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Naruto and Naruto: Shippuden through the lens of Campbell's Monomyth

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Naruto and Naruto: Shippuden through the lens of Campbell's Monomyth

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Abstract

“Naruto and Naruto: Shippuden through the lens of Campbell’s Monomyth” is a comparative analysis of the anime television series Naruto (2002-2007 Japan, 2005-2009 USA) and its sequel Naruto: Shippuden (2007-2017 Japan, 2009-2019 USA) with Joseph Campbell’s monomyth as delineated in his The Hero with the Thousand Faces. These Japanese anime television series that are considered one of the most popular worldwide, and yet the hero’s quest in each series is often overlooked. This study both compares and contrasts how the Campbellian stages of monomyth intersect with Naruto and Naruto: Shippuden animation narratives.

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Anime shows have grown in popularity in the United States and the reasons for it are endless. Especially in the younger generations, people of all races or ethnicity have no problem being in a room together talking about their favorite anime show, characters, villain, and story-line. As kids typically do, many tend to stay up late at night to watch anime shows on Cartoon Network. The show that had the most impact for young people in the early 21st century was the *Naruto* series. *Naruto* taught its viewers many life lessons such as working hard, resilience, being yourself, and determination. Every anime show was unique but there was always something that made them similar to each other. There was always a classic hero with magical powers that needed to save the world from evil with the help of his friends and a female. When *Naruto* (2002-2007 Japan, 2005-2009 USA) came on the Cartoon Network channel, it was the talk of the whole country because of the different ways everyone can relate to the characters. This was followed by the Hero's journey story-line which made many fans, especially children, fall in love with the show. As *Naruto* was coming to an end, the anime came out with a sequel called *Naruto: Shippuden* (2007-2017 Japan, 2009-2019 USA) which continued with the story-line of the original show. Similar to real life, everyone in the anime got older and this meant that the anime were able to capture new audiences along with the previous one. Research was conducted from several articles and interviews for the purpose of this paper. Inspired by Gallacher's discussion of anime and manga, this paper tries to move beyond definitions to analyze the form of anime and manga (20). Anime is television animation that typically comes from a subset of the original manga, which is equivalent to a comic book in the United States (Gallacher 20). Many popular manga have been turned into anime which is a television animation show. What makes *Naruto* and *Naruto: Shippuden* such compelling anime shows that reached multiple generations and people from all ages. A comparative analysis, *Naruto and*

Naruto: Shippuden will look to analyze and compare both series based on the idea of Campbell's Hero's quest (the monomyth). These two series have reached fans of all ages because the original was more child friendly while the sequel was more dark and violent. The main character, Naruto Uzumaki along with Sasuke Uchiha will be the primary focus along with other side characters in a broader sense. Side characters in both of the fantasy series will also be used in this comparative analysis paper to provide further insight.

History of Anime in the USA

The history of anime and manga comes from Japan and has been around for over a hundred years, but anime has recently reached people from across the globe, due to shows like the *Naruto* series. The first anime shows came out during the early 20th century; many of these early anime works were only a few minutes lasting as long as twenty minutes. (Winter 2). The films were played during the first and second world wars where the anime characters were the protagonists as soldiers. As the 21st century was nearing, anime was reaching world-wide fame and it started to reach international markets like in the United States (11). "In the 1990s, anime was popularized in the United States by television shows like *Pokémon* (1997–present), *Dragon Ball Z* (1996–2003), and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* (2000–06). In 2002, Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* won the Academy Award for Animated Feature Film. By 2016, anime accounted for 60 percent of television cartoons worldwide" (11). Anime has gained popularity around the world and for children growing up, it's become a new way of life. The majority of what many kids watched growing up was anime cartoons which were on popular channels like Cartoon Network and Disney Channel. Additionally, it was in commercials, McDonald's happy meals, stores, and what seemed like everywhere. The anime boom was hitting every city in the country hard. Anime has

become one of America's favorite fantasy shows to watch because of the popularity and influence it has grown to be.

The creator of the *Naruto* series is Masashi Kishimoto, a Japanese manga artist who spent his whole life working on different manga stories with no luck until *Naruto* happened. He took advantage of this opportunity with his work on *Naruto* but he never imagined the enormous success to come. In an interview called *Naruto: Meet The Creator* with Chris Butcher as moderator, Kishimoto admits that before *Naruto*, he struggled to make it in the anime world and was on the verge of quitting with *Naruto* being his last chance. He goes on to say that he is a huge *Star Wars* fan which is important because this indicates that he had knowledge of the *Star Wars* monomyth. Since Kishimoto watched the George Lucas films, it can be assumed that the *Naruto* series were influenced by the Hero's Journey in those movies. When Kishimoto was asked what made the film successful, he responded that it was a secret which can be a clue that he used Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey ideology.

Overlapping the Hero's journey, also known as a monomyth, is the different stages that will be discussed from the fictional and realism components in the series for the sake of my comparative analysis paper. Joseph Campbell argued the solution to the socio-economic conflict was for people to follow their dreams and listen to their gut feeling. He used this concept to come up with many of the myths told in anime stories today. Those myths are what people know as the Hero's journey, which was a major focus of Campbell's work (Morong 2). Joseph Campbell decided to learn about myths from all around the world which inspired him to publish a book entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* in 1949. In the book Campbell explains the importance of narrative because it's the basic way in which human beings can understand the world (Wong 3). The monomyth that Campbell created is a structure that is common in many

heroic stories because they all use the twelve stages and for years countless stories have been successful using the same methodology (Campbell 1). In a monomyth, there are twelve stages that are separated into three acts. “Act One (separation) has a stage of Ordinary World, Call to Adventure (Inciting Incident), Refusal of the Call and Meeting with the Mentor. While in Act Two (descent and initiation) consist of Crossing the Threshold, Test, Allies & Enemies, Approach, Central ordeal (midpoint, death, and rebirth) and Reward. The Act 3 (return) consists of The Road Back, Resurrection (climax) and Return with Elixir” (Wong 3). In both Japanese anime series, they draw from the Hero’s journey outline which is the recipe for success. In 1985, Hollywood heavyweight George Lucas credited Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* with making the *Star Wars* films possible” (15). Kishimoto was influenced by these stages in the *Naruto* series and was successful in applying them for his work.

Hero and Foil

What makes this true is because Naruto Uzumaki is considered to be odd compared to everyone else due to him being a jinchuriki. Naruto has the nine-tailed fox inside of him which has made him have a rough childhood. Naruto’s call to adventure is his determination to become the next Hokage in his village and to be accepted by the people of Konoha. This is difficult for Naruto because many people blame him for the destruction and pain caused by the tailed beast when Naruto was only a newborn. After graduating from the academy, Naruto had many doubters which clouded his own self but he had a great circle of people who pushed him forward. The two most influential supernatural aid Naruto received was from Kakashi and Jiraiya. One of the first threshold Naruto faced was the Chunin exams where he learned the dangers in the ninja world such as injury and death. It is during Naruto’s first mission where he understands he is too weak and needs to grow stronger physically and mentally if he wants to become Hokage. He was

staring death in the face but luckily Sasuke and Kakashi were there to save him. He had many trials throughout the series against the villains of the series: Orochimaru, Itachi, Pain, Madara, and Kaguya. In the entire series, Naruto had a crush on Sakura but she never gave him a chance. Hinata was always hiding behind everyone cheering Naruto on from inside her and in the end, he realized Hinata was the one for him. When Sasuke leaves the village to pursue his own goals, Naruto changes his goal to rescue his friend but this becomes a rivalry that will last a lifetime. Their bond keeps them together but their days of doing missions together are over. There have been many times in the seasons in the series where Naruto feels lost and overwhelmed with everything in his life. Jiraiya, his parents, Kakashi, and his close friends were the ones who would lift his spirits. In the end, Naruto saves the world, becomes a world-wide hero, and marries the girl of his dreams with all his closest people in attendance, including the new Hokage: Kakashi sensei. The show ends with everyone at the wedding but what comes next is something we are all waiting to see: Naruto becoming Hokage.

In the Japanese anime series *Naruto* and *Naruto Shippuden*, Sasuke is what's known as the Foil character in the Hero's journey stage. However, some may claim that he is another hero that the series had since he was an influential piece in the story similar to Naruto. A foil character is necessary in a monomyth because it's one that goes through similar things as the hero but chooses a different path. Sasuke is odd from anyone else because he is the sole survivor of the Uchiha clan. His whole clan was wiped out by his older brother, who spared his younger brother. Sasuke's goal is to kill his older brother Itachi and obtain his revenge which is his only purpose in life. He doesn't tell anyone of this goal but it's clear to few people like the elders and Kakashi because they know what happened. Sasuke questions his own strength when he sees Naruto's development rapidly progressing. After his encounter with Itachi, Sasuke realizes that

he needs to seek power elsewhere because being in team seven has distracted him from his goal. The supernatural aid Sasuke had were Kakashi and Orochimaru. One of the thresholds Sasuke faced that was the turning point for him was against Naruto in the Valley of Death. This was the battle where he buried his memories with team seven and would never be the same Sasuke as before. The second threshold that changed Sasuke was after the fight with Itachi where he discovered the truth about the village and the Uchiha clan. Some of the many trials Sasuke had in his life were against Orochimaru, Danzo, Itachi, Kaguya and Naruto. Sasuke was never chasing females and many times shut Sakura's feelings down. He had many females crushing over him, but it was Sakura who would be the girl Sasuke would send messages through his crows in the end. Sasuke's goals would change to wanting to protect the village from the outside looking in and change the ninja world by teaching people about forgiveness thanks to his friend Naruto. Sasuke had help from Naruto, Orochimaru, and Itachi whenever he would feel lost. He went to the darkness because he preferred to be alone throughout the series. In the end, Sasuke was given a second chance at life for his crimes and had a new purpose which was to protect the hidden leaf from the outside, like his own police force. He was allowed to roam the world free and kept in touch with his friends, as well as with Sakura.

Naruto and Sasuke both have the traits to be the hero but in a monomyth there can only be one. What makes Naruto different from everyone is his physical and inner features. The physical features that make him unique is his yellow hair, the three slash on both cheeks, and the blue eyes. His inner traits that set him apart is the seal on his stomach, the tailed beast inside of him, and his sage mode ability. Sasuke adds the dynamic of a character that is jealous because he lacks some of the supernatural aid given to Naruto, as the hero in every storyline does, which adds to their rivalry. These two ninjas come from the Hidden Leaf Village which is where their

reincarnates are from, as well, which is purposely done as elements in a typical monomyth story. Both Naruto and Sasuke had their difficult times where they struggled with loneliness, skill development, mental challenges, being apprentices and struggling to achieve their goals which are all stages in a monomyth. Similar to George Lucas *Star Wars* where one was on the right path with the Jedi while the other went on a different path to the Sith, Naruto and Sasuke follow a similar route. This is the first stage in a Hero's journey which is the call to adventure. Naruto dreamed of becoming Hokage, which is equivalent to being a Jedi master, while Sasuke went astray looking for power wanting to avenge his entire family clan by killing his older brother, which was like turning to the Sith. Both characters became orphans but in different ways that led to become who they are. It was from the time these two were young boys that they realized their call to adventure.

Meeting the Mentor

An apprentice figure in the lives of the ninjas was a theme throughout the show which is a crucial element in a monomyth story. For Naruto it was Iruka, a guy who lost his parents due to what Naruto had inside of him but realized that it wasn't Naruto's fault. Iruka became a father figure in Naruto's life and always believed in Naruto. He seemed to always know how to cheer Naruto up when he was feeling down, even if it meant going to Ichiraku Ramen. There was a moment when Naruto wanted to give up but Iruka sensei reminded him that he is worth living. This was a refusal of the call moment when the hero doubts himself and his journey but Naruto is quickly reminded of his potential by his mentor. When Naruto asked Iruka to become the role of his father days before the marriage, it signified the importance of how he shaped Naruto's life. Jiraiya was the teacher who had the greatest impact on Naruto because of the wisdom, lessons and skills he learned under his wing. After Naruto was informed by his old mentor that the

Akatsuki organization is after him for the nine-tails fox, he is advised to stay in the village.

Jiraiya gives Naruto the option to stay hiding until their arrival in three years or go with him.

This moment made it clear that Jiraiya was the “wise old man” in this monomyth, which is the character that provides useful wisdom to the hero but dies eventually in the story. His death caused Naruto to have another refusal of the call moment because Naruto was seeing many friends die along with the mentor who guided him on the path towards his goal. Naruto’s spirit was broken and he decided he wouldn’t fight anymore. After much realization, Naruto chose to continue his journey to fulfill his mentor's dream of achieving peace in the ninja world.

Sasuke was more reserved growing up so it seemed only right that Kakashi became the person he had in his life to be his first mentor. Kakashi saw a lot of himself in Sasuke since Kakashi was a phenom as a kid much like Sasuke. Sasuke did not adhere to Kakashi’s warnings and words about going through with his revenge. He went on his own path without approval of Kakashi or anyone in his village. After teaching Sasuke the Chidori, Taijutsu, and improving the Sharingan, it was clear that there was nothing he could teach his student anymore. In search of more power, Sasuke had a second influential apprentice figure: Orochimaru. Orochimaru was the person who shaped Sasuke the most due to their similar traits. Sasuke always turned to him for his needs since Orochimaru seemed to always be the person who he can go to for answers. In the early stages of their relationship, Orochimaru was training Sasuke to use him as his ultimate vessel. Under Orochimaru’s wing, Sasuke learned how to control the curse mark, the summoning of snakes, and was able to learn to fight with a sword while mastering his visual prowess. Once Sasuke decided he learned everything from his master, Orochimaru moved forward with his devious plan which ended in Sasuke killing his mentor. Orochimaru survived through the curse mark seal and continued to aid Sasuke later in the show. Once Sasuke became too powerful for

him, Orochimaru decided to end his agenda against Sasuke where he became a wise person for Sasuke to turn to whenever he needed answers. After Itachi's death, Orochimaru helps Sasuke with answers regarding the Uchiha secrets, the Leaf village, and the village elders.

Every generation of ninja had their mentor guide them in the way of the ninja world and in life. There was always a connection down the road with ninjas that shared bonds along with their families. This was looked to appear coincidentally but it was done purposely for this series Hero's quest. It was not coincidental that Naruto's dad and Naruto would end up with the same mentor, Jiraiya, who was the person that promised Minato to be there for his son. Another moment to look at is how Sasuke ended up with Kakashi as a mentor, the same person that was best friends with Obito Uchiha who gave Kakashi his Sharingan eye. Minato was Kakashi, Obito, and Rin's sensei which were similar to team seven. The third Hokage was the sensei for Orochimaru, Jiraiya, and Tsunade. All of the other side characters were placed in the same teams, just like their parents back in their teenage years. In the fourth ninja war, all of the parents from the side characters fought the villains in their teams from their youth days with their children which was a moment that highlighted this phenomenon. It's clear that there is a fascinating connection and loop between all of the generations of ninjas that end up tied together by fate through the monomyth.

Crossing the Threshold

A theme that is used throughout the series signifying the monomyth stages is the element of competition because there are always two individuals that are competing against each other in order for them to become stronger. Team seven was assigned their first mission which was to protect the bridge builder and escort him to his village safely. This is known as crossing the threshold stage; the first real mission for team seven where they were unaware of the highly

dangerous, wanted ninjas lurking their way. Naruto and Sasuke challenged each other during the mission because Naruto didn't want to be weaker than his rival. This tense competition was needed to complete the mission, but more importantly uncovered the benefits from it. Another rivalry that resembles Naruto and Sasukes is Kakashi with Might Guy. Sakura and Ino have a rivalry of their own which brings the best out of the two. It's a key part of both series because every main character in the show has a rivalry with someone as they create ties with. As the ninjas move on to missions where they engage in enemies, these challenges are considered a stage known as the road of trials. In the road of trials, the ninja endures a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo to begin the transformation. The competitive nature of the ninjas is magnified when there are rivals or competitions. This was clear throughout both series because it produced greater strength for the main characters competing against one another. They are reminded of the human qualities that occur in real life. The ninjas can be related to another monomyth storyline, *Star Wars*, where the heroes are battling the Sith army. This can result in the ninjas giving up on meaningful things such as having normal lives. Being a ninja is something that every child in the series grows up wanting to be without knowing the sacrifices that come with it. It creates a competitive mindset from a young age for a dangerous life that awaits them.

Realism

The Japanese anime series focuses on the idea of maturity as a humanistic feature in a fictional world which is not done in most monomyth plots. Masashi Kishimoto found interesting ways to add these features in the series with the characters by changing their outfits or appearances. Kishimoto elaborates on the Hero's journey storyline by tweaking it into something more humane. Usually, monomyth storylines contain heroes that are two-dimensional but the

Naruto characters go through many realistic obstacles in the show. In season two, Sasuke abandoned his old blue outfit and was dressed in an all black outfit, signifying the tough training he had to endure with his sensei Kakashi in order to be ready for the playoff round of the Chunin exams. This is the belly of the whale stage where the characters go through a metamorphosis by changing into an improved individual. It was obvious that Sasuke felt like he had made progress in his quest to kill his older brother so he ditched the blue outfit that reminded him of his days as a weak boy in the academy. However, every time that Sasuke made a dent in his past and made progress towards his ultimate goal, he would always come up short or have to be saved, making him feel inferior inside. Naruto stuck with the same outfit for a longer period of time signifying he was still more immature than his rival. Naruto could even be seen as the little brother to Sasuke because of how childish he was during his missions with team seven. There had to be some meaning or symbolism why Masashi Kishimoto kept Naruto's outfit throughout the entire first series which could be because they wanted to keep his outgoing goofy personality to the younger viewers. During the first episode of *Naruto Shippuden*, Naruto is seen by the village with different clothes and looking more grown. The dramatic scenes of Naruto's arrival was met with a scene where Sakura was blushing by Naruto's maturity followed by Naruto showing his goofy side which was a relief because he still had his personality from the first series that everyone loved.

Another way the series demonstrates realism is through human made equipment and weapons. There are many times throughout each season when the characters only carry a limited amount of weapons which is ironic in a fictional story. Iruka was the first main character that was wounded by one of these tools in season one by the demon wind shuriken; a massive, four-bladed shuriken. Season one provided the best use for these ninja tools because of the

combination attacks and the level being low amongst the characters. It's incredible how ineffective these weapons become as the seasons progress because of how strong everyone becomes but they are still used throughout the entire show. Another point to mention is the amount of ninja tools aren't endless as the ninjas seem to run out of them. The only ninja that truly has an endless supply of tools is Tenten because she is able to summon them at will through her scrolls. The style and shape of the tools appear to be the same in every village displayed in the show. Only the weakest or inexperienced ninjas have died by direct hits to ninja weapons since the stronger ones can easily dodge them. In season 13 of *Naruto Shippuden*, many weapons were being thrown simultaneously as battles took place due to the war.

Taijutsu is a basic martial art that requires no use of magical elements so a ninja is limited to only brute force. The series uses realistic fighting styles such as Taijutsu in this fantasy series for the purpose of making this monomyth different from others. In season one, Sasuke and team seven were getting ready for their first Chunin exams when Rock Lee confronted them. He challenges Sasuke to test his own abilities because he wants to see how strong he is at the moment. This is where Taijutsu is first introduced in the show because Rock Lee only uses martial arts combat. His talented martial arts was impressive as he gave Sasuke a beating leaving him helpless. Rock Lee displayed great speed and strength that made Sasuke look like a novice ninja, even with his magical powers. There aren't many superior Taijutsu ninjas in the show because it is a method that is usually ineffective against the unrealistic powers of the other fighting styles but Rock Lee is an example of how Taijutsu is still a fighting style that can be up to par with the rest of the characters. His sensei, Might Guy, is one of the best at Taijutsu and taught Lee everything he knows. Ironically, Taijutsu has a move called the eight inner gates which is a forbidden jutsu that enhances the user's magical elements. This is known to be the

most ferocious Taijutsu attack because it makes the caster stronger than the Hokage or Sages. The jutsu is temporary and can make the caster die if they unlock all eight gates. In *Naruto Shippuden*, all of the Taijutsu users were put in battle at the fourth great ninja war. It came to a shock to see one of the best Taijutsu ninja killed in the war. Neji was a beloved character and many felt this to be a disappointment for his development in the show. Neji dying could have brought Naruto closer to Hinata but it was definitely a heart break to everyone.

Throughout the series, there were constant flashbacks of characters in *Naruto* of their past in order to highlight key events or moments. These moments when the characters go back in time help build nuance to the characters, an arc of development. The ninjas had flashbacks of the past often, especially when faced with death in a battle. This is important because it explains the time-line of aging along with details of another humanistic quality such as remembering. In episode 451, Sasuke's older brother Itachi's life is explained in further detail. Itachi would have flashbacks to remember his loved ones in order to continue fighting. Without these memories, many ninjas, like Itachi, wouldn't have the added motivation to move forward. For Naruto, his parent's life was explained in episode 168 in the *Naruto Shippuden* series. More details of his parents' life were told later on and that led to Naruto being alone like Sasuke as childrens but both ended up in different paths as they got older. *Naruto* does not explain much of the past lives of the characters whereas in *Naruto Shippuden* they did. Many questions from the original series were finally answered in the Shippuden. The flashbacks were crucial because it made the viewer feel more connected with the characters. The viewers were able to sympathize with the characters and it made sense why they did the things they did growing up.

On the other hand, Naruto was alone from the time he was born making him an orphan. Naruto was a boy who was last in absolutely everything, had no talents, and was always doing

pranks on everyone in the village with no remorse because he had no parents. His curiosity and gullible nature made him an easy target for many people who wanted to take advantage of him for personal gain. This was made aware in the first episode of *Naruto* when Mizuki wanted a scroll for forbidden jutsu and used Naruto to obtain it. An example when flashback is used with Naruto is during the fight with Sasuke when he remembers all the memories with his friend and team seven. Naruto holds onto those memories because he developed human qualities like emotional attachment and the feeling of having a brother which is something he got with Sasuke. It's because of these realistic moments that Naruto goes to great lengths for his friend when others would've left him alone. A typical monomyth would not contain these concepts so this makes the series unique.

Reward

The ninja world in *Naruto* is one of magical realism and concepts that require imagination. The effects of using magical realism to narrate real concepts is about using those magical abilities in order for the hero to conquer his quest. Magical realism is needed for Naruto to become the hero and successfully achieve his goals in the show. Without it, Naruto would not be able to go through the stages in the monomyth and the plot would fail. Throughout his journey, Naruto is acquiring new skills and powers that he will use to defeat his enemies later in the show. He learns the Rasengan, a powerful attack that his father learned when he was alive. By the time the series reached its climax, Naruto became so strong that his power rivaled that of the sage of six paths. Every one of Naruto's friends train to become stronger by preparing themselves for the fourth ninja war. The characters become stronger with every battle and mission similar to the *Dragon Ball Z* anime where the fighters become more powerful after every fight.

The goal for Naruto is to acquire powerful jutsu through training from his master and self. This is an element in a Hero's journey called atonement with the father. The importance of ninja jutsu is echoed throughout every season in *Naruto* and *Naruto Shippuden*. Ninja tools are weapons that help aid them in their missions and everyday lives. Throughout the series, the importance of these abilities is highlighted because the ninjas need to go past rigorous training and sacrifice to gain the new powers. Jutsu is a magical skill that requires energy from within along with hand signs to bring it to life. He goes through this stage with Jaraiya, the toad sage, and Kurama. Once Naruto masters the skills that are being taught to him, he will reach the stage called the ultimate boon. Naruto was able to reach this stage once he mastered the Rasengan, Sage jutsu, Summoning jutsu, and controlled the powers of his Jinchuriki. Sasuke went through a similar path as well. The different ways that the series use these stages of a monomyth will be further explained with several characters to explain this.

Genjutsu is a special kind of fighting style because it uses illusions and mind games as a weapon. Ninjas that use this style of fighting effectively can put their opponents in a trance that can injure them internally, while making them vulnerable for physical attacks. Sasuke and the Uchiha clan were highly skillful at this style of attack due to their visual prowess. Itachi Uchiha was a master at this style of jutsu thanks to his advanced Sharingan at such a young age. In season two of *Naruto*, Itachi uses his Tsukuyomi technique on Kakashi which is an extremely high level Genjutsu. One of the secrets of acquiring a more advanced Sharingan is by killing their best friend. Itachi gained more power from the death of his friend Shisui Uchiha and obtaining his friend's eye. Shisui Uchiha was a ninja who possessed powerful Genjutsu techniques like the Kotoamatsukami. This is a mind-controlling jutsu where the victim has no idea they are under the spell. It's a Genjutsu where the user enters the mind of an individual and

manipulates them by giving them false experiences, while the victim believes they are doing things of their own free will. After learning this, Sasuke wanted to kill Naruto in order to have the power he desired. Sasuke was able to unlock his hidden powers by killing his brother Itachi, a goal he had since the beginning of the show. Kaguya is the most powerful Genjutsu user because she possesses the Rinne-Sharingan which allows her to use the Infinite Tsukuyomi. This is considered to be the most powerful Genjutsu because it traps the entire world in a mind-controlling spell for eternity. The people who are trapped in this jutsu will live a life that they always wanted but they will not be aware they are under this jutsu. This style of fighting was crucial for Sasuke to fulfill his role as a foil character.

Ninjutsu is the most used style of fighting because it involves using chakra which is internal energy with hand signals to perform attacks or defensive moves. This was a style of fighting that was vital for Naruto to complete his journey. Depending on the ninjas origins and family heritage will be the factor in what type of jutsu they use. For example, Sasuke is part of the Uchiha clan so because of his family culture, Sasuke is able to use fire style ninjutsu. Naruto is a wind style ninja so he can use wind style jutsu like the Rasen shuriken move that he used to defeat many of his enemies. In the first series, Naruto and his friends are new to the ninja world so they are discovering their style and ninjutsu attacks. Naruto learned how to perform the shadow clone jutsu which has become his signature move while Sasuke was a master at the Fireball jutsu and Chidori. Naruto wanted to have an edge over Sasuke so he picked up the Rasengan. These were the main jutsu that they performed in the first series. During the sequel, Naruto and Sasuke had much more powerful ninjutsu moves in their arsenal. There was the Susano from Sasuke and the ability to use sage mode for Naruto. Naruto Shippuden also had an advanced version of the characters original ninjutsu moves. In season three of *Naruto*, Naruto

and Sasuke fought at the Final Valley which was the first time they engaged in battle. This was a test of both of their strengths with no one to stop them. Naruto unleashed his nine-tails fox chakra while Sasuke released the curse mark. Both ninjas displayed all of their ninjutsu tricks out of the bag which was a thrilling experience for the viewers. It was only fitting for the sequel to do a final battle at the exact same location. *Naruto Shippuden* gave the viewers what seemed like deja-vu from the first time the two fought, only this battle was even better. Naruto and Sasuke battled having the Mangekyou Sharingan along with the Rinnegan in Sasuke's arsenal. On top of that, Sasuke had the power of the Amaterasu and the Susano. His power rivaled that of the Hokages or Sannin which was half of the reason the fight would live up to the hype. Naruto's ninjutsu was just as impressive because of his summoning jutsu, sage mode, the complete control of the nine-tails power, Rasen-shuriken, and the power of the sage of six paths.

Another skill in *Naruto* that has proven to be feared because of unique family heirlooms is called Kekkei genkai, which is a special ability that is passed down from generation to generation. Many families were hunted down and murdered because of the fear and danger that these abilities made people feel. The main characters that possessed a Kekkei genkai were Sasuke, Haku, Negi, Hinata, Kimimaru, Hashirama, and Madara Uchiha. Kekkei genkai abilities are some of the most feared because of their tremendous power like the Sharingan, Byakugan, and Rinnegan. This was introduced early on in *Naruto* during the encounter with Zabuza and Haku. Haku explained to everyone the term because of her Kekkei genkai ability to manipulate ice. Not many enemy shinobi with Kekkei genkai were in the first series but *Naruto Shippuden* proved to have many more of these powerful Kekkei genkai ninjas. The most feared of all, Madara Uchiha, made an appearance in the sequel with the help of Obito. He was the most powerful Uchiha and wielded the Sharingan along with the Rinnegan.

Although Naruto does not have a Kekkei genkai like Sasuke, he has another feared power that is known as a tailed beast. This makes Naruto a jinchuriki and gives him an edge over Sasuke because he gets chakra from this beast as well as his own. Jinchuriki are a massive support to ninjas because of the overwhelming power it contains. For villages or nations, they see these beasts as a potential military weapon so they try to take them. In *Naruto*, Sasuke realizes this in this first series so he decides to do something about it because knowing that his rival, who was recently inferior to him, is stronger than him enrages Sasuke. Another reason is the fact that he can't complete his revenge knowing he can't even beat Naruto so Sasuke becomes aware he has no chance against Itachi during that point in the show. In order to obtain more power, Sasuke seeks out Orochimaru who gives him the curse mark. In season five of *Naruto*, Naruto and Sasuke have their long awaited battle without interruptions where we see first hand the power of the curse mark.

Some characters in the show have become so intrigued by this fact that they go so far as to try to create new jutsus' or forbidden ones. Forbidden jutsu are abilities that the village, nation, or entire ninja world have banned their people from using because of ethical or safety reasons. In the first series, forbidden jutsu was first shown when Orochimaru used the reincarnation jutsu that he used against the third Hokage to bring back the dead into the living. Once this jutsu is activated, Orochimaru can use these dead beings to do anything he says with the only catch being that the caster needs to sacrifice someone to bring them back temporarily. This kind of forbidden jutsu is banned obviously due to ethical reasons because bringing back people from the dead to do the casters bidding goes against any ninja villages beliefs. An example of a forbidden jutsu that is banned for danger hazards alone is the Eight Inner Gates that was used by Rock Lee and Might Guy. The Eight Inner Gates is dangerous because of the

massive wear and tear it does to the user including broken bones that can lead to death.

Orochimaru is a prime example of a ninja that wants to create new jutsu because of his creativity and curiosity. A jutsu that was created by him was the Living Corpse Reincarnation Jutsu which allows him to transfer his soul to another body in order to keep him young thus achieving eternal youth. In the second series, Kabuto was able to use the reincarnation jutsu to bring back hundreds of dead people during the fourth ninja war. This was done at a much greater level to show the advanced power that Kabuto has gained throughout the years.

Apotheosis Stage

In *Naruto*, the anime begins with season one telling a brief overview of past events including when Naruto was a baby. The importance of time is significant in both series to highlight the progression of the story. Age is an important element in the show because it signifies the passage of time and life passing by. It's crucial to compare the actions between the youth and older generations because they all followed the same path in the Hero's Journey. It was revealed in *Naruto Shippuden* that Naruto and Sasuke are actually reincarnation of Asura and Indra. This recurring phenomenon was made clear to Naruto and Sasuke while fighting in the fourth ninja war which comes as a shock, since the sage of six paths told them. It's a repeated pattern that has been going on since the day Asura and Indra were born which meant every generation in the series were destined to have a monomyth. This information made Naruto realize that he needs to break the cycle in order to create peace in the world. Sasuke has changed because he doesn't want to destroy the hidden leaf village, he wants to become Hokage. The sage of six paths, father of Asura and Indra, confirmed it to them and mentioned that this has been going on since his two sons' deaths. The first time this phenomena occurred was with Hashirama and Madara, where both started off similar to Naruto and Sasuke because they were friends that

went on to become rivals due to conflicts of interest. But Naruto and Sasuke were able to change fate by not fighting until the end of their lives. They were both able to come together as best friends and forge their own paths in the ninja world by creating peace and returning home.

Unaware of the recurring cycle in the ninja world, Naruto attends a school where he meets other kids his age that he will grow up with. Every season is an event in the lives of Naruto and Sasuke as they get older that was similar to their previous reincarnates. After season three, Naruto starts acting more mature because of his new responsibilities under team seven. It was in Naruto Shippuden where everyone has grown up to be three years older so age was evident once again. Many of the older characters would reminisce of their childhood or younger selves which was an obvious sign of the effects of aging in the series. Just like in the real world, the older generation of ninjas were making way for the younger generation and the cycle never ends. Orochimaru challenged the idea of aging in the series by working for a jutsu to make him immortal while maintaining his youth. He did this by transferring his soul to a new vessel after a period of time when the old vessel becomes worn out. Its obvious age is one of the key factors in the show because of the constant references within the characters. The third Hokage was a character who bears the title of the strongest ninja in the village but has been nerfed due to old age. Many of the younger characters like Naruto don't take him seriously which is the opposite for the older characters because they were aware of the Hokage's strength when he was young. The children in the show were worried about passing the academy and moving up the ranks in the ninja world. The elders have the ultimate power to make decisions that result in who lives and who dies. Their decisions have had many terrible future outcomes like the Uchiha genocide. These decisions were all done in accordance with the cycle of the ninja world and Kaguya influencing such events through Madara and Obito.

Naruto and Sasuke were only twelve when the original series started and they showed many signs of immaturity, especially Naruto. Since Naruto was a little boy, he was always getting in trouble and getting the worst grades in school. Nobody believed in Naruto because the people of the village only knew him as the kid with the nine tailed fox. Many villagers called him rude names like monster, the beast, nine tails, and those are just to name a few. Since Naruto was a newborn, he became an orphan due to his parents dying because of the nine tails attack on the village. In order to save the village and their son, they sealed the beast away in Naruto. Twelve years later, many people are left without loved ones or hear rumors of that dreadful day so they direct those feelings onto Naruto since he has the beast inside him. What everyone in the village except only a select few higher up ninjas know is that Naruto is the son of the fourth Hokage and Kushina Uzumaki. This lack of knowledge created distrust and fear whenever the people of the Hidden Leaf saw Naruto. Not having a family telling Naruto what to do or care about him is what makes him go out into the world for attention. Everyone gets mad and starts yelling at him like what parents do for their own children. Naruto does it because at the end of the day, no parent will go check up on him or walk home with him.

As Naruto got older, he met guys such as Iruka sensei and Kakashi who started to care for him. In the first series, Iruka was harsh on Naruto in a fatherly way and would treat him to ramen. Kakashi was getting a tour of Naruto's home to better understand him as anyone who is interested in their students would be. They became like the father figures he never had up until this point and guided him to the right path. Naruto met a person later on in the show who made his progress accelerate and made that big jump. Jiraiya was a guy who was the fourth hokage's sensei so he had a really good relationship with Naruto's father. After the hokage's death, Jiraiya stepped away from that role of being like a godfather but after meeting Naruto as a young

teenager, he got really close to him again. In *Naruto Shippuden*, Naruto has three important figures in his life to guide him in the right direction and away from making the wrong path in life. However, the death of Jiraiya was the biggest loss he had ever experienced and he was in a state of depression. In the first series, Naruto is a young boy who has not experienced any tragic loss in his life as a teenager. The second series teaches Naruto the idea that ninjas will experience terrible things as they get older. It's the reality that he learned but quickly had to switch back on because the enemies would not wait for anyone. Along the way as a shinobi, Naruto heard from many different ninjas about pain and how it changed them to do terrible things. It's for those reasons that Naruto wants to change the world to a world without hate or vengeance. That kind of world sounds ridiculous to everyone that Naruto has told but afterwards, they believe he is the only one capable of achieving an impossible goal. Naruto has grown up to become a ninja who has made the impossible look possible and turned every doubter into a believer.

Sasuke was a person that was able to witness everything that he lost as a child. Unlike Naruto, Sasuke was born into a family with an older brother who loved him more than his entire clan. Sasuke got to experience bonds with members of his clan that were as tight as a chain. In addition, Sasuke had the best training partner a child could have, Itachi Uchiha. Being part of the Uchiha clan was enough pressure for even the most talented ninja's but Sasuke was the younger brother of a phenom known to the village as Itachi. Itachi was moving up the ninja ranks in record breaking time being the youngest Anbu member in the village. So for Sasuke, he needed to prove to everyone, including his parents, that he is worth something too. In episode 130 of the original series, Sasuke tells his dad, Fugaku, to watch him perform the Fire style fireball jutsu in order to get some kind of approval from him. Fugaku was a man who was not easily impressed but, like others, was in complete awe of Itachi's talents and abilities. On the other hand, Sasuke

was someone who Fugaku paid little attention to because, in Sasuke's eyes, he only cared about his older brother. After working so hard on this jutsu, which was the foundation of his clan because of the fire emblem on the Uchiha's crest, he finally had a chance to even make his dad blink. After performing an amazing fireball jutsu that was a blast of the shape of a meteorite and could light up an entire village, it did not seem to impress his father since he turned and looked away. Disappointed by the reaction of his dad and feeling hopeless, Fugaku stopped and said the three words that Sasuke could only dream of. That's right, he said, "That's my boy." Only a few months passed and the frightening day occurred when Sasuke was awake to see his entire clan murdered by the one person he loved most. His brother. After that day, Sasuke was found alone in the Uchiha neighborhood by the village leaders and he had to live his life as a sole survivor of the Uchiha clan. Although these two characters' narratives are different from each other, they are still strangely similar and they end up experiencing similar feelings.

Ordeal

The ninja world is a dangerous place to live in especially for female ninjas because of the difference in power that they face. In the series, many female ninjas were used in the storyline for medical and sacrificial purposes. Only a select few were given incredible strength such as Tsunade because she is known to be one of the legendary Sannin who became Hokage later in the Naruto series. The second female is Mei Terumi who is the fifth Mizukage which earned her respect from the world leaders. Other than these two, the female ninjas are not taken seriously because of their feminism features. In season one of the original Naruto, Sakura and Ino were learning about flowers and girly things which are things that symbolize the female ninja. The girls were gossiping and cared about who their crushes were, not about getting stronger or training. In order for a female ninja to be on the same level of the male ninja, these females must

have extraordinary powers combined with a personality different from regular girls. When Sakura and Ino chopped their hairs off in battle, it was a sign that they were not girls anymore. The long hair they both had meant they still had their innocence and female features. With their hair being cut, the two had become true ninjas that can handle their own in any situation that comes their way. Females need to eliminate part of what makes them female, which is the case in *Naruto*. Females will never be taken seriously unless they are tough or go through a traumatizing event that scars them forever just to be on equal terms with men.

The majority of female ninjas were used in the series for minor roles in the monomyth plot, along with commonly known stereotypes. During the fight against Sasori of the Akatsuki, Granny Chiyo and Sakura played a major role in defeating this powerful foe. Granny Chiyo was mentoring Sakura during the fight as if they had years of experience being teacher and student. This was evidence that Granny Chiyo would eventually die since she was a wise old lady that was important because of her ties with Sasori. After defeating the member of the Akatsuki, Granny Chiyo survived but her role will be used further in the show as the savior of the hero. Gaara passed away so in order to bring him back to life, Granny Chiyo sacrificed herself using her special ability. Naruto's mother was another female who had to sacrifice herself in order for the hero to survive. The series doesn't reveal much of her past other than stereotypical female duties such as being a housewife. The only significant role the show gives this character is giving up her life so that Naruto can live on.

In team seven, Naruto and Sasuke are paired up with a female that is not like any other. Sakura has proven time and time again that she is worthy of being part of their team. Yet, she constantly had to prove herself to everyone, including herself, because of how fast the other two were getting stronger. In her battles along her journey like against the sound ninja, battling

against Ino, Sasori, and all the others, Sakura has shown to everyone what a great ninja she is despite being labeled as a female. Along with her excellent chakra control and brute strength, she has learned the abilities of healing thanks to Tsunade, one of the legendary Sannin. Tsunade was like Sakura because of their unique brute strength that could kill even the mightiest ninjas at contact with their blows. The legendary Sannin were a group of leaf ninjas that were similar to team seven. The interesting thing about them is that they all trained with a member of team seven and the personalities are quite similar to one another. Tsunade became Sakura's master, Jaraiya became Naruto's sensei, and Orochimaru became Sasuke's sensei. What made the legendary Sannin known throughout the ninja world was because of their fight with Hanzo of the Salamander in the Village Hidden in the Rain. For Sakura, learning everything she can from Tsunade, who became Hokage, was just what she needed to boost her confidence. Many times, she felt she would slow the group down because she was only a female who offered nothing, but she was beginning to see the light in her situation.

There are other female ninjas that could have given up the shinobi life but never gave up. Ino and Tenten are both similar to Sakura because they both are from the Hidden Leaf who needed to find their place in the ninja world. Ino was always the stronger one growing up and someone who Sasura looked up to even though they are the same age. Ino was a child who had a lot of confidence and her beauty backed it up. After the Chunin Exams, it seemed as though Sakura was developing at higher speeds than Ino so she let go of her pride and asked Sakura to be her teacher for healing skills. That was the hardest thing Ino ever had to face. Tenten was a kunoichi who always relied on her skills because it got her through any challenge. However, as the missions got tougher, she needed to find ways to get stronger too. Thanks to her squad leader Might Guy, she was able to get her confidence back and learn new abilities. Temari is a kunoichi

from the Hidden Sand village which is a place where every ninja is extremely talented and vicious. So to be a female ninja in that kind of environment is not an easy task and many end up not being cut out for it. Temari is the sister of feared ninja Gaara of the desert and the puppet master Kankuro so she was just as fierce as them if not more. In every fight, it seemed like Temari was always in control whether it was as a foe of the Hidden Leaf or as friends. Temari is a kunoichi that represents them very well because she can hold her own against any shinobi. Tsunade is one of the three legendary Sannin so being a female in this group has great significance. She was a kunoichi that had the third Hokage as her sensei alongside Orochimaru and Jaraiya. Little is said about her entire childhood in the series but they do focus on her present with few details of her past. However, no one can deny her enormous power and experience like when she goes to battle against Orochimaru in episode 96. There was no denying her power alongside her other former teammates who were male ninjas proving that a woman can be an elite shinobi.

Supernatural Aid

In the Naruto series, the main characters and villains were protected based on their role in the monomyth. Some characters changed their personalities as the seasons went on because of what the series needed to contribute to the storyline. This was true for Itachi because after his death, he was revived by the reanimation jutsu where he was fighting alongside Sasuke. Unlike real life events, mostly every ninja had something happen to them in order for them to become a certain way. These things could come from murders, conversations, politics, or war. Naruto always had a way of changing people through conversation which is the charismatic trait he had as the hero. He was able to change Zabuza, Pain, Sasuke, and the Raikage which are some of the most hard headed people in the series. They are characters whose personalities come mainly

from traumatizing events. After killing his brother Itachi, Sasuke received news from Obito about the truth of why his brother did the things he did. His act of murder led him to look for answers from the elders which is similar to the hero but doing it in a distinct way. What's important to note in the *Naruto* series is the level of insanity going on with several of the characters. Their pursuit to take out thousands of lives including women and children is ridiculous. In season 22 of *Naruto Shippuden*, a character in the show was making people from different villages explode. This gave the focus to Sasuke because he was there to solve this mystery without team seven. Sasuke wanted to put an end to these explosions thus explaining his transformation as a ninja back on the good side.

Naruto, being the main character in the show, is given supernatural aid for the purpose of the storyline. Supernatural aid (plot armor) is when a main character in the show is able to survive dangerous situations in order for the plot of the show to go on. This is a fiction phenomenon that happens all the time in fictional shows. Naruto's personality type is inquisitive but airheaded, energetic, impulsive, foolish and idealistic. Naruto thrives in making new connections and it comes off so naturally that he does it without knowing it. His traits are similar to the hero's from other anime shows such as Goku from *Dragon Ball Z*, Yugi from *Yu-Gi-Oh*, and Luffy from *One Piece*. The traits from these characters always make them more enjoyable to watch and there seems to be similar foil characters in every anime show too. During the many fights Naruto endured, he was on the verge of death countless times but there was always something to save him. This perfect timing situation is always done in a dramatic way to bring excitement, knowing that without the hero of the series there would be no way of finishing it.

Sasuke is more reserved and keeps everything to himself which are traits that many foil characters contain. He shares his thoughts and feelings to very few people like Kakashi, Naruto,

Sakura, and his older brother. His personality type is an intuitive thinking and judging person. These people are aloof, calculating, and cautious which is a perfect way to describe Sasuke. To many people looking at Sasuke, they believe he is a cocky, self-centered, egocentric, and overly confident ninja. Other foil characters that are almost identical to Sasuke are Vegeta from Dragon Ball Z, Kaiba from YuGiOh, and Zoro from One Piece. However, due to this, many people choose not to follow a person like that so it becomes a huge blow for Sasuke in his quest to become Hokage. Even though most people wouldn't follow a guy like Sasuke, he still managed to acquire loyal members throughout the series even after he left the Hidden Leaf as a rogue ninja. Itachi would have killed Sasuke whenever he wanted to but kept him alive because secretly he cared for his little brother. That idea never crossed Sasuke's mind until after he killed his older brother but that wasn't the only reason he stayed alive throughout the series. Being a foil character is almost equivalent to being a hero because these people can't die for the sake of the monomyth.

Return to the Elixir

It's important to analyze the female goddess character in this monomyth who was Hinata, a shy, timid, soft-spoken ninja who was on team Kurenai along with Kiba, his pet Akamaru, and Shino. Hinata was born in the famous Hyuga clan that was known throughout the ninja world for their Kekkei genkai. It was the Byakugan and this special visual prowess gave fear to many people who faced it. Hinata was cursed by being born a few seconds earlier than Negi making her the heir to the clan. This meant that she was the preferred child and Negi was simply her guardian. Many people questioned the decision because she was a female who wasn't as strong as her sparring partner and cousin Negi. Ignoring all those who doubted her including Negi, she kept going and with Naruto giving her the extra encouragement, she became an important piece

in the Fourth Great Ninja World. In season one, Hinata gets to show everyone her power when she battles her cousin Neji. Here is when the series tells her story growing up with Neji and the family drama with the Hyugas. Hinata never wanted to be the heir to the clan because that title forced her to become a fighter, which is something she does not enjoy. Since Hinata was a little girl, she knew that Neji was stronger and a better fit for the heir but due to family rules, they could not switch roles. Hinata's father did not care for Hinata and her younger sister because he would make them fight for his own ambitions. Her mom died when she was only a little girl but no one truly knows how that happened. Hinata had extreme pressure to make her clan proud which was mentally draining for her. When her father finally decided she was too weak to be the heir to the Hyugas, they made her younger sister be the next heir. Hinata was able to collect these memories and obtain energy due to Naruto cheering her on. After remembering all of these memories from the past and facing Neji in the Chunin Exams, it gave Hinata the strength to fight on. It was an admirable fight from Hinata because she kept fighting until the very end instead of giving up which changed the way Naruto felt about her. In *Naruto Shippuden*, Hinata had gained more confidence but was still the same timid girl. She finally found the courage to speak to Naruto which is something she could never do in the first series. Similar to Naruto cheering her on, Hinata became the source for Naruto's energy as he was on the verge of death against Pain. Naruto witnessed Pain hurt Hinata which triggered his Jinchuriki powers. This was an event typical in a monomyth which is when all seems lost and the villain has all the advantage, ready to kill the hero. After gaining power from out of nowhere, Naruto now has the advantage and is victorious through strength from the goddess. It's in this event that Naruto gains knowledge from his father as a spirit in his mind that was unlocked through the Jinchuriki power.

Hinata became a key figure in Naruto's life as she would fight many battles with Naruto against Pain and in the Fourth Great Ninja War. She became a fan favorite to many and was the important female in a monomyth story. Throughout both series, Hinata was always supporting Naruto and was the only one who believed in him when nobody else did. According to Wong's article, "After going through all the challenges, suffering and resurrection at the point of death, the heroes return to their starting point" (Wong 8). It's assumed that Naruto will have sexual relations with Hinata which means they will have kids. This ending to the story is a clear indication of the theory presented. Naruto ultimately completed his journey after going through most of the stages in a monomyth. He returned home having learned many lessons and new powers which helped him overcome any obstacle. His transformation was clear in the end as he looked forward to becoming Hokage and starting his new life with Hinata. He appears older and with different clothes which resembles the last version of his look in the series. Naruto and Sasuke were able to change fate by not fighting until the end of their lives. They were both able to come together as best friends and forge their own paths in the ninja world by creating peace and returning home. Naruto was able to return home after going through all the challenges, suffering, and on the verge of dying multiple times. Naruto and his friends' finally were able to go back to the Village Hidden in the Leaves. In the end, Naruto married Hinata which means he has completed his journey with all his friends attending the wedding.

Conclusion

Now that this paper has explained most of the twelve monomyth stages within the series, another theological idea to process is how all of this can rationalize a person's way of life. Some fans may identify more with Naruto while others may feel a deeper connection with Sasuke. Naruto came from having nothing to reach the top which is something that people strive to be in

the real world. Although it is safe to assume people in the real world don't have supernatural aid like Naruto did, people can reach heights similar to Naruto coming from humble backgrounds. "For us, the value of doing this was to foreground the question of identity and its resolution that we all face—thus connecting our project to what Norman Holland would consider valuable psychoanalysis, psychoanalysis that helps readers and critics to become more self-reflexive, to know ourselves better" (Butchart 17). There are many other characters with their own distinct personality in the show to provide a further reach to everyone. Naruto is a goofy character that starts to take his training seriously as he gets older and has more success. However, he is impatient and childish when it comes to doing the stuff that involves more time to get done. Naruto has proven to his friends and followers that he cares about them and will fight for them no matter what. He has a certain charisma that makes people believe in him and inspires them about his or their own goals in life. This charisma that he has is so great that he was able to befriend the nine tailed fox and all the other tailed beasts. He constantly chases after Sakura who has zero interest in him but many fans were wondering if she would become the goddess in the monomyth concept but that was disregarded in the ending of the series. Itachi is an interesting character to analyze because many fans confirm that he is their favorite character. His loyalty to the village and his love for Sasuke by always keeping him safe are traits that people respect. This may pose a question that those who feel this way of Itachi might do something like he did if they were given orders to do so.

So what makes *Naruto* and *Naruto: Shippuden* a compelling Hero's Quest story? Anime's popularity across the entire world has grown highly thanks to the *Naruto* series. The twelve stages of the Hero's Journey is a traditional story-telling principle for anime. The narrative structure for *Naruto* and *Naruto: Shippuden* used the same stages and provided excitement for

the viewers. Kishimoto used his own unique humanistic elements in his series that made his monomyth one of the best. *Naruto* has been a massive part of many people's lives and has influenced those people to find themselves. Anime shows have taught its viewers valuable life lessons that can be applied in real life. The monomyth concept is undoubtedly a positive asset for individuals, especially the youth who need guidance and a pathway to personal growth. For some, *Naruto* was the support they needed but for others it may be a different anime show using the same monomyth guideline. The series describes a dynamic, fictional reality that is universal. In this Hero's journey, different characterizations were analyzed mainly between *Naruto* and *Sasuke*, along with other characters, to further intensify the argument. In addition, *Naruto* and *Sasuke* demonstrated growth in different human qualities in the fictional series that was highly attractive to a worldwide audience. The viewers saw the impacts in aging, skill sets, maturation, sexism, and different personalities which are real life phenomena. Towards the end of the show, many of the characters would reflect on the things they did in the past. As the characters got older, they understood their meaning in life and found a purpose to keep on going after all the hectic situations and battles. *Naruto* and *Sasuke* settled their differences and even though they were far apart, their bond kept them together in spirit. Joseph Campbell's monomyth in the *Naruto* series had its audience on an emotional rollercoaster. The story-line was made possible through Campbell's concept throughout the show. In this comparative essay, the *Naruto* series were analyzed to highlight the magnitude of the shows' Hero's journey. This paper was not trying to convince the readers to watch or give bias towards *Naruto* and *Naruto Shippuden*, rather view different aspects of the show's dynamics in relation to the basic patterns found in the stages of the Hero's Journey. This paper could be beneficial for an anime script writer based on the methods needed to produce a successful and attractive show.

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