

Archetypes and the hunger games



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Archetypes, as defined by the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, are the “ contents of the collective unconscious”. Comparable to themes, archetypes are the “ deposits of the continuously repeated experiences of mankind”; they are universally understood symbols and patterns that have actually occurred and continue to occur in art and literature. In *The Hunger Games*, there are a number of key archetypal characters and circumstances.

The archetype of the hero or heroine in the story is Katniss, a brave sixteen-year old girl who provides to take the place of her sibling in the annual *Hunger Games*.

She displays amazing guts in the face of fear and is firmly faithful. Katniss discovers herself and her self-identity throughout the story.

Katniss embarks upon the archetypal “ monomyth”, or hero’s journey in the movie. Joseph Campbell, an American scholar, explicated that the hero’s journey consisted of departure, initiation, and return and that many stories worldwide share this essential structure. Katniss initially lives the life of normality prior to the call of the journey, or the departure; she resides in District 12, a location of mostly poor coalminers and carries out tasks such as searching and going to school.

Nevertheless, when her sibling’s name is contacted the lottery for the gladiator-like video games of death, Katniss receives the “ call of adventure”.

The archetypal hero likewise typically receives help before the initiation stage of the journey. In *The Hunger Games*, this aid is available in the form of Haymitch Abernathy. Abernathy is also a stereotypical figure; though not

the most orthodox example, he is basically the “ sage” of the film. Abernathy is a coach to Katniss and strategically guides her to guarantee survival in her brave job.

After her training, Katniss gets in the initiation phase of monomyth. She ventures to the Capitol, where she must take part in the video games. Her fight with the other participants in the fights is her “ road of trials”, a series of tests she should undergo in order to change as a brave character. Katniss and her ally Peeta fight the forces of evil and lastly emerge as the victors of the Appetite Games at the end of the film.

After winning the games and overcoming the major conflict of the plot, Katniss finally enters the chapter of return. She has gained wisdom and experience through her journey, and now must return to District 12 where she will be able to integrate her newfound understanding into her daily life. Katniss has completed the hero’s journey, and has now fully undergone the heroic transformation.

Archetypes are prevalent and will continue to exist, even in contemporary films like The Hunger Games. The hero and his or her journey, the battle against evil, the rite of passage, and the return are all classic archetypes within the movie and are the same archetypes that will continue to shape artistic and literary narratives in the future.