

# The Rise and Future of Heroism Science: A Cross-Disciplinary Conference

**11-12 July 2016**



[Hill Lecture Theatre](#), Building 450, Education and Humanities Building

South Street Campus, Murdoch University

## Conference Program

### DAY 1: Monday 11 July 2016

8.15am	Arrivals (Coffee & tea on arrival)
<b>8.30am</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
8.35-9.30am (Incl. questions 9.15-9.30am)	Keynote: The rise and coalescence of the field of heroism science <i>Scott T. Allison, University of Richmond, Virginia, US</i>
<b>Session 1: Historical perspectives on heroism</b>	
9.30-9.45am	The conceptualisation of heroism in ancient Egypt and its reception: A case study of Inaros <i>Lawrence Xu-Nan, University of Auckland, New Zealand</i>
9.50-10.05am	Rethinking hero status in colonial Western Australia <i>Sarah Booth, Edith Cowan University, Perth &amp; Luciano Pavez</i>
10.10-10.25am	Local heroes: Community involvement in the Great War by residents of the Bunbury-Harvey District, Western Australia <i>Margaret Warburton, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
<b>10.30-11.00am</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
<b>Session 2: Cultural perspectives on heroism</b>	
11.00-11.15am	The Robin Hood principle: A cultural approach to outlaw heroes <i>Graham Seal, Curtin University, Perth</i>
11.20-11.35am	A theological perspective on heroic leadership in the context of followership and servant leadership <i>Deborah Robertson, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne</i>
11.40-11.55am	Altruistic motivation in Ecuador <i>Alejandro Pacheco Jaramillo, James Cook University, Townsville</i>
12.00-12.15pm	Deadly feat: From individual to collective heroism in Aboriginal sporting participation <i>Amma Buckley, Curtin University, Perth</i>
<b>12.20-1.30pm</b>	<b>BUFFET LUNCH, Club Murdoch</b>
<b>Session 3: Heroism in popular culture and fiction</b>	
	<b>Part 1: Film perspectives</b>
1.30-1.45pm	<i>Fury Road</i> and the hero monomyth <i>Mick Broderick, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
1.50-2.05pm	The first duty: Heroism and the personal truth of whistle-blowing <i>Christopher Comerford, University of Technology, Sydney</i>
2.10-2.25pm	Children's heroism in Indonesian cinema <i>Satrya Wibawa, Curtin University, Perth</i>
	<b>Part 2: New media and visual culture</b>
2.30-2.45pm	Listening to the Sound of One Hand clapping: The depiction of moral characters

	in colonial graphics <i>Audrey Fernandes-Satar, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
<b>2.50-3.20pm</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
3.20-3.35pm	The evolving visual representation of Palestinian heroes since 2000 <i>Rusaila Bazlamit, Curtin University, Perth</i>
3.40-3.55pm	De/romanticizing heroism in Palestinian women bloggers narrative <i>Samiha Olwan, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
	<b>Part 3: Creative fiction</b>
4.00-4.15pm	Reimagining heroism: A conceptual analysis through <i>Antigone</i> and <i>Medea</i> <i>Keegan Martens, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
4.20-4.35pm	Quest of the Goddess: Is there a unique journey for the heroine in popular fiction? <i>Lillian Allen, Flinders University, Adelaide</i>
4.40-4.55pm	Writing diverse science fiction heroes, and the heroism of the science fiction writer <i>Bronwyn Lovell, Flinders University, Adelaide</i>
5.00pm	Close

## DAY 2: Tuesday 12 July 2016

8.15am	Arrivals (Coffee & tea on arrival)
<b>8.30am</b>	<b>Welcome to Day 2 and introduction</b>
8.35-9.30am (Incl. questions 9.15-9.30am)	Keynote: Transdisciplinarity, transformative inquiry and heroic scholarship <i>Peter le Breton, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
<b>Session 3, Part 3 (Continued): Heroism in popular culture and fiction (Creative fiction)</b>	
9.30-9.45am	Trauma and recovery: Finding the ordinary hero in recovery narratives <i>Lynn Gumb, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
<b>Session 4: Contemporary psychological perspectives on heroism</b>	
9.50-10.05am	What is the impact of heroism on civilians? <i>Thomas Voigt, Deakin University, Melbourne</i>
<b>10.10-10.40am</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
10.40-10.55am	What makes a hero? Exploring characteristic profiles of heroes using Q methodology <i>Brian Riches, Claremont Graduate University, US</i>
11.00-11.15am	Grandparents raising grandchildren: Neglected everyday heroes <i>David Coall, Edith Cowan University, Perth</i>
11.20-11.35am	Resilience and heroism: Theoretical convergence? <i>Julie Ann Pooley, Edith Cowan University, Perth</i>
11.40-11.55am	Mindfulness and heroism: Clear mind / open heart <i>Patrick Jones, Murdoch University, Perth; Life Quality Systems</i>
<b>12.00-1.00pm</b>	<b>BUFFET LUNCH, Club Murdoch</b>
<b>Session 4 (Continued): Contemporary psychological perspectives on heroism</b>	
1.00-1.15pm	The hero's journey as a mudmap for your life <i>Clive Williams, Psychologist, Brisbane</i>
<b>Session 5: Heroism in professional contexts and career identity</b>	
1.20-1.35pm	Faking heroism: A mechanism of 'Mafia Offer' <i>Layla Al-Hameed, Edith Cowan University, Perth</i>
1.40-1.55pm	Lawyers as heroes: Promoting altruism in law students through pro bono teaching clinics <i>Nick James, Bond University, Gold Coast</i>
2.00-2.15pm	The engineer as hero: The career journey and gender

	<i>Jolanta Szymakowski, Notre Dame University, Perth</i>
2.20-2.35pm	The influence of heroic leadership on career identity: A transdisciplinary perspective <i>Olivia Efthimiou, Murdoch University, Perth &amp; Dawn Bennett, Curtin University, Perth</i>
<b>2.40-3.10pm</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
<b>Session 6: Heroism in educational contexts, and heroism as a pedagogical tool</b>	
3.10-3.25pm	The visible-invisible hero: Redefining heroism for the school leader <i>Deborah M. Netolicky, Murdoch University, Perth</i>
3.30-3.45pm	Democratising heroism: Effects of heroism training on individual heroic action <i>Sylvia Gray, Deakin University, Geelong; President, Hero Town, Geelong</i>
3.50-4.05pm	The making of a hero: Cultivating empathy, altruism, and heroic imagination <i>Matt Langdon, The Hero Construction Company</i>
4.10-4.25pm	Heroic living, human ecosystem management, and psychological well-being <i>Shawn Furey, The Hero Training School, US</i>
4.30-4.45pm	The heroic learner <i>Joanna Pascoe, University of Auckland, New Zealand; Epsom Girls Grammar School</i>
4.50-5.00pm	Closing remarks and reflections <i>Scott T. Allison, University of Richmond, Virginia, US</i>

**Note:** All presentations run for 15 minutes, followed by 5-minute question time.

## Abstracts and Speaker Information

### **Keynote Speaker, Day 1: Scott Allison, University of Richmond, Virginia**

*Scott Allison* has authored numerous books, including *Heroes* and *Heroic Leadership*. He is Professor of Psychology at the University of Richmond where he has published extensively on heroism and leadership. His other books include *Reel Heroes*, *Conceptions of Leadership*, *Frontiers in Spiritual Leadership*, and *the Handbook of Heroism*. His work has appeared in *USA Today*, *National Public Radio*, *the New York Times*, *the Los Angeles Times*, *Slate Magazine*, *MSNBC*, *CBS*, *Psychology Today*, and *the Christian Science Monitor*. He has received Richmond's *Distinguished Educator Award* and the Virginia Council of Higher Education's *Outstanding Faculty Award*.

#### **The rise and coalescence of the field of heroism science**

Scott Allison will introduce the emerging field of heroism science and forecast its potentially wide-reaching impacts for research and communities. He will provide an overview of the burgeoning heroism research in the field of psychology, and beyond, over the past decade. He will introduce the definition of heroism science as a nascent multiple disciplinary field which seeks to reconceptualise heroism and its correlates through a close examination of the origins, types and processes of these interrelated phenomena. He will highlight the deeply transformative nature of heroism, and the field, based on the premise that heroes and hero narratives fulfil important cognitive and emotional needs, including the need for wisdom, meaning, hope, inspiration, and growth.

### **Keynote Speaker, Day 2: Peter le Breton, Murdoch University, Perth**

*Peter le Breton* is Associate Lecturer, Centre for University Teaching and Learning at Murdoch University. He champions general education, and an ecological, holistic, integral and systemic approach to scholarship and education. As well as being an active qualitative and theoretical researcher, he is passionate about teaching and the teaching-research nexus. He thinks of himself as a scholar-practitioner, as his professional life has been divided between academe, business and government. In business, he founded and developed independent and specialized retail bookstores for over twenty years. As a public servant in Port Moresby and Canberra, he worked on social indicators, urban and regional development strategy, and poverty. More recently, he led a team of corporate trainers within the Australian Taxation Office.

#### **Transdisciplinarity, transformative inquiry and heroic scholarship**

Peter le Breton will discuss the endeavour to unite scholarship; the potential of heroism and the emerging field of heroism science to promote holism; the radical nature of transdisciplinary research, its challenges and benefits; the redefinition of 'science' (and science versus scientism); and the centrality of transformation in both heroism as a phenomenon and scholarship more broadly. He will introduce the concept of 'heroic scholarship' and argue for the reclamation of (fake) 'heroism' as a tool of institutional propaganda, to (authentic) 'heroism' as heroic scholarship. He will argue that one characteristic of many contrarian scholars is that they are unconstrained by disciplinary boundaries, agendas and paradigms. Such scholars are heroic, even super-heroic, for two reasons: first, their insights are often profoundly important for knowledge creation and epistemology, with equally profound implications for wise action in human affairs. Second, unsung and sometimes vilified scholars are so committed to their narrative or paradigm that they willingly sacrifice security and status for independence.

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## Session 1: Historical perspectives on heroism

### The conceptualisation of heroism in ancient Egypt and its reception: A case study of Inaros

*Lawrence Xu-Nan, University of Auckland, New Zealand*

*Lawrence Xu-Nan* is a PhD candidate in Ancient History and Egyptology at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Ancient Egypt, in its long history, has produced some of the world's earliest and most fascinating narratives; the Inaros series being one of its most striking examples. The series consists of a collection of historical narratives set during the mid-seventh century BCE and features the extensive use of heroic figures of this period, thus making the series an ideal case study for heroism analysis. As typical of such literary genre, the heroes within the narratives are part of the social elites that venerates military achievements. Hence, the first step of the present paper is to distinguish the characteristics that define an Egyptian hero in the context of its literary framework. In doing so, some psychological observations behind its reception, both ancient and modern, can then be examined. The focus of ancient reception is on the historic incentives behind the materialisation on the fictional hero, especially since evidence on the interaction between narrative and audience is scarcely available. Modern reception, in contrast, addresses the issues and cautions present in the transmission of ancient heroism in a modern context and suggests alternative strategies that may be implemented for such heroism to be received in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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### Rethinking hero status in colonial Western Australia

*Sarah Booth, Edith Cowan University, Perth & Luciano Pavez*

*Sarah Booth* is a PhD candidate with a background education, art, Indigenous learning and cultures at Edith Cowan University.

*Luciano Pavez* is a Chilean sociologist and an independent researcher.

There is reluctance in the Western Australian community to admit and discuss the atrocities committed by the colony's settler heroes. Settler heroes such as Captain Stirling (founder of WA) and their 'triumph over adversity' could not have come about without the dispossession and exploitation of Australia's first peoples. Yet, their hero status still thrives despite the evidence of what had occurred. Even within education where Indigenous perspectives are becoming more prominent and Indigenous heroes such as Yagan are discussed, it is clear they have not yet penetrated the heart of what it means to be Australian, they are still the 'others'.

This resistance to accepting a wider ideal of Australians has been firmly placed in Australia's national identity, where Indigenous peoples are viewed as 'other' because they do not fit an ideal version of Australia created by the colonisers. In such a large country where pockets of the population are so far apart, defining a national identity is vital for social cohesion. Symbolizing great achievements through heroic figures is one way to establish this. However, the absence of a critical perspective within the wider community in regards to the historical myth of a peaceful settlement would unbalance the accepted interpretation of historical events. It would appear that Indigenous perspectives are

accepted only as far as it does not damage the reputation of the moral and ethical motives and actions of the settlers. Through the lens of new historical criticism theory, content analysis of both historical and contemporary documents, this paper will explore how historical views have filtered into contemporary society and shape societies view of settlement/invasion. Although there are plenty of arguments for the recognition of Indigenous heroes and educating every Australian in the role of Indigenous perspectives, this paper argues that we need to go a step further and in fact rewrite the hero status of settlers who committed atrocities in order to broaden the reach of reconciliation.

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## **Local heroes: Community involvement in the Great War by residents of the Bunbury-Harvey District, Western Australia**

*Margaret Warburton, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Margaret Warburton is a PhD candidate in History at Murdoch University.*

My research takes its cue from the 300 names embedded in the letter archive of a West Australian soldier who was killed in France during WW1. I have used the 200 WA names to explore the history of the Bunbury - Harvey district of WA to determine the characteristics of the population that sent its sons to war and supported them and their families as they made their wartime contribution and sacrifice. What has emerged is a picture of a community where heroic leadership was the norm and where, in the absence of governmental assistance, community organizations were formed to address the challenges they faced. Although it is self-evident that hardship was a daily experience, the overwhelming impression gained from the sources is one of people uniting to solve problems and further the development of their community. When the war came, the people immediately mobilized their leadership and organizational skills to fight the war on the home front and support their 'soldier heroes' on the battle-front.

I have used the letters and newspaper archives to examine the experiences and qualities of the people and have identified among that population any number of heroic 'men' during the less than 80 years of European settlement in the Bunbury-Harvey district, who, on the outbreak of war, formed organizations to address the challenges they perceived. Whereas, during the prewar period, the rôle, and even the identity, of the women was obscured (as they took their husbands' names on marriage) the women became visible during the war as they took on organizational and supporting rôles of their own.

The traditional view of the Australian population as portrayed by the ANZAC legend is that of a nation of 'heroic' bushmen, yet a different view had emerged as early as 1919, of a people who were neither bushmen nor exclusively townspeople, but 'something in between' who possessed a range of heroic qualities which could be put to the service of their communities and, later, their country and Empire in a time of war.

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## Session 2: Cultural perspectives on heroism

### The Robin Hood principle: A cultural approach to outlaw heroes

*Graham Seal, Curtin University, Perth*

*Graham Seal* is an Australian and international authority in the field of folklore. He is Professor of Folklore at Curtin University teaching within the Australian Studies program and post-graduate studies in Australian Folklife. In 2007 he was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia 'for service to the preservation and dissemination of Australian folklore, particularly through a range of academic, editorial and research roles'.

Back in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the historian Eric Hobsbawm identified a type of historical figure he called a 'social bandit'. By this he meant a criminal who was nevertheless considered to be a hero by one or more significant social groups. Hobsbawm's interest was political as well as historical. As a Marxist he contended that social bandits represented a struggle of the dispossessed and downtrodden against their oppressors. He identified a selection of celebrated criminals from various eras and across the world who fitted his criteria.

Not surprisingly, Hobsbawm's arguments – considerably modified over many years almost up to his death in 2012 – have been controversial. Further investigation of social bandits by scholars from many fields, including myself and several other folklorists, have now produced a broader and usually less doctrinaire understanding of the social bandit phenomenon as a long-standing and widespread tradition operating in most cultural groups around the world. So well-defined and consistent is this tradition that its elements can be identified, as they are in this paper. So persistent is the tradition as a response to certain social, economic and political circumstances that we can predict with reasonable confidence when such heroic villains or noble robbers figures may arise.

This paper provides a description of the cultural processes involved in the creation and perpetuation of outlaw heroes or 'social bandits' and their enduring myths. It identifies the discrete elements involved in the process and seeks to understand the dynamic relationships between these elements and their role in what I call 'the Robin Hood Principle.'

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### A theological perspective on heroic leadership in the context of followership and servant leadership

*Deborah Robertson, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne*

*Deborah Robertson* worked in Catholic primary schools in Western Australia for 28 years having experience as a leader and follower in 8 primary schools across the State. After being Assistant Principal in two schools, Deborah was then Principal in another two schools. As a school based practitioner researcher, Deborah was involved in action research leading to the completion of an EdD exploring teachers' experiences of assessment. In 2010 Deborah began working as a Senior Lecturer in Educational Leadership at Australian Catholic University in Melbourne where she has learned and taught about various understandings of leadership and followership, especially those identified as values based and people centred such as servant and authentic leadership. She continues to work as an HDR supervisor and online lecturer from her base in Bunbury, WA. Deborah is about to submit her PhD thesis "A theology of leadership: social justice and transformation" with Murdoch University.

This presentation addresses the understanding of 'hero' in the context of the Christian ideal of servant leadership and what this could mean for Christians in the modern workplace in both faith-based and secular organisations. It explores the question of how recent and emerging understandings of 'hero' are different from the traditional understandings of heroic leadership related to charismatic and 'great man' leadership, and whether this is compatible with a theological understanding of servant leadership. Given the Christian tradition of followership, the paper also considers the relationship between heroic leaders and followers and the appropriateness of the concept of heroic followership.

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### **Altruistic motivation in Ecuador**

*Alejandro Pacheco Jaramillo, James Cook University, Townsville*

*Alejandro Pacheco Jaramillo* is a PhD candidate at the College of Business, Law & Governance at James Cook University.

The new Ecuadorian Constitution (2008) established the concept of good living "Sumak-Kawsay"<sup>1</sup>, where human collective values should predominate over the individualistic values. These principles are based on indigenous culture preserved from ancient times. From this constitution<sup>2</sup>, an institutional framework of a social and solidarity economy has been created jointly with the utilitarian model of the standard Economics. Even though, the first principle of Economics is that every agent is actuated only by self-interest, the rescue of ancient values and the implementation of social policies seem to motivate Ecuadorians to act more altruistically. Thus, based on Behavioural Economics and the social preference model (SPM), it wants to understand whether other alternatives to utilitarian or individualistic model (UMM) could help to improve the Ecuadorians' wellbeing.

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### **Deadly feat: From individual to collective heroism in Aboriginal sporting participation**

*Amma Buckley, Curtin University, Perth*

*Amma Buckley* is a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Humanities at Curtin University.

Sporting heroism plays an important part in the Australian psyche and is attributed to inspiring and uniting a nation. In the popular media, sport and Indigenous achievement have been inextricably linked. Indeed, in recent times there has been an unprecedented growth of Indigenous elite athletes in the Australian Football League -- representing 10 per cent of the AFL listing. While the increasing occurrence and importance of sporting success for Indigenous elite footballers has been well documented, it is largely attributed to determinist traits such as 'born to play' or 'natural abilities'; a somewhat antithesis of heroism. Yet this recognition often creates another dichotomy as it highlights the individual's talents but not the activities or aspirations at a community level where grassroots participation in sport arguable engages thousands of Indigenous people. As Indigenous, and specifically Australian Aboriginal, culture is built around collectivism, this paper explores the notion of collective heroism --a loyalty to people and country -- in the context of a local district competition or 'bush league' illustrated through a case example. This study of an Aboriginal football club and its journey from 'wooden spooners' to re-establishing its status at the top of the league ladder, captures the story of collective heroism that enabled the club and community to deliver a

range of personal, organisational, social and broader community benefits as well as success on the playing field.

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## Session 3: Heroism in popular culture and fiction

### Part 1: Film perspectives

#### *Fury Road* and the hero monomyth

*Mick Broderick, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Mick Broderick* is Associate Professor of Media Analysis at Murdoch University. A writer, curator and screen producer, Broderick has been seduced by the apocalyptic muse since the late 1970s and crafted creative works that engage with nuclearism, genocide and trauma over three decades. His latest book *Reconstructing Strangelove: inside Stanley Kubrick 'nightmare comedy'* is due for release in late 2016.

The latest Mad Max film, *Fury Road* (the fourth in the series) was met with unprecedented media anticipation and, for those scholars of heroism, great expectations. The previous trilogy had (self)consciously drawn from and applied narrative trajectories based on the works of Joseph Campbell, especially *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, now an industry bible amongst both neophyte and establishment filmmakers. So how has *Fury Road* contributed to, or usurped, Campbell's cyclical journey of the monomythic hero? Have the familiar tropes and iconography of gender and (dis)ability operating in the latest sequel served to reinforce or undermine the ideological determinism of the patriarchal hero? This paper will suggest via close textual readings and comparative analysis, how the franchise has Max seemingly frozen, atemporally, in a post-holocaust tomorrow-morrowland, unable or incapable of assuming his predestined, heroic fate.

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#### The first duty: Heroism and the personal truth of whistle-blowing

*Christopher Comerford, University of Technology, Sydney*

*Christopher Comerford* is a PhD candidate in cultural studies, superhero culture and film at the University of Technology Sydney.

In a 1992 episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Captain Jean-Luc Picard proclaims that 'The first duty of every Starfleet officer is to the truth; whether it is scientific truth, or historical truth, or personal truth'. This 'guiding principle' of Starfleet, upon which the utopian-influenced future of *Star Trek's* United Federation of Planets is built, is an elemental one that is just applicable to us. However, this principle is forgotten or intentionally eschewed today by those reporting on 'traitors' and 'troublemakers' like Chelsea Manning, Julian Assange and Edward Snowden, the latter of whom noted it was his desire 'to allow the public to decide' whether the NSA's intrusive global surveillance program should continue (Greenwald 2014, p. 47). To speak against those who operate in secrecy and attempt to curtail civil liberties is tantamount to villainy, while those who commit the alleged crime of speaking out do so under an unproclaimed aegis of heroism; doing what is necessary to protect the people with bravery, courage and self-sacrifice.

This paper analyses whistleblowers through a heroism science lens, using the ideals of Jean-Luc Picard and the Star Trek franchise as articulations of the ideas these whistleblowers stand for. The paper establishes Star Trek's ongoing capacity for articulating aspects of the real world fifty years after its creation, before comprehensively outlining the specific use of Picard as a case study manifesting these articulations through both Star Trek's visual media and a doctoral-published book dedicated to Picard's thoughts on leadership (Roberts & Ross 1995). The paper then uses Picard's ideals as a way of showing how these whistleblowers, and Snowden in particular, are accused of treason and worse by world governments, but nonetheless represent heroism through 'risk and sacrifice' (Allison 2015, p. 5), derived from both the horrifying truths of the systems they exposed and the personal truths they stand for.

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### **Children's heroism in Indonesian cinema**

*Satrya Wibawa, Curtin University, Perth*

*Satrya Wibawa* is a PhD candidate in the School of Media Culture & Creative Arts at Curtin University.

Since the beginning of Indonesian cinema, many films have deliberately portrayed children to articulate social and political messages. Children's image of innocence makes them able to discuss current sensitive issues. On film, they are presented in the way adults see and construct the image of children, including forming the figure of a hero. Defining a hero in Indonesian society is commonly given to war where a mature male as a soldier is featured. Meanwhile, in a mostly patrilineal cultural Indonesia, children are placed in the weakest stage of the family system; the father is the centre and the primary power. I examine two films with the same title: *Jenderal Kancil*. The first version was made in 1958 and the second version was made in 2012. Both films present children in the primary *role* but with different social and political context. I argue that the idea of heroism represented in those films change given their social and political context.

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## **Part 2: New media and visual culture**

### **Listening to the Sound of One Hand clapping: The depiction of moral characters in colonial graphics**

*Audrey Fernandes-Satar, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Audrey Fernandes-Satar* is an academic, researcher and visual artist in the School of Education at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia. Her body of work involves the investigation of the politics of identity, transnationality and the border. Audrey has exhibited nationally and internationally. She traces her heritage to the people of Gaunco Vaddo, who left Goa during the nineteenth century.

Graphic novels and comic books have been a springboard for many blockbuster movies, shinning a light on the Hero, a mythical being that moves from the everyday world we know to the realm of the supernatural, the underworld. Fantasy and myth encircle this journey, until irrefutable victory is accomplished and the cycle is complete when the Hero returns back to the common world, and the clapping commences. Conceptually the Hero claps with one hand representing the embodiment of courage, of moral imagination and agency.

Cousineau (1990, p.xvi) says that the journey of the hero is humankind's eternal quest, this is what binds us to our 'spiritual history' this is the 'metamyth' or the 'Story beyond the story,' the search for self-transformation on one side and the search for identity on the other.

Through a critical visual literacy standpoint, this paper examines how the journey of the Hero is imagined in history through cultural representations in historical graphic novels. It endeavors to listen to the sound of one hand clapping, by investigating the role of moral imagination (Johnson, 1997) through an examination of how dilemmas of peace and dilemmas of violence are imagined, critically negotiated and resolved.

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## The evolving visual representation of Palestinian heroes since 2000

*Rusaila Bazlamit, Curtin University, Perth*

*Rusaila Bazlamit* is a digital and interactive designer, artist, and architect. She lectures in Architecture, Design, and Digital and Interactive Media. She has exhibited video-art projects, interactive installations and photography works worldwide and curated major exhibitions in Australia. She has an online atelier "Lab Tajribi | Experimental Expressions" <http://www.lab-tajribi.com>. Currently she is completing her PhD in Design at Curtin University. In her research she is investigating the potentials of immersive interactive installations in carrying complex political narratives experientially and spatially. In specific she is looking at the occupation of Palestine narratives.

In this presentation I will examine how the hero image has evolved in Palestinian visual arts, films and digital/social media scenes since the year 2000. This year marks a significant change in the political arena starting with the second Palestinian popular uprising (*The Second Intifada*) against Israeli occupation. Despite the continued struggle, technology and digital media has noticeably affected the creation of art in Palestine. Also creative documentation of the everyday has gained worldwide attention through social media. Inevitably these factors have inspired and changed the depiction of heroes and heroism.

In every national struggle for independence and self-determination various images of national heroes emerge alongside images of struggle and victimhood. Palestine has been struggling against occupation and fighting for independence since 1948 when around 720,000 Palestinians were expelled from their villages in what is known as *Nakba*. Since then heroes have been represented in literature, visual culture and pop culture. The representation of heroes has been evolving and in a constant state of flux.

Through examining examples of Palestinian artworks, installations, films, graffiti, pop culture and social media (including Internet memes); I argue that three distinct archetypes of heroes have emerged. The first archetype is the political icon. Images related to these icons are usually celebratory in nature and often romanticised. The second archetype is the anonymous rebels. Most of the imagery depicting them especially in social media is romanticising them yet artists have been challenging these images either by contextualizing the heroes' behaviours or questioning the media depictions of them. The third archetype is the *samidoun*; the everyday people whose heroism lies in their attempts to lead a normal life. Images of these heroes have increased with the accelerated use of social media and microrblogging by Palestinians especially at times of military operations.

Each of these archetypes has their own particular audience and reach, raising the question as to which of these three archetypes create the most powerful empathetic connections with a Western audience. An answer to this question would be of immediate usefulness to activist artists and designers working within a Western context.

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### **De/romanticizing heroism in Palestinian women bloggers narrative**

*Samiha Olwan, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Samiha Olwan* is a PhD candidate in Comparative literature and Creative Writing at Murdoch University. Her PhD research aims to explore the ways in which Palestinian women bloggers who are writing from the position of a national struggle can employ online spaces to voice their gender identity through online personal accounts. She is particularly exploring ways in which online discourse can transcend heroic representations of Palestinian women as portrayed in national discourse.

In anti-colonial nationalist struggles, notions of sacrifice and heroism dominate nationalist narratives. The major aim of these narratives is to promote a sense of commitment to a larger collective political cause and invite a larger participation in the struggle. Singh (2012:535) argues that “part and parcel of this notion of sacrifice is the creation and mythification of heroes in this society’s popular discourse.” In the Palestinian narratives, heroes and heroines are constantly constructed and mythified, and they are loaded with notions of honour, courage, perseverance, strength and selflessness. The construction of male and female heroic imagery such as that of “the martyr”, “the mother of the martyr,” and “the prisoner” has led to the invocation and reiteration of nationalist imagery such as “the motherland”. This, has as a result, meant the fixation of gendered imagery, which entrapped women within the symbolic realm in conventional national representations. Through an analysis of narratives of Palestinian women bloggers online, I consider images of heroism invoked by women activists who are engaged in the on-ground offline activism through blogging. The blogs, created by these women, are records of personal experiences of colonialism and its underpinning violence; they document events such as first hand witnessing of the death of friends and family. The narratives produced as a result of such intense colonial encounters struggle to lament these unnecessary deaths. Lamenting, in this situation, entails a degree of heroic representation. The act of romanticising heroism becomes a way in which wounds are healed, martyrs remembered, death mourned. Within this context, I investigate the possibilities for the narratives of these women bloggers to produce alternative imagery to the nationalist archetypes. I argue that the literary narratives they develop, creates a space for reflection, giving the bloggers a chance to rethink their own position and representation in nationalist narratives and attempt to produce alternative human non-mythical imagery.

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## **Part 3: Creative fiction**

### **Reimagining heroism: A conceptual analysis through *Antigone* and *Medea***

*Keegan Martens, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Keegan Martens* is a PhD candidate in Philosophy at Murdoch University, drawing on feminist philosophy to critique various scientific approaches to understanding sex and gender.

The definition of heroism is contested within the psychological literature, with some suggesting that a formal definition is unfeasible (Kinsella, Ritchie & Igou, 2015a; Goethals & Allison, 2012). Following these suggestions, in order to help clarify what is understood by 'heroism', I critique two potential understandings of heroism drawn from recent psychological work on heroism. These critiques use Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Medea* as their examples to show that these understandings cannot express what is heroic about Antigone and not heroic about Medea.

In the first critique I discuss the notion of heroes as displaying certain characters traits, or strengths. Noting that Medea and Antigone display surprisingly similar traits, I argue that many positive traits can be displayed by a person who acts immorally and, thus, that we should use actions rather than traits (which may help predict such actions) as the basis for assessments of heroism.

In the second critique I argue that heroic action cannot be defined by consequences. Again using *Antigone* and *Medea* as examples, I show that the eventual outcome of an act is not always helpful in defining its heroic character. This is not to say that consideration of likely outcomes should not feature in our assessment of actions as heroic, but rather that the actual outcomes should not be the entire basis of such an assessment.

Finally, I will suggest that, on the basis of these critiques, that the designation 'hero' should be understood as an ethical evaluation of the person so designated on the basis of their actions.

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### **Quest of the Goddess: Is there a unique journey for the heroine in popular fiction?**

*Lillian Allen, Flinders University, Adelaide*

*Lillian Allen* has a Masters in Science, a Graduate Diploma in Education and Counselling, a Masters in Creative Writing, and is currently a PhD candidate in Creative Writing at Flinders University. She has over 40 poems and five fictional novels published under pseudonyms.

The hero's journey has long been applied to fictional stories as based on the work of Joseph Campbell and later Christopher Vogler. It's part of a writer's tools to use when constructing a fictional story, whether a novel, movie, or even computer game. Typically, the hero answers a call to adventure, goes on his quest, over comes challenges and temptations, has a revelation, transforms, then returns home with knowledge to share with the community.

The heroine's journey can be seen to be similar but according to Maureen Murdock's version there is a focus on the separation of the feminine, which leads to an over identification with the masculine. The journey becomes about the reconciliation of the feminine and then reincorporation of the masculine, so there is harmony between the feminine and masculine in the heroine resulting in a strengthening in personal identity.

When planning my creative novels, I apply the hero's journey to my main characters both male and female. However I've begun to question if the hero's journey would be an adequate model for the feminine perspective. For example, is there a need for a heroine's journey to allow the heroine a unique transformation that connects her to own feminine wisdom and power? Or is the hero's journey adequate for either character regardless of gender in contemporary fiction?

This presentation will explore how the heroine's journey can be applied to the main female roles in popular fiction, and look at if there really is a different journey for the heroine, and whether or not gender is enough to suggest there needs to be a different journey for the heroine.

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### **Writing diverse science fiction heroes, and the heroism of the science fiction writer**

*Bronwyn Lovell, Flinders University, Adelaide*

*Bronwyn Lovell* is a PhD candidate in creative writing at Flinders University, Adelaide.

Central to my PhD project in creative writing, I am composing a science fiction verse novel, which will follow a small group of astronauts as they leave Earth and embark on a seven-month journey through space to Mars in a small shuttle. My aim is to write a story set in space with a female protagonist, embodying a female experience of space, including non-monstrous motherhood and real emotions, to present a truly female point of view underrepresented in space exploration narratives.

The advent of science fiction was in many ways more a social movement than a literary one (Larbalestier, 2002:31). It was founded on the belief that science would propel humanity towards a progressive, evolved future (Larbalestier, 2002:33). Science fiction stories use the rational logic of science as a rhetorical tool for modelling alternative realities. They subvert the norm in their imagined worlds, so that accepted human rules, expectations, tendencies and patterns of behaviour are highlighted for scrutiny and criticism (Lefanu, 1988:21). Novelist, poet and literary critic Kingsley Amis said that Science Fiction's most important use is as social enquiry (Lefanu, 1988:4).

Science fiction's foremost social enquiry concerns questions of difference. However, science fiction has mainly focused on representing the difference between humans and non-humans (Penley et al, 1991: vii), rather than showing diversity among its human characters. In particular, its focus on the traditionally male-dominated fields of science and technology has meant that science fiction writing has been colonised by male preoccupations and rarely explores the emotional life of women or children (Lefanu, 1988:3,14–15). Critic Sarah Lefanu says that the 'mother' is the "rarest of beings in the world of science fiction" (Lefanu, 1988:15–16).

As an author in the process of writing the feminist science fiction verse novel *The Best of Both Worlds*, I am consciously constructing characters that display diversity in gender, ethnicity, sexuality and (dis)ability in order to subvert typical science fiction hero archetypes. In creating diverse heroes within the narrative, I am attempting to use writing as a form of heroic leadership. This paper will explain my methods and rationale.

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### **Trauma and recovery: Finding the ordinary hero in recovery narratives**

*Lynn Gumb, Murdoch University, Perth*

*Lynn Gumb* has been an English and Theatre Arts Teacher, Lawyer, Policy Maker, Lecturer, Speechwriter for a former Chief Justice and Chairperson of the Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers Centre. She holds a Master of Arts and is the recipient of several research grants. Lynn has won awards for her short stories, including the Australian Irish Heritage Association Award for Fiction, and has had her short fiction published. She is currently a PhD candidate at Murdoch University.

Our desire to speak, to tell the stories of our personal and communal suffering, offered literature myriad tales spanning continents and histories. Traumatic experience has been recorded for historical reference and has been represented in fiction as individual and collective stories. The word 'trauma' is so broadly used in contemporary vernacular that it is difficult to wrangle it into a simple definition. Literary theory, informed by the fields of social psychology, neurobiology, psychology and psychiatry, has developed contradictory theories of trauma, and contentious debates continue as theorists try to capture what has become an almost indefinable term. Links between trauma and heroism exist in trauma fiction which can be teased from existing literary canons or from contemporary novels. Traditional notions of heroism, much like the concept of trauma, are complex and weighted with a catalogue of elements that may serve to complicate an already multifarious field of study. Notions of heroism can be integrated within a new trauma narrative that reveals a new subject, the recovery process. I argue for a shift from the focus on trauma stories of wounding, or on suffering, and revenge narratives to repositioning literary trauma studies towards more life-affirming subjectivities emerging from recovery narratives. It is my view that recovery narratives consist of three associated elements: resilience, reconciliation and resistance. I demonstrate how trauma survivors can be read as heroes in their own tales of recovery, and how the story of the hero can be infused into the trauma narrative, or teased from existing texts, to create a productive and progressive narrative rather than the destructive and degenerative approach that focuses on extreme responses to trauma. It is my position that recovery from trauma, as depicted in literary fiction, can be productively read as a tale of "ordinary" heroism.

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## Session 4: Contemporary psychological perspectives on heroism

### What is the impact of heroism on civilians?

*Thomas Voigt, Deakin University, Melbourne*

*Thomas Voigt is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Health at Deakin University.*

In keeping with Franco and Zimbardo's (2006, p. 2) assertion that '*we are all potential heroes waiting for a moment in life to perform a heroic deed*', some 3983 Australians have, since 1973, been presented with bravery medals for acts of bravery or heroism. Acts of bravery or heroism may often involve trauma and can have a life changing impact on those prompted to take action including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A great number of civilians awarded bravery medals receive little or no support or assistance in dealing with the aftermath of their life changing experiences despite support available for some individuals through Victims of Crime legislation, motor vehicle insurance schemes and through workers compensation.

It is not uncommon for individuals who have been affected by trauma to look for and seek meaning from their experience, to seek to make something positive from a negative event. However, the ability or capacity of individuals to effectively deal with the aftermath of trauma may relate closely to their level of resilience. Those with high levels of resilience may cope better than those that have experienced subsequent trauma or significant 'life events' which may have the effect of reducing or diminishing resilience. The focus of this paper is to discuss the literature relevant to post traumatic growth and the possible implication of this on people who have received bravery awards for acts in areas where no formal support is available.

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## What makes a hero? Exploring characteristic profiles of heroes using Q methodology

Brian Riches, Claremont Graduate University, US

Brian R. Riches is a PhD candidate in the Division of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California.

Heroism is defined as a voluntarily act performed for the good of one or more people at significant risk to the self, without being motivated by reward (Zimbardo, 2007). The varieties perspective of heroes asserts that a hero can possess many virtues, and these may be different from the virtues or characteristics possessed by another hero (Walker, Frimer, & Dunlop, 2010; Dunlop & Walker, 2013). In other words, there could be different profiles or constellations of virtues possessed by heroes. Many studies of recognized heroes seek to determine the primary psychological characteristics that heroes possess. Heroes tend to score relatively high on measures of social responsibility, risk taking, empathy, and altruism (Midlarsky, Fagin Jones, & Corley, 2005), but there are likely many other characteristics to consider in light of the varieties perspective, such as moral emotions, character strengths, and values.

Conceptualizing heroes based on their character strengths, moral emotions, personality traits, values, and other individual differences also act as a step towards understanding the person-context interactions integral to the development of heroes. According to developmental systems theory, the characteristics of these heroes were not the drivers of their development (Lerner, 1991; Ford & Lerner, 1992; Lerner, 2006). These individual differences influenced these peoples interaction with their contexts, leading to heroic behavior, and influencing the development of these profiles of characteristics. In short, these characteristic profiles influenced the development of these heroes and are a product of that development.

Using Q-methodology I sought to explore how heroes see themselves, and to investigate the extent to which different types of heroes have similar and distinct character profiles. Q-Methodology is a person-centered, quantitative and qualitative self-report method in which participants rank order characteristics, statements, or traits from 'most characteristic' of themselves to 'least characteristic' (Waters & Deane, 1985). Quantitative results are analyzed using a by-person factor analysis (Dziopa & Ahern, 2011), and interpreted using qualitative responses. Using Q-methodology allowed me to explore the psychological characteristic profiles of heroes. While the quantitative results could be amassed using a survey with a variety of scales, participants have limited time and attention which prevents examining numerous characteristics this way. Q-Sort is quicker and allows for investigation of many characteristics, it also includes a qualitative component which deepens understanding of the character profiles.

The final sample included 14 heroes (79% Male; 93% White, 7% Hispanic or Latino;  $M age = 50.71$ ,  $SD = 13.16$ ) Which is not an uncommon sample size for a Q study (see Brown, 2009 & Lai et al., 2007 for examples). These 14 heroes were awarded for their heroic actions with awards such as the Carnegie Medal for Extraordinary Civilian Heroism, Hank Nuwer Anti-Hazing Hero Award, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award, and recognition from the Giraffe Heroes Project. Using an online Q-Sort, participants sorted 49 psychological characteristics based on how well each described them.

Q factor analysis revealed two factors, profiles, or groups of heroes. One group, *open, loving, and risk taking* heroes, was characterized by high rankings of courage, perseverance, love, curiosity, humor,

creativity, and zest, and low rankings of public self awareness, prudence, hedonism, shame, embarrassment, anger, spirituality, elevation, and disgust. The second group, described as *spiritual, socially responsible, and prudent* heroes, was characterized by perseverance, honesty, bravery, social responsibility, spirituality, courage, humor, judgment, mindful, and prudence, but not hedonism, creativity, public self awareness, internal locus of control, sense of world community, joyful, awe, future minded, zest, and risk-taking (see figures 1 and 2 for full profile distributions). These differences were clearly demonstrated in the open ended responses. When discussing risk taking one of the *open, loving, and risk taking* heroes said “I have always thrown caution to the wind.” Meanwhile, one of the *spiritual, socially responsible, and prudent* heroes said, “I have a constant internal dialogue... I do not do things without carefully thinking about the consequences and costs.”

In short, the results revealed two groups of heroes who shared some characteristics but also possessed unique characteristics. This supports the varieties perspective of heroes and acts as a step towards understanding the more complete and complex person-context interaction integral to the development of heroes. Most previous research has seen heroes as individuals who impulsively take risks for the good of others and who are driven by past experience, personality traits, or social pressures. However, this analysis showed that half the heroes in this sample felt they were prudent, purposeful, and agentic in their heroic actions. Whether they made the choice to act in an instant, or deliberated their actions over time.

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### **Grandparents raising grandchildren: Neglected everyday heroes**

*David Coall, Edith Cowan University, Perth*

*David Coall* is a Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Science within the School of Medical Sciences. After completing his PhD in 2005 David worked in the Health Department of Western Australia and the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning at the University of Western Australia. David was awarded a 3-year Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at the University of Basel, Switzerland in 2006. In 2008 David returned to Western Australia and was employed as a Research Fellow in the School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences at the University of Western Australia before joining Edith Cowan University in 2010.

Across human cultures, grandparents and elders more generally are respected and valued contributors to the health of their families and communities. Disciplines as diverse as sociology, economics, psychology, and evolutionary biology and psychology have documented the impact grandparents have within families. Evidence from traditional societies shows that the presence of a grandparent can be as beneficial to child survival as, for instance, the introduction of a new water supply (Gibson & Mace, 2006; Sear & Mace, 2008). In industrialized nations, the evidence is mounting that—especially in family environments with low resource availability—grandparents can buffer child development against difficult early environments (Coall & Hertwig, 2010; Sear & Coall, 2011). In many families grandparents go beyond this, putting their own lives aside, taking on the work of full-time parenting responsibilities for their grandchildren and the associated financial, physical and mental health costs. The role grandparents play in many societies is predominantly discussed in terms of altruism (Coall & Hertwig, 2010). However, the costs, sacrifice and voluntary nature of grandparents raising their grandchildren may also be usefully understood as heroism.

Using data from interviews with 49 Western Australian grandparents raising grandchildren (Taylor, Marquis, Batten & Coall, in press), this article will examine grandcarers’ lived experiences as heroes.

Although grandcarers are often hidden in society and rarely receive media attention, most of society would agree they are heroic. Grandparenting is often considered altruistic. In the case of grandparents raising grandchildren, however, devoting potentially the remaining years of their lives to parenting again and the considerable financial, social, familial, and mental and physical health sacrifices grandcares make means grandcarers may indeed be heroes. Because of their readiness to step in to help when the grandchild's parents are not available and the grandchildren are in desperate need, the known costs and sacrifices and the increased danger to themselves, means the role grandcarers play may be a form of social heroism and match Franco, Blau & Zimbardo's (2011) good Samaritan heroic subtype.

Moreover, using Franco, Blau & Zimbardo's (2011) five stage definition of heroism, grandcarers are heroes. Grandcarers help their grandchildren who have an inescapable need. They volunteer to take this role, while there may appear to be no alternative there are often alternatives (e.g., foster care) and grandcarer groups do remind grandparents that it is perfectly acceptable to say no. Grandparents understand the impact this change in roles with have to every facet of their lives. However, grandparents accept this challenge without any recognition or gain from the relationship, except helping to ensure their grandchildren's health and development.

This article will also use an evolutionary perspective to explore and compare altruistic grandparental investment and the social heroism displayed by grandcarers. Here, Franco, Blau & Zimbardo's (2011) distinction between altruism and heroism will be used for the first time to examine the behavior of grandparents. This presentation will simultaneously extend the literature in both the heroism and grandparental investment fields of research.

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## **Resilience and heroism: Theoretical convergence?**

*Julie Ann Pooley, Edith Cowan University, Perth*

*Julie Ann Pooley is the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Science. She is also Associate Head of School in the School of Psychology and Social Science, and Discipline Leader (Psychology).*

It seems that almost every day we are bombarded with stories or episodes of terror and disasters from all around the globe. Intrinsically we are often mesmerized by the situations in which we see the worst and best of human beings. Circumstances that are so personal to the individuals involved are felt by many or millions due to the nature of our 24/7 media coverage. The focus of the media in most of the terror and disaster stories is always, first, about the victim/s, what happened, to whom and when. It is important for the personal aspect to be portrayed to the wider audience, the shock the terror and the despair become the focus of questions asked by journalist but ultimately the stories end with some depiction of heroism and resilience. These scripts are not unfamiliar to anyone growing up in the "Disney" century that has been exposed to the familiar formula. The question possibly for social scientist is, Do these links really exist in our psyche and even in our communities and societies? Can 'good' really conquer 'evil'?

By 'good' do we mean that are people inherently resilient or do we see this aspect of people on rare occasions and do we constitute this aspect or construct as heroism?

Psychologists have been working to understand the notion of resilience for many decades. Possibly the first known study is that by Werner in Hawaii in the 1950's. Contemporary resilience research is rich with a multitude of definitions and observations but few theoretical frameworks have yet emerged. Whilst philosophers have theorized and written about heroism, more recently social scientists, and specifically psychologists, have become increasingly interested in understanding and describing heroism. However there is little literature that brings together the concepts of resilience and heroism.

The few pieces of research that have attempted to describe both resilience and heroism have done so in an ad hoc rather than systematic way.

This presentation dissects the literature related to heroism and resilience, at the individual and community level, in an attempt to understand the theoretical links on which future empirical research could be based and potentially evolve our understanding of both concepts.

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### **Mindfulness and heroism: Clear mind / open heart**

*Patrick Jones, Murdoch University, Perth; Life Quality Systems*

*Patrick Jones* is a PhD candidate and has presented his findings at national and international conferences in psychology.

Whilst the fields of mindfulness and heroism science have been conducted in parallel, they share a common interest in the causes and conditions of self-less action. Findings such as increased attentional functioning, enhanced primary sensory awareness, greater conflict monitoring, increased cognitive control, reduced fear response, increased loving kindness and self-sacrificing behaviours, all point to heroically relevant qualities increased by mindfulness training. This paper outlines topics of interest in the science of heroism and then explores relevant theory, practices and scientific outcomes of mindfulness. It proposes that there is evidence that heroic qualities can be trainable and that mindfulness may be able to teach the skills necessary to maintain an enduring experience of selflessness in service of others.

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### **The hero's journey as a mudmap for your life**

*Clive Williams, Psychologist, Brisbane*

*Clive Williams* is a psychologist with over thirty years of experience. For the past 25 years Clive has been focused on the work of Joseph Campbell and his idea of the Hero's Journey; the story that continues to be told across the centuries. Clive believes that the Hero's Journey resonates with all people as the stories of the various heroines and heroes resonate with the trials and troubles of our own lives. Clive works with clients, uses the Hero Journey as a mudmap for people to navigate their way through the challenges of their lives. His book, *A Mudmap of Living; A practical guide for daily living* based on Joseph Campbell's 'The Hero's Journey' is available online.

In 1949 Joseph Campbell wrote *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, outlining his proposal that the heroic myths and legends across time were in essence retelling the same story. The story focused on a person separated from their usual concerns by an event, or newfound interest. This

event/interest disrupts their lives and the Hero, often reluctantly, sets out to restore balance, to solve the problem. Resolution however is only achieved by attempting numerous, often onerous, and sometimes life-threatening tasks. Finally after attempting the last and most difficult task, the problem is resolved, balance restored though never in the way intended. The Hero however has also been changed, transformed. The person who began the story is not the same as the person who completes the final test. Risks have been taken, tests failed and passed. A death and resurrection of the Hero has occurred. Campbell said such myths, were essentially psychology misread as biography, history and cosmology. The recurring story of the Hero is in essence the psychology of change. Using the Hero's Journey as a template for personal change, I work with a diversity of clients, from adolescents to the elderly whose lives have been disrupted. Their old coping strategies no longer suffice and like the Heroes of the myths and legends, they are often forced to learn new coping skills through being forced to deal with a range of new and challenging tasks. Such tasks often feel life-threatening and in the process the Hero must learn to take risks, to do deeds he has no idea how to do and attempt deeds he never wanted to attempt. For most of us, the most difficult, challenging tasks will be in transforming ourselves. The life threatening events will happen in our lounge room or kitchen. We will have to risk rejection in order to solve our problem. In short we will have to undergo a death and resurrection and this is the heroic feat that all heroes must endure.

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## Session 5: Heroism in professional contexts and career identity

### Faking heroism: A mechanism of 'Mafia Offer'

*Layla Al-Hameed, Edith Cowan University, Perth*

*Layla Al-Hameed is a PhD candidate in the School of Business at Edith Cowan University.*

Businesses strive to establish a strong position within their market using a unique quality that differentiates them from their competitors. To achieve this goal, some businesses use 'twisted means', often perceived as deceptive actions. Deception has always been a part of human nature, regardless of the ethicality of such human attitude, and the level of harm that might result as an outcome. One of the motives of adopting such attitude or action is to enhance the public perception by drawing a heroic image for the person or the organisation; this is what I call 'faking heroism'.

In this conceptual paper, I argue that faking heroism is a mechanism of the 'Mafia Offer', which, according to the Theory of Constraint (TOC), is an offer that cannot be rejected by customers and the competitors cannot match. This mechanism has been used for different motives, but mainly –based on what has been observed and anecdotal evidence– to achieve the goal of making higher profits than competitors.

This paper will explore the concept of the Mafia Offer using recent examples of faked heroism, such as the Lance Armstrong doping scandal in cycling, and Volkswagen's faked environmentally friendly image. Unfortunately the scandals of athletes and organisations practicing fraudulent actions are continuing to rise, and organisations and individuals are using creative means and innovative techniques to fake heroism. These cases open the debate about how the current social structure and context supports fake heroism—even for a while– and consider strategies to prevent organisations utilising this kind of Mafia Offer.

Mafia offer is a strategy to lead the market, and it can be triggered by different mechanisms. The mechanism of faking heroism has catastrophic implications in the long term for business success and customers' confidence.

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### **Lawyers as heroes: Promoting altruism in law students through pro bono teaching clinics**

*Nick James, Bond University, Gold Coast*

*Nick James* is the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Law at Bond University. He is a former commercial lawyer, and has been practising an academic since 1996. His areas of teaching expertise include business and commercial law, law in society and legal theory, company law, the law of succession and property law. He has won numerous awards for his teaching including a National Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning, and he is the author of three textbooks *Business Law*, *Critical Legal Thinking* and *The New Lawyer*. He has written numerous journal articles, book chapters and conference papers in the areas of legal education, critical thinking and critical legal theory. Professor James is the Director of the Centre for Professional Legal Education, Editor-in-Chief of the Legal Education Review and a member of the Executive Committee of the Australasian Law Teachers Association (ALTA).

A 'good lawyer' is a lawyer who is not only knowledgeable, competent and effective, but also committed to behaving ethically and working towards the public good. They are concerned not only with doing what is best for themselves and their client, they are also concerned with identifying the ways in which legal expertise, legal services and the law itself can be used to address injustice and foster communal wellbeing. To become good lawyers in this sense, law students need to develop heroic attributes such as altruism, empathy and community awareness during their years at law school, and law schools need to create the conditions in which such development is facilitated and even encouraged.

Law schools can foster heroic attributes in law students through the use of pro bono teaching clinics. In these clinics, law students work with volunteer lawyers to provide free legal advice to clients typically unable to access legal services and support. This paper describes how the notion of heroism applies to law students and lawyers, explains why law schools should teach students to be 'heroic' lawyers, and— by examining qualitative data obtained from law students and volunteer legal professionals participating in pro bono teaching clinics – considers how law schools can use a pro bono teaching clinic to foster the development of heroic attributes in law students. It also considers the challenges inherent in implementing such teaching practices and suggests ways in which law schools can address these challenges.

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### **The engineer as hero: The career journey and gender**

*Jolanta Szymakowski, Notre Dame University, Perth*

*Jolanta Szymakowski* is an electrical engineer, a high school teacher, a liturgist with a Grad Dip (Theol) and a researcher of engineering education. She is currently a PhD researcher of gifted education at UNDA.

Conclusions from a recent survey of an Australian engineering member organisation suggested that in a four stage engineering career, the third stage was that of 'hero'. However, the stages and terms used to describe each stage mirror the typical male journey, rather than a broader engineering journey. This presentation rethinks the engineering hero through a gendered and archetypal perspective.

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### **The influence of heroic leadership on career identity: A transdisciplinary perspective**

*Olivia Efthimiou, Murdoch University, Perth & Dawn Bennett, Curtin University, Perth*

*Olivia Efthimiou* is a PhD candidate at Murdoch University, Perth and Associate Researcher at the Australian National Academy of Screen and Sound. Her doctoral research focuses on the emerging field of heroism science, embodiment, transdisciplinarity, the philosophy of science, and creative play in social, locative and mobile spaces. She is the website creator and administrator of [Heroism science: Promoting the transdisciplinary study of heroism in the 21st century](#). She is Editor of *Heroism Science*, the first cross-disciplinary international peer-refereed journal dedicated to advancing heroism research.

*Dawn Bennett* is John Curtin Distinguished Professor and Director of the Creative Workforce Initiative with Curtin University in Australia. Her research focus is enacting and enabling employability within higher education learning and teaching. This incorporates research on employability, identity development, graduate transition and graduate work, retaining a special interest on careers in the creative industries. A violist and a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Dawn serves numerous editorial boards and she convenes the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows' network. She is on the board of directors for the International Society for Music Education and peak body Music Australia, serves as a commissioner with the ISME Commission for Education of the Professional Musician, and co-chairs the Curtin Academy.

In terms of scholarly inquiry, the exploration of heroism within the context of career development is relatively new. We will respond to the gap in literature with an exploration of the potential influence of heroic leadership on contemporary career identity development. We will discuss the alignment of the epistemic, energizing and ecological functions of heroic leadership across ten key areas of heroic leadership activity. As such, we consider career as quest and adventure; inspiration; paradox; the transrational; purpose and meaning; metaphor; intelligence; the heroic imagination and entrepreneurial creativity; story; and lifelong learning. We argue that building a heroic leadership profile serves as an important tool for developing the skillset necessary for optimizing student retention and engagement, graduate wellbeing, resilience and satisfaction, and the ability to cope with lifelong career challenges.

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## Session 6: Heroism in educational contexts, and heroism as a pedagogical tool

### The visible-invisible hero: Redefining heroism for the school leader

*Deborah M. Netolicky, Murdoch University, Perth*

Educator and researcher *Dr Deborah M. Netolicky* has over 16 years' experience in teaching and school leadership roles in the UK and Australia. Her PhD thesis—*Down the rabbit hole: Professional identities, professional learning, and change in one Australian school*—explored the ways in which professional learning and school contexts interact to shape educators' professional identities. She blogs at [theeduflaneuse.wordpress.com](http://theeduflaneuse.wordpress.com) and tweets as @debsnet.

This presentation argues for an alternative narrative for leadership, within the context of schools. It challenges the need for heroes to be visible, recognized, and applauded for their heroics, proposing instead a new way of thinking about the school leader as hero, through the metaphor of the Cheshire Cat. In examining the stories of 11 school leaders from one Australian school, including middle leaders who are often absent in school leadership literature, this paper provides insights into school leaders' perceptions of themselves as leaders, and their private processes of decision making. It challenges the notion of school leadership as an archetypal story of a central hero's struggle, triumph, and transformation, showing that school leaders can instead be quiet and subtle in their heroism. Serving the moral purpose of education and leading schools transformatively can look less like a journey of overcoming obstacles in a flourish of public courage, and more like a liquid choreography of collaborative, restrained, and even imperceptible movements.

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### Democratising heroism: Effects of heroism training on individual heroic action

*Sylvia Gray, Deakin University, Geelong: President, Hero Town, Geelong*

*Sylvia Gray* is a psychology student at Deakin University, Geelong and President of [Hero Town Geelong](#). Sylvia's current dedication to helping others rose from the hardships she experienced in childhood. From adolescence to adulthood Sylvia has battled continuously with naysayers and adversity. A few years ago she became deeply inspired by Dr. Philip Zimbardo's work, especially the Heroic Imagination Project, and decided to return to university. She realized that while battling adversity and evil might be noteworthy, prevention is more valuable than a cure. Her own experiences as well as her work on a national crisis support hotline has led her to believe that empowering effective action is crucial to reduce issues of discrimination and stigmatization.

Recent literature has demonstrated the need for a more democratic definition of heroism, which empowers everyday individuals to become everyday heroes. Global trends demonstrate a shift in public mindset from an exclusive vision of heroism (*e.g.* warriors) to an inclusive, democratic vision of heroism (*e.g.* volunteers and other individuals who devote their time and energy to pro-social causes) (Zimbardo, Breckenridge & Moghaddam, 2013).

While substantial research, past and present, has explored the underlying morality and pro-social behaviours required of an everyday hero, little has been done to explore whether heroism can be trained. That is, can heroic acts be learnt? Can everyday individuals learn to become everyday heroes?

Hero Town Geelong, in an Australian-first partnership with the Heroic Imagination Project [HIP], has focused on delivering a psychological intervention aimed at training everyday heroes. The project has sought to bring long-standing psychological and sociological theories to practical application in the community.

The primary research focus, Hero Town Geelong [HTG] has explored the influence of the HIP intervention on heroic action in schools, workplaces and community organisations. A wide range of participants have been included in the research, ranging from primary school-aged children to adults in psychology professions. All participants began with a series of pre-tests (including the Time Perspective inventory amongst others). The HIP training was delivered to most participants (with control groups as reference wherever practical) and all participants then responded to a series of post-intervention tests. The results of this research, including relationships between types of heroic action (reactive vs. reflective) and personality types, are discussed.

Using similar methodologies, HTG and local partners have investigated relationships between the HIP intervention and other influencers on behaviour. One such program investigated the relationships between HIP interventions and socialisation (primary, secondary and tertiary). Another explored relationships between the intervention and educational outcomes (in a range of education settings, including primary, secondary, tertiary and VET). Relationships between the HIP intervention and resilience in telephone crisis supporters has been explored with a leading national crisis support hotline. Further, the HIP intervention has been utilised and measured as part of an innovative approach to youth recidivism and, separately, empowering long-term disengaged youth to re-engage with their community. Finally, cultural influences have been considered through extensive testing with HTG and HIP's partner organisations in Budapest, Bali and the United States.

While still in the pilot stages of the initiative, the Hero Town Geelong's proof of concept framework has a strong focus on applied innovative research balanced with evidence-based programs. Initial findings of Hero Town Geelong's pilot program will be presented. Extensive opportunities for future development and research will be discussed.

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## **The making of a hero: Cultivating empathy, altruism, and heroic imagination**

*Matt Langdon, The Hero Construction Company*

Matt Langdon is the founder of [The Hero Construction Company](#), a non-profit dedicated to heroism promotion and education in schools. It is an innovative program that helps combat bullying, anti-social behaviour and foster moral responsibility, greater academic and social engagement, and overall well-being in school communities. Matt is also the organiser of the annual [Hero Round Table](#), the world's leading community and research conference on heroism. Matt co-hosts [The Hero Report](#) with Dr Ari Kohen, a monthly online YouTube discussion forum featuring interviews with heroism researchers and activists, and commentaries on hero culture and heroism in current affairs. Matt is the author of [The Hero Handbook](#).

Heroes aren't born; they're made. This presentation examines the commonalities in the backgrounds of people who take heroic action on behalf of others to theorize the ways in which our society can encourage citizens to prepare themselves to act heroically. Every year in New York City, dozens of people die after being struck by subway trains. In 2013, 151 commuters were hit by trains. On nearly every occasion, dozens of people stood by. Every year there are also reports of subway

heroes. These people step out of the crowd, compelled to do the right thing despite the obvious risk. Most of them walk away after their heroics, uninterested in any press coverage. It turns out to be very difficult for most people to do the right thing when the stakes are high. It's not that people don't know what it would mean to do the right thing in any given situation. The real reason that most people are bystanders rather than heroes is that most people are out of practice.

This presentation examines the ways in which people who act heroically are primed to take that action as a result of their personal history. In looking closely at and interviewing a variety of people who have acted heroically, in a single moment or over time, I argue they have several crucial commonalities: They imagined situations where help was needed and considered how they would act; regularly helped people in small ways; and had some experience or skill that made them confident about undertaking the heroic action in question.

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### **Heroic living, human ecosystem management, and psychological well-being**

*Shawn Furey, The Hero Training School, US*

Shawn Furey is a Hero Trainer and Situation Optimization Strategist. He created an online hero training and hero support program which functions as a kind of behavior guidance system for people who might not have learned growing up that we are all born to be heroic, that heroes are situation technicians, and that situations can be optimized for life success. Shawn also applies his passion for heroism in his full-time work as a Behavioral Health Technician at a 'Supermax' prison where he facilitates psychoeducational groups and therapeutic activities with men who have been convicted of a violent crime and have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder. He has a B.A. in Psychology with a double minor in Sociology and Philosophy and is completing a M.S. in Educational Psychology.

Shawn will present the view that the concept of heroism is both ontological and teleological in that it describes a transcendent way of being which is also a prerequisite for experiencing a sustainable sense of psychological well-being and flourishing in life. Heroism is described as both the pinnacle of a change agent developmental ladder and as the means by which a mature human being can take personal responsibility for their own basic human mental health need-satisfaction and personal goal-attainment through the successful performance of tasks associated with social ecosystem management [also known as situation optimization]. Finally, heroic living, social ecosystem management, and psychological well-being and flourishing in life are described as arising coextensively via biopsychosocial engagement with day-to-day situational variables. Ultimately, heroism education and promotion may serve a restorative function in both individuals and society by reuniting people with their natural power to interact with a social reality that is governed by habit and by equipping them with the managerial knowledge, habits, values, tasks, techniques, skills, and support that they'll need to restructure social groups in a way that supports basic human need-satisfaction and personal goal-attainment.

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## The heroic learner

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The hero's journey (Vogler, 2007) offers a framework in three acts. In Act One, a character in an ordinary world is called to adventure. He or she refuses the call then crosses the threshold after meeting the mentor. In Act Two, the character meets allies and enemies, and takes tests. He or she approaches the inmost cave, faces a large ordeal, after which he or she receives a reward. In Act Three, the character starts the road back to the ordinary world, on the way he or she is resurrected from the dead and finally returns with the elixir. The hero's journey could be extended as a framework to the heroic learner's journey, within the context of a holistic interpretation of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007). This interpretation of the curriculum explicitly combines learning to learn, with knowledge acquisition, empowering the learner to realize their potential. The heroic learner's journey is a tool that shows how a learner can utilize their strengths to undergo transformation. This educational transformation has benefits for all members of society, including at-risk learners.

An individual's call to learning is inherent, as humans are predisposed to knowledge; however, a lack of awareness of learning to learn strategies may result in the refusal of the call or disempowerment that leads to disengaged learners. Increasing engagement is crucial, as Dalziel (2013) notes that, "one of the greatest problems in the New Zealand education system is student disengagement" (p. 191). Learning to learn refers to developing learning power regarding creative, critical, curious thinking, resilience, being open to learning, making connections, strategic awareness, and learning relationships. While these learning dispositions are listed in the front end of the NZC (2007), they are not explicitly embedded in the secondary learning experience.

A mentor embodies the reciprocal concept of 'ako', an interactive reflexive approach to knowledge, where the teacher and learner share ownership of teaching and learning and learn together in partnership. This supports the notion of a learner who manages his or her own learning. The mentor may use creativity to foster confidence and engagement in order to lead the learner across the threshold into the aspirational realm of possibility and hope. Establishing an enriched environment for learning empowers the learner to acknowledge their strengths, and develop the resilience and personal agency to manage challenges as they arise along the heroic learning journey. The mentor requires a growth mindset, that is, the belief that the learner has the capacity to learn. According to Dweck's growth mindset (2006), learning is possible through effort. This inclusive view of a learner's potential helps transfers agency and responsibility from the teacher to the learner.

Embedding learning to learn alongside the acquisition of knowledge could be facilitated via a variety of interventions, such as a self-assessment tool, The Crick Learning for Resilient Agency (CLARA); learning logs a metacognitive reflective journal; Philosophy for Children; explicitly sharing of the thinking process; connecting with educational programs in the community, for example the Auckland Art Gallery, where English students collaboratively interpret visual images as metaphorical springboards for creative writing.

The learning journey presents tests, allies and internal conflict insisting that the learner develop confidence, self-belief, and resilience as he or she responds positively to challenge, risk and uncertainty. Tests prove to the learner that they can indeed learn and make progress. Using self-

awareness of existing strengths he or she finds flow and transfers this experience to their approach to new knowledge. If the learner is an active participant in their assessment, for example, through self-assessment, then assessment or tests support learning. An ordeal, such as a difficulty or failure enables the learner to increase their self-awareness, to learn to seek help through learning relationships and build on their strengths to transform, strengthening his or her learning identity. This reward of self-awareness enables the heroic learner to access the road back to their true learning identity, where synergy between self-awareness, learning to learn and knowledge enables a learner's resurrection and authentic engagement with a coherent community in which his or her elixir or strengths and empowerment radiate, demonstrating heroic qualities.

Synergy between knowledge acquisition, learning to learn and the heroic learner's journey allows a learner the opportunity to learn from struggle. However, this is a challenge working within the current constraint where expectations of student success increase yearly. This has led to an assessment-heavy rather than knowledge-led curriculum with a highly-scaffolded learning experience to ensure learners' success targets are met. While high success rates are pleasing these should not happen at the expense of developing the heroic learner. Once a learner is driving their own learning they can take themselves anywhere; whereas a learner dependent on scaffolds and their teacher may flounder once these supports are removed – which they are, at tertiary level or in the workforce.

Happiness has become one of the indices to measure the success of nations. According to Sahlberg (2015), happiness is an integral goal of schools. Happiness is a result of knowing yourself, what you like doing to achieve Csikszentmihalyi's (2014) idea of 'flow'. Sahlberg (2015) notes that you cannot find what Robinson (2009) calls you 'element', "if you are trapped in a compulsion to conform" (Sahlberg, 2015, p. 202). Through the synergy of learning to learn, the heroic learner's journey and the acquisition of knowledge, a learner gains the potential to access his or her heroic learning identity, strengths, 'flow' and the door to powerful knowledge. A learner who knows how to learn holds their potential power. My proposed area of study will test this hypothesis.