

# **The American Monomyth**

**is the myth of an Eden-like society helpless in the face of evil but rescued by an outsider, a superhero, who then disappears again.**

**This powerful theme pervades our popular entertainment — with startling implications about ourselves.**

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**Robert Jewett and  
John Shelton Lawrence**

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**Foreword by Isaac Asimov**

# The American Monomyth

**William M. Simons**



## **The American Monomyth:**

The American Monomyth Robert Jewett, John Shelton Lawrence, 1988     *The American Monomyth in U.S. Political Rhetoric* Thomas H. Gardner, 1993     **The ^AOxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies** Simon J. Bronner, 2019-08-06 The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies surveys the materials approaches concepts and applications of the field to provide a sweeping guide to American folklore and folklife culture history and society Forty three comprehensive and diverse chapters explore the extraordinary richness of the American social and cultural fabric offering a valuable resource not only for scholars and students of American studies but also for the global study of tradition folk arts and cultural practice     The Myth of Michael Jordan in Popular Culture Tomasz Jachec, 2024-03-18 This book examines the life and career of Michael Jordan one of the greatest athletes in the history of sports asking how he transcended his sport to become a canonical myth in popular culture Drawing on work in sport studies cultural studies sociology history business and media this book helps us to understand how myths are made in modern society and highlights the importance of myths in a post truth world It unpacks the underlying monomythical structure of the Jordan myth including the universality of the hero s journey and explores those features that are inherently American but that also carried Jordan to the status of a global superstar This book traces the contours of his career and looks at how the intersection of commercial interests media narratives and supreme athletic talent in a particular social political and historical context generated a myth that continues to resonate today long after the end of Jordan s playing career Drawing on original research and adding new theoretical depth to our understanding of Michael Jordan s place in popular culture this book is essential reading for anybody with an interest in the relationship between sport and wider society     **Verses on the Depth of the American Monomyth** Jan D. Hodge, 1977     Black Female Vampires in African American Women's Novels, 1977-2011 Kendra R. Parker, 2018-11-09 This book critically situates the figure of the black female vampire in several fields of study including literary studies cultural studies gender studies and critical race studies Black female vampires continue to appear as important literary devices and revealing indicators of cultural attitudes and trends about African American women s bodies This book examines five novels written by four African American women writers to investigate what it means to represent African American womanhood through the lens of vampirism interrogate how these representations connect to or stem from historical representations of African American women and explore how representations of black female vampires in African American women s literature simultaneously negate reinforce or dismantle stereotypes of African American women

The Hero and the Perennial Journey Home in American Film Susan Mackey-Kallis, 2001 In contemporary America myths find expression primarily in film What s more many of the highest grossing American movies of the past several decades have been rooted in one of the most fundamental mythic narratives the hero quest Why is the hero quest so persistently renewed and retold In what ways does this universal myth manifest itself in American cinema And what is the significance of the

popularity of these modern myths The Hero and the Perennial Journey Home in American Film by Susan Mackey Kallis is an exploration of the appeal of films that recreate and reinterpret this mythic structure She closely analyzes such films as E T the Star Wars trilogy It s a Wonderful Life The Wizard of Oz The Lion King Field of Dreams The Piano Thelma and Louise and 2001 A Space Odyssey Elements of the quest mythology made popular by Joseph Campbell Homer s Odyssey the perennial philosophy of Aldous Huxley and Jungian psychology all contribute to the compelling interpretive framework in which Mackey Kallis crafts her study She argues that the purpose of the hero quest is not limited to the discovery of some boon or Holy Grail but also involves finding oneself and finding a home in the universe The home that is sought is simultaneously the literal home from which the hero sets out and the terminus of the personal growth he or she undergoes during the journey back Thus the quest Mackey Kallis asserts is an outward journey into the world of action and events which eventually requires a journey inward if the hero is to grow and ultimately necessitates a journey homeward if the hero is to understand the grail and share it with the culture at large Finally she examines the value of mythic criticism and addresses questions about myth currently being debated in the field of communication studies

American Theology, Superhero Comics, and Cinema Anthony Mills, 2013-10-01 Stan Lee who was the head writer of Marvel Comics in the early 1960s co created such popular heroes as Spider Man Hulk the X Men the Fantastic Four Iron Man Thor and Daredevil This book traces the ways in which American theologians and comic books of the era were not only both saying things about what it means to be human but starting with Lee they were largely saying the same things Author Anthony R Mills argues that the shift away from individualistic ideas of human personhood and toward relational conceptions occurring within both American theology and American superhero comics and films does not occur simply on the ontological level but is also inherent to epistemology and ethics reflecting the comprehensive nature of human life in terms of being knowing and acting This book explores the idea of the American monomyth that pervades American hero stories and examines its philosophical and theological origins and specific manifestations in early American superhero comics Surveying the anthropologies of six American theologians who argue against many of the monomyth s assumptions principally the staunch individualism taken to be the model of humanity and who offer relationality as a more realistic and ethical alternative this book offers a detailed argument for the intimate historical relationship between the now disparate fields of comic book superhero film creation on the one hand and Christian theology on the other in the United States An understanding of the early connections between theology and American conceptions of heroism helps to further make sense of their contemporary parallels wherein superhero stories and theology are not strictly separate phenomena but have shared origins and concerns

*The Myth of the American Superhero* John Shelton Lawrence, Robert Jewett, 2002 As the nation seems to yearn for redemption from the evils that threaten its tranquility the authors maintain that Joseph Campbell s monomythic hero is alive and well but significantly displaced in American popular culture

**Batman as Monomyth** Andrew Thigpen, 2017 In 1988 Jeffrey Lang and Patrick Trimble wrote an article

called *Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow* which explains the absence of a hero of the American monomyth in comic books. The American monomyth was proposed by Robert Jewett and John Shelton Lawrence and describes a community in harmonious paradise threatened by evil. The normal institutions of law and order fail to defeat the evil but fortunately a hero from outside the community arises to resist temptation, defeat the evil and return the community to its peaceful condition. Lang and Trimble observe the death of Superman during the events of the 1986 story *Crisis on Infinite Earths* as the death of the American monomythic hero in comics. But Lang and Trimble failed to consider that Batman might be a replacement for Superman in the American monomyth. Indeed, before 1986's *The Dark Knight Returns*, Batman had never been presented as the hero of any monomyth. Thus to argue that Batman is the hero of the American monomyth, it must be established that he can function as the hero of the traditional monomyth as presented by Joseph Campbell.

**Manipulation of the American Voter** Karen S. Johnson-Cartee, Gary A. Copeland, 1997-08-21. Manipulation of the American Voter provides the reader with the means necessary to analyze political commercials by presenting the motives behind advertising strategies and tactics used in contemporary politics.

**Open Range - Negotiating a Traditional Western in the 21st Century** Johannes Steinl, 2011-01-19. Seminar paper from the year 2010 in the subject American Studies Culture and Applied Geography grade 1-3. University of Frankfurt/Main, England and Amerikastudien language English. abstract: Cattle being driven through a lush green valley, a cowboy sitting on his horse with his back to the audience looking out into the open range of America's Midwest, only limited by the horizon, dark clouds gathering on the far left side of the picture: these are the first images the viewer gets from Kevin Costner's 2003 Western movie *Open Range*. And in fact, this is all the audience needs to know what this movie is going to be about. *Open Range* is made in the tradition of a classic Western. The cinematography of the opening sequence already establishes that. During these long shots, the camera literally dwells in the scenery, showing America's open range at its best. One could add: The symbolic meaning is conveyed immediately since the audience recognizes the movie's frontier setting. Since the Western genre has undergone a freefall since the late 1970s, not only in public interest, which is shown in box office rates, but also in its critical reception, it is interesting that director Costner refers back to the Western's grand age in *Open Range*, even more so if one considers the public as well as the critical success of the two most prominent Westerns of the 1990s. Both Clint Eastwood's *Unforgiven* and *Dances With Wolves* also by and with Kevin Costner offered a new interpretation of the classic Western to be honored with an Oscar for best picture in the process. So why does Costner then in *Open Range* take on the classic model of the Western again? The purpose of this paper is to try to give an answer to this question. To do so, it is first necessary to investigate in how far *Open Range* can be considered a classic Western movie and how deviations can be interpreted. Having done so, we will have to read our findings against the political and cultural context of the time of production of *Open Range*, since movies are cultural products and especially in the case of the Western, trigger certain expectations which in our case address the central idea of American self-understanding: the

frontier myth The story told in the Western hence becomes a cultural story      **The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science** ,1977-11      *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz in American Popular Culture* Neil Earle,1993

**The Phantom Messiah** George Aichele,2006-12-15 Examines the Gospel of Mark as fantasy literature      Language, Blood, Sexuality - Turning the American Monomyth Upside Down Ralph Cibis,2013-05-07 Essay from the year 2012 in the subject American Studies Literature University of Bayreuth Nordamerikastudien course Superheroes and the American Monomyth language English abstract When considering the American Monomyth one usually thinks about a tale like Superman or Spider Man a selfless hero on a journey to save mankind and to find his place as a Redeemer inside an endangered society Before 2008 those typical journeys have consistently featured the same patterns They deal with serious enemies and serious topics like politics and ethics they try to avoid the depiction of blood and violence and they change the reality of sexuality to hyper masculine superheroes and weak and helpless women But finally in 2008 time had come to break these standards of narration and to change the reputation as well as the representation of the typical superhero That is when Mark Millar and John Romita Jr have released Kick Ass      *The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, 2001* William M. Simons,2002-04-15 This is an anthology of 23 papers that were presented at the Thirteenth Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture held June 6 8 2001 and co sponsored by the State University of New York at Oneonta and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum Featuring keynote remarks from George Plimpton author of Home Run The Best Writing About Baseball s Most Exciting Moment this Symposium examined such topics as baseball s myths legends and tall tales These essays divided into sections titled Mythic Heroes Media Mythology Myth and Mystery and Myths in Progress go beyond the quick and easy judgments of the media and offer instead the longer more informed views of scholars and researchers      **"Who Goes There?"** Susan Andre George,2002      **The Practice of Rhetorical Criticism** James Robertson Andrews,1990      **Communication Criticism** Karyn Charles Rybacki,Donald Jay Rybacki,1991 This book should be of interest to courses in rhetorical criticism and rhetorical theory

Uncover the mysteries within Crafted by is enigmatic creation, **The American Monomyth** . This downloadable ebook, shrouded in suspense, is available in a PDF format ( PDF Size: \*). Dive into a world of uncertainty and anticipation. Download now to unravel the secrets hidden within the pages.

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