**Prof. Pope Fischer**

Lpopefischer@citytech.cuny.edu

**ANTH 1102**

**Attendance/Participation Questions for Week 6: Myth**

**Attendance/Participation:** Your attendance/participation will be determined by your post in the discussion board. Read the entire article before answering the questions. Only answer one option each covering the topic, thesis, and cultural example (aim for 250 words):

***Option 1: Malinowski***

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 2014. [“Myth in Primitive Psychology,”](https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/citytech-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4558755&ppg=161) in Myths and Mythologies : A Reader. Edited by Sinding Jensen, Jeppe. Sheffield: Taylor & Francis Group. Accessed March 16, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

A.(Topic) What is the main point of Bronislaw Malinowski’s article? (One sentence)

B.(Thesis) For anthropologists, a myth is typically seen as an origin story. Malinowski’s thesis argument focuses on three main points: the cognitive function of a myth, the social function of a myth, and how the myth is integrated into the society.  In terms of the social function, he states:

“The reality of myth lies in its social function; on the other hand, once we begin to study the social function of myth, and so to reconstruct its full meaning, we are gradually led to build up the full theory of native social organization (Malinowski 2008: 174).”

Having read the entire article, what does the above quotation mean and how does it contribute to Malinowski’s overall argument? (What does the social function of myth mean?) (This should be at least 3 sentences)

C.(Cultural example) Though he generally talks about “primitive societies” (a term we no longer use), specifically he draws on his fieldwork among the Trobriand islanders in Melanesia. He talks about a myth the represents the four main clans to illustrate his point (Malinowski 2008: 172-174).

REFER TO THE FILM WE SAW LAST WEEK --The myth for the Masai is stated at the end of the film.  What is the social function of the Masai myth? (Think about what might cause conflict in Masai culture, and how the myth resolves that). Or what is the cognitive function of the myth? (What is the myth teaching the society?)

**Option #2: Klaus**

2Klaus, Simona. 2010. “[Heroes in Virtual Space.”](http://citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=57085379&site=ehost-live&scope=site)*Studia Ethnologica Croatica* 22 (January): 361–91.

 A.(Topic) What is the main point of Simona Klaus’ article? (One sentence)

B.(Thesis) She draws on Joseph Campbell’s understanding of the monomyth of “the hero’s journey” to see how it applies to modern day video games.  She states:

“Alone the modern hero seems related to the virtual one, but the modern hero is created by mass media in the “real” world and many times has just a brief existence.  A person must actually do something heroic to acquire the “hero” title.  In contrast, the virtual hero as a factor of virtual space can enable anyone to become a hero.  Players can start the game whenever they want and become a hero over and over again” (Klaus 2010: 386).

Having read the entire article, what does the above quotation mean and how does it contribute to Klaus’ overall argument?  Why do you think it is important for people to feel like heroes by playing these games? Why are monomyth’s important? (This should be at least 3 sentences)

C.(Cultural example) The cultural examples she uses to prove her point are the fantasy role playing games “Morrowind, “Ultima,” “Diablo,” and “Rune.”  Perhaps you play role playing games by yourself or within a gaming community.  Do you agree with Klaus argument or do you think there are other underlying reasons why people play these games?