

# The many myths of spiderman essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

According to Joseph Campbell, a universal heroes pattern “ involves a process by which the hero leaves the ordinary world of waking consciousness, enters the dark world of the supernatural, overcomes those who would destroy him there, and then returns to the ordinary, possessed of new knowledge and powers for his people” (Leeming, p. 217). Spider-Man in his own way was involved in this process. Peter Parker leaves the safeness of reality every time he suits up as Spider-Man. He goes from a gifted science student on the fast track to college, to a superhero whose main concern is stopping the bad guy.

Once the day is saved, he simply returns to the ordinary, going back to the simple life of Peter Parker, a gifted student living in Forest Hills, Queens. “ More often than not the hero is miraculously conceived and born under unusual circumstances” (Leeming, p. 218) Spider-Man was born a little different from most other mythological characters. Peter Parker started out as a typical teenage nerd, The Spider-Man myth was born about 50 years ago in 1962, over the years there have been several stories of how he got his powers and started his journey.

No matter how the tale starts, in each one; he receives his powers the same way. Peter Parker (or Spider-Man) is bitten by a radioactive spider that promptly dies. Leeming states, each hero faces death but escapes it and emerges into a new individuated existence. Experiencing the bite of a poisonous spider may have killed another; however Peter escapes the destiny and assigned a new one. In the Buddha myth, the Queen could be the original hero, dying after giving birth, “ therefore it was that the mother

of the future Buddha died when he was seven days old” (Leeming, p. 231), leaving behind her creation, the “ Great Buddha”.

This makes to two myths similar, also similar to the Buddha myth, Spider-Man was also birthed or created while standing, somewhat. After being bitten by the spider, he feels a little ill and wanders in the street, as the story is told in one tale, “ Feeling ill, Peter wanders out onto the street and narrowly avoids an oncoming car by making a superhuman leap into the air” (Kistler, 2012). Having acquired superhuman strengths, he has the speed, strength, and agility of a spider.

Therefore Spider-Man is born. In the beginning Spider-Man, tries to ignore his “ superhero” calling, using his powers for only personal gain. Then one day, discovering that a thief he once ignored had gone as far as to kill; he abandons his newfound career and embarks on his destined journeys as a superhero. Once he accepts his new identity as a superhero, he makes several gadgets; “ Peter designs a flashy costume and builds wrist-worn ‘ web-shooters’ that fire a special ‘ liquid cement’ of his own design” (Kistler, 2012).

He uses them along with his spider senses to rid the world of many criminals. “ No lustful thought sprang up in the mind of the future Buddha’s mother; having reached the pinnacle of good fortune and of glory, she felt comfortable and well, and experienced no exhaustion of the body” (Leeming, p. 231). Carrying the future Buddha, the Queen was guarded by four angels with swords, making her feel safe. On the hand even though he was risking

his life constantly to protect the Universe, Spider-Man was mistrusted and feared by the public.

It is not written anywhere, but I am sure he later becomes a trusted and loved superhero. In the Buddha myth the Queen lies down and dreams of the conception of the great Buddha. His strengths are discovered before he is birthed into the world. " Now the instant the future Buddha was conceived in the womb of his mother, all the ten thousand worlds suddenly quaked, quivered, and shook. And the thirty-two prognostics appeared," revealing to his mother that she was in fact carrying a future Buddha.

The Queens quest was to carry the great Buddha, and it seems the journey, or quest of the Buddha was to save the world " the blind recovered their sight; the deaf received their hearing; the dumb talked" (Leeming, p. 231). It was as though anything that had gone wrong in the world was immediately restored to normal once queen Maha-Maya became impregnated. Like Buddha, the journey of Spider-Man was also to save the world. Ridding it of the many bad guys, be it the small time criminal breaking in houses or the major criminal that hurts and tries to kill the innocent.

" But whoever the hero may be, he or she journeys for us, carries us metaphorically into our darker side, into the unconscious realm that we tentatively explore in our dreams-into the world where our nightmares become real, where the monsters inside of us take on terrifyingly real forms, where our deepest wishes sometimes are fulfilled. " (Leeming, p. 217) The creation of the Spider-Man character takes us through this journey Leeming speaks of.

Many people, no matter the ages, often wishes they could save themselves, their family or a friend from the heartache and pain that they have at one time experienced during their lifetime. Reading the many stories, created over the years, of the Spider-Man character helps children and some adults live out the fantasy and have possibly given many courage. " At some point in the hero's journey quest he or she must confront the ultimate nemesis, death itself, and must undertake a journey to the Land of the Dead. "

(Leeming, p. 219)

Spider-Man in each journey was confronted with death; usually he beat death by ultimately beating the bad guy. According to the comics in the final episode involving Peter Parker he did in fact finally meet his death, " Peter Parker, the original Spider-Man, had his mind swapped with Doctor Octopus and eventually died in Otto Octavius's decaying body. " (Comic Vine), upon his passing and body swapping he was able to show the enemy the life of Spider-Man. The criminal was able to realize the struggles of Spider-man, and regretted the death of Spider-Man.

" Otto immediately regretted his actions. However it was too late and after Peter Parker's passing, Doctor Octopus vowed to become an even Superior Spider-Man. " (Comic Vine) Like many myths mentioned in Lemmings' The World of Myth, Spider-Man was killed and reborn in a sense. He was able to follow the new Spider-Man in spirit preventing him from killing himself or being killed before he's able to return to his body. Spider-Man lives on, even in death. Over the years there were many stories/ comics written about Spider-Man, this paper combines small events from only a few.