

# The Hero's Journey in Digital Stories

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# Content

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1. What is Digital Storytelling - uses, practice and theory
2. The Hero's Monomyth
3. Phases of the monomyth explained
4. The transformative potential of stories
5. 3 DS and their analysis
6. Conclusions and discussions

# What is digital storytelling?

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Digital Storytelling (DS) originated in Berkely, California during the mid 1990s is a simple, powerful tool which provides people with skills to tell their personal story as a two minute film.

Each completed film is shown in a community setting before being stored on the internet so others can share it.

# Practice and Theory

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- DS emerged from a dynamic area of practice driven by technology, collaboration across different forms of creative practice and a political commitment to finding stories for particular societal groups.
- Although there is a growing body of academic literature on DS, much of this takes the form of case studies and is therefore on a relatively small scale.
- One consequence is that practice has grown quickly without a theoretical framework to shape it and our aim is to adopt a particular approach as a step towards rectifying this.

# Uses of DS

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Nesteruk, 2015 - DS as a form of pedagogical approach.

Lee, 2014 - a form of teaching 21st century digital literacy skills

Reeves, 2013 - DS narrative pedagogy

Küpers, Mantere and Statler, 2013 - DS as a form for shaping organizational strategy change.

Guajardo, 2011 - storytelling for education leaders

Sandars & Murray, 2011 - DS increase reflexivity among medical students

# Hero's Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008)

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Who is the hero?

The man or the woman who is able to battle past her/his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms.

The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man - perfected, unspecific, universal man - he has been reborn.

His second task is to return to us, transfigured, and teach the lesson he has learned of life renewed. (Campbell, 1949/2008, 14-15)

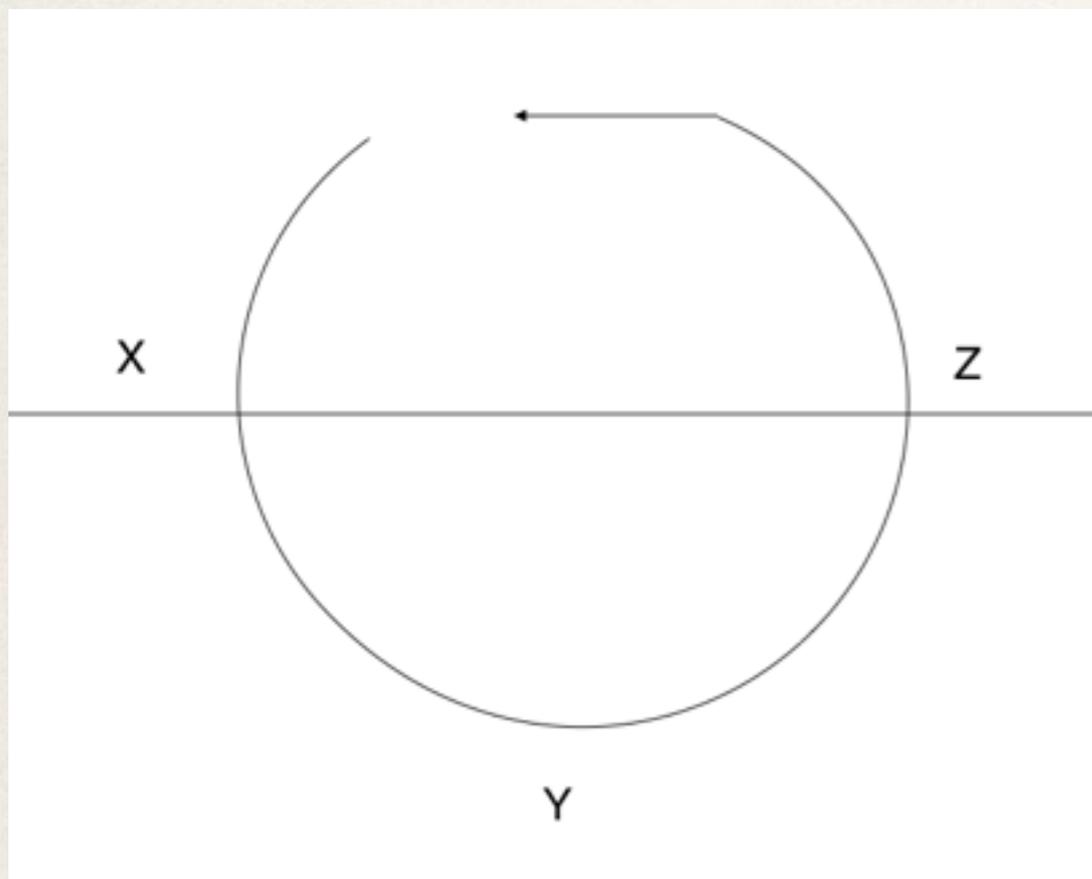
# The Hero's Monomyth (Campbell, 1949/2008)

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What does the hero do?

S/he goes through a mythological adventure with 3 rites of passage:

separation - initiation - return (the nuclear unit of monomyth)



X: the hero ventures from the everyday world into the supernatural world;

Y: fabulous forces are encountered and a victory is won;

Z: the hero comes back from his adventure and bestows the boon on his fellow men (Campbell, 1949/2008, 23)

# The Separation / Departure

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1. The Call to Adventure - children are being taken to the forest
2. The Refusal of the Call - using stones they find the way back home
3. Supernatural Aid - the white stones
4. The Crossing of the First Threshold - they enter the forest for the second time
5. The Belly of the Whale - the forest itself (Campbell, 1949/2008, 28).

# The Trials and Victories of Initiation

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1. The Road of the Trails - walk through the forest
2. The Meeting with the Goddess - the witch from the candy house
3. Woman as the Temptress - the witch is being thrown into the oven
4. Atonement with the Father - NA
5. Apotheosis - they the kill the witch
6. The Ultimate Boon - the jewelery they take home to exit poverty.

# The Return and Integration in Society

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1. Refusal of the Return - NA
2. The Magic Flight - using the broom to find the way out of the forest
3. The Rescue from Without - the swan
4. The Crossing of the Return Threshold - crossing the lake
5. Master of the Two Worlds - return to the family
6. Freedom to Live - NA (Campbell, 1949/2008, 29).

# The Outcome of Transformation

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The travel and encounter with Otherness, whether in terms of different cultures or the “more than human realm” of nature and wilderness, have significant **transformative potential** (Morgan, 2010).

The archetypal path of transformation can be undertaken for reasons that vary greatly with one’s social and psychological condition.

Types of outcomes:

Productive and instrumental - career development

Personal - therapeutic

Emancipatory - transgressing oppressing boundaries

Holistic - Spiritual and ecological transformation

(McWhinney & Markos, 2003, 31)

# Research questions

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1. Can we find the phases of the monomyth in DS?
2. If yes, which?
3. Do DS reveal personal transformations? Of which kind:

Productive and instrumental

Personal

Emancipatory

Holistic

# Lessons from an unlikely teacher

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## Lessons from an unlikely teacher

### Separation / Departure

Call	to my surprise the work God had for me, was to move from America & volunteer in a Romanian orphanage
Refusal	I've always loved children, BUT I had no experience in working with disabled kids
Supernatural aid	God's guidance

### Trial of initiation

Crossing 1st threshold	Mary's body was rigid, but she could smile...i found myself smiling back
Road of trials	doing my heart's desire work, but struggled with thoughts about Mary's condition, why was she like that
Meeting Goddess	i didn't see her as disabled, but as a child in need for love
Apotheosis	Mary's role was that of a teacher

### Return and integration

Ultimate boon	To love those less fortunate
Freedom to live	Smile, even when there's little to smile about

### Transformation

YES	HOLISTIC
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# Let's do it, Romania!

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## Let's do it, Romania!

### Separation / Departure

Call

A cleaner country

Crossing 1st threshold

I have done 1.000.000 ecological deeds, caravans, film projections, contests, reading clubs, planting trees,

### Trial of initiation

Road of trails

Travelled a lot, strategical partnerships, pictures, banners, distributed gloves.

Meeting Goddess

I have met many people who resonated with the same idea

Apotheosis

Mobilizing thousands and thousands of volunteers

Ultimate boon

I have gained many friends, together we are stronger

### Return and integration

Master of two worlds

I am a volunteer who will always say yes to a cleaner environment

Freedom to live

I want to leave the next generation a greener world, i can do it, I can choose to get involved.

### Transformation

YES

HOLISTIC

# My little Turkish friend

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vg-uNbRNQqQ>

## My little Turkish friend

<b>Separation / Departure</b>	Call	A special place, where I have never been before
	Crossing 1st threshold	I didn't know what will happen. What's behind the nice scenary.A pink and white building with paintings which looked very welcoming
	Belly of whale	A lady welcomed us in an office. Mother was talking with the lady all the time.
<b>Trial of initiation</b>	Road of trails	Finally a lot of children. Some of children were crying, until a girl showed up.
	Meeting Goddess	Diana, will you take me to you family. She was amazed by all my gestures, she was Turkish, she wants a family.I will take you, but not now.
	Temptress	People recommended my mother not to take her, because she has only 6 months to live maximum.
	Atonement	I asked mother to take her home, because we will save her
	Apotheosis	Don't bring me another child! Tanu was home and I started crying because of iov.
Ultimate boon	Because we took care of her and loved her, Tanu did not die.	
<b>Return and intearation</b>	Magic flight	She staid with us and got baptised and I was her godmother
	Freedom to live	She is 26 years old now and for 16 years she has been changing my life. Our family would not be the same without her.
<b>Transformation</b>	YES	EMANCIPATORY

## The phases of the journey

Story	Mary	Let's do it	Turkish
<b>Separation / Departure</b>	Call	x	x
	Refusal	x	
	Supernatural aid	x	
<b>Trial of initiation</b>	Crossing 1st threshold	x	x
	Belly of whale		x
	Road of trails	x	x
	Meeting Goddess	x	x
	Temptrass		x
	Atonement		x
	Apotheosis	x	x
	Ultimate boon	x	x
	<b>Refusal of return</b>		
	Magic flight		x
<b>Return and integration</b>	<b>Rescue from without</b>		
	Master of two worlds		x
	Freedom to live	x	x

# CONCLUSIONS

# Themes for Discussion

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- How is the hero shaped and defined? Who is the hero?  
- the narrator vs the character
- What is the mediating influence of the commissioning process on this? - see DS for advocacy purposes

# Thank you!

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