Aid/ Meeting Mentor	Obi-wan rescues Luke from the Sand People	Trinity extracts the "bug" from Neo
4. Crossing the First Threshold	Escaping Tatooine agents	Capture Neo/ he takes the red pill
5. The Belly of the Whale	Trash compactor	Torture room/ awakens in a pod
II: Initiation		
6. The Road of Trials	Light saber practice	Sparring with Morpheus
7. The Meeting with the Goddess	Princess Leia	The Oracle
8. Woman as the Temptress	Luke is tempted by the Dark Side	Cypher (the failed messiah) is tempted by the world of comfortable illusions
9. Atonement with the Father	Darth Vader and Luke reconcile	Neo rescues and comes to agree (that he's The One) with his father-figure, Morpheus
10. Apotheosis (becoming god-like)	Luke becomes a Jedi	Neo becomes The One
11. The Ultimate Boon	Death Star destroyed	Humanity's salvation now within reach
III: Return		
12. Refusal of the Return	"Luke, come on!" Luke wants to stay to avenge Obi-Wan	Neo fights agent instead of running
13. The Magic Flight	Millennium Falcon	"Jacking in"
14. Rescue from Without	Han Solo saves Luke from Darth Vader	Trinity saves Neo from agents
15. Crossing the Return Threshold	Millennium Falcon destroys the pursuing TIE fighters	Neo fights Agent Smith
16. Master of the Two Worlds	Victory ceremony	Neo declares victory over machines in final phone call
17. Freedom to Live	Rebellion is victorious over Empire	Humans are victorious over machines

Bruce Isaacs posits: "*The Matrix* offers neatly formed parcels of traditional mythology, accessible and imminently recognisable to a greater part of the viewing audience" (2004). But Robert Ellwood and others have rebuffed the perceived tendency of Campbell's monomyth to

⁵ www.moongadget.com/origins/myth.html

oversimplify different cultures. Ellwood also saw in Campbell's monomyth, Eliade's structuralism, and Jung's archetypes (1999: 174) the "tendency to think in generic terms of people, races, religions...the profoundest flaw in mythological thinking" (1999: x). Christopher Vogler cautions that Campbell's narrative stages, 'The Meeting with the Goddess' and 'Woman as the Temptress', are perhaps misleading. He asserts that the energy of these stages may be male or female because archetypes may have positive and negative sides (2007 [1998]: 168). However, Joseph Campbell did not enter into any detailed discussion of Jungian archetypes in his monograph *THWATF* (2008 [1949]) from which the narrative model above is derived. Nevertheless, while films like *The Matrix* (1999) and *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (2003) may be seen as examples of popular film texts influenced by Campbell's narrative structure, these films have also been criticised for supporting a distinctly American ideology of individual power over the importance of society as a whole (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler 2006: 310).

Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey vs the American Monomyth

Although Campbell's classical monomyth (2008 [1949]) underscores rites of initiation at its foundation, Jewett and Lawrence assert that a distinctly different American monomyth has arisen, based on tales of redemption (1977: xx). These secularised Judeo-Christian redemption dramas, which replace the traditional Christ figure, "whose credibility was eroded by scientific rationalism", combine elements of "the selfless servant who gives his life for others and the zealous crusader who destroys evil" (Jewett and Lawrence 1977: xx). Conversely, Campbell's mythological pattern may be considered 'traditional', in that it echoes the plot of many traditional tales. These include: Ulysses undertaking a long, adventurous journey; Prometheus stealing fire from the gods on behalf of mankind; St. George doing battle with the dragon. Such mythic narratives "enable people to re-enact and temporarily resolve widely shared psychic

conflicts” (Cawelti 1971: 12). Strongly conventionalised narratives such as these are appealing, in part because they help to reinforce societal conventions by asserting an ongoing continuity of values (28). But in *The American Monomyth*, Jewett and Lawrence delineate a secularised American monomyth, in which pop culture superhuman heroes arise from the American soil to “reflect a hope of divine, redemptive powers” (1977: xx). Such superhero narratives offer “a *mythic massage* that...imparts a relaxing feeling that society can actually be redeemed by anti-democratic means” (xx):

A community in a harmonious paradise is threatened by evil: normal institutions fail to contend with this threat: a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptations and carry out the redemptive task: aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisaical condition: the superhero then recedes into obscurity (Jewett and Lawrence 1977: xx).

Further differences between Campbell’s model and the American monomyth lie in the latter’s curious rejection of sexual union as a primary value (Jewett and Lawrence 1977: 13), in contrast to Campbell’s ‘mystical marriage’ with the Goddess (1993 [1949]: 118); as well as a perceived ‘antimythical’ tendency in space-themed American narratives such as *Star Trek* (Blish 1972), that appear to contest a mythical world view as held by Campbell (Jewett and Lawrence 1977: 17). Paradoxically, while this format “may be a new set of wineskins” [with its space-age man in a ‘cocoon of mythic ignorance’], “the mythic fermentation within [Star Trek] is as old as Apollo” (17).

Yet Jewett and Lawrence appear to concur with Campbell’s mythic world view. They argue that the justification of violence in overcoming evil in the American monomyth is the result of a lack of mythic coherence; that “violence arises when myths and symbols, which provide maps of order and meaning, fall into disrepair” (1977: 40). Citing Friedrich Hacker, who inferred that “the secret message of the mass media” inspires destructive heroics on a world-wide scale, (Hacker 1973: 21), Jewett and Lawrence conclude that the popular media have rationalised the

American monomyth's justification of unlimited violence in order to exterminate the 'enemy's evil'. In turn, Joseph Campbell's 'hero' is apparently reproduced as "an anonymous killer in search of an enemy 'with a thousand faces'" (1993 [1949]; Jewett and Lawrence 1977: 224).

An Absence of Female Heroes

Folktale and mythic narrative models offered by Propp and Campbell in the early twentieth century reveal a notable absence of female heroes. Both Propp and Campbell selected texts for analysis which either concluded with the folktale marriage motif (Propp 1968 [1928]) or myths exclusive to the Hero type (Campbell 2008 [1949]). The outcomes of both these narrative types have historically privileged the status of male characters (Doherty 2001: 76; Plant 2012: 104). Such narratives have been embedded in and thereby serve to perpetuate patriarchal ideologies (Stephens and McCallum 2013: 64). Otto Rank's work in *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, although influenced by Freud, with whom he later broke irrevocably, "offers a striking foil to Campbell's largely Jungian analysis" of the hero myth (Segal 1990a: ix). Nevertheless, the narrative models derived from studies of classical heroes (Dundes 1997; Lord Raglan 2003 [1936]; Rank 1990 [1909]), which follow the sequential structure of the hero's life story, have all conceptualized a pattern in which the hero is male by default (Jorgensen 2014: 19). Although Campbell does allow for female heroes (Campbell and Moyers 1988: 125) and provides several example tales (2008 [1949]), he too has been criticized for presupposing male heroes in *THWATF* (Segal 1990a: xvii).

This absence of female heroes may be partly explained by an existing deficiency in the literature, highlighted by Merlin Stone. In her book, *Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood*, Stone criticised the existing gender bias among predominantly male scholars of ancient history and

mythology, claiming their research was never objective because of subjective selection of themes and texts (1979: 12). By choosing to begin their studies with Homer and ancient Greece, for example, scholars have ignored at least two thousand years of earlier written accounts of human history (10). Stone documented images and narratives of women from a diverse range of religious and mythological origins, previously ignored by male scholars. She asserts, justifiably, that these findings portray women not only as courageous heroes, but as providers and teachers of law, initiators of important cultural developments and prophets of ultimate wisdom (9).

Just as Jewett and Lawrence embrace mythic narrative structure while calling for a revision of the destructive elements that have arisen in the American monomyth, I also assert that Campbell's original monomythic narrative structure needs updating. Such revision is now becoming vital because of the way the monomyth has been applied by filmmakers to largely exclude female heroes. It is screenwriters after all, who, through creative expressions of mythic narrative structure, are best positioned to "understand the implications [the narrative] contains and resolve to give their work a more responsible content" (Jewett and Lawrence 1977: 225).

In identifying potential beneficiaries of a new narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, especially young female viewers, this chapter has posited that a more balanced representation of gender and diversity in screen narrative is necessary and indeed beneficial. In the context of traditional narrative structure and the absence of female heroes, this chapter has also compared Vladimir Propp's morphological versus Joseph Campbell's mythological approach to the monomyth or Hero's Journey narrative structure, concluding that Campbell's model, with its influence on Initiation, contains the potential to be culturally appropriate in narrative representations of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and women. This chapter has also

explored the proliferation of the masculine hero archetype across history, art, literature and film, and how the traditional folktale and mythic narrative models offered by Propp and Campbell in the early twentieth century have resulted in a notable absence of female heroes. This chapter has considered how Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative structure, later simplified by Vogler, has been successfully applied to the three-act screenplay structure of many blockbuster films, while highlighting the difference between Campbell's model and the American monomyth. In positing that the absence of female heroes in media narratives may be explained by deficiencies in the existing canon of literature, this chapter concludes that Joseph Campbell's original monomythic narrative structure requires updating.

Chapter 2

The Need for a New Mythological Model – The Female Hero’s Journey

This evaluation of the writings of influential theorists, including those whose work relates to the research field of the Heroine’s Journey, reveals that there remains a need for a new, more settled narrative model for the mythological structure of the Female Hero’s Journey that is directly applicable to screen texts. Whereas the term ‘heroine’ connotes female characters who are “passive, submissive, and helpless” (Lieberman 1987: 190), the developing narrative convention of the empowered female protagonist is better reflected in the term ‘female hero’ (Ngram 2019). Although flaws have been observed in the extant research of Joseph Campbell and Maureen Murdock, each has made a significant contribution to the advancement of this field. When viewed in combination, together with ‘Heroine’s Journey’ models proposed by Valerie E. Frankel, Victoria Lynn Schmidt and others, especially Patti McCarthy, their works provide a solid foundation to progress the field of research toward the formulation of a new narrative model for the Female Hero’s Journey in narrative media.

The time has come for a new mythological narrative model for the Female Hero’s Journey. It has been observed that the nature of the historical period determines the kind of hero needed or even possible at a given moment in history (Segal 2000: 2). Within the cultural context, the hero’s appearance in narrative can be interpreted as a product of a society at a certain developmental stage (Segal 1990b: 3; Spencer 1874). This explains why the characteristics of heroes may vary as they adapt to the circumstances and needs of their particular era. Having recreated them, cultures proceed to use heroes as a guide to feeling, thinking and decision-making (Knight 2015: 2). Many scholars agree that the narrative of the hero’s journey evolves to meet the needs of the times. Yet there remains a need to define and articulate the narrative

pattern for a specifically female hero's journey, which can be applied to narrative media. To date, a proliferation of warrior heroes has been valorised in a canon of blockbuster films wherein the hero resolves conflict through violence. There is a need for alternative portrayals of heroes that show audiences of any gender that there are other ways of being a contemporary hero, apart from enacting the frequently aggressive male warrior archetype, that has been selectively preferred by a film industry dominated by male filmmakers.

While heroic protagonists arise and act in accordance with their times (Carlyle 1897; Hook 1955; Segal 1990b: 5), such heroes may indeed be either male or female (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 14; Hook 1955: 154; Polster 1992: 49). George Miller claims that the feminist notion of his female warrior hero, Imperator Furiosa in the film *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), evolved out of the mechanics of his story as part of a canon of superhero movies telling stories that were conducive to their time (Patten 2015). Transmedia producer Maya Zuckerman asserts an argument for evolving the monomyth's archetypal pairing from the Masculine Hero/Female Sidekick to a Champion/Steward partnership of either sex, in order to more appropriately address contemporary audiences (2015). Covington further signposts the need to incorporate the spectrum of hero/heroine so that both of their aspects can be valued together (1989: 253).

Although previous research in this field has attempted to reinterpret the male model of the hero's narrative journey, such research has yet to result in a settled narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey. Scholars have sought to transpose Joseph Campbell's archetypal sequences of Separation, Initiation and Return (2008 [1949]) into archetypal patterns for a female hero's narrative arc (Pearson, C. and Pope 1981). Pearson and Pope, for example, described the three primary stages of the female hero's journey, in which "the protagonist is faced with a powerful figure to interpret, a dragon to slay, and a treasure to win", as: The Exit

from the Garden, The Emperor's New Clothes, and A Woman is Her Mother (1981: 68). However, their 'Return' stage of the female hero's quest is largely devoted to a discussion of literary feminist utopias (260-278). Such studies have been censured for their 'predictably politicized' feminist positions (Dickie 1983) or their failure to address the central importance of myth. So, although the authors set out 'to do for the female protagonist what Joseph Campbell had done for the male hero', their study has drawn criticism in that "they neither know nor greatly care about myth" (Allen 1982).

Additional studies in this field have been themed around healing the mother-daughter split (Murdock 1990) or the valorization of motherhood (Frankel 2010). Further research has approached the topic of the heroine from the varied perspectives of gestalt therapy (Polster 1992), Jungian psychology (Pearson, C. S. 2013), or through fairy tale (Haase 2004), modern fantasy (Campbell, L. M. 2014) and screenwriting analysis (Vogler 2007 [1998]). Vogler recommends that while the Hero's Journey archetypal narrative pattern applies, in theory, to both male and female heroes, writers might look to Jungian feminist theorists Maureen Murdock and Clarissa Pinkola Estés, as well as the work of Merlin Stone and Jean Shinoda Bolen, for alternative paradigms for the woman's journey (2007: xxii). Even so, much of this former research, foundational as it is for the crafting of a new model for the female hero, was not written for screen texts or has neglected to foreground Campbell's mythological emphasis.

Although the Hero's Journey has proven popular in film and literary narrative, many female readers feel that Joseph Campbell's compelling pattern lacks an understanding that the heroic feminine journey, while parallel to, may be different from the male hero's journey. Certainly, the female hero faces different challenges on her mythological journey, and her goals and interests may differ. Science fiction author Ursula K. Le Guin railed against the dominance of

the male hero in traditional Western narratives, which celebrate “the use of long, hard objects for sticking, bashing and killing” (1996: 151), and suggests the feminine alternative of a ‘cultural carrier bag’, in which stories are less linear and “not apocalyptic at all” (154). Donna Haraway, citing death-dealing metaphors in masculine technoscience narratives, shares Le Guin’s frustration with ‘killer’ hero narratives (Grebowicz and Merrick 2013: 131) in her desire for “stories which do not reveal secrets acquired by heroes pursuing luminous objects across and through the plot matrix of the world” (2013: 127).

Before his death in 1987, Joseph Campbell himself acknowledged that the female hero’s journey differs from the male’s. In the posthumously published *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine*, he states:

I taught at a women’s college for nearly four decades, and as I said to my students, all I can tell you about mythology is what men have said and have experienced, and now women have to tell us from their point of view what the possibilities of the feminine future are... There is something that the world hasn’t really recognized yet in the female, something that we are waiting now to see (2013: 263-64).

Yet the near absence of female heroes in a mythological narrative literary tradition dominated by male heroes is no accident. Robert Ellwood makes clear that “as [Campbell] became more interested in, and positive toward, feminine values in myth, [he] spoke of the ancient Hebrew conquest of Canaan as a truly egregious example of pastoral fighting people subjugating the feminine and promoting warlike attitudes” (1999: 163). While explaining the origins of what Ellwood describes as the dolorous patriarchal monotheism that has long afflicted Western culture, Campbell declared in *The Power of Myth*: “the Yahweh cult was a specific movement in the Hebrew community, which finally won [over older feminine myths]. This was a pushing through of a certain temple-bound god against the nature cult, which was celebrated all over the place, [especially by women]. And this imperialistic thrust of a certain in-group culture is continued in the West” (Campbell and Moyers 1988: 21).

Nevertheless, attempts have been made by previous authors to offer mythological keys to the heroic female journey through an examination of either Jungian archetypes interpreted through Greek goddesses (Bolen 1984); the patriarchal shift away from ancient goddess worship (Eisler 1988); a therapeutic roadmap for feminine healing (Murdock 1990); or tales of the wild woman archetype (Pinkola Estés 1992). None of these explorations are directed toward narrative structure in the production of screen texts. However, Valerie Estelle Frankel, like each of the feminist authors mentioned above, offers a mythologically-based heroine's journey that not only differs from the male Hero's Journey, but shares a similar structure with Joseph Campbell's monomyth (Frankel 2010). Like Campbell, Frankel drew from diverse historic sources (8-10) including Jungian archetypes, eastern and western mythologies and religious and literary texts (173) to craft a pattern for a journey of the Self towards wholeness (22).

Valerie E. Frankel's Mythological Model – The Heroine's Journey towards Motherhood

Valerie Estelle Frankel describes her narrative model in *From Girl to Goddess: The Heroine's Journey through Myth and Legend* (2010), as follows:

The heroine's journey is a path of cleverness and intuition, buoyed by water and earth. It is a path of circular logic, of kindness, of creativity so forceful that the world shapes itself to a wish. It is a path of birth and patience, or guardianship, but never of passivity. Women's work, nowadays devalued as folk craft and biological urges and time wasting, is the work that has conquered and preserved nations. It is as White Buffalo Calf Woman told the Lakota women: The work of their hands and the fruit of their bodies keep the people alive. "You are from the Mother Earth," she said. "What you are doing is as great as warriors do." This is the path of the great mother goddess, destroying mountains and creating civilizations. And each woman journeying toward insight, toward adventure, toward motherhood, toward wisdom is following this path, just as great Astarte, valiant Judith, passionate Isolde, and even sweet Cinderella once did (2010: 10).

In her presentation of the Heroine's Journey, Valerie Frankel commences in accord with Campbell's formulation of the Hero's Journey narrative model, furnishing the summation: "The hero feels something's lacking in his life. He then goes off to recover it or to discover a life-giving elixir. There's a cycle of going and returning" (Campbell and Moyers 1988: 123; Frankel 2010: 2). Frankel also agrees with Campbell's claim that the hero's battle with the ultimate nemesis, or the "submerged half" of his own dark side, is frequently characterised by a war with the father figure, noting the emphasis of this pattern in Darth Vader's dialogue, spoken in a climactic scene from George Lucas's *Star Wars* film (1977), "Luke, I am your father" (Frankel 2010: 2-3).

Yet Frankel departs from Campbell in his claim that the hero's mentor gifts him with Excalibur (or a lightsaber), since none of the heroines from fairy tales she examined had carried swords (3). Frankel concedes that in his use of the feminine myth recounting the goddess Inanna's underworld descent to illustrate the narrative stage wherein the hero sinks to near certain death (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 87-89), Campbell offers the prospect of the hero being female (Frankel 2010: 3). Still, Frankel declares that none of the patterns she had seen in heroines' stories include the "sword-young warrior-dark lord-kingship struggle" (3). Frankel concludes that the hero quest provides an imbalanced, unfair view of the world, in response to Campbell's statement that for the hero in classical mythology, "[t]he mystical marriage with the queen goddess of the world represents the hero's total mastery of life, for the woman is life, the hero its master and knower" (1993 [1949]: 120). Further, Frankel determines that in today's society, "women oppressed by hero myths see only two choices: Be the helpless princess sobbing for rescue, or be the knight...armored against the natural world, featureless behind a helmet. Only men or those who act like them, with business suits and power lunches and strategy charts, will succeed" (2010: 3).

In her unauthorized guide and commentary on the television series *True Blood* (2008–2014) and its related book series *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* (Harris 2001), titled *Bloodsuckers on the Bayou: The Myths, Symbols and Tales Behind HBO's True Blood* (Frankel 2013), Frankel gives an explanation of her own Heroine's Journey model with a comparison to Joseph Campbell's monomyth. In the chart below, taken from Frankel's ebook (2013), which also appears in her earlier monograph (2010: 121), italics highlight the narrative stages in which Frankel's model differs from Campbell's. In reference to the quest of the hero in Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative model, she declares:

This quest, into the otherworld of fairyland or the dark underworld of death, represents facing one's dark side and thus journeying into adulthood. It's the most popular story pattern for fantasy, creating the foundation of plots from *Harry Potter* to *Star Wars*. [...] The heroine's journey is similar, though not identical. The heroine is more likely to have a magical box (seen in the twelfth Sookie Stackhouse novel) or light (seen in the show's sixth season) rather than a hero sword, wand, or lightsaber (2013: ebook, no pagination).

Campbell's Hero's Journey

The World of Common Day
The Call to Adventure
Refusal of the Call
Supernatural Aid
The Crossing of the First Threshold
The Belly of the Whale
The Road of Trials
The Meeting with the Goddess
Woman as Temptress

Atonement with the Father
Apotheosis

The Ultimate Boon
Refusal of the Return
The Magic Flight
Rescue from Without
The Crossing of the Return Threshold
Master of Two Worlds
Freedom to Live

Frankel's Heroine's Journey

The World of Common Day
The Call to Adventure
Refusal of the Call
The Ruthless Mentor and the Bladeless Talisman
The Crossing of the First Threshold
Opening One's Senses
Sidekicks, Trials, Adversaries
Wedding the Animus
Facing Bluebeard
Finding the Sensitive Man
Confronting the Powerless Father
Descent into Darkness
Atonement with the Mother
Integration and Apotheosis
Reward: Winning the Family
Torn Desires
The Magic Flight
Reinstating the Family
Return
Power over Life and Death
Ascension of the New Mother

Frankel takes up the argument that, from ancient goddesses to the heroines of popular fiction, clever, creative heroines have always existed. She suggests that girls may follow the heroic journey by “forming a family circle they can rule as supreme nurturer and protector” (2010: 4). This, according to Frankel, is the heroine’s journey, “the true goal of which is to become this archetypal, all-powerful mother” (3-4). At this stage, Frankel introduces a substantial point of difference between her Heroine’s Journey narrative model and Campbell’s monomyth: The Bladeless Talisman. According to her circular model (read anticlockwise) on which Frankel further elaborates, heroines set out on rescue missions to restore their shattered families, working as hard as any fairy tale heroes, and “they do it without swords” (4).

Frankel’s Mythological Heroine’s Journey Model – Strengths and Weaknesses

Valerie Estelle Frankel, like Maureen Murdock, writing two decades earlier, strove to chart female alternatives to the narrative stages in Joseph Campbell’s mythological model (Croft 2011). In fact, Frankel’s work owes much to the previous writings of Maureen Murdock (1990). Frankel cites a passage from Murdock’s book (Frankel 2010: 131; Murdock 1990: 18), where Murdock is also citing the same passage from Kathie Carlson’s book, *In Her Image: The Unhealed Daughter’s Search for Her Mother* (1989: 55). The quoted text is fundamentally relevant to Murdock and Frankel’s shared points of difference with Campbell. The passage, quoted in full by all three authors, relates to the heroine’s split from her mother, wherein the daughter projects the negative aspects of Jung’s ‘devouring feminine’ archetype onto her mother (Carlson 1989: 55; Murdock 1990: 18; Frankel 2010: 131). This mother/daughter split, and later reconnection with the feminine—a concept first proposed by Murdock, then later by Frankel—is a significant point of departure from Campbell.

Frankel further augmented Campbell's 'The Call to Adventure' with "a desire to reconnect with the feminine" (2010: 20). She made several other changes, including substituting 'Confronting the Powerless Father' for Campbell's 'Meeting with the Goddess'; 'Atonement with the Mother' for Campbell's 'Atonement with the Father'; and 'Power over Life and Death' for Campbell's 'Master of the Two Worlds' (Campbell 2008 [1949]; Frankel 2010: 121). However, her final narrative stage, 'Ascension of the New Mother' as a substitute for Campbell's 'Freedom to Live', limits the field of female achievement to the role of mother, and has been criticized for undercutting any true freedom for women (Laity 2014). Terri Frontgia contested Joseph Campbell's narrative model for a similar reason: that the gendered stereotype and biological determinism of 'mother' delimits the female paradigm (1991: 16).

Although Frankel offers a number of stories as narrative examples, not all of them match the claim that "the true goal of the heroine is to become this archetypal, all-powerful mother" (2010: 4). Not all women perceive the female hero within the gendered confinement of women's usefulness as "man's saviours and protectors", as Frankel's pattern apparently suggests (317). While Frankel's Heroine's Journey narrative model is based on women's literature, folktales and mythology, and can thus withstand comparison to Campbell's mythological model for the masculine Hero's Journey, it fails to offer a narrative pattern that can be considered relevant to the majority of contemporary women. Like Frankel, many previous authors have attempted to offer keys to the narrative pattern of the Female Hero's Journey. Regrettably, most are not specifically directed at narrative structure in the creative production of screen texts. My research aims to fill this gap in the literature.

Maureen Murdock's Heroine's Journey – Healing the Mother-Daughter Split

Maureen Murdock, family therapist and educational consultant, authored *The Heroine's Journey: Woman's Quest for Wholeness* (1990), an exploration of the feminine psyche. In it, Murdock proposed a model for the heroine's journey to wholeness, which she affirms was derived in part from Joseph Campbell's model of the heroic quest (1990: 3). "The language of the stages, however, is particular to women, and the model appeared to me in a very feminine way" (3). The heroine's journey begins with 'Separation from the feminine' and ends with 'Integration of masculine and feminine' (5). Murdock provides an overview:

It began with a very abrupt rejection of the feminine as defined by me as dependent, overcontrolling, and full of rage. It continued with total submersion into the familiar outer heroic journey, complete with masculine allies, to achieve the boon of independence, prestige, money, power, and success. This is followed by a bewildering period of dryness and despair, which led to an inevitable descent to the underworld to meet *the dark feminine*. Out of this darkness came an urgent need to heal what I call the *mother/daughter split*, the *deep feminine wound*. The return trip involved a redefinition and validation of feminine values and an integration of these with the masculine skills learned during the first half of the journey (3-4).

Remarking on Murdock's Heroine's Journey model, author Patti McCarthy suggests that since the prevailing myth in our society is decidedly patriarchal, many women judge themselves against the male model of success (2016: 183). McCarthy cites Murdock's explanation:

Male norms have become the social standard for leadership, personal autonomy, and success in this culture, and in comparison women find themselves perceived as lacking in competence, intelligence and power. The girl observes this as she grows up and wants to identify with the glamour, prestige, authority, independence, and money controlled by men. Many high-achieving women are considered *daughters of the father* because they seek the approval of the first male model. Somehow mother's approval doesn't matter as much; father defines the feminine, and this affects her sexuality, her ability to relate to men, and her ability to pursue success in the world (McCarthy 2016: 183; Murdock 1990: 29).

Like Joseph Campbell, who claimed that his Heroic Journey was not limited to men (1988: 125), Maureen Murdock explicitly states that her proposed model is not limited to women, nor does it fit the experience of all women of all ages (1990: 4). She provides further clarification:

[The model I am presenting] addresses the journeys of both genders. It describes the experience of many people who strive to be active and make a contribution in the world, but who also fear what our progress-oriented society has done to the human psyche and to the ecological balance of the planet (1990: 4).

Maureen Murdock's Influential Heroine's Journey Model 1990

Murdock is often referred to as 'the student of Joseph Campbell' who was deeply unsatisfied with Campbell's answer to her 1981 interview question, in which he responded, in part: "When a woman realizes what her wonderful character is, she's not going to get messed up with the notion of being pseudo-male" (Campbell quoted in Murdock 1990: 2). While Joseph Campbell did not fully formulate the mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative model during the course of his own lifetime, in his later years he was actively inviting women to take up this task. During a series of final public lectures sponsored by a California non-profit organisation given months before his death in 1987, Joseph Campbell was heard to remark in response to an audience question: "If women don't write the Female Hero's Journey it may never exist." (Abrams, G. 1987). While perhaps unintended, Murdock's oft-cited claim that she was stunned by Campbell's answer to her question years earlier, is at least partially responsible for some of the subsequent feminist criticism of Campbell's work. Although Murdock's own work is derived in part from Campbell's, it is possible that her prominence in the literature has benefited not only from her frequently mentioned 'opposition' to his work, but by allowing the work of scholars who have subsequently cited her, to also stand in contrast to the scholarship of the renowned Joseph Campbell.

Indeed, the writings of authors Patti McCarthy (2016) and Victoria Lynn Schmidt (2001), were considerably influenced by Maureen Murdock's Heroine's Journey Model. Victoria Lynn Schmidt's work (2001) is relevant here, in that it specifically addressed an audience of writers. However, like Frankel, Schmidt did not directly credit Maureen Murdock's influence on her model. Nevertheless, both Schmidt and McCarthy's models reveal Maureen Murdock's pre-existing, essential pattern of the Heroine's Journey. Each of their journey models begins with feelings of betrayal after the heroine initially follows the male heroic pattern, as outlined by Murdock (1990: 71-79). This betrayal is followed by the Descent stage, common to both Joseph Campbell's and Murdock's original models (Campbell 1993 [1949]: 213-16; Murdock 1990: 90-91). This stage is elucidated by Campbell through the underworld myth of Inanna (2008 [1949]: 87-89, 184-86). Accordingly, following the Descent stage, and, having faced her demons, the heroine undergoes rebirth and return. In her book, *45 Master Characters: Mythic Models for Creating Original Characters* (2001), Victoria Lynn Schmidt proposed a Feminine Journey of nine stages:

Act 1: Containment

1. The Illusion of a Perfect World
2. The Betrayal or Realization
3. The Awakening – Preparing for the Journey

ACT II: Transformation

4. The Descent – Passing the Gates of Judgement
5. The Eye of the Storm
6. Death – All is Lost

Act III: Emergence

7. Support
8. Rebirth – The Moment of Truth
9. Full Circle – Return to the Perfect World

(Schmidt 2001: 185-86)

Others have sought to detail a narrative structure for the heroine's journey that differs from Campbell's 'hero's' journey, without directly referencing Murdock's work. One example, given by author Theodora Goss, is derived from the narrative patterns in fairy tales. Goss states

that while this pattern is specific to heroines in fairy tales, it also reflects the pattern of contemporary women's lives because it is the underlying pattern of a disproportionate number of fairy tales we still read or watch, such as the ubiquitous Beauty and the Beast, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White and Cinderella. (Goss 2015; IAFA 2017):

1. The heroine receives gifts.
2. The heroine leaves or loses her home.
3. The heroine enters the dark forest.
4. The heroine finds a temporary home.
5. The heroine meets friends and helpers.
6. The heroine learns to work.
7. The heroine endures temptations and trials.
8. The heroine dies or is in disguise.
9. The heroine is revived or recognized.
10. The heroine finds her true partner.
11. The heroine enters her permanent home.
12. The heroine's tormentors are punished.

Nonetheless, feminist critics of fairy tales have highlighted the stereotypical gendered pathways in their metanarratives that reinforce patriarchal constructions of female functions. While it is true that fairy-tale stories are constantly being reshaped and retold for contemporary audiences, the traditional narrative structure of fairy tales valorises beauty, motherhood and domesticity, which are rewarded with marriage (Rowe 1991: 348; Stephens and McCallum 2013a: 205). The path towards a new Female Hero's Journey narrative structure is not well served by looking into the dark mirrors of traditional fairy tale construction, however tempting.

The Female Hero Archetype and Narrative Journey

The existence of women's mythologies is still ignored by academics in many Ancient History departments. This may account for the claim that "there are no models in our mythology for an individual woman's quest" (Rossi 2013: xiv). Nevertheless, Joseph Campbell—otherwise known for formulating the narrative arc of the masculine hero's journey or monomyth—recognised the need for a female hero's narrative paradigm. He provided the bones of the

narrative structure for this heroic feminine journey in the more than twenty public lectures he gave on the divine feminine from 1972 to 1986. Campbell's focus in this series was to highlight the uniqueness of the feminine archetype in mythology through its three main themes of initiation, transformation and consciousness. Campbell perceived a feminine narrative structure within the "bones and imaginations of the great goddess" through his explorations into her symbolic, mythological, and archetypal themes of "initiation into the mysteries of immanence experienced through time and space and the eternal; transformation of life and death; and the energy consciousness that informs and enlivens all life" (2013: ix-x).

At the same time, Joseph Campbell emphasised the enduring power of the feminine mythological archetype, despite two thousand years of attempts by patriarchal and monotheistic religious traditions to exclude it (2013).

Inanna, Ishtar, Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus: those were the names she bore in successive culture periods...in Egypt she became the goddess of the Dog Star, Sirius, whose annual reappearance in the sky announced the earth-fructifying flood season of the river Nile (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 184).

Campbell recognised the importance and potential of the feminine spirit embodied within the process of birthing the meaning of women's experiences into mythic and creative form. He not only saw the archetypal feminine form in mythology "as the gift and challenge of our age", but also "honoured women in their visioning and forming of the journey" (xi).

In Campbell's discussion of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, also known as Inanna, he points to the heroic role of the mythological female hero as 'rescuer':

What is the hero, essentially? The hero isn't someone who has hit six hundred home runs in his lifetime. The hero is someone who has given his life for a cause or for others. And this giving of life is here represented in the female role as the wife who goes into the underworld for her husband because she is one with him, and brings him back to eternal life. We find this in the great story of the underworld journey of Ishtar to bring

the god, her spouse Tammuz, back to life. This is the great myth of the Goddess, how She descends to the underworld to bring immortal life to her spouse and herself. This image of the woman's role not only as creator of the cosmos but as rescuer within the cosmos is the basis of the old traditions (2013: 82).

Valerie E. Frankel agrees "many heroines set out on rescue missions...to restore their shattered families" (2010: 4) as do other scholars:

When goddesses embark upon heroic journeys, it is to restore what is broken or injured. Isis searched for the pieces of Osiris's body to resurrect him; the Shekina gathers up Jewish souls in exile; and Nu Kwa, a Chinese goddess, went through the world after a holocaust, repairing the cosmos (Merlin Stone 1979; cited in Chinen 1996: 166).

Writing more than four decades ago to assert a place in narrative for the female hero, Pearson and Pope classified her through the archetypes of warrior, artist or sage, who, like the traditional masculine hero, is the primary character in her own story (Culp et al. 1976).

Nonetheless, the attributes of the female hero vary in motivation and quality from the masculine hero. Indeed, the female hero archetype has more in common with screen representations of the Indigenous hero. Just as the motivations that drive the narrative formation of character, such as ego-fulfillment, freedom, socialness and order are viewed somewhat differently within an Indigenous framework (Clague 2019), so too do the motivations of the female hero character differ from the conventional construct of the masculine hero. For example, the traditional archetypal hero is often motivated to boost the ego and gain worth through his actions. While he aspires to prove his worth through courageous acts and expert mastery in a way that improves the world, he also fears failure, weakness, and vulnerability. Conversely, the Indigenous hero archetype is motivated to act as a provider for community, someone who protects and creates direction, offering insights into what the world needs, but who fears not being able to adapt and people not surviving because of something they do (Clague 2019).

At the same time, the female hero archetype does not conform to the usual cinematic feminine character tropes to act as victim, villain, seductress or sidekick. Moreover, instead of the beginning/middle/end common to traditional narrative arcs, the Female Hero's Journey may be experienced as ending/middle/beginning; a death/rebirth cycle, which begins with grief and moves through the emotions of anxiety and anguish, reaching towards satisfaction and joy, followed by fulfillment (Drake 1992: 53). Nevertheless, through her narrative journey, the Female Hero creates a new heroic archetype in which she becomes:

...independent without alienating herself from others; courageous without being contemptuous of the weak; powerful without dominating or exploiting others; rational without compromising feeling or intuition; autonomous without abjuring others; nurturing without denying her own self; and androgynous without sacrificing the best attributes of her femaleness but affirming full humanity for all (Christ 1980; Drake 1992: 53-54; Noble 1990: 8; Pearson, C. and Pope 1981).

The mythological archetype of the female hero and her narrative journey may both differ from her male counterpart's, but in order to be perceived as a hero she must still satisfy the requisites of the mythological model for the heroic narrative arc. And like the masculine hero who is "the champion not of things become but of things becoming" (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 289), her full potential is initially unrealised.

Patti McCarthy's Heroine's Journey Narrative Model 2016

A recently-proposed model, Patti McCarthy's structure for the female narrative journey, was specifically formulated with screen texts in mind. It clearly credits the influence of previous scholars in this field. Thus, it is directly relevant to the current study's aim to formulate a new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey in screen narrative. In describing the Heroine's Journey narrative model offered in her book chapter, *The Heroine's Journey: Claire Beauchamp Reclaims the Feminine* (2016: 182-84), Patti McCarthy, author of *The Lucas*

Effect: George Lucas and the New Hollywood (2014), not only credits both Joseph Campbell's and Maureen Murdock's pre-existing narrative structures (2016: 183), but also cites the influence of Victoria Lynn Schmidt's work (185). Note that Murdock also acknowledged that her psychological journey was derived from Campbell's model (1990: 3). The three stages of Patti McCarthy's Heroine's Journey pattern contain many of Joseph Campbell's original seventeen stages of the Hero's Journey (Campbell 1993 [1949]: 245).

McCarthy's story model substitutes Campbell's Departure; Initiation; and Return; with Awakening; Transformation; and Rebirth, mythologically matching them to the Triple Goddess stages of Maiden, Mother and Crone. The Threefold Goddess is described in Robert Graves' *The White Goddess* as follows:

As Goddess of the Underworld she was concerned with Birth, Procreation and Death. As Goddess of the Earth she was concerned with the three seasons of Spring, Summer and Winter: she animated trees and plants and ruled all living creatures. As Goddess of the Sky she was the Moon, in her three phases of New Moon, Full Moon, and Waning Moon. [...] As the New Moon or Spring she was a girl; as the Full Moon or Summer she was woman; as the Old Moon or Winter she was hag (2013 [1948]: 646).

Patti McCarthy summarises her Heroine's Journey model as follows:

1. AWAKENING – The Maiden

World of Illusions
The Call to Adventure
Refusal of the Call
Harsh Mentor/Supernatural Aid/Talisman
Threshold Guardians
Crossing of the First Threshold
Fortunate Fall

2. TRANSFORMATION – The Lover and Great Mother

Road of Trials (Revelations and Losses)
Meeting with the Animus
- Face Bluebeard (*Negative Animus*)
- Meet Green Man (*Positive Animus*)
Tempted to Abort Quest/True Path
Atonement with the Mother
Confront False and Powerless Father
Apotheosis
Reward: Integrated Self/Family

3. REBIRTH – The Crone

Refusal of the Return

Supreme Ordeal: Rescue from Within

Crossing of the Return Threshold

Rebirth: Power of Life and Death

Mother of the World

(2016: 184)

In her narrative model, McCarthy substitutes ‘World of Illusions’ for Frankel and Campbell’s ‘World of Common Day’. While Frankel specifies a ‘Bladeless Talisman’ and ‘Wedding with the Animus’, McCarthy substitutes ‘Talisman’ and ‘Meeting with the Animus’. For Frankel’s ‘Descent into Darkness’, McCarthy specifies ‘Tempted to Abort Quest/True Path’. Where Frankel asserts the stages ‘Winning the Family’ and ‘Torn Desires’, McCarthy supplants ‘Reward: Integrated Self/Family’ and ‘Refusal of Return’. Frankel’s ‘Magic Flight’ and ‘Reinstating the Family’ are concentrated by McCarthy into ‘Supreme Ordeal: Rescue from Within’. Lastly, in McCarthy’s model, Frankel’s ‘Ascension of the New Mother’ turns into ‘Mother of the World’. Patti McCarthy’s Heroine’s Journey narrative model shows an awareness of both mythic structure and screenwriting principles (2016: 205). She not only credits the influence of previous scholars in this field, including Murdock (1990), Vogler (2007 [1998]), Schmidt (2001) and Frankel (2010), but specifically credits the foundational influence of Joseph Campbell’s narrative model (2008 [1949]). Thus, McCarthy’s template deserves greater recognition in the scholarly literature on the emerging Female Hero’s Journey model.

Although McCarthy’s narrative structure reveals limitations, it presents the potential to be further developed. For instance, McCarthy’s model, which contains nineteen narrative stages, could be condensed to better mirror the seventeen stages of Joseph Campbell’s highly successful structure. Also, the important narrative stage that closes the first of three parts to the journey, known as ‘Belly of the Whale’ in Campbell’s model, is missing from McCarthy’s Heroine’s Journey template. The Belly of the Whale signifies an initiatory gateway into the

second, extended middle stage (Act Two) of the narrative journey. Through its absence, McCarthy's Heroine's Journey model lacks the full potency of Campbell's Hero's Journey model. In addition, rather than providing an equivalent narrative stage to Campbell's 'Woman as Temptress', McCarthy substitutes 'Tempted to Abort Quest/True Path'. Here, I would suggest that a better equivalent stage for the Female Hero's Journey would be an encounter with 'Masculinity in Crisis'. So, while McCarthy's Heroine's Journey narrative structure shows promise, the model invites further refinement and provides the potential to be built upon.

Still, instead of a narrative model titled the 'Heroine's Journey', contemporary female protagonists deserve a 'Female Hero's Journey' that more potently mirrors the agency bestowed upon heroes who have undertaken the narrative arc of Campbell's mythic Hero's Journey. My research posits such a model, inspired by enduring themes from ageless feminine mythologies. The narrative structure for my new Female Hero's Journey, detailed in Chapter 6, is built upon a lineage of scholarship in this field, as thus far described. Joseph Campbell's life's work was focussed on elucidating the heroic journey within a mythological context. And while he provided abundant research over many decades encompassing both male and female heroic narratives, Campbell also suggested in his final public lectures that a definitive Female Hero's Journey is best written from a female point of view. This dissertation addresses this task by devising and demonstrating a new mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative structure, elucidated via this research-enabled, practice-based creative screenwriting research project.

This chapter has posited the need for a new narrative model for the mythological structure of the Female Hero's Journey that is directly applicable to screen texts. The proliferation of warrior heroes, preferred by a film industry dominated by male filmmakers, has been valorised

in a canon of blockbuster films in which the hero resolves conflict through overt violence. However, this chapter established that the narrative journey of the female hero is parallel but different to the male hero's journey. This chapter focussed on the attributes of the female hero archetype and her narrative journey, noting similarities between on-screen representations of Indigenous and Female heroes. It has highlighted Campbell's focus on the heroic feminine archetype in mythology through themes of initiation, transformation and consciousness and the heroic role of rescuer. An assessment of previous scholarship exploring mythological keys to the heroic female journey concluded that very little has been directed toward the narrative structure of screen texts. Although Murdock's scholarship, influenced by Campbell's, has inspired subsequent Heroine's Journey models posited by Schmidt, Frankel and McCarthy, Patti McCarthy's nineteen-stage mythic Heroine's Journey narrative model was deemed most relevant because it builds on previous scholarship, including Campbell's, and was created with screen texts in mind. This chapter concludes that since Campbell suggested that a female hero's journey is best written from a female point of view, this research-enabled, creative practice screenwriting research project resolves to address this task by conceiving and demonstrating a new mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts.

Chapter 3

Finding The Female Hero's Journey Screenplay Structure:

Research-Enabled Screenwriting Practice

This chapter describes my methodological approach to devising an innovative narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, which can be directly applied to narrative screen texts. My research method, leading to the new model, also adds to the existing literature on the evolving Female Hero's Journey narrative model.

My research methodology involves four steps:

Step 1: Write a draft feature-length screenplay for a female hero, based on existing film industry narrative models.

Step 2: Analyse this draft screenplay structure in context with Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage mythological Hero's Journey narrative model.

Step 3: Formulate a new seventeen-stage mythological narrative model that is unique to the Female Hero's Journey, which also has the potential to apply to other screen narratives that diverge from the dominant male-warrior-hero archetypal structure.

Step 4: Revise the screenplay by overlaying my new seventeen-point narrative template for the Female Hero's Journey onto the first draft of my screenplay – *Little Bit Long Way*.

The result is applied research, in that the ensuing creative artefact (the final screenplay) constitutes research as a demonstration of the new narrative model produced by my research (Bell, Desmond 2006). This research methodology, used in concomitance with my creative practice of screenwriting, illustrates how the new narrative model, produced through my research process, can be overlayed upon the basic structure of an original screenplay draft, during its rewriting, to more effectively tell the story of an authentic Female Hero's Journey. The intention of my creative practice research is that, by making an evolved narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey available to writers, it can contribute to the sustained box office success of future female-protagonist-led screen narratives. My new Female Hero's Journey narrative model will assist writers and filmmakers to produce more socially constructive, culturally diverse films, which more accurately reflect the reality of our richly diverse contemporary society.

Representation

The recent deluge of film industry studies, reports and statistics makes it clear that when it comes to the screen industries, women are not being given equal opportunity to participate in our cultural narrative (Smith, S. L. and Pieper 2018). "We are grappling as a culture and as a world with our collective failure to create a space that treats men and women equally" (Ronan Farrow cited in Littleton 2018). From a film industry perspective—and with accumulating evidence of the continued exploitation of women in cinema (Beattie 2016)—Laura Mulvey's notion of the 'male gaze' (2009)—that mainstream movies are told from the perspective of a white male—still holds largely true. A study of the fifty-six top-grossing films of 2018 in North America, Scandinavia, Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe found that 42 per cent of men were shown in leadership roles compared with 27 per cent of women, who were four times more likely than men to be shown on screen completely naked (Plan International 2019). Of the top 100

American films of 2015, only 11.8 per cent were written by women (Smith, S. L. et al. 2018). In 2015-16, only 31.2 per cent of leading roles in film went to women, while 13.8 per cent of feature films were written by women (Hunt et al. 2018), rising to 14.4 per cent by 2018 (Smith, S. L. et al. 2019). With marginal improvement to date (Fuster 2019; Smith, S. L. et al. 2019), only 3 per cent of film releases by the six major Hollywood studios in 2018 were directed by women, the lowest percentage in five years (McNary 2018). Women spoke only 27 per cent of the dialogue in 2016's top grossing films in the United States, when on average, they are greater than 50 per cent of movie-going audiences (Thomas 2017). In 2017, 31.8 per cent of speaking roles in such films were female – fewer than a decade earlier (Smith, S. L. et al. 2018), with no meaningful deviation in 2018 (Smith, S. L. et al. 2019). While a trend towards improvement was noted in late 2019 (Aurthur 2019), based on a decade of studies surrounding inclusion in entertainment, Stacy Smith of USC Annenberg declared that “[t]he exclusion of women and people of color is an entrenched industry practice in Hollywood” (Smith, S. L. and Pieper 2018).

Diversity

Yet, this deficiency in representation of diversity in screen production, both on screen and behind the camera, is not confined to Hollywood. A 2017 study of German film and television productions found that men are twice as likely to appear on screen, particularly in characters over the age of forty. Further, in children's television in Germany, only one in four human characters are female, while one tenth of non-human characters (talking animals etc.) are female (Rieger 2017). To express their frustration, a group of writers from the Danish Writers' Guild contributed a satirical manifesto titled *Manus Festet* towards the Danish Film Institute's attempt to address gender stereotypes and the continued lack of screen diversity in that country (Enggaard 2017). Other parts of the world have seen modest improvement in onscreen representations of diversity. In 1992 there were no Indigenous Australians in sustaining roles

on Australian television, although they began appearing on TV screens from 1999 onwards (May, H. 2002). Hunter Page Lochard, featured in the Australian television series *Cleverman* (2016-2017), has said that while progress has been made, we still have a long way to go with regard to Indigenous representation on screen.

There is still a huge majority of audience members that seem to still ‘apologise’ for not wanting to see diversity only because they don’t get it or it’s too confronting. We need to keep feeding them so it becomes natural for [audiences] to witness diversity (Lochard cited in Morelli 2017).

Others have taken active steps to support greater diversity and inclusion in the screen industries. Actress Frances McDormand uttered the words ‘Inclusion Rider’ in her acceptance speech for Best Actress at the 2018 Academy Awards ceremony (O'Connor 2018). An inclusion rider is an equity clause to be included in the contracts of A-list film industry talent. It specifies a more equitable process for auditioning and casting onscreen talent and interviewing and hiring for behind-the-camera jobs. The inclusion rider establishes a practice of equality from the earliest stages of a film project. It creates a system of checks and balances to achieve this by developing a system of metrics to measure its success (Smith, S. L. and Pieper 2018: 76).

Diversity Sells Films

There is a growing market for screen texts that portray greater gender and ethnic diversity. In fact, recent box office figures show that diversity sells films (Matusek 2019). When it comes to onscreen representation – since who is heard and who is not defines the status quo, by redefining whose voice is valued “we redefine our society and its values” (Solnit 2017: 18). Authentic storytelling acts to humanize those often depicted as stereotypes on screen. Girls feel more confident when they see onscreen heroes who look like them, and, by a significant majority, both boys and girls have expressed a desire to see more female leads in popular science fiction and superhero screen genres (Burton et al. 2018). “Representation matters to the little

girl who has yet to dream of who she will become and to the grandmother who has never seen someone like herself on screen” (Hunt and Ramón 2017). The 2017 Hollywood Diversity Report from the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA found that audiences are more drawn to projects that feature a diverse cast. The study posits that diversity is good for business. Co-author Ana-Christina Ramón, assistant director of the Bunche Centre at UCLA, concludes that “[l]ess-diverse product underperforms in the marketplace, and yet it still dominates. This makes no financial sense” (Hunt and Ramón 2017). My research aims to provide a new narrative model for screenwriters to assist in the creation of screen narrative texts that reflect real-world diversity.

Creative Practice Situated as Research

Through my study of existing narrative models in screen media, including mythological research, I have created a new narrative model for the Female Hero that can be applied to feature-length films and other forms of screen media. This is a narrative model that represents a recognisably real female hero’s journey, as opposed to previously conceived versions of the stereotypical female character. Since my research involves “the use of existing knowledge in experimental development” to produce and demonstrate a new narrative model for the female hero’s journey in screen media, I am undertaking research that is also embodied in the final artefact (Biggs 2009: 67). The dynamic relationship between my research and the corresponding creative artefact can be identified and articulated in that the artefact (the screenplay) is intended as a demonstration of my research findings, which in turn have informed the production of the artefact, which is also created in dialogue with my research findings. Thus, the research and the research artefact each inform and extend the other in their development. As research-enabled practice (Batty and McAulay 2016; Batty et al. 2016), this doctoral thesis—

a conjoined exegesis and screenplay as artefact—demonstrates how scholarly research can lead to creative work (Smith, H. and Dean 2009: 7) and in the process, produce new knowledge.

What follows is the original logline and synopsis for my screenplay as creative artefact, to which my research has been applied. A logline differs from a synopsis in that it is a concise summary of a screen narrative that describes the central conflict of the story. It is also known as a ‘one-sentence synopsis’. For example, the logline for *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (1977) might be: Luke Skywalker, a spirited farm boy, joins rebel forces to save Princess Leia from the evil Darth Vader, and the galaxy from the Empire’s Death Star. The one-page synopsis (two pages at most) summarises the screen narrative to include the event without which the story would not begin; the decisions and actions the characters make in pursuit of their goals; how they approach the obstacles they encounter; whether they win or lose; and where we leave them in the end (Screen Australia 2009). Both documents are commonly used to secure funding to enable production to proceed.

Title:

Little Bit Long Way – Draft One (2017)¹

A feature-length screenplay by Sophia Riley Kobacker

Logline:

A lost orphan, hunted by brutally corrupt miners, sets out on a thrilling adventure across the Australian desert in search of her new home.

¹ In Australian Aboriginal Kriol, *Little Bit Long Way* roughly translates as: It’s a long way but you can make it. The final title, logline and genre details that appear here were all revised between Draft One and Draft Two.

Genre:

A PG-15 Coming of Age/Action Adventure aimed at youthful, mainstream audiences. The female hero is an Indigenous Australian girl.

Synopsis:

15-year-old Eddie— orphaned and injured after a plane crash in the remote Australian desert—is befriended by wayward female Afghani cameleers; Aboriginal women opposed to a uranium mine development; and a band of scruffy teenage musicians lost on tour. Homeless, wounded, and hunted by vicious miners (whose gold she’s accidentally acquired)—as well as a corrupt mining executive (a potent villainess) and a mysterious old Scot in a helicopter (a grandfather she’s never met)—how will this abandoned Aboriginal girl survive not only the desert, but her enormous emotional loss; and will she ever find ‘home’ again? Luckily, a scrappy dog, offbeat outsiders and a mother camel with downy calf become valuable new allies for Eddie.

Little Bit Long Way is a coming of age story for its young characters, forced to shed the abstract comforts of childhood to confront the stark reality of a conflicted ‘adult world’ and the harsh desert environment in which they are marooned. Despite vastly different cultural backgrounds, the capacity for these characters to connect with the ‘other’ through shared woundedness fosters strong emotional bonds, helping most of the characters survive against all odds.

Quintessentially Australian—steeped in iconic Outback Kimberley landscapes and the swirling cultural kaleidoscope that is modern Australia—this warm-hearted action-adventure film moves beyond parochial twentieth century ideas of interracial assimilation to explore pressing, contemporary, universal themes of shared planetary survival. The story plays on common fears in society today: of ‘cultural aliens’; as well as of the beautiful and terrifying endless expanse

of the inscrutable desert, a space that defines freedom and lawlessness, joy and danger, within which the characters in this film are provided the opportunity for self-realization.

Four Methodological Steps

Step One

My creative practice research methodology involves four major stages. These steps enable the demonstration, within my research, of my new narrative model for screen texts. Step One was to write a draft feature-length screenplay with a female protagonist, based on standard film industry narrative models for three-act screenplays. Below are examples of two well-respected film industry models for screenplay writing, currently in use in Australia and the United States. Such narrative models are generally intended as helpful guides and are not prescriptive. The order of some stages may be varied or omitted.

9 Points of Plot Structure (AFTRS 2017)²

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. The set-up | Act One |
| 2. The inciting incident | |
| 3. The significant setback | |
| 4. The change of plan | Act Two |
| 5. The midpoint | |
| 6. The moment when things are at their worst. | |
| 7. The small amount of hope | Act Three |
| 8. The climax | |
| 9. The resolution | |

² Australian Film Television and Radio School

15 Beats of Screenplay Structure (Snyder 2005)

1.	Opening Image	Act One
2.	Set-up	
3.	Theme Stated (during the Set-up)	
4.	Catalyst	
5.	Debate	
6.	Break into Two (Choosing Act Two)	Act Two
7.	B-Story	
8.	The Promise of the Premise	
9.	Midpoint	
10.	Bad Guys Close In	
11.	All is Lost	
12.	Dark Night of the Soul	
13.	Break into Three (Choosing Act Three)	Act Three
14.	Finale	
15.	Final Image	

Chapter 5 of this dissertation elaborates on the writing of the first draft of my screenplay using these standard industry models as a guide. Also detailed in Chapter 5 are the specific narrative beats of *Little Bit Long Way* selected to correspond with each stage of the film industry narrative models shown above.

Field Research – Location, History, Language and Look

Location research is essential to the writing of both fiction and non-fiction film projects. Filmmaker and scholar Desmond Bell asserts that “the development of fiction scripts rests on extensive research into the cultural and historical location of events, the language, habit, psychological motives of characters and into the visual elements that make up the film’s ‘look’” (2006). My film narrative involves the rescue of my female protagonist by Afghani cameleers after a plane crash in the Australian desert, and their subsequent journey on foot across the desert while being pursued by vengeful antagonists. There in the desert, my hero encounters a new language, widely spoken in the centre of Australia, commonly known as Australian Kriol, from which the film’s title is taken. In the film’s narrative, my protagonist becomes immersed in a

vast and mysterious landscape where it is imperative that she learn desert survival skills. Beyond knowledge of available desert foods, the required basic survival skills include how to work with camels, trust one's own instincts and navigate by the stars. So, in May 2018 I spent a week walking with camels in the remote interior of Australia to better understand the location, language, history and 'look' of landscapes that are portrayed in the film's screenplay.

This location research added enormous depth to my first-hand knowledge of the difficult conditions my female hero must negotiate throughout the telling of her story. The protagonist in my screenplay narrative, Eddie, is a young Aboriginal girl who must learn to walk across the Outback with camels. Like Eddie, I learned how essential camels can be to ensuring human survival in the desert. Camels can carry heavy supplies of food and water, as well as the injured, over great distances, requiring very little water of their own. Afghan cameleers played a vital role in the history of early transportation in the Australian desert, before the coming of the roads. They participated in important national projects such as the Overland Telegraph Line from Adelaide to Darwin, the Canning Stock Route and the Transcontinental and Central Australian Railway lines (CAAMA 2004). Camels were, and still are, an important part of the Australian story. The camel handling skills I acquired have been handed down from the early Afghan cameleers through Indigenous Australian camel handlers. During my research travel, I learned how to catch, handle, load, feed and care for individual camels working in an extended camel train. I also learned to navigate by the stars, as did the early cameleers and the First Australians before them. These are the same skills my protagonist would need to learn in order to survive her narrative journey across Australia's desert interior.

This location research also contributed to my developing theoretical research, adding to the formulation of my Female Hero's Journey narrative model. The camel training process I

undertook is based on developing mutual trust, and respecting and prioritising the natural instincts and inclinations of the camel. It is consistent with an Indigenous approach to cooperation with animals, plants and the land for mutual survival. In many instances, camels are trained via verbal abuse and rough handling from their handlers. Such handling generates fear, causing the animals to bellow, bite, spit and kick as a consequence. Camel handling based on respect for the animal is the opposite of this dominant, aggressive approach and is far safer for both camels and their human handlers. When camels form an affectionate bond of mutual trust and respect with their handlers, they do not need to be bullied and forced into work. Instead, as herd animals, they enjoy working in willing cooperation with their human companions. This is exactly the way my young female protagonist would need to bond and work with her camels to survive her desert journey.

This distinct contrast between these different approaches to camel handling also led me to devise a new narrative stage. In my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model, this stage becomes: 'Masculinity in Crisis', which stands in contrast to Joseph Campbell's narrative stage: 'Woman as the Temptress', in his Hero's Journey model (1993 [1949]: 120). As my protagonist discovers, working in respectful partnership is safer and far more effective than an aggressive approach, inherent with unrealistic expectations of power and dominance (Saunders 2017). It is also illustrative of contrasting approaches between the narrative journeys chosen and portrayed by female and traditionally male heroic characters, when challenged. This new understanding provided the means to clarify the apposite narrative stage in both my research thesis and creative artefact. It enabled the illustration of my protagonist's encounter with toxic masculinity, or Masculinity in Crisis, at the appropriate stage of both my Female Hero's Journey narrative model and screenplay. My arrival at this theoretical and narrative solution would not have been possible without a direct experience of location research with camels in the desert.

Step Two

Once Draft One of my screenplay had been written, based on prevailing industry models, the next step was to analyse the narrative structure of the existing screenplay draft in context with the seventeen structural stages reflected in Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey model. This is because my new narrative model for the female hero is intended as a demonstration of the female version of Campbell's seventeen-stage mythological journey, which is frequently evidenced in blockbuster film structure.

Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey – Seventeen Stages (2008 [1949])

Departure

- The Call to Adventure
 - Refusal of the Call
 - Supernatural Aid
 - The Crossing of the First Threshold
 - Belly of the Whale
- Act One

Initiation

- The Road of Trials
 - The Meeting with the Goddess
 - Woman as the Temptress
 - Atonement with the Father
 - Apotheosis
 - The Ultimate Boon
- Act Two

Return

- Refusal of the Return
 - The Magic Flight
 - Rescue from Without
 - The Crossing of the Return Threshold
 - Master of Two Worlds
 - Freedom to Live
- Act Three

Initiation

Joseph Campbell's mythological model for the Hero's Journey, derived from his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2008 [1949]), includes Initiation as a major component of the story arc. Standard film industry models do not. Rites of passage, or initiation ceremonies, from which the female or male initiate returns 'reborn' to the everyday world (Van Gennep 1909), are characteristically found in a multitude of Indigenous cultures worldwide (Brown 1963). Because Campbell's mythological hero's journey specifically emphasizes Initiation as an essential narrative stage, it has, from the beginning, carried the capacity to be culturally appropriate for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women and men. This provides Campbell's monomyth, in an evolved contemporary form, with the ability to influence the emergence and generation of more culturally aware, diverse narrative structures.

On the topic of Initiation, Campbell noted:

When we quit thinking primarily about ourselves and our own self-preservation, we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness. And what all the myths have to deal with is transformations of consciousness of one kind or another. You have been thinking one way, you now have to think a different way (Campbell, J. and Moyers 1988: 126).

The inclusion of Initiation in the Female Hero's narrative structure facilitates the portrayal of the female protagonist's character as undergoing a powerful transformation. Just as in other successful blockbuster films based on Campbell's model—like the original *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983), *The Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003) and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) that contain Initiation as a narrative stage—the inclusion of Initiation in the narrative arc of the Female Hero lends enormous power to the protagonist's narrative journey. It generates a visceral, cathartic experience that is universally appealing to audiences, and which in turn, may also substantially contribute to a film's box office revenues.

Step Three

My third methodological step was to devise a seventeen-stage Female Hero's Journey structure to reflect Campbell's mythological narrative model, by showing how it is built upon earlier scholarly attempts to define the evolving narrative structure of the Heroine's Journey.

Choosing the term 'Female Hero' over 'Heroine'

The 'heroine' label insinuates "passive, submissive, and helpless" female characters (Lieberman 1987: 190). Thus, the developing convention of the empowered female protagonist is better represented by the term 'female hero' (Campbell 2014: 4-14). Increased usage of the term 'female hero' is illustrated in historical data referencing analysis by Google Books in Ngram Viewer (2019). Campbell himself does not confine the definition of the hero's journey to a single gender. He clearly states that the hero "is a man or woman who has been able to battle past his [or her] personal and local historical limitations" (2008 [1949]: 14). A "hero or heroine [...] has found and done something beyond the normal range of achievement and experience [...] someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself" (Campbell, J. and Moyers 1988: 123). Therefore in fictional narrative, the hero archetype, a representation of the ego's search for identity and wholeness, can be embodied by a protagonist of any gender.

Building on the Work of Previous Scholars

As discussed in the previous chapter, theories emerged around the formulation of the Heroine's Journey, beginning in the late twentieth century. Below is a partial list and overview of the characteristics of some previous attempts to formulate a Heroine's Journey narrative model:

- Pearson, C. and Pope (1981) – Archetypal patterns
- Bolen (1984) – Jungian Archetypes through Greek goddesses
- Vogler (1985) – Screenwriting/The Hero
- Eisler (1988) – Patriarchal shift away from ancient goddess worship
- Murdock (1990) – Psychoanalysis: Healing the mother-daughter split
- Polster (1992) – Gestalt Therapy
- Pinkola Estés (1992) – Wild Woman archetype
- Haase (2004) – Fairy Tales and Feminism
- Frankel (2010) – The Bladeless Talisman
- Pearson, C.S. (2013) – Jungian Psychology
- Campbell, L.M. (2014) – Modern Fantasy
- McCarthy (2016) – Awakening, Transformation and Rebirth
- Bassil-Morozow (2018) – Jungian Theory for Storytellers
- Bassil-Morozow and Miller (forthcoming) – Female Individuation on Screen

However, there is still no ‘settled’ Female Hero narrative model with Campbell’s mythological emphasis. Moreover, the majority of these scholarly achievements do not apply to screen texts. Significantly, neither did Campbell’s original narrative model in *THWATF* (1993 [1949]). In practice, it is Vogler’s condensed version of Campbell’s Hero’s Journey (2007 [1998]) that is more commonly applied to screen narrative. While it may be asserted that the narrative structure of *Wonder Woman* (2017) finds correspondences in models provided by both Vogler (2007 [1998]) and Murdock (1990) to combine both the Hero’s and Heroine’s Journey character arcs, a singular structure for the Female Hero’s Journey model has yet to be agreed upon in the context of screen narrative. Vogler’s pattern (2007 [1998]), a simplified version of Joseph Campbell’s model (1993 [1949]), is largely applicable to male heroes. Maureen Murdock’s structure, in her widely referenced book *The Heroine’s Journey* (1990), in which there is clear acknowledgement that her journey model was also derived from Campbell’s (1990: 3), was not written to apply to screen texts.

As concluded in the previous chapter, Patti McCarthy’s Heroine’s Journey narrative template deserves greater recognition in the scholarly literature. Her Heroine’s Journey narrative model

(McCarthy 2016: 183) not only credits the foundational influence of Joseph Campbell's narrative model (2008 [1949]) for the Hero's Journey, but also credits the work of previous scholars in the field such as Murdock (1990), Vogler (2007 [1998]), Schmidt (2001) and Frankel (2010). Most importantly, McCarthy's model, which also reflects the three-act structure of feature film screenplays, reveals an awareness of feminine mythological elements within mythic narrative structure, as well as screenwriting principles (2016: 205). For these reasons, McCarthy's narrative structure for the Heroine's Journey has significantly influenced the development of my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts.

Feminine Mythological Elements

Like McCarthy's narrative model, my Female Hero's Journey model also includes feminine mythological elements. A number of myths and tales dating back to the ancient world (Johnson 1993; 1986; Pearson, C. S. 2015; Wasson et al. 2008), including the Sumerian myth describing Inanna's descent into the underworld (Campbell, J. 1993 [1949]: 105; Jacobsen 1987) are reflected in the feminine going deep into the nether world, during which time the earth falls barren. This motif is seen in other world myths, including Native American and Oriental mythologies (Campbell 1993 [1949]: 207-213). The female hero's return from the underworld represents a symbolic restoration of balance in the world and the renewal of fruitful seasons.

The Descent is reflected in multiple stages of the Female Hero's narrative Journey, since the entire second act is concerned with the narrative representation of transformational initiation for the female hero. This initiatory aspect of the journey begins in earnest with 'Belly of the Whale Initiation/Falling into Grace', the final narrative stage prior to Act II. However, the female protagonist's descent into initiatory realms is featured in many of the second act stages, including The Rescue from Within. In Campbell's Hero's Journey paradigm, this narrative

stage is known as The Rescue from Without (1993 [1949]: 207). As in McCarthy's model (2016), The Rescue from Within reflects the hero's realisation of her own strength through an episode of seeming powerlessness. Here, the female hero descends into a symbolic cave, where:

[Her] consciousness having succumbed, the unconscious nevertheless supplies its own balances, and is born back into the world from which [she] came. Instead of holding to and saving [her] ego [...] [she] loses it, and yet, through grace, it is returned (Campbell 1993 [1949]: 216).

The 'redemption of the wasteland' was one of Joseph Campbell's favored narrative motifs. He associated the wasteland with either the ego's repression, or the tyrant's oppression of a quality or condition that is being excluded. Such exclusion results in an imbalance that perpetuates the wasteland (Linn 2018). In George Miller's film *Fury Road* (2015), the redemption of the wasteland is represented by the widespread uprising and integration of the repressed, which in Miller's film gives focus to a redemption of the feminine.

George Miller has declared that his *Mad Max* films were deeply influenced by Joseph Campbell's ideas (Barra 1999; Douglas 2015). George Lucas said the same of his original *Star Wars* trilogy. "I would still be writing *Star Wars* today if I hadn't found Joe Campbell and *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* [...] He is my Yoda" (*The Hero's Journey: The World of Joseph Campbell* 1987). Just as Miller and Lucas both used Joseph Campbell's mythological model to revise early drafts of their screenplays, I employ the structure of my newly developed Female Hero's Journey model to revise and enhance the narrative of Draft One of my own screenplay.

Step Four

As explicated in Chapter 6, the final methodologic stage was to revise the first draft of my screenplay by overlaying my own seventeen-point narrative template for the Female Hero's Journey upon it. This part of the process constitutes research-in-dialogue with the narrative of my existing draft of a screenplay featuring a female protagonist. Thus, I have developed a new narrative model based on the structure-in-process of my original feature film screenplay for *Little Bit Long Way* (2017). While my new narrative model retains the three-act screenplay structure, the order of the stages is slightly varied from previous models. Initiation is emphasised in its narrative arc. My new Female Hero narrative structure, building upon previously posited Heroine's Journey models, is a female version of Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage Hero's Journey narrative structure that can be applied to any female hero character in contemporary screen narrative.

The Hero's Journey Narrative Model (Campbell, Joseph 1993 [1949])

Departure		Act One
1.	The Call to Adventure	
2.	Refusal of the Call	
3.	Supernatural Aid	
4.	Crossing the Threshold	
5.	Belly of the Whale	
Initiation		Act Two
6.	The Road of Trials	
7.	The Meeting with the Goddess	
8.	Woman as Temptress	
9.	Atonement with the Father	
10.	Apotheosis	
11.	The Ultimate Boon	
Return		Act Three
12.	Refusal of the Return	
13.	The Magic Flight	
14.	Rescue from Without	
15.	The Crossing of the Return Threshold	
16.	Master of Two Worlds	
17.	Freedom to Live	

The Female Hero's Journey Narrative Model (Kobacker, Sophia Riley 2019)

Departure		Act One
	The Call to Adventure	
	Refusal of the Call	
	Supernatural Aid/Strict Mentor/Talisman	
	Crossing the Threshold/Threshold Guardians	
	Belly of the Whale Initiation/Falling into Grace	
Initiation		Act Two
	The Road of Trials/Adventure/Misadventure	
	The Meeting with the Animus	
	Masculinity in Crisis	
	Atonement with the Mother	
	Apotheosis/Inner Transformation	
	The Ultimate Boon: Integrated Self/Family	
Return		Act Three
	Refusal of the Return	
	The Magic Flight/Supreme Ordeal	
	Rescue from Within	
	The Crossing of the Return Threshold	
	Mistress of Two Worlds/Letting Go of What is Dead/Rebirth	
	Queen of Her Own World/Freedom to Live	

Although there are differences between various other stages of the two models, Stage 8, ‘Masculinity in Crisis’, is unique to the new Female Hero’s Journey model. While not exclusive to men, toxic masculinity, often associated with bullying and other forms of coercion and violence, creates hierarchies favouring some and victimizing others (Keith 2017: 2; Newsom 2017; *The Mask You Live In*, 2015). But, since not all men exhibit the attitude and behaviours of toxic masculinity, just as not all women represent temptresses, I have used the more broadly applicable term ‘Masculinity in Crisis’ for this narrative stage. This also enables the new narrative model to encompass a wider variety of both male and female protagonist narrative arcs. Stages 7 and 9 of the Female Hero’s Journey narrative model share similarities with McCarthy’s Heroine’s Journey model (2016). Stage 9, ‘Atonement with the Mother’ also appears in Frankel’s model (2010).

My research demonstrates the functionality of my new narrative model through showing how it can be applied to a potentially commercially successful feature-length screenplay, aimed at mainstream audiences. The creative artefact (the final screenplay) constitutes research as a demonstration of the new narrative model my research has produced. Although it accounts for fifty per cent of my doctoral thesis, ultimately, I will have completed two screenplays: (a) the first draft of an original feature-length screenplay, and (b) the revised screenplay containing my new narrative model for the Female Hero. The final versions of both the creative artefact and the new narrative model for the Female Hero’s Journey have come to completion through a process of mutual development. While my research methodology can be categorized as research-enabled creative practice, the new knowledge generated by my research, as well as the screenplay produced through it, are each enabled by the other. My creative practice research

process thus reflects a symbiotic relationship between art and theory. Like camel and handler, both operate in reciprocal partnership for mutually beneficial outcomes.

The intention of my creative practice research is that, by making my narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey available to writers, it will potentially contribute to the sustained box office success of future female-protagonist-led films. This new narrative model will also find application in game design and long-form serial storytelling, including television and transmedia narrative. The Female Hero's Journey narrative model draws inspiration from McCarthy's model and many scholars before her, especially Joseph Campbell. It is intended as a contribution to the literature. Just as myths evolve according to the epoch in which they are found, it is my hope that this new narrative model will continue to evolve as future scholars find ways to improve upon it. Nevertheless, my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model is a functional tool to assist writers and filmmakers to produce more socially constructive, culturally diverse films, which more accurately reflect the reality of the society we live in. The tagline used by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media is: "If she can see it, she can be it" (2016). My screenplay—*Little Bit Long Way*—uses the new Female Hero's Journey model to tell the story of an ordinary girl, who, through extraordinary circumstances, finds her own hero within. In the current age, these are the stories women and young girls alike need to see on screen.

This chapter has provided an overview of my methodological approach to research-enabled screenwriting practice. The Australian Research Council defines research, which includes "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis", as "the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings" (2015). Further, it identifies the impact pathway of such research outputs through their "uptake and adoption" (2015). The research and

development through creative practice of my new narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, which constitutes new knowledge, and whose methodology is detailed here so that it is replicable, is intended for uptake and adoption by fellow screenwriters.

This chapter has described my research method for devising an innovative narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, which is directly applicable to screen texts. It argues that, as research-enabled creative practice, this doctoral thesis—a conjoined exegesis and screenplay as artefact—demonstrates how scholarly research can lead to creative work and in the process, produce new knowledge. In this chapter I have detailed the four steps involved in my research methodology. These are: 1. Write a draft feature-length screenplay for a female hero, based on two existing film industry narrative models. 2. Analyse the draft screenplay's structure in context with Campbell's seventeen-stage mythological Hero's Journey. 3. Formulate a new seventeen-stage mythological narrative model that is unique to the Female Hero's Journey. 4. Revise the screenplay by overlaying my new seventeen-point narrative template for the Female Hero's Journey onto the first draft of my screenplay – *Little Bit Long Way*. Because the arising creative artefact (Draft Two of the screenplay) validates my research through the direct application of my new narrative model to its writing, the result is applied research. In addition to providing a logline and synopsis for the screenplay, this chapter documents how my field research working with camels also assisted in the formulation of a new narrative stage for the Female Hero's Journey model that stands in answer to Campbell's 'Woman as the Temptress'. This chapter has shown that my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts, founded on feminine mythologies, adds to the existing literature by building on the work of previous scholars, particularly the narrative structures of Campbell's Hero's Journey and McCarthy's Heroine's Journey, while also arising from the emerging narrative of my screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*.

Chapter 4

Screenwriting Authorship: Screenplay Text and the Creative Process

My research project is focused on the discovery of a new narrative model for the Female Hero that can be applied to the structure of narratives in multiple screen media formats. However, the chapter that follows focusses on creative practice authorship and the form taken by the creative artefact my research has produced: an original screenplay for feature film. In the making of blockbuster films, as in long-form series television, authorship is, in reality, a team sport, conducted by showrunners and teams of screenwriters at writers' tables, as well as by directors and producers. But, since my research and creative artefact are situated within the context of an original single-authored screenplay, as opposed to multi-authored screen texts or adaptations from a previous text, a discussion on authorship is relevant to this research project. How do theoretical debates around authorship apply to screenwriting authorship and screenplays as an authored work in industrial and academic contexts? This chapter examines various debates around theories of authorship to contextualise and situate my own screenwriting authorship and creative process.

Perhaps more than at any other period in human history, the twentieth century saw the rise in debates around the question of authorship. The Latin origin of the noun *auctor* gives the meaning of the word author as originator, which denotes agency. Indeed, in Medieval Europe it denoted authority. The original Greek word which corresponds to author is *authentes* – which comes from *autos* + *entes*. The word literally means “he who himself accomplishes; in other words, a doer, a master” (Donovan and Lundén 2008: 3). To address the matter of screenplay authorship, this chapter explores some of the critical and theoretical debates around

agency in authorship as it applies to cinema. It examines the author-function of screenwriters and filmmakers, using the examples of two celebrated French screen authors, Jean Renoir and Jean-Claude Carrière, to explore notions of collaborative authorship and *auteurship*, or single authorship, within the context of cinema.

The debate among cinema critics and theorists at the intersections of ‘the popular’ and ‘the artistic’ in cinema, which were intersections between the classification systems of ‘genres’ and ‘auteurs’, reached its height in the 1950s and 1960s. The first French Avant-garde movement between the 1910s and early 1920s questioned authorial practice in relation to the new machinery of cinematic apparatus. But it also gave rise to the idea of linking the Romantic artist-author with the materiality of reality (De Vincenti 1997: 22). In 1954, Francois Truffaut wrote ‘A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema’ in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, a journal associated with film critics. His attack on the dominant *Tradition de la Qualité* advanced the concept of *La politique des auteurs* (Price 2010: 6). André Bazin defined this as the analytical process of “choosing in the artistic creation the personal factor as a criterion of reference, and then postulating its permanence and even its progress from one work to the next” (Bazin 1985).

This discussion fuelled the French New Wave movement, *La Nouvelle Vague*, which not only turned away from the literary quality of traditional French cinema, but championed auteurs, directors who wrote their own screenplays as expressive, individual authors and made films which bore their creative imprint (Corrigan and White 2004: 372, 424). Then, in the 1960s, American film critic Andrew Sarris posited the idea that American directors should also be viewed as authors of their films, just as literary writers were regarded as having authored their own texts (Sarris 1996). After all, Howard Hawks, John Ford and Orson Welles were among the American directors revered by Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard. The director “would not be

worth bothering with if he were not capable...of a sublimity of expression almost miraculously extracted from his money-oriented environment” (Sarris 1976: 251). However, questions around agency in film authorship and the relationship between artist, author and subject continue to be contested within the context of cinema.

The term ‘author’ points to a complex set of issues positioned around the ‘subject’ in aesthetic production. Twentieth century theoretical and cultural debates in this area can be seen in the context of resituating authorship in different ways than in previous centuries (De Vincenti 1997: 21). Michel Foucault’s “What is an Author?” ([1969]; Barrett 2007) was written in the ideological context of his reaction to the theoretical questioning of the author-function (Rabinow 1991: 107) as it performed within the bourgeois construct of authorship, which he saw as upholding bourgeois sensibilities of art (Gerstner 2003: 12). Although more recent scholarship sees individual authorship as “the exception to the general rule of collaboration expressed in the ‘socialised text’” (Price 2010: x), the nineteenth century Romantic tradition gave society the concepts of ‘artist’, ‘creator’ and ‘genius’, which in the Modernist period continued to separate ‘heroic’ artistic authorship (Murphy, A. and Potts 2003: 68) from science, religion and craft. This concept of artist-author was questioned both at the intersection of art and industry in the development of cinema, and within the preoccupations of structuralism and semiotics in the twentieth century.

Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky, founding member of The Society for the Study of Poetic Languages, wrote that: “Art is not created by a unique will, by a unique genius; man is a creator, that is, a simple geometric point of intersecting lines and of forces which are generated beyond him” (1923: cited in De Vincenti 1997: 21). Semiology of the cinema has also theoretically examined complexities around authorship, including an idea proposed by Christian Metz in

Language and Cinema, of the text representing a displacement of codes, as a work on and against codes (1974). The work of Jean-Luc Godard might be said to have redefined authorship through making his films, like *Breathless* (1960), the site for work on codes, texts, and fragments of surrounding culture in which the audience is immersed, by which they are constituted, thus empowering them as spectators with the activity of interpretation (De Vincenti 1997: 24). Roland Barthes' cultural codes, his *doxa*, or 'goes without saying', can also be seen at work in Jean Renoir's film *Rules of the Game* (1939) in the form of Renoir's social commentary on the rules of courtesy, honour, friendship, jealousy and gossip, which govern marriage, adultery, masters and servants, and the high society hunt (Julia Lesage cited in Stam et al 1992: 195).

Jean Renoir, who made his first film in the 1920s, was considered a kind of elder brother to filmmakers like Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut, Jacques Rivette, and Eric Rohmer, who were interested in applying innovative technical-linguistic practices to active film authorship. Due to Renoir's openness to both the world and language in his work, in which were perceived artistic-authorship and deep existential values, Renoir was named as one of the 'authors' par excellence who were celebrated in the *politique des auteurs* of *Cahiers du Cinéma* (De Vincenti 1997: 24), along with Roberto Rossellini and the British and American directors Alfred Hitchcock and Howard Hawks. All were seen as forerunners of the French New Wave, of which the *politique des auteurs* was one aspect (24, 21). Women auteurs, like Agnès Varda (1928-2019), sometimes known as the 'godmother of the French New Wave', have been largely omitted from history books and from special issues of *Cahiers du Cinéma* dedicated to French cinema (Dargis 2019). Similarly, the authorial voice of French filmmaker Alice Guy-Blaché (1873-1968), one of cinema's earliest and most influential pioneers, has been all but forgotten (Weitzman 2019). In any case, Jacques Rancière has said that the *politique des auteurs* was

soon reappropriated by commercial cinema as a way to sophisticate its product, as part of formulating a narrative for the cinema based on the concept of taste (de Baecque 1995).

Yet Jean Renoir discreetly expressed his doubts concerning the rationales of *la politique des auteurs*, placing a greater emphasis on the artistic possibilities of the cinema than on the artist-author:

The history of the cinema, especially of the French cinema, during this last half century was under the sign of the struggle of the author with the industry. I am proud to have taken part in this victorious struggle. Finally, today, one recognises that a film is the work of an author in the same way as a novel or a painting is. But who is the author of a film? In the heroic period of the American cinema the signature on a film was, for the most part, that of the actor. Success transformed that tendency into the star system. The cinema of recent years has imposed the idea that the author of a film is its director. It is a welcome change and conforms to current artistic and literary developments. Today, there are films signed by Truffaut or Jean-Luc Godard as there are novels signed by Simenon or André Gide. Many of my friends have asked me to write an autobiography. Their interest can perhaps be best explained by this new importance given to the author... As for me, I think that everyone, artist or not, is to a large extent a product of his environment... None of us exists by ourselves, but by virtue of those elements [such as the novels we have read, our friendships or family pets,] which have formed us (Renoir 1974: Preface).

Jean Renoir goes beyond this subtle reduction of 'heroic' author to 'social construction' to emphasise his inherited esteem of craftsmanship. He characterised the artistic activity of his father, the great painter Pierre-August Renoir, as that of an 'artisan' and 'worker', who taught his son that 'in life it is necessary to give oneself up to it like a cork in the current of a stream.' In the book *Renoir*, Jean Renoir's description of his father and his work also reflects an alternative to the heroic idea of artist-author championed by the *auteurs*:

He was convinced that it had been the world that had created him; he had done nothing more than reproduce the life which filled him with joy like the bar-line of a great symphony. 'A cork in the current' (De Vincenti 1997: 23; Renoir 1962).

Auteurism itself has been criticized as hopelessly Romantic in its reaction to the supposed disappearance of the individual author into the text, and would appear to work best as a theory of film criticism within the discourses about cinema, rather than as a theoretical practice (Caughie 1981: 15). Yet, while copyright laws and contemporary neoliberal economic theory still support the legal protection of an original product of the intellect, authored by a unique individual (Staiger 2003: 42; Woodmansee 1994: 27), it is undeniable that the screenplay text, the foundational film text, now exists as a product—whether collective, evolving or anonymous—within an advanced industrial filmmaking practice which stands in direct opposition to any Romantic notions of authorship (Corrigan and White 2004: 428; Price 2010: 342).

The screenplay is still thought of as a text which constitutes authorship in filmmaking. However, in the industrial model, it is often viewed as a mere planning document, or blueprint for the director (Field 1984 [1979]: 4). Yet Jean Renoir detested the word ‘blueprint’ because it repressed creativity, improvisation, and the dynamic collaborative relations within the filmmaking process (Price 2010: 46-47). That many other screenwriters also reject the blueprint analogy suggests that they too view the screenplay text as a literary creation, which invites the film production team to find correlatives for the verbal text in their own fields (xiii). Nevertheless, the screenplay is certainly the first and most important step in the process of making a film (Nichols, D. 1943). And although the problem of the ‘writer’s intention’ has been debated in literary criticism, many critics have argued that the inference or knowledge of an author’s intentions provides valuable intertexts that “cannot be wished away” (Price 2010: 48). Yet, perhaps more than any other form of authored text, the reception of the screenplay exemplifies Roland Barthes’ 1960s theoretical reorientation from the agency of artistic ‘work’ to ‘text’ (Price 2010: xi). Additionally, as a narration, the screenplay precedes the filmic event as a text and is therefore rendered invisible by the film (Price 2010: 23). This paradox only

partially explains why screenwriting remains marginalised in critical studies of cinema and within literature departments of Western universities (Price 2010: 5). While Barthes might have claimed that linguistics has provided the destruction of the author; that it is the culture which writes the work; and that the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author (1977), writers of screenplays continue to declare or demonstrate agency in their practice of authorship.

Multi-award-winning screenwriter, Jean-Claude Carrière, demonstrates agency in his authorship by elaborating on the process of collaboration and improvisation of the screenplay text. Carrière, who has written screenplays for dozens of films including *Belle de Jour* (1967) and *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972), collaborated with writer/director Luis Buñuel for nineteen years.¹ Like Jean Renoir, who made one of the masterpieces of French cinema, *La Grande Illusion* (1937), Carrière knows that film authorship is also inherently collaborative. To explain this, Renoir stated: “one person can’t do everything” (Field 1984 [1979]: 214). But, Jean-Claude Carrière also makes it clear that for him, the collaborative process of writing a screenplay is a tangible and purposefully authored process.

In his book, *The Secret Language of Film* (1995), the detailed description Carrière provides of the daily process of working collaboratively to write screenplays with the director Luis Buñuel is a clear example of authorial agency. Buñuel was always fascinated and inspired by stories in the daily newspaper. But Carrière says that reality is not enough; the imaginary must graft itself onto reality, must distort it, and strengthen it (183). So, each morning, after reading the newspapers, the two men would tell each other their dreams, and if they’d forgotten them, make

¹ Carrière has received nominations for eighteen international film awards and won two Academy Awards, including an Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015 (Carrière IMDb).

them up. This was supplemented by long hours of reflection, improvisation and invention. Then suddenly out of nowhere, a scene would materialize to then be improvised by them, repeatedly. When the words and movements grew sharper, Carrière began taking notes for the screenplay. Carrière's instructions for the process of improvisational writing are: allow the scene to come to you, live it, improvise it, and let yourself be taken over by it ('The Vanishing Screenplay' 1995: 184-5). Out of their improvisations, both writer and director would arrive at the same vision for set arrangement and character positions (173), and, as it was with Buñuel's former collaboration with Spanish artist Salvador Dalí (*Un Chien Andalou* 1929), both had to agree before a scene was included in the film (Ebert 2000). Nevertheless, Carrière's long time writing partner Luis Buñuel, who was a Surrealist at heart, often said that films should be like cathedrals; the author's names should be removed from the credits ('Vanishing' 1995: 176).

In discussing how the 1950s New Wave of cinema violently overthrew Formalism and monotony, Carrière concludes that with the arrival of this new concept, where filmmakers insisted that every film bear the stamp of its author—who was the director—the screenwriter was tossed into oblivion. The directors staked their exclusive claim on the terrain of 'author', and the screenwriter became a subspecies of writers, capable only of rehashing "mediocre recipes" ('Vanishing' 1995: 174). However, in Carrière's view, these *Nouvelle Vague* films were unwatchable, because the essential contact with the audience was lost. In fact, audiences fled these films, which according to Carrière consisted of "an avalanche of intimate narcissistic works, recollections, little fantasies, poetic effusions, greeting-card messages... addressed only to the director himself and a few of his acolytes" (ibid.) But, says Carrière, by the late 1960s, the screenplay was back. "Quick, quick, tell us a story! The need was desperate" (175). Carrière champions the authorial agency of the writer, declaring the screenwriter as today's storyteller, "pursuing an ancient tradition with modern means", whose purpose is to transmit

certain feelings from one person to another (186). Still, despite this apparent resurrection of the writer as author, the screenwriter “must accept the fact that the public gives the director credit for ideas and intentions that are often his own” (177).

While Carrière confirms that the films made from screenplays effectively kill them (Price 2010: xii), he claims that in the first months of writing, the authorship of a film belongs to the screenwriter. A screenplay is not the last stage of the literary journey. “It is the first stage of a film” (Carrière ‘Vanishing’ 1995: 151). Only when shooting starts must the writer relinquish the power of his authorship (172). Carrière acknowledges this transference of the power of authorship from writer to director by stating that a screenplay is always the dream of a film, but when it comes time to shoot, the compromises begin (154-55). The writer’s imagination must do its work and then metamorphose. The screenplay conquers by disappearing. Carrière calls this “the secret heart of the machinery” (171). In speaking of how the authored text is transformed into film, Carrière asserts this essential: “that making a film is truly a work of alchemy, of transmuting paper into film...Transforming matter itself” (150). “The screenplay is the *potential* butterfly. But it cannot fly. Yet the urge to fly is deeply buried in its most secret essence” (150-51). It is the caterpillar’s ‘skin’ that will be discarded through the process of making the film. “A film is complete when the screenplay has vanished” (170). The screenwriter knows his work is doomed to disappear, that he himself will remain unknown to audiences (185).

Embedded within Carrière’s butterfly analogy, the words of Barthes seem to echo down a lineage of writers of screenplays whose authors are consumed with the knowledge of their fate: “Life never does more than imitate the book, and the book itself is only a tissue of signs, an imitation that is lost, indefinitely deferred” (Barthes 1977: 147). So too, the question

surrounding the screenwriter's tenuous position within their sometimes anonymous though nevertheless original contribution to authorship of a film is iterated in Barthes' destabilization of the author's position with regard to the authored text: "language knows a 'subject', not a 'person', and this subject, empty outside of the very enunciation which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together', suffices, that is to say, to exhaust it" (Barthes 1977: 145). If writing annihilates the author, screenwriters, together with Renoir and Jean-Claude Carrière may ask, "Who is speaking?" and "What does it matter?" along with Foucault (Rabinow 1991: 101). However, it is clear from Carrière's detailed descriptions of collaborating and improvising the writing process with the great Buñuel, that this is a screenwriter who demonstrates agency over his authorship. That the screen text he or she authors will be annihilated by the film to which it gives birth can be assumed as inevitable by all who write for the screen.

Carrière and Renoir both offer visual metaphors to reflect the nature of their authorship of screen texts. Rather than being subsumed by the text, their authorship is a process of surrender to their art. In a scene from the biographical documentary *Carrière, 250 metros* (2011), Carrière is shown walking along the beach, then stopping to draw in the sand an image of Ganesh, the archetype of the scribe or writer. A wave breaks onto the beach, causing the drawing to quickly vanish. Carrière says good-naturedly, "Sorry Ganesh, we'll try again tomorrow" (2011). This image symbolises what Carrière has said about the vanishing effects of the produced film on both screenplay and screenwriter. Likewise, the maxim Renoir inherited from his father seems to annihilate all aspiration towards heroic authorship: 'in life it is necessary to give oneself up to it, like a cork in the current of a stream' (Renoir 1962). Although these visual metaphors point away from the agency of individual authorship, both Renoir and Carrière have exemplified, each in his own way through the richly creative works

they have offered the world, what Foucault has dryly described as the author-function: to characterise “the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society” (Rabinow 1991: 108). The notion of authorship continues as a critical construct (Corrigan and White 2004: 431) and contested debate. Yet as authors, Carrière and Renoir have each embodied the original Greek idea of author as ‘doer’, thereby demonstrating the agency of one who has accomplished mastery.

The Creative Spark in Authorship – Imagination and the Mystery of Story

Following Barthes’ destabilization of the author’s position with regard to the authored text (1977), it remains *de rigueur* in the academy to concede that the concept of the single author is debatable, that ideas and writing are derived from the culture in which one lives. I suggest that the concept of ‘story in the process of being birthed’ is so nebulous at first glance that the individual creative process may be confused with simply channelling concepts that already exist within the cultural milieu. But for many screenwriters, musicians and poets, their participation in the creative process is about becoming part of a far greater mystery. Creativity, according to Linda Seger, “comes from a collision of ideas not ordinarily thought of as fitting together” (1999: 8). The ignition of the creative spark that leads to story is, for me, like an encounter with a wild animal. I call it: The Caracal Experience.

The Caracal Experience

What modern people think of as wilderness is simply ‘the land’ or ‘country’ for Indigenous peoples, who have always listened to the living presence or ‘soul’ of the land. This dialogue

with country, with place, has allowed all of our ancestors to live in harmony with the rhythms of the land. Although life in the modern world has rendered most of us culturally disassociated as well as geographically and psychologically exiled from the wilderness, this does not mean that the living presence of the land has exiled itself from us. What remains of these wild places, despite our hunger to destroy them for dollars, is still alive and available to us if we are prepared to listen. For hundreds of years, the silence of great cathedrals has spoken to those who enter. So too, the great forests have been whispering to us for millennia. This language of liminal spaces may shape itself as symbols or synchronous events. In whichever manner it presents itself to us, it represents a form of human dialogue with the non-human world.

From an ecological perspective, Indigenous traditional knowledge moves beyond environmental knowledge to include a broad range of interactions with all entities within a territory, whether animate (plant, animal) or inanimate (rock, wind) (Poirier and Laurent 2014). All of these entities interact and work collectively toward achieving a balanced environment; to maintain order and preserve the dynamic system as a whole. Alice Walker provides a writer's point of view on such interaction in *Living by the Word* (1989):

The longer I am a writer—so long now that my writing finger is periodically numb—the better I understand what writing is; what its function is; what it is supposed to do. I learn that the writer's pen is a microphone held up to the mouths of ancestors and even stones of long ago. That once given permission by the writer—a fool, and so why should one fear?—horses, dogs, rivers, and, yes, chickens can step forward and expound on their lives. The magic of this is not so much in the power of the microphone as in the ability of the nonhuman object or animal to *be* and the human animal to *perceive its being* (170).

Early one morning, while camping in the bush at the edge of the Kalahari Desert, I sat quietly alone, listening to the dawn. When one sits in solitude in the wilderness it is almost impossible not to become exquisitely aware that nature, in its pregnant stillness, is teeming with life in myriad forms. As I sat in the desert sand, simply watching, listening and thrilling in the quiet

beauty of my surroundings, a wild cat appeared. It had not been there a moment before, but suddenly the caracal was quite near me, so close I could smell its wildness.

The caracal is a medium-sized lynx, the heaviest of Africa's small wild cats, similar in appearance to the mountain bobcat of the Americas. The body is slim, short and muscular with a small, delicate head. Its coat is made of sandy reddish fur with long tufts of black hair that wisp away from large pointed ears and black spots over each eye. Here, at the edge of the Kalahari, a young caracal now had me fixed in its citrine gaze, as if I were prey. As the caracal picked its way soundlessly across the desert space between us, I smiled in surprise. Instinctively, I allowed the crouched animal to smell the back of my hand, just as I would greet a dog or a camel. The wild cat made a peculiar guttural sound, perhaps a caracal purr. Time stopped as our two worlds met. The desert dissolved around me. Now, it was only this wild cat and me, in this one moment, willing to make sense of each other. Some writers speak of communing with the muses. But for me, the spark that ignites the creative process of storytelling always begins with an experience very much like an encounter with a wild animal. But a story, like a wild animal, can never be tamed. For a story to have true resonance it must have the freedom to follow its natural inclinations, its innate wisdom, its own compass, to have a life of its own.

Analogously, the inspiration for the screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, came to me through a state of willingness to encounter something other than myself. The story arrived as an experience of some *thing* forming; an awareness of an entity quietly coming into being, like an interstellar swirl of dust, a nebula forming into a new galaxy. This specific forming cloud was quite small at first, about the size of a caracal; small enough and close enough to fondly caress, but large enough to be dangerous. As I stayed with this little cloudy nebula of story, willing to

make sense of it, it began to form into the experience of flying through a cloud above the Great Sandy Desert. And there I was, in a specific place and time, flying west on a small aircraft toward the Indian Ocean with my main character, Eddie. I felt the vibration of straining twin jet engines; sensed the dense cabin heat from broken air-conditioning; smelt the salt of human sweat in the late afternoon sun. From there, the visual, emotional and geographic details of the story rapidly revealed themselves to me.

The Caracal Experience is one of intentional activation of the imagination. It is a moment out of time and space in which the two vastly different worlds of writer and story encounter each other for the first time. This process cannot be forced. It happens through a quiet state of active willingness; an openness to something other than oneself, allowing it to come so close that, providence willing, the writer is yielded the privilege of smelling its wildness. In nature, the human and animal fields are but one ecosphere. So too do story and storyteller coalesce. The creative spark of inspiration, an author's process of giving birth to story, is thus mysteriously triggered. This activation practice requires the cultivation of vibrant stillness, a paradoxically passive yet dynamic process that will differ in impression and minutiae for each writer and story, according to individual customs and circumstances. Early conceptions of the creative process have been connected to the belief that creativity is spiritually inspired—since spirit lives on in the word 'inspiration'—as believed by animistic societies, the shamanistic tradition, and the first literary criticism seen in Plato, who found artists to be vessels for spiritual forces, externalized in Greek mythology as the Muses. For me, allowing the creative spark of story to ignite requires curiosity, but also courage in the spirit of *haut les coeurs*, the wisdom of an uplifted heart.

Imagination, the fertile creative field familiar to all writers and artists, is a mode of perception that has lost value as the Western world privileges rational thought. In Jungian terms, animals symbolically represent the instinctual realm of the Self, attuned to its surroundings (Jung and Von Franz 1971: 220). In the analogy of The Caracal Experience, the two worlds in encounter with each other are the creative, instinctual area of the human mind and earthly reality; a meeting between imagination and the mundane. As Carrière states: “The imaginary must graft itself onto reality” (1995: 183). This bridged connection between two worlds allows symbols, metaphors, myths and finally stories to arise, providing meaning to the human experience. Symbols, after all, are the basis for all art, music and poetry. Interpretation of this metaphorical language arises from heart wisdom rather than head knowledge, something indigenous peoples have long understood. Within this context, we are not discussing the Caracal Experience as an intellectual process but rather a field in which the imagination, activated by the non-rational, instinctual realm, brings story into being. This is a long way from authorship contextualised within the thought processes of twentieth century European linguists. But from my own authorial point of view, this is how the practice of creative authorship, activated by a creative spark, operates in application to the writing of fiction. Still, to become fully realised, the perceptions gleaned by the creative imagination must then be applied to a tangible form.

Creativity may be defined as the ability to produce work that is original and valuable in its context (Lubart 2018: 134). Divergent thinking, commonly associated with artists and writers, occurs in spontaneous, unconstrained environments, where as many creative ideas as possible are generated and evaluated (Furnham 2018: 81). This is the point at which narrative models may be used as a tool by screenwriters to help structure the products of the creative imagination. Just as an artist may apply a sketched drawing of her ideas to the canvas before beginning to paint, so too might a writer make use of a narrative model to guide the developing structure of

her story. Yet, just as an artist's sketch does not dictate the finished painting, which follows its own organic process of development, neither will a narrative model dictate the outcome of the organic process of storytelling, with all its varied elements, for the writer. A writer makes use of a narrative model as an artist makes use of a sketch – merely as a tool to create structure. Both are guides to assist in the process of bringing the products of the creative imagination into form. Herein lies the value of narrative models as a storyteller's tool. They provide screenwriters with a way to discipline or rationally direct the imagination so that narrative inspirations may be crafted into visual and textual form.

Therefore, following the initial inspiration for a story, it is helpful for the screenwriter to draft an outline of the screenplay's narrative structure, as I did at this juncture. A dramatic outline, which expands the one page synopsis to several pages, reveals the flow of narrative stages through sequential blocks of action as they will appear on screen (Screen Australia 2009). This structural outline of the developing story can then serve as a guide throughout the writing process. It allows the screenwriter to take an audience on a journey from the story's beginning point to a specific destination. Crucially, dramatic outlines help to ensure that a satisfying end point to the narrative is achieved. It is at this early stage that narrative models, which assist in the assembly of a complete narrative structure, can be markedly useful tools to effective authorship, especially when working in defined genres of fictional narrative. But first, since my research is specifically focussed on writing for screen narrative, this discussion will now turn to the authored text itself; the screenplay.

The Screenplay and Screenwriting Practice in Academia

One of the most common misconceptions about a film script is an apprehension that it is a highly technical blueprint made up of incomprehensible symbols, graphs and charts – and that the dialogue is rather casually made up by the actors as they go along. It is true that some actors, under a delusion of literacy, try to tamper with written words. It is also true that occasionally writers indulge in flights of technical fancy which might include anything from designating a particular camera lens to instructions for parting the Red Sea in miniature (Mankiewicz 1951: ix).

A screenplay is an artefact that tells a story on the page, an autonomous document reflecting the skills and efforts of the writer or writers involved in its crafting (Batty and Waldeback 2019: xix). Screenplays also represent a narrative setting or story-world captured in narrative temporality in which an audio-visual story is revealed. Screenplays not only provide the narrative framework within which characters speak and perform actions, but also, through a cognitive and emotional text-audience relationship (Gorton 2009; Hockley 2007), provide context for the realisation of story within the imagination and emotional response of an audience (Smith, M. 1995). Writing for the screen involves the construction of visual narrative through a variety of storytelling elements, including character, theme, setting, action, dialogue, sound, mise-en-scene, scene order, subtext and genre (Bordwell, D. and Thompson 2004: 176-228; Gibbs 2002). Ultimately, however, a screenplay is a literary document with an industrial connection (Dean 2019).

Screenwriting practice studies are seen as a practice in which the screenwriter incubates and experiments with ideas informed by research within an academic context, with the aim that both the screenwriting process and the artefact or screenplay produced will be changed as a result (Batty and Waldeback 2019: xxv). My research is focused on screenplay narrative structure, and more specifically, narrative models that form the architecture of story structure for the screen. As one of the more important storytelling tools in screenwriting, narrative

structure provides context for meaning by creating narrative flow, rhythm, atmosphere, subtext, pace and point of view (Batty and Waldeback 2019: 31). But, beyond a film's narrative content, because narrative structure may also be viewed as ideology in the way it helps to construct meaning through its form, debates have arisen around the narrative structure of screenplays, particularly in, though not limited to, American films. This topic is further explored in the following chapters within the context of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey and other narrative models in current use by the mercantile film industry.

Although I do not claim the designation of auteur in the vein of Jean-Claude Carrière or Jean Renoir, I am able to demonstrate that my screenwriting authorship is both single-authored and self-originating, the subsequent textual creation capable of finding application in both academic and industrial contexts. This chapter has described a selection of images offered by screenwriters in relation to their creative practice of authorship. Each is distinctly different: the enigmatic caracal perched at the edge of the Kalahari; a cork bobbing in a gurgling stream; the symbol of a scribe etched in beach sand being washed away by the sea. Each is representative of a metaphor that expresses a screenwriter's individual approach to creative practice. The following two chapters elaborate on how, through my own creative process, I drafted and followed sequential narrative stages to write a complete story, authored in screenplay format. Chapter 5 details my process of drafting a series of narrative beats for Draft One of my story, by following two respected and widely-used film industry models. Chapter 6 elaborates on how I then used my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model, formulated via my research as described in this study, to rewrite my screenplay to arrive at Draft Two of *Little Bit Long Way*. The creation and application of my new narrative model for the mythological Female Hero's Journey enabled me to portray my protagonist, Eddie, as a more authentic female hero.

This chapter has explored debates around theories of authorship to contextualise and situate my own screenwriting authorship and creative process. Using Jean Renoir and Jean-Claude Carrière as examples, it has examined the author-function of screenwriters, exploring notions of collaborative authorship and auteurship within the context of cinema. It observed that although the French New Wave movement championed as auteurs directors who wrote individualistic screenplays and made films that bore their creative imprint, including Americans Howard Hawks, John Ford and Orson Welles, female filmmakers like Agnès Varda, the ‘godmother of the French New Wave,’ and Alice Guy-Blaché were largely excluded from film histories of auteurs. This chapter upheld that although the concept of artist-author was questioned at the intersection of art and industry in the development of cinema, and within the preoccupations of structuralism and semiotics in the twentieth century, more recent scholarship sees individual authorship as the exception to the general rule of collaboration expressed in the ‘socialised text’. This chapter asserts that although revered as an artist-author championed by the auteurs, Renoir and later Carrière disrupted such ideas by emphasising the collaborative nature of film narrative creation. Carrière’s claim that the French New Wave tossed the screenwriter into oblivion, only to see a return to favour by the late 1960s due to the audience’s need for stories, is countered by his own argument that ultimately, the screenplay is annihilated by the film to which it gives birth. This chapter has offered a series of visual metaphors offered by screenwriters to describe their approach to the creative practice of authorship, including my own. Through an articulation of how my own creative process leads to the creation of story, this chapter has enabled me to demonstrate that my screenwriting authorship is both single-authored and self-originating. The chapter concludes by situating the subsequent textual creation of such creative practice—the screenplay—as screenwriting practice within academia.

Chapter 5 – Falling Short of the Female Hero’s Journey

Screenplay Structure Via Conventional Film Industry Models:

Draft One – Creative Artefact

Narrative Models as Screenplay Architecture

The arrangement of Aristotle’s beginning, middle and end in classical narrative (Hiltunen 2002) is populated across the conventional three-act structural architecture of the majority of contemporary screenplays (Aronson 2010; Field 1984 [1979]; McKee 1997; Moritz 2001). While some screenwriters prefer the freedom of working with alternative narrative models, the three-act screenplay structure remains in dominant use in mainstream feature films (Bordwell, David 2006). Thus, all of the narrative models discussed in the current study reflect this classic three-act structure. Such structural architecture provides a powerful way to identify the main turning points in both plot and character arc (Bordwell, David 2008). It also assists the screenwriter to create a three-act story map. This enables the screen narrative being crafted to hold the audience’s attention for the duration of three acts, allowing the story to be brought to resolution. Structure is not a formula; it is a framework for storytelling. Writer-director Billy Wilder emphasises the importance of structural architecture in discussing writing for screen narrative in the documentary film *An Informal Conversation with Billy Wilder* (2018):

Structure to me is compared to building a house...Writing a picture is a mixture of architecture and—forgive me, a pompous word—poetry, storytelling on a certain level. But it has to have a very solid thing...so the second act follows the first act, it’s strong enough to keep the audience in their seats to see what is in the third act. But you need that very, very, very strongly (2018).

Following the initial inspiration for *Little Bit Long Way*, I wrote Draft One of my three-act screenplay after sketching out a series of narrative beats for my story. To do this, I followed the structural architecture provided in two widely-used film industry narrative models, as particularised in this chapter. But first, I sketched out four key scenes belonging to the beginning and end of my story, before I began writing Act One. I intended to use these four key scenes as a foundational guide around which the subsequent narrative stages of the evolving story, with the working title of *Blink*, would be allowed to develop.

DRAFT ONE

Four Key Scenes (or Narrative Sequences) – *Blink* (2017)

ACT ONE

First Key Scene

After Ellie's mother dies mysteriously in Mt Isa, Ellie and her father are now on board a commuter mining jet. Ellie's father, an environmental engineer, is reading over his Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) report on the 'Dowager Arcadia Mine Project', while telling Ellie how they are going to make a new life together in Broome.

Second Key Scene

Following the plane crash into the desert, Ellie is rescued by a mysterious Afghani woman cameleer and her two daughters, then taken at night by camel to an Aboriginal women's camp. While old Rosie tends Ellie's head wound, she tells a delirious Ellie that those mining 'fellas' she was travelling with on that plane are 'very bad men'; that the place they call 'Arcadia' is

her sacred dreaming country, the 'sickness country'; and that uranium belongs in the ground. Ellie's only words are "I want to go home".

Prior to this, Ellie has had no memory of the crash. Now she remembers, in flashback, placing her father's ESD report about the mine into her fabric shoulder bag, just before the plane goes down. She also remembers her father's last words about making a new life in Broome. Ellie now understands that her father is dead.

Suddenly, a helicopter appears on the horizon, coming their way. The women quickly hide all evidence of human activity, including the crouched camels, with shrubs and branches. Rosie, Fila, Kinah and Raza all leap under the cover of a small bush shelter with Ellie, just before the helicopter swoops loudly overhead.

Third Key Scene

Fila, Kinah, and their mother Raza, together with Ellie, who is slumped over the mother camel, are travelling across the desert towards the setting sun in search of a road, since Ellie has insisted she wants to continue her journey to Broome along with the cameleers.

The helicopter appears again on the horizon. Seated in the passenger seat is a grey-haired old man, searching the ground intensely through binoculars. Raza and the girls make a dash with Ellie and the camels up and over a ridge and down into a deep ravine, looking for cover.

Wedge into the crotch of the ravine is the head of an old mine shaft, from which emerges first one, then another dusty miner, both armed with shot guns. When one of the men stumbles, his

rifle discharges, spooking the camels. The woman and girls flee after the camels, while the men give chase on motorcycles. Ellie tumbles off the big camel and because she is still too injured to run fast enough, takes cover in a low ditch. She watches as the two men capture the mother and her two girls. The men knock the women senseless with rifle butts, haul them by the hair onto the back of the bikes, then shout gleeful expletives as they drag them back into the mine entrance. Ellie gazes up at the sky to see the helicopter passing to the north without spotting them.

ACT THREE

Fourth Key Scene

A jeep pulls up in front of a beachfront resort in Broome. The mystery helicopter man, Macpherson, is in the driver's seat. Ellie is seated beside him. He speaks with a Scottish accent, telling her that he's owned this place since before her parents were married. In fact, they met here. He has arranged a meeting here for her; and says, "Come on".

Ellie reluctantly follows him to some outdoor tables overlooking the ocean, where a group of a dozen or so Aboriginal people, mostly women and children, are seated, setting up a picnic. Macpherson says to Ellie: "This is your family, your mother's family." An old Aboriginal woman reaches her arms out to hug Ellie through tears. Others gather around in a group hug, sobbing. Ellie weeps with them, while Macpherson looks on with arms folded, smiling; then quietly leaves. Beyond the family group, a camel train can be seen walking along the beach in single file.

Screenplay Outline Using Nine Points of Plot Structure

As a screenwriter writing in contemporary Australia, I originally began outlining my screenplay using a nine-stage narrative model provided by the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), the national broadcast and screen arts school at which I had studied.¹ Although there are many options available, I chose this nine-stage narrative model not only because it had been offered by the nation's highly-respected, leading contemporary film school, but because it was the simplest model available to me at a time when my emerging story was bursting to be captured on the page. The nine points of narrative structure below have been expressly designed to assist the screenwriter to develop a structure or plot for a three-act screenplay.

9 Points of Plot Structure (AFTRS)

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. The set-up | Act One |
| 2. The inciting incident | |
| 3. The significant setback | |
| 4. The change of plan | Act Two |
| 5. The midpoint | |
| 6. The moment when things are at their worst | |
| 7. The small amount of hope | Act Three |
| 8. The climax | |
| 9. The resolution | |

Accordingly, I worked with this nine-point narrative model to draft the initial story idea into nine narrative stages for my screenplay. Thus, by early 2017 I had sketched out Four Key Scenes, followed by a Scene Breakdown for the entire screenplay. At this stage, my story still had the working title of *Blink*, and my female protagonist's name was Ellie. This early draft included additional characters that do not appear in the final screenplay/creative artefact. Many

¹ Batty and Waldeback have also offered a three-act structure in nine stages: Status Quo; Inciting Incident/Catalyst; End of Act 1 Turning Point; Act 2 Turning Point; Act 2 Midpoint; End of Act 2 Turning Point; 'Hardest Choice'; Climax/Final 'Battle'; Resolution and End (2019: 35).

other details have now been removed or changed, including variations to the spelling of final character names. Significantly, two major characters—an antagonist and an ally—did not appear in the earliest draft. It is important to note that no weapons are used in Draft Two of my screenplay, where earlier references to weapons and extreme violence have been modified to comply with a PG-15 cinema rating. What follows below is the initial draft of a complete Scene Breakdown for Draft One of the screenplay, based on the AFTRS nine-point narrative model. The ‘final screenplay’ referred to above follows this exegesis under the title ‘Creative Component: Feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way* – Draft Two’.

DRAFT ONE

Scene Breakdown, per Nine-Point AFTRS Model – *Blink* (2017)

ACT ONE

Ellie’s Original World: trauma and helplessness.

1. The Set Up

Ellie’s mother dies.

On the way home from school, a lonely Ellie is about to chomp into an apple when she comes across some kids playing football in the street. A stray ball is kicked at her, so she kicks it back accurately. An Aboriginal boy catches the ball and waves: “Hi Ellie!” She looks at the apple, shakes her head, then throws it to him. He smiles, catching the apple, and on second thought, calls out to her that his mum says that her mum didn’t show up at the hospital for work today. Ellie hurries home.

- Ellie's mother 'suicides' in Mt Isa (a detail not specified in Draft Two, now that murder is hinted at). Ellie and her mother both have long dark hair.
- Ellie and her red-haired father are on a commuter jet. He tells her how they'll start a new life together in Broome.
- The plane crashes into the desert, leaving her orphaned.

Ellie's Original World begins to change.

2. Inciting Incident

Ellie is rescued by Asylum Seeker cameleers.

- After the plane crash, all Ellie is left with are: her mother's photo; *The Hobbit* paperback; and the spiral bound Mining Report her father had been reading (carried in her shoulder bag). This report is damaging to his former employer's uranium mine lease.
- A secretive Asylum Seeker family of Afghan cameleer women rescues a badly injured Ellie. They are assumed to be illegal immigrants by all; they are not.
- The Afghani women take Ellie into the night on the back of a camel to an Aboriginal women's camp for healing. [Animated dream/FX sequence involving Creator Serpent]
- Old Rosie, the Aboriginal elder, explains to Ellie who her rescuers are; that the men on the plane were miners ('bad men' to her, because she opposes the uranium mine); and that Ellie was the only survivor. Ellie now knows that her father is dead. She says she wants to go 'home' – but where is 'home'?

- A helicopter appears on the horizon. All of the women instinctively hide themselves, the mother and baby camel, and any evidence of their presence from being seen from the air.

3. Significant Setback

The Afghani women are kidnapped by gold miners.

- After having decided to continue her journey to Broome across the desert, Ellie watches unseen, as her travelling companions, the Afghani mother and her daughters, are violently captured and dragged unconscious into a gold mine by two miners.
- Ellie gazes up to see that the mysterious helicopter has passed to the north without spotting them. The women cameleers have been kidnapped and Ellie is now alone in the desert.

ACT TWO

4. Change of Plan

Ellie attempts to rescue the Afghani women.

- Ellie creeps up to the mine entrance to rescue the kidnapped Afghanis. She makes a noise; waits for the first (now drunk) miner to step out; and cuts his ankle with the dagger Rosie gave her. She stabs the other miner in the calf as he runs out.² Ellie rushes inside, unties the women and they all run like hell.

² In Draft Two of *Little Bit Long Way*, the female protagonist does not use the knife and there is no stabbing.

- Ellie grabs an old canvas water bag hanging just inside the mine entrance and flies out after them. The feral miners, both drunk, are left bleeding and writhing on the ground. The camels are waiting nearby, so the women escape into the night. Not followed, the camel party navigates by the stars, on foot, in the deep silence of the desert.

5. Midpoint

The miners regroup and, this time, kidnap Ellie.

- The two patched-up feral miners come after the camel party on their motorbikes. Meanwhile, Ellie has befriended a Boy Band, broken down in the Outback. The miners make a first pass of their panel van, see the Afghani women and Ellie, and double back. Ellie yells, “That’s them!” They all pile into the panel van and peel off at high speed, camels galloping behind, feral miners in pursuit on bikes.
- The Afghanis scream that the baby camel can’t keep up! The panel van takes a steep bend too fast and half rolls into a sand dune. The feral miners now drag Ellie onto a motorbike, and, laughing in anticipation of revenge, roar off!

6. The moment when things are at their worst

Now lost, Ellie takes refuge in a cave complex after escaping.

- Ellie, lost and alone in a high-ceilinged cave, weeps into a rock pool, caressing the locket containing some of her mum’s ashes.

ACT THREE

7. The small amount of hope

Ellie decides to go back and use her father's report to make a difference.

- As Ellie rubs her eyes at the cave entrance, she can clearly see the winding tracks of the motorbike she rode here. "OK, Follow your own tracks!"
- Ellie arrives back to find the Boy Band and Afghanis finishing off repairs to the van after the crash. She asks: "Where's that mine protest; I'm going!" The drummer tells her it's about 100 kms from here, towards Broome.
- The panel van reaches the Mine Protest site. A helicopter lands carrying the Mine Manager and a grey-haired man. Ellie tells the crowd that her father's report contains proof as to why this mine should not go ahead. The crowd chants: "No mine! No mine!" The mine owner (Macpherson) grabs the Mining Report from Ellie, sees his son's name on the front and looks at Ellie in shock.

8. Climax

Bad guys are dispatched in dramatic helicopter crash sequence.³

- Against her will, Ellie is dragged and thrown into the Macpherson chopper. A desert willy-willy whips up, growing ever more powerful as it approaches the mining chopper, which bucks and dips in its turbulence. The Macpherson chopper makes a sickening lurch to the left, then begins to descend rapidly. Seconds before impact, Ellie jumps free and makes a tumbled landing into the sand as the chopper explodes behind her.

³ Substantial changes to this early draft, including the introduction of a charming new ally 'Cheeky Boy' and a powerful new antagonist 'Clarissa', appear in Draft Two of *Little Bit Long Way*.

9. The Resolution

Ellie is reunited with her mother's family in Broome.

- A jeep pulls up in front of an elegant beachfront resort in Broome. Macpherson tells Ellie he's owned this place (the Resort) since before her parents were married. They met here. Now he's arranged a meeting for her.
- Ellie realises, pointing at the town and beach: "Then this place must be my..."
- Alan says to Ellie: "This is your family, your mother's family." An old woman reaches out to hug Ellie through tears. Others gather round in a group hug, sobbing, including old Rosie. Ellie weeps with them, while Macpherson looks on, arms folded, smiling, then quietly leaves. Beyond the family group, a distant camel train is seen walking single file along the shoreline. Ellie and Fila lie on their backs overlooking the beach, smiling and listening to the Boy Band. They laugh and run down towards the sunset waves.



The story arising from the use of the AFTRS narrative model produced plenty of action-packed plot points that mirror scores of films that follow narrative models designed by men for male protagonists. However, it failed to result in a sufficiently unique female hero's narrative arc. This narrative model appears to be deficient in its ability to portray the narrative arc of a female hero, with agency, who is not driven by demonstrable heroics, the urge to dominate, or the philosophy of exceptional individual heroism that is so prevalent in the warrior archetype of the masculine hero's journey. An authentic narrative model for the female hero instead demands recognition that a genuine female hero is much more likely to be a team player, with a heightened awareness of collective concerns, and less likely to resort to violence to achieve her personal and collective goals.

DRAFT ONE

Screenplay Outline Using Fifteen Beats of Screenplay Structure

Next, I sought to improve on Draft One of my screen story by following the fifteen-stage narrative model for writing screenplays provided in Blake Snyder's 'Save the Cat' paradigm, as shown below. Snyder himself declares that his book containing the model is primarily aimed at those who wish to master the mainstream film market (2005: xvi). However, I chose to work with this model not only because Snyder's book is required reading in many screenwriting programs at film schools worldwide (x), but because Snyder also pays homage to distinguished narrative models that came before his, including those offered by Joseph Campbell, Syd Field and Robert McKee (xi).

15 Beats of Screenplay Structure (Snyder 2005)

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Opening Image | Act One |
| 2. | Theme Stated | |
| 3. | Set-up | |
| 4. | Catalyst | |
| 5. | Debate | |
| 6. | Break into Two | Act Two |
| 7. | B-Story | |
| 8. | Fun and Games | |
| 9. | Midpoint | |
| 10. | Bad Guys Close In | |
| 11. | All is Lost | |
| 12. | Dark Night of the Soul | |
| 13. | Break into Three | Act Three |
| 14. | Finale | |
| 15. | Final Image | |

Screenplay Outline, per 15 Beats of Screenplay Structure – *Little Bit Long Way* (2017)

Concept/Logline (as it originally appeared in Draft One)⁴

A lost and orphaned girl, hunted by brutal and corrupt miners, sets out on a perilous but thrilling adventure across the Australian desert in search of a new home.

ACT ONE

1. Opening Image

Lonely Eddie, with troubled parents, has no idea she's in danger.

- Feral camels gallop into the red Australian desert away from a dusty mining town as a lonely 15-year-old girl, Eddie, walks home alone from school.

2. Theme Stated

Mother Nature has her own plan (A detour on the way home).

- This theme is stated in the pilot's voice-over, just before the plane is hit by a huge dust storm over the desert.

3. Set-up

Orphaned following a plane crash in the desert, Eddie is rescued by strange women.⁵

- Eddie discovers her mother's 'suicide'. Soon after, a corrupt female mining CEO, who has just fired Eddie's father, threatens him by phone, hinting at murder. He's got something she wants: a damning Mining Report that he's not prepared to yield.

⁴ The female protagonist's name has now changed from 'Ellie' to 'Eddie' and the screenplay has a new title.

⁵ Besides the change to Eddie's character name, Eddie's father is now 'Andrew', and a new prime antagonist 'Clarissa' has been introduced.

- Eddie and her father, Andrew, board a plane to the coastal town of Broome to start a new life in the west. They don't know that the evil lady CEO Clarissa, and her henchmen, are waiting for them at Broome airport.
- When their plane crashes in the desert, Eddie is the only survivor. A futile rescue helicopter flies over some teenage musicians camped in the Outback.
- Eddie is rescued by female Afghan cameleers at night, and secretly taken to an Aboriginal women's camp where she receives healing. Eddie is angry, distrustful and sulky. She just wants to go home. But where is 'home' now?

4. Catalyst

A helicopter is hunting Eddie. She decides to set out again for Broome.

- A threatening mining company helicopter continues to hunt Eddie down, prompting the Aboriginal and Afghani women to hide. Eddie, although she is in possession of her father's mining report, doesn't understand why the helicopter is hunting her. She makes the decision to continue her journey to Broome across the desert, alone if necessary. Broome is her mother's birthplace. Old Rosie, her Aboriginal mentor, tells Eddie that she will die out there, trying to cross the desert on foot. "You're not ready." Eddie says people have always doubted her, but she'll never know if she's 'ready' until she tries.

5. Debate

Eddie declares she's ready to cross the desert to Broome; but is she?

- Old Rosie remarks that Broome is a 'little bit long way' to go. She tells Eddie that she must first learn to trust the desert. Though doubting her readiness, Rosie teaches Eddie basic desert survival skills and how to navigate by the stars. Self-doubting Eddie is determined to try, but often fails at these new skills.

ACT TWO

6. Break into Two

Eddie becomes the rescuer.

- After the Afghani women cameleers set out to cross the desert with Eddie, they are kidnapped by feral gold miners, perhaps to enslave them. Eddie, now lost and alone, lies in wait to rescue the women by using Rosie's knife to wound the men's feet as they dash out of the mine.⁶ Eddie also grabs a canvas bag labelled 'water' from just inside the mine entrance. She continues her desert crossing to Broome, on foot, navigating by the stars at night (for safety) with the Afghani women, a camel and calf.⁷

7. B-Story

Eddie and the female cameleers meet a teenage Boy Band lost on tour.

- After many days in the desert in search of a particular track, and, after walking all night, Eddie and the Afghani women come upon a broken-down surf wagon parked on the side of a remote dirt road. They creep up on the van and discover three scruffy teenage musicians from the city having a séance in the back, somehow hoping the spirits can help them. There's no Internet in the Outback, so they can't Google information on how to fix a flat tyre. Eddie knows how. (Awkward meeting.)

8. Fun and Games

Boys make nice with girls while playing with the baby camel.

⁶ Eddie does not use the gifted knife as a weapon in Draft Two of this screenplay.

⁷ In Draft Two of this screenplay (a PG-15 version of this story) there is only one adolescent Afghani daughter. Not specified here: Draft One included the distressing detail that one of the daughters is killed off in the conflict.

- Eddie shows the boys how to find the spare tyre and fix the flat. They introduce themselves and get to know each other (hopes, dreams and fears). They all share a common destination since the boys have detoured and gotten themselves lost en route to play at an upcoming festival in Broome. While the others play games with the baby camel (teenage boys and teenage Afghani girls), Liam, the handsome lead singer, talks to Eddie about how it is possible to find a family and be ‘at home’ with friends. While Liam is flicking through her father’s Mining Report, Eddie opens up to him about what happened with the feral miners. Liam shows her that her father’s report is critical of the Uranium Mine (for reasons related to Environmental and Heritage risk). The drummer overhears and mentions an upcoming protest at the mine, two days from now, on the way to Broome. (Although her father’s Mining Report survived the plane crash with Eddie, she has never read it.)
- Confused by this new information, Eddie moves over to the camels to find the canvas water bag and take a swig. Something lodges in her throat: a gold nugget; and there’s more in the bag. She and the audience now realise that she has accidentally swiped this gold from the feral miners while rescuing the Afghanis. Not knowing what else to do, Eddie hides her father’s Mining Report and the gold nuggets in plain sight, attached to the mother camel’s saddle.

9. Midpoint

New secrets put Eddie in greater jeopardy but help her set a new goal.

- The B-story ‘possible romantic interest’, Liam, has just told Eddie that it appears that her father’s goal was to stop the Uranium Mine. Eddie, knowing that there’s a protest

at the Uranium Mine site about 100 kilometres from here in two days' time, STILL doesn't know that the feral miners are now hunting her for their gold that she accidentally swiped. She is STILL unaware that the really bad guys—the evil CEO Clarissa and her henchmen—are hunting her down to get the Mining Report. But the audience knows they're coming! Eddie has not yet decided what to do about the Uranium Mine protest.

10. Bad Guys Close In

Eddie is snatched by the Feral Miners and separated from her friends.

- The two feral miners, having realized their gold is missing, come after the women across the desert on their motorbikes. They've also alerted the evil CEO, their boss, Clarissa (who wants the Mining Report that could stop the Uranium Mine development). Clarissa alerts her boss, Macpherson (the owner of the uranium mine lease), who's been searching for Eddie by helicopter. The two groups of bad guys, who've been coming for Eddie from opposite directions, now close in.
- The feral miners suddenly appear on motorbikes, coming up the dirt track toward the panel van. The women and Boy Band pile into the van and peel out. The motorbikes chase the van, followed by galloping camels, at high speed (the women screaming that the baby camel can't keep up), until it rolls. The feral gold miners snatch Eddie and ride off, but the gold nuggets and the Mining Report are still on the mother camel's saddle. As Eddie is driven away on the back of a feral miner's motorcycle, she yells back to (possible romantic interest) Liam – "I'm coming with you to the mine protest! Wait for me!" A miner whacks her into silence as they roar off.⁸

⁸ In Draft Two of this screenplay, Eddie does not call back since she has not yet made any decision on whether to act on her father's Mining Report.

11. All Is Lost

Chased into the caves by the Bad Guys, Eddie falls down a crevice.

- Eddie is tied up while the miners, on an alcoholic spree, joke about what they'll do to her for stealing their gold. She eventually escapes and takes off on one of their motorbikes, riding across the desert to a large cave complex, with the helicopter now on her tail. Clarissa (the evil CEO) and her two henchmen jump from their chopper and chase Eddie through the maze of caves.⁹ The feral miners also arrive and join the search. Clarissa tries to tempt Eddie with money and luxurious travel (if the mine goes ahead). While rejecting these advances, Eddie falls down a crevice, out of sight. The bad guys keep searching for her.

12. Dark Night of the Soul

Eddie is lost and alone again, in a cave, with no way back.

- The voices of the Bad Guys slowly fade as they search in a different direction. In pitch dark, Eddie crawls out of the crevice and creeps forward through the caves. She follows the dim light of sunset to a cave opening. But the motorbike she ditched is nowhere in sight. She's alone, thunder and clouds rolling in.¹⁰ The stars are concealed so she can't find her way back. At nightfall, she weeps into a rock pool, clutching the pendant that holds some of her mother's ashes. As she falls asleep, a snake slithers past her.

⁹ Rather than by helicopter, in Draft Two, Clarissa arrives in her own chauffeur-driven luxury armoured vehicle. She now also has an even more evil secret foreign boss whose face is never seen on screen.

¹⁰ In Draft Two, this sequence and the next have been significantly reworked and expanded to reveal Eddie's inner transformation. Also, there is never any thunderstorm or rain.

ACT THREE

13. Break into Three

Eddie finds the courage to regroup and keep fighting for her new goal.

- Eddie wakes to a clear morning and sees the snake trail left in the sand. That's it! Follow your own trail back. She looks out and finally spots the motorbike she ditched, far away at a distant entrance to the caves. She finds the courage to defy her pursuers—to break cover and make a run for it, to get back to her companions who unknowingly have her father's Report—and get to the mine protest site in time. What gives Eddie this courage is remembering Liam's words about 'her father's goal', (not so in Draft Two), plus the realization that she can follow her own bike trail in the sand, back to where her companions are hopefully still waiting at the van crash site. They are! (This follows some infighting wherein the drummer insists that the Afghanis are illegal aliens). They all take off toward the Mine Protest, this time with the baby camel strapped into the trailer, with all the amps and drums strapped to the van roof.

14. Finale

More secrets revealed at the Mine Protest climax. Bad Guys dispatched.

- Eddie and her friends arrive at the loud mine protest, a gathering of hundreds of Aboriginal people (Rosie too), hippies, 'No Mine' banners, politicians, police, etc. The Macpherson Mining helicopter and Feral Miners (on their motorbike) arrive soon after. Liam follows Eddie (carrying the Report and gold nuggets) to the megaphone, where she presents her father's report findings to the crowd. Macpherson pushes his way forward and grabs the Report. Clarissa is plotting with the other bad guys in the back. Macpherson sees his own estranged son's name on the Mining Report and is stunned

to realize that Eddie is his granddaughter. Eddie shoves the gold into his hands; it's from his own mine anyway.

- The Feral Miners rush forward and try to grab Eddie and the gold in the canvas bag. But Clarissa's henchmen shove them aside, grab the Report, Eddie and the bag, and drag her away, then stuff her into the waiting chopper with Clarissa. Just as it lifts off, a large desert willy-willy (whirlwind) destabilizes the chopper. Eddie jumps free at the last minute before the chopper crashes.¹¹ Macpherson (her grandfather) flies with the reluctant Eddie back to Broome in the police chopper for medical treatment. Eddie waves to her friends: "See you in Broome!" Back in Broome, Macpherson introduces her to her mother's Aboriginal family; the reason for family estrangement.

15. Final Image

Eddie, not lonely, troubled, or in danger, has found a new family.¹²

- At the beach in Broome, a long line of decorated camels ridden by happy tourists, walk towards Eddie in rhythmic single file along the white sand of the turquoise shoreline. She's surrounded by all the new friends she's met on her journey (including Rosie, and Liam, who's playing in the band), at their reunion celebration – at the beach festival in Broome. The Uranium mine nobody wanted has been killed off, thanks to her dad's Report. She now has plenty of new family members and a new home.



¹¹ The Climax of Draft Two includes the addition of FX-Animation of Dreamtime imagery, which recurs for Eddie throughout this story and is especially potent during her transformation in the cave complex.

¹² Draft Two of this screenplay portrays Eddie as resistant to this outcome until the last moments of the story.

Although Blake Snyder's fifteen-stage narrative structure shows the influence of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey (Snyder 2005: xi), and even with its additional narrative beats to allow room for B-story relationships, this model again fails to sufficiently address a female hero's narrative arc. As a lifelong lover of cinema, it would be futile to deny the long-observed, persistent use of hegemonic narrative models designed by men to suit masculine screenwriters and male-protagonists-by-default in a male-dominated movie industry (Verhoeven 2019). Or as writer/director Jill Soloway suggests: "Protagonism is propaganda that protects and perpetuates privilege" (2016). Soloway expanded on this point, as keynote speaker at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival, in her elucidation of 'The Female Gaze' in the production of screen narrative:

Sometimes the first gasp of this re-centering of ourselves is a kind of paralysis when it occurs to us how we have been groomed to stay quiet simply by having TAKEN IN all of this work, all of our lives—of consuming such an overwhelming amount of cis male artists splashing in their privilege, by telling their stories which work like propaganda that suggest how we should act, for access to their attention. And how that stops us from gathering our own attention on ourselves (2016).

The same postmodernist debates around bias and objectivity in science and academia are still relevant to cinema narrative today. As Donna Haraway has argued, concrete practices of particular people *make* truth (2002). This is especially relevant to the broad impact of cinema, in the way movies convey meaning to audiences.

Looking beyond the point of view from which a film is told; its narrative content; or the lack of diversity in the creative team behind a film's production; narrative structure itself may be viewed as ideology in the way it helps to construct meaning through its form. Although Joseph Campbell makes it clear that the mythic structure of the monomyth entails the hero bringing

back an ‘elixir’ or boon that is intended to benefit society as a whole (1993 [1949]: 193), his Hero’s Journey narrative structure has been adopted by many filmmakers as a reworking of the American Dream, shaped as a highly individualistic pursuit (Batty and Waldeback 2019: 180). Thus, specific social values can be promoted not only in a screenplay’s content, but also through the form of its narrative structure.

Indeed, screenwriter and playwright, Louis Nowra, recounts that when Christopher Vogler arrived in Australia to teach story structure, he discovered that Australians have an antipathy to heroes. They regard certain film theories, “particularly the Hollywood preference for happy endings and strong story structures, as an instrument of cultural imperialism” (Nowra 2009). However, after watching a year’s worth of Australian films, Nowra concluded that this dismissive approach to three-act structure and the lack of a strong second act is key to the failure of most (ibid). Nevertheless, narrative models espoused by Vogler, Campbell, and others have been challenged by Helen Jacey (2010), Kim Hudson (2009), Maureen Murdock (1990), and many others cited in previous chapters of this work, because “the female experience of growth and transformation has a markedly different flavour” to the gendered nature of narrative structures written for a male-hero-by-default (Batty and Waldeback 2019: 179). Such debates around structure as social ideology will persist until suitable alternative structures for screen narrative are developed for adoption by screenwriters.

It is reasonable to now question, as a screenwriter, how well widely used narrative models designed for and by men, including those influenced by Campbell, such as Snyder’s, suit contemporary female protagonists, if at all. Women pay to attend the cinema and now increasingly demand to see at least *some* movies that authentically reflect their point of view

(Smith, S. L. and Pieper 2018). There is a hunger amongst contemporary audiences for screen narratives that portray women in action out in the world, rather than in stereotypical domestic dramas which, like fairy tale narratives, can reinforce a restricted and diminished social status for women. Instead of parachuting a female lead into screen narratives crafted from narrative models designed for male protagonists (Burkhart 2019; Cinema Tropical 2019), a more effective approach would be to restructure prevailing film industry narrative models to reflect the reality of the female hero's narrative arc. The following chapter illuminates how, using Joseph Campbell's mythic Hero's Journey narrative model as a foundation and building on previously posited models, I used the structure of my mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative model, developed through my research as detailed in preceding chapters of this work, to reflect a more authentic narrative arc for the female hero in Draft Two of my screenplay.

This chapter has articulated how, following the initial inspiration for *Little Bit Long Way*, I wrote Draft One of my three-act screenplay after sketching out a series of narrative beats for my story. It explicated that in order to do this, I followed the structural architecture provided in two widely-used film industry narrative models, the first of which contains nine points of plot structure (AFTRS), the second containing fifteen beats of screenplay structure (Snyder). This chapter has shown that the story arising from the use of the first narrative model produced plenty of action-packed plot points that mirror scores of films that follow narrative models designed by men for male protagonists. This first narrative model was judged deficient in its ability to portray the narrative arc of a female hero, with agency, who is not driven by demonstrable heroics, the urge to dominate, or the philosophy of exceptional individual heroism that is so prevalent in the warrior archetype of the masculine hero's journey. After applying the second industry model to my screenplay structure, this chapter discerned that, even with its additional narrative beats to allow room for B-story relationships, this second

structural model also failed to result in a sufficiently authentic, uniquely female hero's narrative arc. As a screenwriter writing for contemporary audiences, I queried how well widely used narrative models such as these, predominantly designed with male protagonists in mind, and including those influenced by Campbell, suit female protagonists, if at all. This chapter concludes by positing that a more effective approach to screenwriting practice, for screenplays that contain heroic female protagonists, would be to expand and restructure prevailing film industry narrative models so that the resulting screenplay reflects the reality of an authentic female hero's narrative arc.

Chapter 6 – The Female Hero’s Journey: Narrative Transformation for Women and Girls

Screenplay Structure Via the Female Hero’s Journey Model: Draft Two – Creative Artefact

This chapter concerns the rewriting of Draft One of my screenplay in accord with the narrative structure of my new Female Hero’s Journey narrative model, to arrive at Draft Two.¹ In the process of rewriting, I expanded the existing narrative stages of Draft One, as detailed in the previous chapter, so that Draft Two now encompasses the seventeen narrative stages of my Female Hero’s Journey model. As noted in Chapter 3, the final methodological stage of my creative practice research was to revise the first draft of my screenplay by overlaying my own seventeen-point narrative design for the Female Hero’s Journey upon it. Thus, the development of my new narrative model constitutes research-in-dialogue with the structure-in-process of Draft One of my screenplay for the feature film, *Little Bit Long Way* (2017). While my new narrative model retains the traditional three-act screenplay structure for feature films, the number and order of narrative stages varies in differing degrees from previously-cited models. Significantly, Initiation is emphasised as an essential narrative stage for both women and girls. My new Female Hero’s Journey model, building on previously posited Heroine’s Journey models, is a female version of Joseph Campbell’s seventeen-stage Hero’s Journey narrative structure that can be applied to any female hero character in contemporary screen media. In this chapter, the narrative stages of the Female Hero’s Journey that most diverge from Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey narrative model (1993 [1949]) are afforded greater emphasis.

¹ See ‘Creative Component: Feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way* – Draft Two’, following exegesis.

The Hero's Journey Narrative Model (Campbell, Joseph 1993 [1949])

The Female Hero's Journey Narrative Model (Kobacker, Sophia Riley 2019)

I. Departure	Act One
1. The Call to Adventure	
2. Refusal of the Call	
3. Supernatural Aid	
4. Crossing the Threshold	
5. Belly of the Whale	
II. Initiation	Act Two
6. The Road of Trials	
7. The Meeting with the Goddess	
8. Woman as Temptress	
9. Atonement with the Father	
10. Apotheosis	
11. The Ultimate Boon	
III. Return	Act Three
12. Refusal of the Return	
13. The Magic Flight	
14. Rescue from Without	
15. The Crossing of the Return Threshold	
16. Master of Two Worlds	
17. Freedom to Live	

Departure	Act One
The Call to Adventure	
Refusal of the call	
Supernatural Aid/Strict Mentor/Talisman	
Crossing the Threshold/Threshold Guardians	
Belly of the Whale Initiation/Falling into Grace	
Initiation	Act Two
The Road of Trials/Adventure/Misadventure	
The Meeting with the Animus	
Masculinity in Crisis	
Atonement with the Mother	
Apotheosis/Inner Transformation	
The Ultimate Boon: Integrated Self/Family	
Return	Act Three
Refusal of the Return	
The Magic Flight/Supreme Ordeal	
Rescue from Within	
The Crossing of the Return Threshold	
Mistress of Two Worlds/Letting Go of What is Dead/Rebirth	
Queen of Her Own World/Freedom to Live	

While the narrative stages of my Female Hero's Journey mirror Campbell's narrative model for the Hero's Journey, many have been markedly transformed and several (highlighted in bold) retitled, including stages 7 and 9, which share similarities with McCarthy's Heroine's Journey model (2016), the latter stage also appearing in Frankel's model (2010). Stage 8, 'Masculinity in Crisis', is unique to the new Female Hero's Journey model. As deliberated in Chapter 2, the structure of the new Female Hero's Journey is built upon a lineage of scholarship in this field. It is inspired throughout by compelling themes from enduring feminine mythologies.



Seventeen Stages of the Female Hero's Journey in Draft Two of *Little Bit Long Way*

Concept/Logline

A lost orphan hunted by brutally corrupt miners, sets out on a thrilling adventure across the Australian desert in search of her new home.

I. Departure

Act I

1. THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

This first stage of the mythological journey—which we have designated the “call to adventure”—signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred [her] spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of [her] society to a zone unknown (Campbell, ‘The Call to Adventure’ 2008: 48).

Pages 2-3: Scene 3

Eddie's father checks two airline tickets bearing the names Andrew Macpherson and Edwina Macpherson – destination ‘Broome’. Eddie's ‘Call to Adventure’ comes as she is packing her childhood into boxes. Her father has decided they will relocate to Broome, a pearling town on the west coast, following her mother's death. She has not been consulted about the move and is given no choice in this call to relocate to a new ‘home’. While her father argues on the phone with his former employer, Clarissa, over a mining report he has written, Eddie lifts a small equestrian trophy to place in her ‘special’ box. As Clarissa makes a veiled threat against Eddie to her father, a house spider crawls across the head of the horse trophy in Eddie's hand. Seeing the spider, Eddie shudders violently and flings the trophy away. The horse shatters.

...

Commenting on the ‘Call to Adventure’, McCarthy declares: “a road trip always signifies that our heroine has begun a journey of self-discovery” (2016: 186). Campbell adds: “You can’t have creativity unless you leave behind the bounded, the fixed, all the rules” (1988: 156). Although Eddie’s call, signalled by a pair of plane tickets, indicates that Eddie’s adventure begins with a journey by air, it also follows tragedy. The world she has known, her ‘Ordinary World’ (Vogler 2007 [1998]): 83), or ‘World of Illusions’ (McCarthy 2016: 184), no matter how imperfect, has been shattered by her mother’s death. But Eddie has, by now, rejected the limited, racist world in which she and her late mother were living. She is ready to leave this stale world behind to cross into novel territory, the world that now calls her to adventure. Yet, the danger implied by the threatening phone call is still an unknown.

2. REFUSAL OF THE CALL

Not all who hesitate are lost. The psyche has many secrets in reserve. And these are not disclosed unless required. So it is that sometimes the predicament following an obstinate refusal of the call proves to be the occasion of a providential revelation of some unsuspected principle of release. (Campbell, ‘Refusal of the Call’ 1993: 64).

Page 8: Scene 11

On the flight to Broome, Eddie’s father tries to persuade her that moving to Broome is a great idea. Eddie remains unconvinced. She attempts to smile but turns away, moving her hand to her shirt pocket (containing a photo of her late mother), holding back tears. She stares down on an endless expanse of empty desert wilderness, a furnace of red dunes and spinifex scrub.

...

Eddie is ‘Refusing the Call’ to relocate to Broome and a new life. Instead, she looks back in grief to what she has lost. But, like the character Rey in *Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force*

Awakens (2015), who refuses the call of her destiny multiple times (Kobacker 2016: 56-57), Eddie is given no choice; the momentum of her journey's 'call' carries her forward.

3. SUPERNATURAL AID / STRICT MENTOR / TALISMAN

For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure...who provides the adventurer with [protection] against the dragon forces [she] is about to pass (Campbell, 'Supernatural Aid' 2008: 57).

SUPERNATURAL AID – Part 1 of 4

Pages 14-15: Scene 24

After barely surviving a plane crash in the desert, an injured and delirious Eddie dreams of riding a great snake across the night sky. The appearance of this snake marks the first of multiple times she is offered Supernatural Aid via the mythical serpent. In this scene, the dream of the snake drives Eddie to survive and begin a dangerous journey across the desert.

...

The unconscious sends up all sorts of vapors, odd beings, terrors, and deluding images up into the mind – whether in dream, broad daylight, or insanity; for the human kingdom, beneath the floor of the comparatively neat little dwelling that we call our consciousness, goes down into unsuspected Aladdin caves. There not only jewels but also dangerous jinn abide: the inconvenient or resisted psychological powers that we have not thought or dared to integrate into our lives...These are dangerous because they threaten the fabric of the security into which we have built ourselves and our family. But they are fiendishly fascinating too, for they carry keys that open the whole realm of the desired and feared adventure of the discovery of the self (Campbell 2008 [1949]: 5).

In *Little Bit Long Way*, Eddie receives what Campbell describes as 'Supernatural Aid' (1993: 69-77) through her immersion in ancient traditional practices found in both Western and Indigenous cultures. Although there is a cultural prohibition around discussing many Aboriginal Dreaming stories, the great creator snake, commonly known as the Rainbow Serpent, is seen today as one of the more public representations of the sacred Dreamtime in

Australian Indigenous mythology. The Greek god of healing, Asclepius, and his daughter Hygieia, goddess of health, are both represented by a snake curled around the rod of Heracles, an image still seen today in modern medicine. In the Asclepieian temple at Epidaurus, supplicants arrived to sleep and dream overnight in the sanctuary of the inner chamber. Next morning, they told the priests about the dreams they had during the night. These ‘snake’ dreams became their cure. The function of this experience was to awaken the serpent power, the healing function within (Campbell, J. 2013: 123). As McCarthy comments on her narrative stage, ‘Supernatural Aid/Crossing the First Threshold’: “It hurts sometimes to wake up to the truth. Sometimes you have to break down to break through” (2016: 190). Eddie is not yet ready for the knowledge that she has been orphaned by the plane crash. In the mythology of contemporary screen narratives, heroes like Rey and Luke from *Star Wars* (2015) and Furiosa in *Fury Road* (2015), all share this ‘orphaned’ quality. Campbell notes there is a common theme of ‘exile’ in the childhood of heroes in many myths and folk tales (2008 [1949]: 280).

SUPERNATURAL AID – Part 2 of 4

STRICT MENTOR / TALISMAN

Page 18: Scene 29

After Eddie is rescued by female Afghani cameleers, Rosie, an Aboriginal elder, becomes her strict mentor. Rosie teaches a bored, adolescent Eddie desert survival skills: how to read animal tracks; how to hunt and catch game; and how to scrape fur off a singed kangaroo tail with a blade. Rosie also gifts Eddie with a talisman – a small dagger with a mother of pearl handle and a curved blade. This talisman can be seen as both a weapon and a symbol of power and protection. Along with the dagger, Rosie offers life advice to Eddie when she is feeling defeated: “Yes, life’s hard. For everyone. But you gotta stand up. Stand up for yourself!

Stand strong! Then stand up for something even bigger than you.” But like a typical teenager, Eddie looks up at the huge camel standing in front of her and giggles, as if to discount her mentor’s wisdom (Page 22, Scene 34).

...

TALISMAN

A dagger handled by the female hero is sometimes considered controversial, even when it represents a symbolic talisman. Although McCarthy describes a narrative moment where the heroine is gifted with a talisman (2016: 184), Valerie Frankel’s model specifies a ‘Bladeless Talisman’ (2010: 5). Frankel, noting that the sword is an unusual weapon for a heroine, posits: “Only through valor and ingenuity, not swordplay, can the heroine survive...” (2010: 52). And further, “heroines work as hard as any fairytale hero. And they do it without swords” (4). Kristin Bovaird-Abbo reinforces this concept, not unusual in scholarship related to the modern Fantasy genre, saying: “traditional weapons such as swords are often beyond the [female hero’s] reach” (2014: 51). But this is not the case for such female action heroes as Rey (2015) and Furiosa (2015) in contemporary cinema narratives. Weapons prohibitions for female heroes may stem from the patriarchal belief that a cultural norm is somehow transgressed when a woman is allowed to handle weaponry. Yet as talisman, a blade may have two natures. As Gawain laments in the court of King Arthur, everything is won by the lance and everything lost by the sword. Here, the lance signifies discrimination, while the sword represents brute force (Johnson 1993: 20). When her mentor gifts Eddie with the decorative pearl-handled dagger with a curved blade, she is being given the choice as to how she will use it on her journey, either as a weapon or as a symbol of self-empowerment.

4. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD / THRESHOLD GUARDIANS

With the personification of [her] destiny to guide and aid [her], the hero goes forward in [her] adventure until [she] comes to the 'threshold guardian' at the entrance to the zone of magnified power (Campbell, 'The Crossing of the First Threshold' 2008: 64).

THRESHOLD GUARDIANS – Part 1 of 2

The Benign Threshold Guardians

Page 23: Scene 36

Eddie has decided to cross the desert to Broome, her late mother's country. The female Afghan cameleers wave farewell to Rosie and the Aboriginal women and girls as they leave with Eddie, riding a packed camel, out into the desert in the direction of the setting sun. The Afghan cameleers represent Benign Threshold Guardians who watch over Eddie and enable her journey across the desert, her journey toward 'home'.

THRESHOLD GUARDIANS – Part 2 of 2

The Malevolent Threshold Guardians

Pages 26-27: Scene 44

As night descends, the women cameleers have been violently kidnapped by two gold miners, leaving Eddie alone in the vast desert. These feral miners represent Malevolent Threshold Guardians, whose dark presence thwart her forward passage on her desert journey toward 'home'. The miners are intent on destroying Eddie and selling her companions into slavery.

...

Campbell states that a dragon battle is one of a variety of possible narrative states experienced by the hero in crossing the journey's threshold (2008 [1949]: 210). According to Campbell's model, the process of crossing the first 'Threshold of Adventure' may involve any combination of the following narrative incidents, whose order may vary: Threshold Crossing; Brother Battle; Dragon-Battle; Dismemberment; Crucifixion; Abduction; Night-Sea Journey; Wonder Journey; Whale's Belly (2008 [1949]: 210). The dragon, or threshold guardian, watches over treasure of some kind. Mythologically, dragon energy may manifest as coarse greed for riches, possessiveness and malice, but also represents the availability of vast spiritual and material resources when directed toward a higher purpose. Thus, when the hero, having dropped her attachment to ego, manages to slay the symbolic dragon, she gains the power to save, having demonstrated that there is nothing to fear.

5. BELLY OF THE WHALE INITIATION / FALLING INTO GRACE End of Act I

The idea that the passage of the magical threshold is a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the worldwide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown and would appear to have died (Campbell, 'Belly of the Whale' 2008: 74).

BELLY OF THE WHALE INITIATION

Page 27: Scene 45

Eddie lies panting, face down in a shallow clay ditch, afraid to move. She is paralysed by doubt and fear following the kidnapping of her travelling companions, now restrained inside the mine. With a grimace of determination, she crawls slowly toward the mine entrance on her elbows. But will she use the pearl-handled dagger as a weapon?

...

This 'Belly of the Whale' Initiation emphasises Eddie's narrative status as a stranger emerging into a newly-threatening, strange land. Campbell's metaphor for this stage of the journey is of the hero being swallowed into the unknown to later emerge transformed (Campbell, J. 1993 [1949]: 90-91). The women have been swallowed by 'the monster', represented here by the violent, greed-obsessed, alcohol-fuelled miners. The initiation Eddie now undergoes is the battle against her own feelings of disempowerment and fear. It is vital for Eddie to triumph in willing herself free from the monster's control. Otherwise, she cannot act to free her companions from 'the monster', which for Eddie reflects both her physically violent adversaries and her inner emotions of alienation and despair. Eddie is now forced to adapt to the uncertainties of this hostile world, a world so recently populated by kind strangers. Here, she will be challenged by the rules of an unfamiliar world that will test her character.

FALLING INTO GRACE

However, in the same scene Eddie unchains a whimpering dog. It immediately takes flight and disappears. This is symbolic of Eddie setting herself free from the monster by setting herself free from victimhood and fear. What is more, through this action of freeing the dog, Eddie gains a valuable new ally in this newly-menacing land. In a Jungian sense, animals represent the instincts as an aspect of the hero's psyche (Shamdasani 2003: 253). McCarthy's narrative stage of 'Fortunate Fall/Meeting the Animus' posits the possibility of meeting the animus or personified positive masculine at this stage of the journey (McCarthy 2016: 191), a stage which arrives in Act II of the Female Hero's Journey. Yet, in her book chapter, McCarthy contextualises the stages of her heroine's journey around the narrative of a woman who has two husbands, circumstances which will not broadly apply to all female heroes on the journey.

Nonetheless, in the Female Hero's Journey, the portrayal of the hero working with her inner animus may be represented by the appearance of helpful animals, wild qualities (instincts) (Johnson 1986: 46) or other elements in the natural world (in Eddie's case: a combination of the helpful dog, stars, spider and snake). These are symbolic representations of assistance being sent to her by the hero's own inner animus (41), or, in other narrative circumstances, perhaps by her male counterpart. However, the appearance of natural aid in a narrative represents a creative act on the hero's part since, rather than being purely passive, she must remain actively receptive, alert and aware, so as to perceive and utilise such aid (45), which frequently provides her with encouragement or the necessary inspiration and courage to act.

II. Initiation

Act II

From the point of view of the female hero undertaking the Female Hero's Journey, the entire narrative arc of Act Two is concerned with Initiation.

6. THE ROAD OF TRIALS / ADVENTURE / MISADVENTURE

Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where [she] must survive a succession of trials (Campbell, *The Road of Trials* 2008: 81).

Pages 29-30: Scenes 49-53

Eddie draws out her dagger, ready to rush inside the cave to rescue her companions. But on second thought, she sheaths it. A spider crawls onto her hand as she feels around for shrapnel to throw at oil drums to create a distraction. A drum topples, leaking its contents onto a still alight cigarette butt discarded by the miners. In the ensuing chaos, the miners are caught up in the flames as they rush out of the mine. Eddie dashes inside to free her companions. She grabs

a canvas water bottle from inside the mine while exiting. The women flee into the moonlit desert, eventually reuniting with their lost camels. Eddie's desert journey or 'Road of Trials', full of adventure and misadventure, begins in earnest.

...

In McCarthy's version of the Heroine's Journey, this stage is termed 'Road of Trials/Allies and Villains' (2016: 191). Rather than 'allies' or 'mentors', which are Jungian archetypes posited in Murdock's, Vogler's and McCarthy's models of the journey, Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey model refers instead to 'helpers' who offer Supernatural Aid and, at times, mentorship (2008: 57-63). Schmidt offers that during the 'Road of Trials' the "heroine must face Issues of Attachment, Fear, Guilt, Lies, Shame, Grief and Illusion" (2001: 220-221; quoted in McCarthy 2016: 191). Nevertheless, here at the beginning of 'The Road of Trials' in the Female Hero's Journey, Eddie immediately exemplifies what Campbell defines as the heroic role of the mythological female hero: the 'rescuer' (Campbell 2013: 82). Significantly, Eddie does not use her dagger as a weapon here, nor at any stage of her journey. Instead, Eddie resists the urge to yield to the negative side of her experience of oppression, alienation and grief.

SELF-ASSERTION

Although debates have arisen around the female hero's expression of animosity or use of weapons during her narrative journey (Frankel 2010: 44-52), it cannot be ignored that women have been burdened by cultural biases that pressure them to avoid self-assertion, to be nice and to never get angry. These forces, reflecting a powerful centuries-old patriarchy, have acted to silence women (Zuckerman, J. R. 2019) and have limited the agency of female characters. Thus, there is no weapons prohibition in the Female Hero's Journey narrative model. Nor is there a proscription on what at times may be a necessary aggression expressed by the female

hero; for example, when she is required to defend a loved one, or a cause, against a violent foe. Rather, in general, the new Female Hero's Journey model encourages empowerment through discernment, the mobilisation of healthy aggression for constructive use, in both masculine and feminine protagonists. In Eddie's case, the pearl-handled dagger is used as a tool for survival, but also serves as a talisman to aid her in discrimination and clarity (Johnson 1986: 27).

7. THE MEETING WITH THE ANIMUS

Like the anima [in a man's psyche], the animus [in a woman's psyche] does not merely consist of negative qualities such as brutality, recklessness, empty talk, and silent, obstinate, evil ideas. He too has a very positive and valuable side; he too can build a bridge to the Self through his creative activity (Jung and Von Franz 1971: 203).

Page 37: Scene 69

Liam smiles at Eddie with softly curious eyes. "Hi. I'm Liam."

...

Eddie encounters her male counterpart, Liam, in the middle of the desert. 'The Meeting with the Animus' stage in the Female Hero's Journey is a substitution for Campbell's 'Meeting with the Goddess'. In Jungian psychology, the animus represents the masculine part of a woman's personality, the male element in the female unconscious (Jung and Von Franz 1971: 16). "To grow on her journey, and reconnect to the 'lost' feminine in herself, the heroine must experience these aspects of the negative and positive masculine personified as both Blue Beard and the Green Man" (McCarthy 2016: 191). Following such logic, the gold miners in Eddie's narrative would play the role of the patriarchal animus, who wants his paradise, but no responsibility and no conscious relationship (Johnson 1986: 18). According to Jung's writings, the four stages of the embodied animus are represented by:

1. Physical Power e.g. Tarzan.
2. Man of Initiative/Planned Action e.g. hunter, war hero, romantic poet.
3. Bearer of the Word e.g. orator, professor, clergyman.
4. Incarnation of Meaning/Guide to Spiritual Truth e.g. Gandhi.

Further, a woman's animus may endow her creativity with such masculine qualities as initiative, courage, objectivity and spiritual wisdom (Jung and Von Franz 1971: 206-207). Her animus may also be reflected in or projected upon the masculine characters she encounters in her outer world. That Eddie's inner masculine or animus is evolving, is thus indicated, narratively, by her meeting with Liam during her Female Hero's Journey. As a representation of Eddie's positive animus, Liam has the capacity to inspire her to new creative ideas.

8. MASCULINITY IN CRISIS

Nevertheless, every failure to cope with a life situation must be laid, in the end, to a restriction of consciousness. Wars and temper tantrums are the makeshifts of ignorance; regrets are illuminations come too late (Campbell, 'Woman as the Temptress' 2008: 101).

MASCULINITY IN CRISIS – Part 1 of 3

Pages 41-44: Scenes 72-74

By page 44, the goldminers, Bruce and Joey, have set out to pursue Eddie in murderous revenge for (accidentally) taking their stolen gold; Liam has explained how Keith's uncontrollable grief has caused the band to become lost in the desert; while Macpherson continues his obsessive and endless search of the desert for something he cannot name. Each of these circumstances causes a crisis that must be confronted by the female hero in the course of her journey.

MASCULINITY IN CRISIS – Part 2 of 3

Pages 52 -54: Scenes 87-88

The panel van crashes into a dune, chased at speed by the feral gold miners who, hell bent on taking their revenge, manage to kidnap Eddie.

...

Female characters other than the female hero may act as stand-ins for the female hero's qualities when she is off screen. That is, narratively, each female character in the story will undergo her own female hero's journey, encountering various narrative stages on the journey, to a greater or lesser degree. For example, during the time that Eddie has been kidnapped by the feral miners—who are acting out the 'wounded masculine' principle—it is the Afghani women, Rasah and Fila, who are confronted with the threat of Keith's grieving wounded masculine.

MASCULINITY IN CRISIS – Part 3 of 3

Pages 59-60: Scene 101

Keith, still grieving his military uncle's death in Afghanistan, calls the Afghani women 'terrorists' and must be talked down by the other band members to prevent him from violently attacking them.

...

A sharpened edge of a razor, hard to traverse,
A difficult path is this – poets declare!
– Katha Upanishad III, 14 (Eliade 1987: 183).

The narrative stage of ‘Masculinity in Crisis’ in *The Female Hero’s Journey* replaces ‘Woman as the Temptress’ in Joseph Campbell’s *Hero’s Journey* narrative structure (Campbell, J. 1993 [1949]: 120). Vogler says of Campbell’s ‘Woman as the Temptress’ stage that the title is perhaps misleading because, as with ‘The Meeting with the Goddess’, the energy of this narrative moment could be male or female. “This Ordeal possibility takes the hero to a junction of betrayal, abandonment, or disappointment. It’s a crisis of faith in the arena of love. Every archetype has both a bright, positive side and a dark, negative side” (Vogler 2007 [1998]: 168). I had initially characterised this narrative stage as ‘Confronting Toxic Masculinity’. However, since both men and women have a masculine side, this narrative stage serves to throw into crisis the unhealed parts of both the female hero and the supporters or adversaries she encounters. ‘The masculine’ is an archetypal force and, as with ‘the feminine’, it is not a gender (Murdock 1990: 156). Like Campbell’s ‘Woman as Temptress’, the narrative stage of ‘Masculinity in Crisis’ symbolises a distraction from the Female Hero’s path.

WOUNDED MASCULINITY

It is instructive to consider the narratives of *The Fisher King* and *The Handless Maiden* concerning the impacts of wounded masculinity on both men and women (Johnson 1993). These mythic tales tell us that something in the masculine essence can be wounded when we trick ourselves into believing we can gain something for nothing, that there is no price to pay for our exploitation of other people, or the earth’s resources, to gain some advantage over others. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the wounded masculine believes it is entitled to prioritise power and profits over the feminine, which includes the integrity of earth’s systems (Anshelm and Hultman 2014), women and girls, and our human feeling values (Johnson 1993: 16). Titled power, not yet legitimately won, is powerless, according to Campbell (19), and no

heroic action can restore meaning to a man's life if his tender feminine feeling value is damaged. When this happens, the creative capacity of the Fisher King is lost and the land falls barren (Campbell and Moyers 1988: 196). A crisis of painful circumstances is triggered by the wounded masculine, not only for the holder of such beliefs, but for all whose lives are impacted by them. It is not surprising then that Eddie, a vulnerable, adolescent Indigenous girl, encounters the wounded masculine multiple times during her female hero's journey, as do so many other young women.

HEALING THE WOUNDED MASCULINE

But how can this woundedness, equally painful for both men and women, be remedied? How can the 'Wasteland' be redeemed? The first task of the wounded masculine is to take personal responsibility, to stop blaming other people or institutions for the resultant experiences of suffering, anxiety, inadequacy and loss of creativity. The next task is to look to one's own 'young knight' (Parsifal), or tender feelings within (Johnson 1993: 102). The mythological language of *The Fisher King* is illustrative of the ideal that the meaning of life is not in the quest for one's own power or advancement, but lies in service of that which is greater than one's self (46). The quest within for such creative, regenerative values is the means by which the Wasteland is redeemed (Campbell, J. 1991: 522).

For a woman caught up in *The Handless Maiden* tale of injuries inflicted by wounded masculinity (Johnson 1993), a period of seclusion and reflection can help her reconnect with her submerged feminine nature (Frankel 2010: 29; Gould 2005: 98). By making her way through the forest of solitude and refreshment, a woman works with her feminine ability to find a third way. Rather than accepting conflicting binaries between opposing elements, she seeks

to put an end to the illusory battle between them. Where the masculine hero may seek a clear triumph of one over another, the female hero works to diminish conflict between the two, threading a path between warring opposites to reveal the middle way of the Grail (Campbell, J. 2013: 51; Campbell, J. and Moyers 1988: 197). This is the heroic quest, the path of the razor's edge, "the road that leads to the Center" (Eliade 1987: 184) and a resolution of lasting peace (Johnson 1993: 80-81). Narratively, since it is the work of art and artists to remind us that we are human, Eddie, as female hero, along with each female character on a similar quest, must find and follow this difficult path, the razor's edge between apparent warring opposites, the path that leads to the centre of her own creative, regenerative energy. There she will rediscover the feminine, creative grail (Murdock 1990: 156), her own humanity (Johnson 1993: 102) and the necessary inner strength (McCarthy 2016: 200) to fulfil the next stage of her Female Hero's Journey, 'Atonement with the Mother'.

9. ATONEMENT WITH THE MOTHER

The mythological figure of the Universal Mother imputes to the cosmos the feminine attributes of the first, nourishing and protecting presence (Campbell 2008: 94).

ATONEMENT WITH THE MOTHER – Part 1 of 3

Pages 44-46: Scene 75

Liam makes Eddie aware that the mine report her father wrote for his ex-employer is extremely damaging to the future of the planned uranium mine. She stumbles away, confused, emotional and angry. Eddie, intent on reaching Broome to take a ceremonial remnant of her mother's ashes to the ocean, is angry that her late father's unfinished business may now interrupt her planned 'Atonement' with her mother'.

ATONEMENT WITH THE MOTHER – Part 2 of 3

Page 75: Scene 126

Eddie is being chased through a cave complex by the uranium mine's evil CEO Clarissa, her father's ex-boss, who is determined to retrieve the remaining copy of the damaging mine report she now believes is in Eddie's possession. Eddie rejects Clarissa's pathetic invitation to 'adopt' her. "My parents might be dead, but they're still better parents than you'll ever be!"

...

Here, rather than the mother archetype, Clarissa's character represents the mother complex, a toxic extension of wounded masculinity. The mother complex is the art of getting something for nothing by a regression of consciousness (Johnson 1993: 61-62). Clarissa, with no consideration for the human cost, believes she can become an instant mother through trickery and/or coercion.

ATONEMENT WITH THE MOTHER – Part 3 of 3

Page 78: Scene 131

Inside a cave with ancient ochre paintings on its high walls, Eddie falls exhausted into a dream of the Dreamtime snake. Although she cries out to her mother's spirit in her dream, it is old Rosie, her mentor, representing the Divine Mother, who responds, "She lives inside you. You are never alone".

...

Eddie now understands that her mother's spirit will always be with her, as symbolised by the white butterfly that revisits Eddie throughout the narrative. The mysteries of birth, death and rebirth were reinforced for initiates during the regularly observed Eleusinian Mysteries (c.1600 BCE-392 CE), which represented the story of the Athenian goddess Demeter, the grieving mother, and Persephone, her daughter, who is said to have been abducted by Hades into the underworld (Clinton 1992; Pearson, C. S. 2015). In Eddie's mythological hero's journey, her late mother stands in the role of Demeter, Hades represents the ravenous greed for underground riches in her antagonists, while Eddie becomes the resurrected Persephone, after experiencing an underworld initiation. Eddie's mother's spirit is present in the cave when Eddie feels there is no hope and does not know how to find her way out – to find her way 'home'. Demeter/Eddie's mother is responsible for the initiation/resurrection of Persephone/Eddie – giving her hope to go on, to take on and complete her father's quest; but in so doing, gaining the courage to begin a new life for herself with loyal friends at her side. In the process, Eddie ultimately overcomes the forces of industrial greed and honours her maternal ancestors by saving a site that has held sacred meaning to them for tens of thousands of years. She also gains two new families. Like Persephone's resurrection, Eddie's 'Atonement with the Mother' initiation holds the promise of rebirth, the end of grief and the coming of Spring.

The mother archetype is the art of living peaceably with the bounty of nature, which is pure gift and lies within the ecology of the natural order (Johnson 1993: 61). Like McCarthy's model (2016: 184), the Female Hero's Journey substitutes 'Atonement with the Mother' for Campbell's narrative stage of 'Atonement with the Father' (1993: 126). However, McCarthy's model also includes 'Confront False and Powerless Father'. Just as Campbell's 'Atonement with the Father' reflects a form of initiation, McCarthy states that here the heroine is forced to undergo a symbolic death experience (2016: 200). At this stage, the female hero may

experience the depths of despair over the loss of the feminine in her world. To be at-one with the Mother, the female hero, like Eddie, needs to find, accept and restore not just the woman but her Goddess qualities buried within (202). This narrative stage reveals a cycle of inner growth for Eddie, who like all female heroes, must integrate the awareness that she is now the mother of her own life, makes her own path, and creates or destroys her own reality (200).

10. APOTHEOSIS ² / INNER TRANSFORMATION

End of Act II

The pause on the threshold of *nirvana*... represents a realization that the distinction between eternity and time is only apparent – made, perforce, by the rational mind, but dissolved in the perfect knowledge of the mind that has transcended the pairs of opposites (Campbell, ‘Apotheosis’ 1993: 152). This godlike being is a pattern of the divine state to which the human hero attains who has gone beyond the last terrors of ignorance (150-51).

Page 78: Scene 131

Inside the cave of ancient rock art in the desert, a defeated Eddie’s dream of the Dreamtime serpent empowers her to action. Although Eddie has reached out for her mother’s spirit, it is old Rosie’s voice that she hears in her dream.

ROSIE (V.O.): Why you always pretend to be invisible, Eddie?

Eddie (V.O.): I’m not always invisible.

ROSIE (V.O.): Well it’s time to stop all that hiding now. You got to stand up! Stand up for something bigger than yourself.

...

² *Apotheosis* is the elevation of someone to divine status (The Oxford English Dictionary 1970).

Eddie's violent adversaries have trapped her inside a cave complex. Alone, directionless and utterly defeated, Eddie falls asleep weeping for her mother inside a gallery of ancient cave paintings. The creator serpent returns to her in an initiatory dream, whose visions empower her, inspiring her with new information for the journey ahead. Eddie wakes from this dream transformed, no longer defeated and afraid. She now knows what she must do. She must gather her allies and act to complete her late father's unfinished business, before continuing her journey to Broome to honour her late mother's memory. Eddie has come to a state of transcendence between two worlds, and in so doing achieves a form of heroic self-redemption.

FEMALE INITIATION

Campbell claims that if the ageless initiatory images or mythologies for rites of passage are not supplied by the outer world to the male or female hero, they will be supplied through individual dreams (1993: 12). On the subject of Initiation, he observed that all the myths deal with transformation of consciousness of one kind or another. "When we quit thinking primarily about ourselves and our own self-preservation, we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness [...]. You have been thinking one way, you now have to think a different way" (Campbell, J. and Moyers 1988: 126). What Campbell observes about his pair of narrative stages, 'Meeting with the Goddess' and 'Atonement with the Father', is also true of their corresponding stages of 'Meeting with the Animus' and 'Atonement with the Mother' in the Female Hero's Journey, since each pair of narrative steps meets at the initiatory stage of 'Apotheosis', common to both male and female heroes' journeys. These pairs of apparently opposite mythological adventures come together, and in both cases, it is found that the hero "is that which he [or she] had come to find" (1993: 163).

The narrative stage of ‘Apotheosis’ is an extension of the inner work required to progress through the three preceding stages of the Female Hero’s Journey, since “to fully reach wholeness within the self, an individual must harmonize the masculine and feminine within” (McCarthy 2016: 203). Thus, when the female hero reaches ‘Apotheosis’, it constitutes the most powerful female initiation and act of self-transformation she will undergo on her Female Hero’s Journey. Like an initiate in the underworld mysteries of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis, Eddie undertakes an underworld initiation in a remote painted cave. This ‘Apotheosis’ stage of the female hero’s journey is an experience of seeing beauty after terror, of gaining illumination out of darkness, from which she is reborn, unafraid and with renewed hope and joy, into a new way of being. The ancient Greek lyric poet, Pindar, wrote of the Eleusinian blessing: “Blessed is he who, having seen these rites, undertakes the way beneath the Earth. He knows the end of life, as well as its divinely granted beginning” (Wasson et al. 2008: 142). Intrinsically, the narrative stage wherein the hero achieves apotheosis represents “an expansion of consciousness and therewith of being (illumination, transfiguration, freedom)” (Campbell 1993: 245).

SUPERNATURAL AID – Part 3 of 4

Page 78: Scene 130

A large spider acts as a form of Threshold Guardian for Eddie’s dream of the great snake as she curls up, lost and alone inside the painted cave.

...

SPIDER WOMAN

The spider is a recurring image throughout the narrative of *Little Bit Long Way*. As shown from the earliest scenes, Eddie is afraid of spiders. Yet, spiders play a role in pushing her

towards finding her strength. They reinforce the message Eddie needs to hear, to stop being invisible. Campbell offers the symbolism of the mythical Navaho crone, Spider Woman (2008: 57). She represents “the benign, protecting power of destiny,” who bestows magical pollen as protection on the hero who has responded to the call, indicating that “Mother Nature herself supports the mighty task” (59). Spider Woman, who lives underground, warns the hero of four places of danger through which she must pass on her journey (Campbell 1993: 69-70). So, despite her fear of them, Eddie regularly encounters spiders in dark passages, playing a fearsome but protective role throughout her journey. Because of this helpful role in Eddie’s heroic journey, the spider symbolises a magical feminine figure providing reassurance and hope during challenging narrative stages of the Female Hero’s Journey (Campbell 2008: 110).

SNAKE

In the repeated sequences where Eddie visualises interactions with a mythical snake, Eddie is straddling two realms of being. For Eddie, the snake represents a bridge between the unconscious and conscious, grief and healing, alienation and belonging, powerlessness and freedom, and the non-Indigenous and Indigenous worlds.

11. THE ULTIMATE BOON: INTEGRATED SELF/FAMILY

What the hero seeks through [her] intercourse with [the gods and goddesses, the custodians of the elixir of Imperishable being] is...their grace, i.e. the power of their sustaining substance (Campbell, ‘The Ultimate Boon’ 2008: 155).

Page 83: Scene 143

Eddie returns to find her stranded allies, the male and female traveling companions and animal allies she’s acquired along the way, newly inspired to complete her father’s unfinished mission to prevent a uranium mine from destroying a sacred Indigenous site.

...

Eddie now has three symbolic objects in her possession: the pearl-handled dagger from her mentor Rosie; her late father's mine report that could save the sacred site; and remnants of her late mother's ashes. She has also accidentally acquired some stolen gold nuggets from the malevolent threshold guardians, for which they will soon hold her to account. These gold nuggets will later rain down on an assembled crowd as gold dust, during the climax of this story. 'The Ultimate Boon' represents Campbell's valuable 'elixir of Imperishable being' (2008: 155). Since in the mythic heroic journey, the hero brings something of value back to her community, the boon with which Eddie returns is a communal victory over those who would destroy an ancient sacred site for personal profit. Eddie helps to bring peace and justice to the family and friends she has met on her journey, and to an entire community.

III. Return

Act III

12. REFUSAL OF THE RETURN

When the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female... the adventurer still must return with [her] life-giving trophy (Campbell, 'Refusal of the Return' 2008: 167).

REFUSAL OF THE RETURN – Part 1 of 2

Pages 83-84: Scenes 145-146

Eddie looks straight ahead, determined. Liam, beside her, drives intently. All of Eddie's allies are piled into the panel van, camels galloping behind, all joining her on her mission, armed with her father's mine report, to get to the protest at the mine site in time to help stop the uranium mine. Her earlier personal goal of reaching Broome does not enter her mind.

...

After her apotheosis in the cave where she became empowered to ‘stop hiding’ and stand up for something bigger than herself, Eddie is now fully living her adventure, without any thought of returning ‘home’. This signifies that she has exculpated her father’s ‘abandonment’ (by dying in the plane crash) and is now willing to postpone the original goal of reaching her new ‘home’ in Broome for a greater, more risky quest with the potential to benefit many others. The personal equestrian trophy that shattered during Eddie’s ‘Call to Adventure’ is to be replaced by the “life-giving trophy” with which she must return (Campbell 2008: 167).

REFUSAL OF THE RETURN – Part 2 of 2

Pages 88-90: Scenes 155; 157

At the mine protest, Macpherson, the wealthy owner of the mine’s lease, sees his late son’s name on her father’s mine report after Eddie holds it up for the crowd to see. He grasps Eddie in a bear hug, but she wriggles hard to get free of him. Macpherson tells Eddie that she’s coming back to Scotland with him. But Eddie struggles free. She flips the canvas bag holding the stolen gold nuggets over his head, returning them to him as the original owner. Eddie refuses to go ‘home’ with Macpherson, who now believes she is his estranged granddaughter.

13. THE MAGIC FLIGHT / SUPREME ORDEAL

If the hero in [her] triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god [she] is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society (Campbell, ‘The Magic Flight’ 2008: 170). [...] And yet, if the monomyth is to fulfill its promise, not human failure or superhuman success but human success is what we shall have to be shown. That is the problem of the crisis of the threshold of the return (178).

Pages 92-93: Scenes 164-167

Eddie further escapes from the evil mining CEO Clarissa, and her henchmen, by leaping from their ascending helicopter. She dangles in mid-air above the crowd of protesters and her friends, clutching a landing rail, fighting for her life as a huge whirlwind strikes the chopper.

...

If a woman can come to a creative, limiting, form-giving 'no', she will learn a vital, perhaps life-saving lesson from the final task set by Aphrodite for Psyche: knowing when to say the 'Creative No' (Johnson 1986: 67). Though not all 'Magic Flight/Supreme Ordeals' in narratives shaped by the Female Hero's Journey will involve a life-threatening episode like Eddie's, in her busy life it is difficult but at times crucial for a woman to say no to the constant demands that drain her time and energy; energy she needs to nourish her own creative destiny. Here, Eddie uses the power of this 'Creative No' to refuse a destiny she knows is not her own.

SUPERNATURAL AID – Part 4 of 4

Page 94: Scene 172

SLOW MOTION: The only sound is the WIND. Eddie glides through the air alone, looking down. Above her, the helicopter dips and careens directly into the belly of the tight, cyclonic dust storm. Below her, the great mythical serpent from her dream rises up out of the black smoke. The snake's mouth opens and closes, showing Eddie a vision of the starry universe inside its mouth, alternating with scenes of smoke and flames below. Still in slow motion, the snake gathers Eddie up and sails upwards, with her, into a sky that has turned into a starry night. END: SLOW MOTION.

[Her] consciousness having succumbed, the unconscious nevertheless supplies its own balances, and is born back into the world from which [she] came. Instead of holding to and saving [her] ego [...] [she] loses it, and yet, through grace, it is returned (Campbell 1993: 216).

Page 94: Scene 172

As Eddie drifts down in slow motion, after leaping clear of the chopper before it slams into the ground, she again falls into the vision of the great serpent. This time it gathers her up into its dark mouth full of stars, above the flames and smoke below.

...

Eddie is ‘Rescued from Within’ by her inner ‘snake’, representing her inward empowerment, which ensures her safe landing as the helicopter explodes around her. This narrative stage in the Female Hero’s Journey comes at the equivalent stage as ‘Rescue from Without’ in Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey narrative structure. Campbell states: “The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him” (2008: 178). However, in the Female Hero’s Journey, the opposite is true. The hero is not born back into the world by anything outside herself. For the female hero, her rescue comes from within.

In the myth of Psyche, Aphrodite gives the female hero four impossible tasks on pain of death if she doesn’t succeed in completing each by nightfall (Johnson 1986). Psyche is assisted in each task by elements of the natural world, or offerings of aid from her inner animus (41). Just as the ants assist Psyche in the task of differentiation to sort the seeds (48), so too does learning the skill of differentiation assist Eddie to navigate by the stars. Just as Psyche is given advice

by the reeds on how to collect golden fleece from the fierce rams (53), Eddie learns the lesson of balancing masculine power with relatedness between self, others and nature, from the dog. The dog also appears, along with a spider, when Eddie is first tempted to use her dagger as a weapon, but then stumbles into an alternative way (fire) to save the Afghani women. While the focussed vision of the eagle of Zeus assists Psyche to fill the goblet from the river Styx (60), the spider reminds Eddie, at significant moments, to use her focussed vision to pick one essential task and do it well. A mythical tower, representing law or lore, gives Psyche instructions for her underworld journey to obtain a cask of beauty ointment from Persephone (64). One of these directives is that she must curb her generosity by refusing pleas for help from various strangers; to say the 'Creative No'.

For Eddie, during her 'underworld' journey deep in the cave, the mythical snake, representing law or lore, provides her with the inner strength to individuate, to say the 'Creative No' to Clarissa, who is tempting her with a spurious offer of adoption. Here too, at the point in *Little Bit Long Way* where Clarissa tries to abduct Eddie by stealing her away in a helicopter, Eddie refuses to go. She chooses instead to say the 'Creative No' by leaping from the ascending chopper to an uncertain fate. But, with the aid of the mythic snake, the outcome of this fateful choice is more aligned with her personal destiny. Just as in Psyche's myth, it is Eddie's own inner animus (Johnson 1986: 74), strengthened and healed by the stars, dog, spider and snake, the natural aid she magnetises on her journey, that redeems her. And, like Psyche's, if she can avoid falling back into the old ways of being, Eddie's reward, when reaching the end of her female hero's journey, is joy.

15. THE CROSSING OF THE RETURN THRESHOLD

Many failures attest to the difficulties of this life-affirming threshold (Campbell, 'The Crossing of the Return Threshold' 2008:189). [...] The returning hero, to complete [her] adventure, must survive the impact of the world (194).

Pages 98-99: Scene 183

Injured following the chopper crash, Eddie reluctantly agrees to go with Macpherson to the beach in Broome to meet someone who might be important to her, only on the condition that she is free to go afterwards.

...

Macpherson is the Return Threshold Guardian. But Eddie, suspicious of Macpherson, is resistant, until the end, to crossing this Return Threshold. McCarthy says that after saving themselves and those around them, heroines must make the sometimes-difficult decision to go home (McCarthy 2016: 204).

16. MISTRESS OF TWO WORLDS / LETTING GO OF WHAT IS DEAD / REBIRTH

The [hero], through prolonged psychological disciplines, gives up completely all attachment to [her] personal limitations, idiosyncrasies, hopes and fears, no longer resists the self-annihilation that is prerequisite to rebirth in the realization of truth... [Her] personal ambitions being totally dissolved, [she] no longer tries to live but willingly relaxes to whatever may come to pass in [her]; [she] becomes, that is to say, an anonymity. The Law lives in [her] with [her] unreserved consent (Campbell, 'Master of the Two Worlds' 2008: 204-205).

Pages 99-100: Scenes 184-186

Macpherson introduces Eddie to her late mother's Indigenous family. Old Rosie is among them. Together with her newly discovered Aboriginal family, Eddie pours the remnant of her mother's ashes into the Indian Ocean, finally laying her mother's spirit to rest in her ancestral

home. As an outdoor festival begins, Eddie is now also reunited with the rest of her ‘family’, the companions she met on her desert journey: the Afghani women, the camels and her dog.

...

‘Mistress of Two Worlds’ is the equivalent narrative stage to Campbell’s ‘Freedom to Live’. Eddie has found her way through the labyrinth, having been on the female hero’s journey of “battling and taming inner demons, and finding [her] center” (McCarthy 2016: 204). By confronting powerful antagonists to complete her father’s work, and the liberation of both people and spiritual resources through saving a sacred site, Eddie has now freed herself and her expanded community to live in peace. Eddie has let go of the past and is reborn into a new life. Having reunited with both her father’s and mother’s relations, her Scots and Indigenous kinfolk, and her clan of new friends, and having crossed the desert to the ocean, Eddie is now mistress of two worlds, free to live a new life in a new home of her choice.

17. QUEEN OF HER OWN WORLD / FREEDOM TO LIVE

The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because [she] is. [...] [She] does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the permanence of Being, nor is [she] fearful of the next moment (or of the ‘other thing’), as destroying the permanent with its change (Campbell, ‘Freedom to Live’ 2008: 209).

Pages 100-101: Scenes 187-190

Liam is playing his guitar and singing with the band on the beach festival stage. Eddie and her Afghani sister, Fila, lie on their backs on the grass overlooking the beach while her extended family enjoy the food and music at the festival behind them. The girls smile as they see Liam singing into the microphone smiling directly at Eddie.

FILA: I think he likes you.

EDDIE: Maybe.

As the sun sets, Eddie and Fila giggle as they run down to splash in the shallow sunset waves, followed by the dog, Cheeky Boy.

...

Eddie is now free to live life on her own terms, free to choose from her own heart with whom she will share her new life. She is now ‘Queen of Her Own World’, finally ‘at home’. Perhaps without being fully aware of where her quest was leading, Eddie has sought and found her better Self. Now, at the end of her journey, she is content to live life as it unfolds, free of fear and regret, free to live in the moment. Eddie is now free to live as the hero, whom Campbell describes as “the champion of things becoming, not of things become” (2008 [1949]: 209).



Draft One of *Little Bit Long Way* was rewritten to align with the new Female Hero’s Journey narrative model and to arrive at Draft Two, which appears following this exegesis titled ‘Creative Component: Feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way* – Draft Two’. Thus, the initial nine then fifteen narrative stages of Draft One, as detailed in the previous chapter, were expanded to encompass the seventeen narrative stages of the Female Hero’s Journey model in Draft Two. The narrative stages of ‘Opening Image’ and ‘Theme Stated’ in Draft One have been replaced with ‘The Call to Adventure’ and ‘Refusal of the Call’ in Draft Two. ‘Set-up’, ‘Catalyst’ and ‘Debate’ have been replaced with ‘Supernatural Aid/Strict Mentor/Talisman’ and ‘Crossing the Threshold/Threshold Guardians’. ‘Break into Two’ is now ‘Belly of the Whale Initiation/Falling into Grace’. ‘B-Story’, ‘Fun and Games’ and ‘Midpoint’ have now become ‘The Road of Trials/Adventure/Misadventure’, ‘The Meeting with the Animus’ and

‘Masculinity in Crisis’. ‘Bad Guys Close in’, ‘All is Lost’ and ‘Dark Night of the Soul’ are superseded by ‘Atonement with the Mother’, ‘Apotheosis/Inner Transformation’ and ‘The Ultimate Boon: Integrated Self/Family’. ‘Break into Three’ is now ‘Refusal of the Return’. ‘Finale’ has metamorphosed into ‘The Magic Flight/Supreme Ordeal’ and ‘Rescue from Within’. ‘Final Image’ is transformed into ‘The Crossing of the Return Threshold’, ‘Mistress of Two Worlds/Letting Go of What is Dead/Rebirth’ and ‘Queen of Her Own World/Freedom to Live.’

This rewriting process, the final methodological stage of my creative practice research, has been used to demonstrate that my new narrative model achieves a more authentic structural representation of a female hero’s narrative arc than do existing film industry screenplay structures. Although the writing of Draft One took approximately ten months to complete, followed by a further period of revision, reformatting and copy editing, it took a full three months to write the first twenty-five pages following a preliminary period of planning out the initial draft. Since the revised narrative of Draft Two was written and rewritten concurrently with my developing research and theoretical writing, it took the better part of an additional year to reach the rewritten draft that appears here. Clearly, rewriting an entire screenplay by transforming its existing narrative structure is a complex and time-consuming process. Therefore, screenwriters who are intent on writing the screen narrative of a female hero’s journey and who wish to avoid reiterating this lengthy rewriting process, may begin by using the Female Hero’s Journey model as the primary narrative structure of their screenplay’s first draft. Nevertheless, this sharing of my methodological approach to research-enabled creative practice is intended not only to show how my research constitutes a distinct and significant contribution to knowledge, but to reveal how this process can be replicated. This method can thus be tested by others who wish to verify that the application of my new Female Hero’s

Journey narrative model to the rewriting of a screenplay not only produces a substantially improved outcome to the narrative structure of a screenplay that features a female as heroic protagonist, but also achieves a more authentic screen female representation of the hero.

This chapter has set out the seventeen stages of the new Female Hero's Journey narrative structure, intended for use in the narrative portrayal of female heroes in screen media. While the narrative model for the female hero mirrors the seventeen narrative stages of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey structure, this chapter has shown that many of Campbell's narrative movements have been dramatically transformed and several renamed, with the intention of facilitating the portrayal of a more authentic female hero's narrative arc. Whereas Campbell created the structure of his Hero's Journey model based on a mythological canon that champions the masculine hero, the Female Hero's Journey narrative model moves beyond that canon to glean inspiration from enduring themes still active in ageless feminine mythologies. Thus, the new female hero model, building on previously posited Heroine's Journey models, particularly the work of McCarthy (2016), is specifically designed to reflect the narrative journey of a credible, contemporary on-screen female hero. In addition, in this chapter, the female hero's journey narrative model has been effectively demonstrated in application to screenwriting, within the context of research-enabled creative practice. This was accomplished by showing how each stage of my new mythologically-inspired narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey—a female version of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, as discussed in preceding chapters of this thesis—was engaged in the rewriting process, to thus achieve Draft Two of the feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, the full text of which appears after this exegesis.

This chapter has addressed the rewriting of Draft One of my screenplay in accordance with the narrative structure of my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model, to arrive at Draft Two. It shows how, in the process of rewriting, I expanded the existing narrative stages of Draft One, as detailed in the previous chapter, so that Draft Two now encompasses the seventeen narrative stages of my mythological Female Hero's Journey model. It has detailed how the final methodological stage of my creative practice research was to revise the first draft of my screenplay by overlaying my own seventeen-point narrative design for the Female Hero's Journey upon it. It has shown that the seventeen stages of my new Female Hero's Journey model, founded upon feminine mythologies and building on previously conceived Heroine's Journey models, particularly Patty McCarthy's, is a female version of Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage Hero's Journey narrative structure. This chapter has given greater emphasis to the narrative stages of the Female Hero's Journey that most diverge from Joseph Campbell's model, since, as discussed in previous chapters, the particulars of Campbell's model have been analysed and critiqued by other authors. The chapter lays out in full the seventeen stages of the Female Hero's Journey, a three-act narrative structure that can be applied to any female hero character in contemporary screen media. It demonstrates the versatility of the new model and how it may be applied to the structure of varying screenplay narratives. This sharing of my methodological approach to research-enabled creative practice shows how this process can be replicated by other screenwriters and at the same time, demonstrates how my research constitutes a distinct and significant contribution to knowledge.

Chapter 7 – The Hero’s Journey in Narrative Media: The New Female Model

Art...is an ever-living question, asked of the visible world by the visual sense, and the artist is simply the man [or woman] who has the ability and the desire to transform his [or her] visual perception into a material form” (Read, H. 1968: 12 cited in Bell, Desmond 2019: 4).

While I concur with Read’s philosophical recognition of art as a means of conceiving the world visually, and with Bell’s emphasis on the distinctiveness of the arts as a way of knowing the world (Bell 2019: 4), I would go one step further. While artists and screenwriters may share the desire to transform their visual perception into artistic form, many also possess the strong desire and potential ability to transform the world through their creative practice and artistic research. In varying degrees, anyone who writes wants to change the world. Fortuitously, the multi-layered nature of creative practice research empowers it to challenge the status quo (Freedman 2007), while also expanding conceptions of creative rigour across academic and industry contexts (Scholtes and Batorowicz 2019). Creative rigour in artistic research involves “knowledge through making” (Mäkelä 2007) via the very *act* of doing (Haseman 2006), in concert with critical application and “artistic embodiment of the making processes” (Scholtes and Batorowicz 2019); a method of performativity that enacts differing realities (John Law and John Urry in Berridge 2006). Since established narrative models in screen media have influenced our world in ways that often fall below the conscious awareness of audiences, my creative practice screenwriting research seeks to highlight and transform the way our perceptions of the world have been shaped through the use of such dominant narrative structures.

In the preceding chapters, I have established that narrative models in current use have perpetuated stereotypical thinking and limited the possibilities for authentic screen

representation of heroic female protagonists. In seeking to transform such limited thinking and restricted artistic potential, I have posited and demonstrated, through my research and creative practice, a new narrative model that invites fresh creative possibilities for narrative portrayals of on-screen female heroes. My new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey challenges the traditional industry paradigm in screenwriting. But, like the break with tradition that emerged as modernist art (Bell 2019: 198), in time, this new approach to structuring screen narrative, which contributes to an accumulating body of work by other writers in this field, may become accepted as an alternative method—perhaps a new normative—in the design of narrative structure used in the representation of female heroes in screen media.

This study set out to address a research problem, namely the lack of an effective Female Hero's Journey narrative structure in screenwriting practice. It was noted that although the three stages in Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative paradigm have proven highly adaptable to the three-act screenplay structure, and, like Vladimir Propp's character functions, are widely referenced in the humanities, Campbell's unique mythological narrative model has been directed almost exclusively toward the masculine hero in feature films. In fact, narrative structures in prevalent use by the film industry may be seen as constituting hegemonic film narratives that have privileged male protagonists and valorised the masculine warrior archetype. But while researchers from diverse fields have previously attempted to define the narrative features of the mythological Female Hero's Journey, to date, theorists have yet to agree upon a 'settled' narrative structure for the Female Hero that embraces Joseph Campbell's mythological emphasis. To correct this gap in the literature, my research has created a new, socially constructive, culturally resonant narrative structure for the contemporary, mythologically-based Female Hero's Journey in screen narrative, then applied it to a creative work.

My doctoral research has successfully formulated a new female model for the mythological Hero's Journey in contemporary narrative media, which has also been effectively tested by its demonstration in an original feature-length screenplay. This exegesis has elucidated how this new narrative structure, devised through my research, has been overlaid upon a draft of my original feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*, to tell the story of an authentic Female Hero's Journey. Since the method of my creative practice screenwriting research involved the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce and then apply the new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey in screen media, my research is also embodied in the resulting creative artefact. This methodological approach to research-enabled screenwriting practice has produced two outcomes. First, it has created a new narrative structure capable of direct application to the writing of feature-length fictional screenplays. Second, it has produced a feature-length screenplay that, in addition to showcasing a female hero as protagonist, also demonstrates my new narrative structure. This new Female Hero's Journey narrative model, originating from my research, can also be applied to various genres of long-form serial storytelling, to include transmedia and game design, along with broadcast or streamed episodic television productions. This doctoral exegesis together with the subsequent creative artefact thereby produced—a research-enabled creative practice screenplay—have effectively solved the original research problem.

The following two-part question was posed by this project: Is it possible to formulate a new female model for the mythological Hero's Journey in contemporary narrative media, then demonstrate it in a screenplay? These questions have been answered in this two-part doctoral thesis, both in the new narrative structure that appears below, and by its demonstrated application in the feature-length screenplay *Little Bit Long Way*.

The Female Hero's Journey – Sophia Riley Kobacker (2019)

I. Departure

Act One

1. The Call to Adventure
2. Refusal of the Call
3. Supernatural Aid/Strict Mentor/Talisman
4. The Crossing of the First Threshold/Threshold Guardians
5. The Belly of the Whale Initiation/Falling into Grace

II. Initiation

Act Two

6. The Road of Trials/Adventure/Misadventure
7. The Meeting with the Animus
8. Masculinity in Crisis
9. Atonement with the Mother
10. Apotheosis/Inner Transformation
11. The Ultimate Boon: Integrated Self/Family

III. Return

Act Three

12. Refusal of the Return
13. The Magic Flight/Supreme Ordeal
14. Rescue from Within
15. The Crossing of the Return Threshold
16. Mistress of Two Worlds/Letting Go of What is Dead/Rebirth
17. Queen of Her Own World/Freedom to Live

The number and order of the narrative stages of the mythological Female Hero's Journey may be varied in application, according to the demands of the story being told. As in Vogler's 'Writer's Journey' narrative model, an annotated version of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, "the stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power" (2007: 19-20). The new Female Hero's Journey narrative structure builds on previously advanced Heroine's Journey models, especially the work of McCarthy (2016), and while it mirrors the seventeen narrative stages of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, many have been transformed so as to portray an authentic female hero's narrative arc. Whereas Campbell's model is founded on a canon of myths that champion the masculine hero, the new Female Hero's Journey structure draws inspiration from ageless feminine mythologies.

Contextualising the Creative Work: The Screenplay – *Little Bit Long Way*

The creative artefact, Draft Two of a feature-length screenplay, presents a young protagonist with whom all but the youngest of cinemagoers can identify. It shares with *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) the universally appealing theme of a young girl learning to value herself in the face of life's challenges, while embarking on a perilous yet entertaining quest to find 'home'. *Little Bit Long Way* is set in the near future, in the surreal landscapes of the Outback, in a frontier space that exists 'below the radar'; outside the normal day-to-day reality of Australia. Like *The Hobbit* (2012), *Little Bit Long Way* distinguishes 'safe' from 'dangerous' geography—a key element of works intended for youthful audiences—as is the 'home-away-from-home', that Bilbo Baggins and Eddie both discover in alien territories amongst strangers. The narrative space of *Little Bit Long Way* largely inhabits the blue sky/hot sun/red earth/unpopulated landscape of the dry Kimberley region of Western Australia (Guého and Winton 2007). This location helps to establish the mood of being lost in a world devoid of meaning. Like an Australian *Harry Potter* (2001), *Little Bit Long Way* is the story of an orphaned adolescent who must find her place in a surreal world, both dangerous and magical. However, the 'monsters' or 'helpful spirits' Eddie encounters are not purely fictional; they are based on archetypes from enduring ancient feminine myths and timeless Indigenous mythologies (Mountford 1976).

While *Little Bit Long Way* exists within a narrative idiom of Australian films set in the vast landscapes of the Outback, this film also effectively disrupts the idiom.

Though the idea of the Australian Outback is one that conjures up mystery and adventure, the reality is far more confronting, and deadly. The trap for these onscreen outlaws and outliers is that the spaces they encounter are psychogeographical, deadly pulsating like the instantly

recognisable yet entirely unknowable image they have of themselves. The image and thus the idea of the landscape only opens up when it's lived – even if living is hell (Judah 2019).

Yet, while the Outback may reflect this inner and outer hell for Anglo male protagonists, *Little Bit Long Way* also invites the possibility of the Outback's wild spaces being experienced as psychogeographic¹ utopia, especially for particular groups of traditional Indigenous women who, as reflected in the film's narrative, are its protectors. Their strong connection with this landscape, this intimate knowledge of place, represents a link between every aspect of their existence—spirituality, culture, lore/law, language, family—that is inherent to their Indigenous identity. The interests and activities of these Indigenous Australian women, as portrayed in *Little Bit Long Way*, including its young female hero, Eddie, echo the statement made by the Combahee River Collective: “the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity” (1979: 365).

Little Bit Long Way has been effectively structured using the Female Hero's Journey narrative model in a way that also serves the narrative and genre conventions of an action-adventure film. The screenplay's characterization, plot, pacing and dialogue also fit well within its genre conventions. As teen action-adventure, the screenplay is generally fast paced with enough adventure and action to engage youthful audiences of this genre, while its environmental, Aboriginal, and social justice themes provide depth. Social critique throughout the unfolding narrative, involving Australian refugee policy, mining policy, corporate greed, racism and Aboriginal rights and culture, provides additional interest for broader audiences. In taking these themes to a mainstream international market, *Little Bit Long Way* addresses audiences who may be unfamiliar with the Australian manifestations of these concerns.

¹ Psychogeography, defined in 1955 by Situationist Guy Debord, suggests the intersection of psychology and geography (Lyons 2017).

Many of these social justice themes, of growing concern globally, are fast becoming universal. For example, Clarissa's spurious offer to adopt Eddie, together with her fleeting idea of stealing a child at the protest site, both reference stolen generations of Indigenous children, a wounding societal concern, whose stark cultural resonance lingers in former British colonies, including the United States, Canada, India, New Zealand and Australia. Moreover, the interplay between the 'tween movie' and western genres allows the narrative to both acknowledge and subvert references to post-apocalyptic elements of other commercially and artistically successful Australian screen narratives, such as the *Mad Max* films. The contribution made by *Little Bit Long Way* lies in its active demonstration that the Female Hero's Journey structure can be applied to a feature film screenplay in a way that efficaciously provides agency and authenticity to a female hero participating in a highly entertaining and culturally resonant film narrative that invites the engagement and enjoyment of a broad global audience.

Limitations

Does the application of the Female Hero's Journey structure make *Little Bit Long Way* a better screenplay? As the author, I strongly feel it does. Nevertheless, in generating this new narrative model, my research has achieved its goal of providing screenwriters who work in many genres and screen formats with an alternative to Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative template. It is the kind of narrative structure that, as a screenwriter writing female protagonists from a female perspective, I had searched for without finding any suitable alternative, but equally potent, model that was also directly applicable to screenwriting. As the new narrative structure shows, each complete story cycle of the Female Hero's Journey—an eternally circular path—culminates in a relatively stable interlude of wholeness and unity. But

what is life, art, or drama, without change? Thus, my protagonist's journey will inexorably continue on, spiralling into her next heroic journey, potentially the second in a narrative screen trilogy featuring Eddie as the female hero. This will present the opportunity to work with the fractal nature of the Female Hero's Journey structure. Not only can it be applied to the narrative arc of each subsection of a trilogy, or individual episode of a television series, it can also be applied to the overall narrative structure of a trilogy in its entirety, or to the structure of any other form of episodic series as a whole.

It should be emphasised that it is Draft Two of the screenplay for *Little Bit Long Way* which is presented here for the specific purpose of demonstrating the new narrative structure of the Female Hero's Journey. According to established film industry standards, this screenplay would undergo further revision over subsequent drafts, taking into consideration shooting locations, casting decisions, production budget constraints etcetera, before a final draft is ready for commercial production as a feature film. By contemporary screenwriting standards, Draft Two still contains excess narrative description that requires further editing/reduction. But, since the purpose of this version of the screenplay is to situate it within an academic research context, and since many readers of academic research may not also be experienced script readers, this excess narrative detail has been deliberately retained to assist narrative comprehension. Yet, even at Draft Two of its writing, the seventeen narrative stages of the Female Hero's Journey are clearly evident in the screenplay's structure.

Due to the limitations of the current study as creative practice research, the narrative stages of the Female Hero's Journey that significantly differ from Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey narrative structure have been afforded greater emphasis. As noted throughout this research project, Campbell's original Hero's Journey narrative structure (1993 [1949]), accessible to

any interested scholar, has been analysed and widely reviewed by numerous researchers during the seven decades since it was posited. However, a future theoretical research project (which I hope to shortly undertake) solely devoted to the Female Hero's Journey narrative structure will provide the required augmented scope to encompass a broader analysis of each of its seventeen mythological narrative stages as they stand in comparison to Campbell's monomyth.

The Female Hero's Journey structure has been shown here in limited application to a single feature film screenplay representing the cinematic action-adventure genre. Therefore, in order to evaluate whether the model can withstand further refinement, it is recommended that additional research be conducted by applying the structure to various genres and media formats to further confirm its efficacy in multiple narrative media applications. The Female Hero's Journey narrative model may be further tested in application to non-gender-specific media narratives to further substantiate its capacity to provide an alternative to on-screen portrayals of archetypal warrior-hero narrative journeys. Scope remains for the seventeen stages of the Female Hero's Journey to be annotated and reduced to twelve stages, as Vogler has accomplished with Campbell's seventeen-stage narrative structure, to facilitate its expeditious application in screen industry contexts.

Thesis Summary: Steps Taken on the Path to the New Female Hero's Journey Model

In identifying potential beneficiaries of a new narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, especially younger female viewers, Chapter 1 posited that a more balanced representation of gender and diversity in screen narrative is necessary and indeed beneficial. Chapter 1 compared Vladimir Propp's morphology to Joseph Campbell's mythological approach to the monomyth

or Hero's Journey narrative structure, within the context of the traditional structure of heroic narratives. Chapter 1 further explored the proliferation of the masculine hero archetype across history, art, literature and film, and how the traditional folktale and mythic narrative models offered by Propp and Campbell in the early twentieth century have highlighted a notable absence of female heroes. Chapter 1 posited that deficiencies in the existing canon of literature from which they drew may partially explain the historic absence of female heroes in media narratives. However, it was established that Campbell's model, with its emphasis on Initiation, contains the potential to be culturally appropriate in narrative representations of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and women. While stressing differences between Campbell's model and the American monomyth, this chapter also considered how Joseph Campbell's mythological Hero's Journey narrative structure, later abbreviated by Vogler, has been successfully applied to the three-act screenplay structure of multiple blockbuster films. Chapter 1 concluded by positing the urgent need to update Joseph Campbell's original monomythic narrative structure to accommodate the female hero.

Chapter 2 posited the need for a new narrative model for the mythological structure of the Female Hero's Journey that is directly applicable to screen texts. The proliferation of warrior heroes, preferred by a film industry dominated by male filmmakers, has been valorised in a canon of blockbuster films in which the hero resolves conflict through overt violence. However, this chapter established that the narrative journey of the female hero is parallel but different to the male hero's journey. Chapter 2 focussed on the attributes of the Female Hero archetype and her narrative journey, noting similarities between on-screen representations of Indigenous and Female Heroes. It highlighted Campbell's focus on the heroic feminine archetype in mythology through themes of initiation, transformation and consciousness, and the heroic role of rescuer. An assessment of previous scholarship exploring mythological keys to the heroic female journey

concluded that very little has been directed toward the narrative structure of screen texts. Although Murdock's scholarship, influenced by Campbell's, has inspired subsequent Heroine's Journey models posited by Schmidt, Frankel and McCarthy, Patti McCarthy's nineteen-stage mythic Heroine's Journey narrative model was deemed most relevant because it builds on previous scholarship, including Campbell's, and was created with screen texts in mind. Chapter 2 concludes that since Campbell suggested that a female hero's journey is best written from a female point of view, it was resolved that this research-enabled, creative practice screenwriting research project would address this task by conceiving and demonstrating a new mythological Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts.

Chapter 3 provided an overview of my methodological approach to research-enabled screenwriting practice. When screen production research practitioners detail their research methods, an additional benefit lies in the ability of other creative practice researchers to thus replicate their methodological approach. This chapter described my research method for devising an innovative narrative model for the Female Hero's Journey, which is directly applicable to screen texts. It argued that, as research-enabled creative practice, this doctoral thesis—a conjoined exegesis and screenplay as artefact—demonstrates how scholarly research can lead to creative work and in the process, produce new knowledge. Chapter 3 outlined the four steps involved in my research methodology. These are: 1. Write a draft feature-length screenplay for a female hero, based on two existing film industry narrative models. 2. Analyse the draft screenplay's structure in context with Campbell's seventeen-stage mythological Hero's Journey. 3. Formulate a new seventeen-stage mythological narrative model that is unique to the Female Hero's Journey. 4. Revise the screenplay by overlaying my new seventeen-point narrative template for the Female Hero's Journey onto the first draft of my screenplay – *Little Bit Long Way*.

The result is applied research, in that the ensuing creative artefact (Draft Two of the screenplay) constitutes research as a demonstration of the new narrative model produced by my research. This chapter provided a logline and synopsis for the screenplay and noted how my field research with desert camels also assisted in the formulation of a new narrative stage for the Female Hero's Journey model that stands in answer to Campbell's 'Woman as the Temptress': 'Masculinity in Crisis'. Chapter 3 helped show that my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model for screen texts, founded on feminine mythologies, adds to the existing literature by building on the work of previous scholars, particularly the narrative structures of Campbell's Hero's Journey and McCarthy's Heroine's Journey, while also arising from the emerging narrative of my screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way*.

Chapter 4 explored debates around theories of authorship to contextualise and situate my own screenwriting authorship and creative process. Using Jean Renoir and Jean-Claude Carrière as examples, it examined the author-function of screenwriters, exploring notions of collaborative authorship and auteurship within the context of cinema. It noted that although the French New Wave movement championed as auteurs directors who wrote individualistic screenplays and made films that bore their creative imprint, including American directors Howard Hawks, John Ford and Orson Welles, female filmmakers like Agnès Varda, the 'godmother of the French New Wave,' and Alice Guy-Blaché were largely excluded from film histories of auteurs. Chapter 4 found that although the concept of artist-author was questioned at the intersection of art and industry in the development of cinema, and within the preoccupations of structuralism and semiotics in the twentieth century, more recent scholarship sees individual authorship as the exception to the general rule of collaboration expressed in the 'socialised text'. This chapter

asserted that although revered as an artist-author championed by the auteurs, Renoir and later Carrière disrupted such ideas by emphasising the collaborative nature of film narrative creation. Carrière's claim that the French New Wave tossed the screenwriter into oblivion, only to see a return to favour by the late 1960s due to the audience's need for stories, is countered by his own argument that ultimately, the screenplay is annihilated by the film to which it gives birth. Chapter 4 further provided a series of visual metaphors offered by screenwriters to describe their approach to the creative practice of authorship, including my own. Through an articulation of how my own creative process leads to the creation of story, this chapter enabled me to demonstrate that my screenwriting authorship is both single-authored and self-originating. The subsequent textual creation of such creative practice—the screenplay—is then situated as screenwriting practice within academia.

Chapter 5 articulated how, following the initial inspiration for *Little Bit Long Way*, I wrote Draft One of my three-act screenplay after sketching out a series of narrative beats for my story. It explained that in order to do this, I followed the structural architecture provided in two widely-used film industry narrative models, one of which contained nine points of plot structure, the other containing fifteen beats of screenplay structure. Chapter 5 revealed that the story arising from the use of the first narrative model produced plenty of action-packed plot points that mirror scores of films that follow narrative models designed by men for male protagonists. This first narrative model was judged deficient in its ability to portray the narrative arc of a female hero, with agency, who is not driven by demonstrable heroics, the urge to dominate, or the philosophy of exceptional individual heroism that is so prevalent in the warrior archetype of the masculine hero's journey. After applying the second industry model to my screenplay structure, Chapter 5 deemed that, even with its additional narrative beats to allow room for B-Story relationships, this second structural model again failed to result in a sufficiently authentic, uniquely female

hero's narrative arc. From a screenwriting perspective, I queried how well such widely used narrative models designed for and by men, including those influenced by Campbell, suit contemporary female screen protagonists if at all. Chapter 5 concluded by positing that a more effective approach to screenwriting practice for screenplays that contain heroic female protagonists would be to restructure prevailing film industry narrative models so that the resulting screenplay reflects the reality of an authentic female hero's narrative arc.

Chapter 6 explained how the mythological structure of my new Female Hero's Journey narrative model was employed in the rewriting of my screenplay/creative artefact, to arrive at Draft Two of the screenplay *Little Bit Long Way*. It detailed how the final methodological stage of my creative practice research was to revise the first draft of my screenplay by overlaying my own seventeen-point narrative design for the Female Hero's Journey upon it. It showed that the seventeen stages of my new Female Hero's Journey model, founded upon feminine mythologies and building on previously posited Heroine's Journey models, particularly Patty McCarthy's, is a female version of Joseph Campbell's seventeen-stage Hero's Journey narrative structure. This chapter emphasised the narrative stages of the Female Hero's Journey that most diverge from Joseph Campbell's model, since, as discussed in previous chapters, the particulars of Campbell's model have been examined and deliberated by other authors. Chapter 6 presented, in full, the seventeen stages of the Female Hero's Journey, a three-act narrative structure that can be applied to any female hero character in contemporary screen media. The versatility of the new model was demonstrated in that it may be applied to the structure of various screenplay narratives. This sharing of my methodological approach to research-enabled creative practice has granted other screenwriters the possibility of replicating this process, and at the same time demonstrated that my research constitutes a significant and distinct contribution to knowledge.

Just as through the process of gaining wisdom on her narrative journey, the female hero undergoes a powerful transformation, so too has the heroic narrative structure been transformed through the writing of this doctoral thesis. This was achieved by applying, through theoretical research, the wisdom derived from existing but overlooked feminine mythological themes—in combination with the alchemical process of rewriting this female hero's screen narrative—to enrich creative practice research. The protagonist's transformed screen journey in Draft Two has thus become aligned with the emerging heroic narrative structure for the female hero, a transfigured mythic structure that also resonates more authentically with her process of heroic metamorphosis. Thus, theory and creative practice have worked together in this dissertation to synthesise a cohesive whole of greater significance than its individual parts.

While prevailing narrative models in frequent use by the screen industries may be seen as constituting hegemonic film narratives that have privileged male protagonists and valorised the masculine warrior archetype, they have also produced films that have been enormously successful at the box office. So too may emerging narrative models, including the mythic Female Hero's Journey structure I have developed, not only produce screen narratives that present a more authentic portrayal of heroic female protagonists, but, importantly, film and television productions that are also capable of achieving favourable audience reception and commercial success.

There is an obvious difference between a feature-length screenplay and a produced feature film. However, successfully produced feature films would not exist if not for the strong narrative foundation provided by their originating screenplays. This is especially relevant to

those fictional narrative films that also manage to recoup their production budgets at the box office. The significance of this doctoral research is thus demonstrated through its contribution, and creative application, of a valuable new narrative structure for the Female Hero's Journey, with the potential to support the box office success of future female protagonist-led films across various screen genres and formats. The new Female Hero's Journey narrative structure allows screenwriters to write female protagonists who not only possess narrative agency but, in the process of undergoing heroic transformation within the unfolding story, also find their own hero within. These are the stories that young audiences, especially young women, as well as the young at heart, yearn for, and need to see on screen.

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Creative Component:

Feature-length screenplay, *Little Bit Long Way* – Draft Two