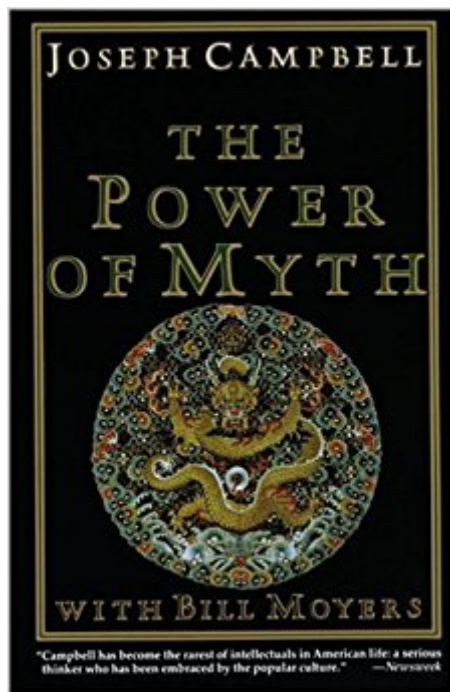


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# The Power Of Myth



## Synopsis

The national bestseller, now available in a non-illustrated, standard format paperback edition. The Power of Myth launched an extraordinary resurgence of interest in Joseph Campbell and his work. A preeminent scholar, writer, and teacher, he has had a profound influence on millions of people—including Star Wars creator George Lucas. To Campbell, mythology was the song of the universe, the music of the spheres. • With Bill Moyers, one of America's most prominent journalists, as his thoughtful and engaging interviewer, The Power of Myth touches on subjects from modern marriage to virgin births, from Jesus to John Lennon, offering a brilliant combination of intelligence and wit. This extraordinary book reveals how the themes and symbols of ancient narratives continue to bring meaning to birth, death, love, and war. From stories of the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece and Rome to traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity, a broad array of themes are considered that together identify the universality of human experience across time and culture. An impeccable match of interviewer and subject, a timeless distillation of Campbell's work, The Power of Myth continues to exert a profound influence on our culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Among his many gifts, Joseph Campbell's most impressive was the unique ability to take a contemporary situation, such as the murder and funeral of President John F. Kennedy, and help us understand its impact in the context of ancient mythology. Herein lies the power of The Power of Myth, showing how humans are apt to create and live out the themes of mythology. Based on a

six-part PBS television series hosted by Bill Moyers, this classic is especially compelling because of its engaging question-and-answer format, creating an easy, conversational approach to complicated and esoteric topics. For example, when discussing the mythology of heroes, Campbell and Moyers smoothly segue from the Sumerian sky goddess Inanna to Star Wars' mercenary-turned-hero, Han Solo. Most impressive is Campbell's encyclopedic knowledge of myths, demonstrated in his ability to recall the details and archetypes of almost any story, from any point in history, and translate it into a lesson for spiritual living in the here and now. --Gail Hudson

"The symbols of mythology and legend are all around us, embedded in the fabric of our daily lives, and the Moyers-Campbell dialogues are a welcome guide to recognizing and understanding their meanings." -- Cincinnati Post.

This book (more accurately, interview) provides an excellent summary of Campbell's work, and his enlightening perspective. Understanding religious metaphors and motifs as both pertinent and meaningful myths is essential to escaping the false dichotomy of "science vs. religion."

I had always heard the well-known phrase "Follow your Bliss" ...and learned it was attributed to Joseph Campbell. However, until I read this book and discussed it with my book group I wasn't fully aware of the meaning. I would recommend reading this book to gain insight into many of the world's religions and myths and most especially, what I came away with, was how interconnected we all are with each other. I've always believed that, but Joseph Campbell helped to solidify that thought. I am only giving the book 4 stars because I would highly recommend seeing the video of the interview. The video is much superior to the book. The book is not an accurate representation of the interviews between Bill Moyers and Campbell. When comparing the two, it appears that the author of "The Power of the Myth" may have taken liberties in many instances and added phrases and ideas that were not in fact said during the interviews. The book still is able to stand on its own, but if given a choice between the two - watching the videos would be the better choice.

This book is a transcript of a series of conversations that took place at George Lucas' Skywalker Ranch between journalist Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell, an influential professor of comparative religion at Sarah Lawrence College. There are nine chapters each devoted to a common theme found in mythology (The Hero's Journey, Masks of Eternity, etc.) For the topic of each chapter, Campbell distills the common wisdom found in the myth, be it religious or not. In that regard the

book is as much a philosophy book as a comparative mythology/religion book as Campbell illustrates the morality common to all religions. What I found most interesting is the commonality between the cultural and religious myths. For example, I hadn't known that the virgin birth myth was known to many, many cultures across the world. And Campbell has numerous such examples.

This book covers Joseph Campbell's entire career work as a teacher and writer of an in debt teaching of how misunderstandings of religious metaphors for denoted meanings has led us to an area where the sociological and the cosmological functions are colliding. This encompasses a pedagogical lesson in higher learning of what can be known and what we must accept as a mystery if we are to make any further spiritual progress. It is the companion book to a series of interviews conducted by Bill Moyers toward the end of Campbell's life. A recommend to read book if you want to grasp a deeper meaning in spirituality.

This is a fascinating listen. It took me back in time and to magical places. It fed my newly found interest in spirituality, fueled my passion in religion, made me think, laugh and cry. It is a magical journey to who we are as a race and what we stand for. Highly recommended.

I ordered this book as a required material for a college class on Religion, Faith, and Theology. I must say, I've haven't been this intrigued by required reading since Orwell in high school. Campbell is insightful, clear, and profound in his ideas, thoughts, and explanations about the role myths play in society and the human race. Moyers asks all the right questions, inserts his own knowledge in an intellectually provoking way, and aids the reading in understanding of the metaphysical aspects discussed. The term "myth" is given a new definition, a new life from what we interpret it as in our culture. The importance of myth is so well plotted out by Campbell that it's changed my agnostic, skeptical mind into realizing that myth can serve a great purpose. Campbell and Moyers explore Myth in great detail, from the role in society to the comparative differences and similarities across time to the human spiritual potentialities. I bought several books by Campbell after reading this. It's a wonderful telling of the truths you know in your heart, and Campbell puts them into words without making them sound like a fantasy. The illustrations are also interesting and relate to the narrative well. Great work!

This series is mesmerizing. Although all scholars do not support Campbell's vision of the universal monomyth, one of the things at which Campbell excelled was the ability to excite our imaginations

and to encourage us to read beyond the surface details of myths to try to derive some sense of their relevance in our own lives. He seemed to have had a natural, comfortable way about him and he helped to make mythology accessible to all of us. I studied classical mythology in high school using good old Edith Hamilton's work and while it was all very interesting it never seemed to help to generate any excitement about mythology. Campbell's personal views have become controversial but I think that it just goes to show that, as with every genius whose works I have studied, the work has to stand or fall on its own. Geniuses all seem to me to be very flawed people. I think that if we scrutinize the personal life of any genius we will find plenty to criticize. If you are interested in the Star Wars saga you will find a lot in the "Power of Myth" series to think about.

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