

Edward Reilly  
Alley-OOP  
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### Alley-Oop's Heroic Adventure

How (can one) teach again... what has been taught correctly and incorrectly learned a thousand times, throughout the millenniums of mankind's prudent folly? That is the hero's ultimate difficult task. How render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? How represent on a two-dimensional surface a three-dimensional meaning? How translate into terms of "yes" and "no" revelations that shatter into meaninglessness every attempt to define the pairs of opposites? (Campbell, 218)

#### ***Introduction***

As Oral Report Coordinator for MG 101 A, my main responsibility was to tell the story of the company. Alley-Oop had a life of its own, and like all other MGPC's, its development can be represented by the five phases of Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning (LCCL 2.4). However, that does not tell the complete story of Alley-Oop. On the very first day of class, Jan. 22, two influential experiences took place, which illuminate the role I played in the company, and how I performed my job. Number one, I remember Prof. Miller mentioning the "best lecture" he had ever heard in which the presenter analyzed and interpreted the movie Star Wars using "the nine steps of the heroic journey outlined in The Hero With a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell". Frankly, I wish I could remember everything Prof. Miller said on the subject, but I do remember him challenging the members of the MG 101 class to see the progression of the companies through the five phases as a journey, possibly even a heroic one. The second experience was the fact that I was the first person to ask a question in class. My question was not this concise, but the heart of it was, "How can you manage community? You can manage efficiency and effectiveness, but how do you create a sense of community? Either the people trust themselves, or they don't."

For me, these two seemingly unrelated experiences are the descriptive catalyst of what I did, and how I answer the problems of integrating Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Community. I see the life of Alley-Oop as a mythological journey, as the Adventure of the Hero, (Campbell, 11). Not only do I see myself as the storyteller of the Alley-Oop tale, I also acknowledge that I played an active part in the adventure. My story is unique in that it's extremely difficult to separate what I saw from what I did, and the experience I shared. The case I present below explicitly states and systematically examines how this past semester Alley-Oop mimicked the progression of the three steps in the Adventure of the Hero presented by Campbell: one, Departure--Chapter I, two, Initiation--Chapter II, and three, Return--Chapter III. Originally, these steps were going to be implicitly presented in brief film clips from Star Wars incorporated into the video documenting the life of Alley-Oop. However, this was not done because of several technological limitations. Therefore, while reading The Hero with a Thousand Faces during the Performing and Adjourning phases, I realized not only could much of the company's history be seen in the pages in the form of other myths and tales, but an explanation of the problems we faced in integrating Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Community is also contained there. In hindsight, I have not just recapitulated facts, but I've analyzed their significance as they relate to the case and have included them within the case accordingly. I use concepts and principles from MG 101 and

examples and many quotes from Campbell to analyze these events. It is my intention to outline a new path for future companies to take, and to adequately describe what I've learned for my own future organizational activities.

## **The Case**

Departure: The Norming and Storming Phase

### **Norming Phase:**

I paraphrased and quoted the following story, because it metaphorically contains the major themes of the Norming phase and it hints to the coming Storming phase.

"Long, long ago, when wishing still could lead to something, there lived a king with a very beautiful daughter. One day as the girl was playfully tossing a golden ball into the air, it did not fall into her hand, but passed it and rolled directly into the water of a nearby stream. The Princess began to cry. To her surprise, a frog approached her and said, 'Be calm; don't cry. I can surely be of assistance. But what will you give me if I fetch your toy for you?' 'Whatever you would like to have. . . .' The frog replied, 'if you would ... let me be your companion... let me sit beside you at your little table... If you will promise me that, I will go straight down and fetch your golden ball.' 'All right,' she said. 'I promise you anything you want, if you will only bring me back the ball.' The frog quickly returned the golden ball to the princess. "The princess was elated when she saw her pretty toy. She picked it up and scampered away. 'Wait, wait,' called the frog, 'take me along; I can't run like you.' But what good did it do, though he croaked after her loudly as he could? She paid not the slightest heed, but hurried home, and soon had completely forgotten the poor frog--who must have hopped back again into his spring "(Campbell, p. 49)

What began as a playful wish, hosting a basketball tournament, which was held by a few members soon involved others. Like the princess, these company members realized they needed help to obtain their "golden" basketball tournament. The Basketball coalition formed, and analogous to the frog, other coalitions were willing to give their assistance at a price. These coalitions wanted to be included in the final decisions made about the service and business projects. Just like the princess, the basketball coalition was very eager to make promises to obtain their goal. Once they had secured the votes, the basketball coalition was equally willing to scramble away with the ball, and some company members were knowingly left behind because they were unable or unwilling to keep up. However, the other coalitions, or the frog, were never completely forgotten. For example, coalition politics later dominated staffing decisions by the Exec. Committee, and also future questions of motivation and the equality of the distribution of the workload among the company members. The other strong and resistant coalitions were also evidence of the departure the basketball coalition had made from MG 101 tradition.

As a preliminary manifestation of the powers that are breaking into play, the frog, coming up as it were by Miracle, can be termed the "herald"; the crisis of his appearance is the "call to adventure". (T)he call rings up the curtain, always, on a mystery of transfiguration a rite, or moment, of . . . passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth. The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals, and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand. (Campbell, p. 51) The idea of providing an event for the outside community at a price instead of selling a product to Bucknell students was a

foreign concept for several students to accept. It broke the typical mode of a MG 101 company. This required a transfiguration. Something within Company A had to die before Alley-Oop could be born. (In these adventures there is an atmosphere of irresistible fascination about the figure (the Basketball coalition) that appears suddenly as guide, marking a new period, a new stage, in the biography (and obituary of Company A and MG 101)." (Campbell, p. 55) Even during the Norming phase, a major topic of conversation among all the other coalitions was the Basketball coalition. The original fanciful wish of a basketball tournament created in Matt Yaglenski's bed developed into an unreal, grand fantasy with exorbitant optimism through the help of early coalition campaigning. In the following quote, it's helpful to picture the Forming phase as the "mother's womb" in which the foundations of relationships between company was created. At that early stage, it was believed that there would be an overwhelming response to the tournament and a large, "easy" profit could be made.

The fantasy is a reassurance a promise that the peace of Paradise, which was known first within the mother's womb, is not to be lost; that it supports the present and stand in the future as well as the past; that though omnipotence may seem to be endangered by the threshold passages and life awakenings, protective power is always and ever present within the sanctuary of the heart and I far even immanent within, or just behind, the familiar features of the world... And in so as the hero's act coincides with that for which his society itself is ready, he seems to fide on the great rhythm of the historical process. (Campbell, p. 72-73)

The obstacles and terrifying realizations that the tournament wasn't going to be as easy as we thought came much later. The "threshold passages and life awakenings" occur during the end of the Storming phase and throughout the Norming phase, or when we actually "do the work". "The sanctuary of our heart" was the feeling of community and devotion we called on in times of crisis to "protect" us. The memory of the original desire for the tournament was obscured by "the familiar features of the world", and at times, these mountainous tasks we performed seemed pointless. Most important to realize, the feeling within Company A that MGPC's sell the same old products year after year was based on historical evidence of past MG 101 companies. We did not necessarily create the wave of change ourselves, but we were sensitive enough to catch and channel it. Just as surfing can have the rather painful consequence of crashing into a rocky shore, "the passage (through) the threshold is a form of self-annihilation." (Campbell, p. 9 1)

### **Storming Phase:**

It's especially hard to find words to reasonably portray the Storming phase, and the self-destructive processes which took place. I believe the following quote from Campbell is almost vivid enough to demonstrate the level of damage we inflicted on ourselves:

“(T)he king of the south Indian province of Quilacare, at the completion of the twelfth (and traditionally final) year of his reign, on a day of solemn festival, had a wooden scaffolding constructed, and spread over with hangings of silk. When he had ritually bathed in a tank, with great ceremonies and to the sound of music, he then came to the temple, where he did worship before the divinity. Thereafter, he mounted the scaffolding and, before the people, took some very sharp knives and began to cut off his own nose, and then his ears, and his lips, and all his members, and as much of his flesh as he was able. He threw it away and round about, until so much of his blood was spilled that he began to faint, whereupon he summarily cut his throat.”

Essentially, like the king, we removed ourselves from our senses. We did not listen to each other, and we were not seeing the other side's perspective. The image of dying to reality to move on to something greater is very similar to what we did. Company A completely turned inwards. Everyone was concerned with their own agendas, and we were willing to cut away anyone in our way as long as our self-interested goal could be met. Issues of "good" and "bad" politics were prevalent during this time period in the life of the company. We developed a must win attitude, and a large pro-basketball and anti-basketball coalition formed.

When I arrived back at Bucknell after visiting my father in the hospital for the second time late Sunday the 23rd, I remember speaking to two people individually in my hallway: Andrea and Jason. Both said to me, "I don't care who wins as long as it's not Basketball." Each separately continued that problems were stemming specifically from deceit and unfair "flip-flop" tactics between service and business coming from Chad. "The herald or announcer of the adventure, therefore, is often dark, loathly, or terrifying, judged evil by the world; yet if one could follow, the way would be opened through the walls of day into the dark where the jewels glow." (Campbell, p. 53) Chad bore the brunt of being the announcer for the adventure, and I, like many company members, thought he was an egotistical liar. I was vocally against the leadership of Chad, and the news had gotten back to him. Before class on the morning of Feb. 24th, Chad asked to speak with me in private. He explained that all the "underhanded deal making" I perceived him making was really unfair, because he was only making the wishes of his coalition known which he said, "changed everyday". Looking back, Chad described the situation as a G II, but he may have had more influence than he admitted resulting in a C II. Regardless, we both apologized to each other, and I told him that the basketball coalition would have my full support.

Often in actual life, and not infrequently in the myths and popular tales, we encounter the dull case of the call unanswered; for it is always possible to turn the ear to other interests. . . The myths and folk tales of the whole world make clear that the refusal is essentially a refusal to give up what one takes to be one's own interest. The future is regarded not in terms of an unremitting series of deaths and births, but as though one's present system of ideas, virtues, goals, and advantages were to be fixed and made secure. (Campbell, p. 60)

Several members of our company temporarily resisted the call. They didn't "see the service value of a basketball tournament", or they saw "the basketball tournament as more of a business project". Originally, many of these concerns were valid. However, as the storming phase raged on, we repeated ourselves more and more, and listened less and less. Frankly, we began to argue solely from self-interest. It wasn't until Chad had apologized to the entire company on the 24th of Feb. did this attitude really begin to change. Shortly after Jason's speech of, "It's not about what I want to do, or what Chad wants to do. It's about what's best for the company" the basketball tournament was voted in as our service/business project. At that time, a majority of the company accepted the call.

Alley-Oop's heroic adventure was just beginning. Many tests of our ability and trials of our resolve were to follow. Although, we did not face them alone. For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-Journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to

pass. (Campbell, p. 69) Of course, I do not want to suggest that Prof. Miller is an old crone of a man. I prefer the later description of "(t)he higher mythologies (which) develop the role in the great figure of the guide, the teacher, the ferryman, the conductor. . ." (Campbell, p. 73) Our teacher, Prof. Miller, and our Teacher Assistants, Kristen and Paul, acted as our guides through the adventure. Alley-Oop set the destination, but they were there to observe our direction and make suggestions based on their knowledge and past experiences. After departing from the known path of a MGPC, Alley-Oop had to pave its own way.

With (also) his destiny to guide and aid him, the hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the "threshold guardian" at the entrance to the zone of magnified power. Such custodians (stand) for the limits of the hero's present sphere, or life horizon. Beyond them is darkness, the unknown, and danger; just as beyond parental watch is danger to the infant and beyond the protection of his society danger to the member of the tribe. The usual person is more than content, he is even proud, to remain within the indicated bounds, and popular belief gives him every reason to fear so much as the first step into the unexplored. (Campbell, p. 77-78)

The Board acted as our "threshold guardian" during the Operating Plans presentation. Beyond the approval of the Board was the unknown. I clearly remember something Andrea saying, "We have nothing to go on. We have to do what's best for us. We can't follow another company's lead, because this has never been done before." This spirit was echoed by Bob and many of the Vice Presidents. We knew we had departed into uncharted territory. We rushed to complete our operating plans two weeks early, so we could completely enter this challenging and dangerous zone with our guides.

### **Initiation: the Norming and Performing Phase**

The traditional idea of initiation combines an introduction of the candidate into the techniques, duties, and prerogatives of his vocation with a radical readjustment of his emotional relationship to the parental images. (Campbell, p. 136)

### **Norming:**

"Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials." (Campbell, p. 97) Everywhere we turned, there was "another problem" we had not foreseen. Was that a lack of poor contingency planning? I don't think so. Marketing made use of almost all contingency plans it created. We had thought of the possibility of expanding to other schools, but we were not emotionally prepared to do so. The basketball tournament was sold to the company as a fun and rewarding project. Market research showed a high percentage of students "who wanted" to play basketball and were "willing" to pay. We were still in a "dream" state between the glorious "vision" during the Storming phase and in the Operating Plans Presentation and the outside real world. In terms of the Porter-Lawler Model on p. 12.a+b of the LCCL, during the Norming phase, we had a high expectancy that our efforts would achieve the organizational goal, and many of us had an equally high valence, or the value of the reward of the success of the tournament. I don't believe instrumentality ever came into question. It was clear that the success of our performance was directly linked to the success of the tournament. Clearly, the overall motivation of the company was very high during this phase. The perils of the Performing phase were yet to come.

## **Performing**

I sensed a real shift in the company's overall outlook beginning the week following Spring Break. The first lab session after Spring Break, March 25th, consisted of mostly Bob and Steve saying, "We didn't sell as many tickets as we would have liked over break, but that's why we worked so hard to get in the Operating Plans early. We have a plan and we have time to work out the glitches." I remember having to ask Steve how many tickets we had actually sold. He replied by saying, "not as many as we would have liked". I had to pressure him again to get an exact number. By Thursday March 27th, reality was beginning to sink in. By Friday the 28th, we were supposed to have filled half the divisions, and as Andrea privately shared, "we're not even close" The tone of the company atmosphere was changing, and the playful excitement was fading. The original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiatory conquests and moments of illumination. Dragons have now to be slain and surprising barriers passed--again, again, and again. (Campbell, p. 109)

In retrospect, one can see that putting the Operating Plans together in less than three days was only the beginning of our adventure. We had to slay countless dragons to try to fill divisions, and we had not expected to have to do so. We all knew it was going to be a lot of work, but not this much. By Tuesday, April 1st, our nervousness and fear became panic and terror. The contingency plan of expanding to other schools which was just a "worst case scenario" was becoming a definite possibility, and "just breaking even" became our goal.

Being in the Report Division and as Oral Report Coordinator, I had no clearly defined tasks in my job description for the Performing phase. I was to "aid in game day preparations. What the hell does that mean? Essentially, I assisted in game day as I saw fit. At this point, its insightful for me to share two comments I made during my Fall 96 Advising Session: 1) "I'm very sensitive to other people's thoughts and feelings . . . and 2) "I want to do something that helps other people, but I also need to make enough money to support my family in the near future". Prof. Payne asked if I had considered a career in Management, and he recommended MG 101 as a good introductory course to take. He also mentioned the dual service, business project system of MG 101 which appealed to me. It's not ironic that during the organization design debates that I argued for the existence of a MIS position on the Exec. Committee and against HRM. I wanted to be the VP of MIS, because I had read the description of MIS on p. 8.4 of the LCCL (which Paul had referred me to for more information). I wanted to be involved in making the decisions, and I thought my communication skills were more than sufficient for me to effectively and efficiently manage the flow of information in the company. This personal information transcends the phases of the company, but it illuminates the role I played in the Performing phase.

There's one more piece to this puzzle. Bob and I were in Cultural Anthropology together last semester. We weren't good friends, but we knew each other fairly. However, this semester we were in Economics 103 together, and we often sat right next to each other. All through out the semester, I talked about what I saw in the company, and I voiced any concerns about the company I had with him. Bob was my liaison to the Executive Board. We had numerous conversations, but a few have more significance for me. The first was as early as Monday, Feb. 10th. Before the lecture began, I briefly explained my idea for the N.E.A.D. fund and asked if he would support it. I remember him saying, "That sounds like a really good idea Ed, but I'm

already committed to another coalition. However, it's definitely something the company should consider." I don't want to criticize Bob, because he wasn't alone in his self-interested view. Several other company members said they were willing to consider it, but at that time, not even one was honestly willing for a moment to see past their own coalition group. Later in the Storming phase, I began approaching Bob with my concerns. I specifically remember talking to Bob after Econ. on Friday, Feb. 14th. As I've mentioned before, I was very displeased with Chad. I told Bob, "I think the basketball tournament is a creative and fun idea, but if someone else (I was thinking of Bob and Megan specifically) doesn't step up in the coalition and run it properly, I will not support it. What the basketball coalition has done is simply wrong." I can't remember his entire response, but referring to the "dominant" members of the coalition, Bob said, "Ed, they're not going to learn unless they lose." When I think of the defining moments of the company, I think of Bob. He always seemed to be in the center of things, or at least running back and forth trying to calm people down and subdue conflict. Why did Bob do that? Why was Bob so concerned about conflict, and why did he read poems and talk about vision? As Campbell would say, Bob was the medicine man of Alley-Oop.

Dr. Geza Roheim writes, "We find the medicine man in the center of (every primitive) society." The medicine men, therefore, are simply making both visible and public the systems of symbolic fantasy that are present in the psyche of every adult member of their society. "They are the leaders in this infantile game and the lightning conductors of common anxiety. They fight the demons so that others can hunt the prey and in general fight reality." (Campbell, p. 100; 101) This is just one example of how interpreting events which occurred in the life and Journey of Alley-Oop through a mythological context can reveal why they transpired.

As I've shared, early on, I was interested in the flow of information in the company, and several conversations I had with Bob and Andrea were focused on the issue of the Exec. Com. not sharing all the information (particularly, the specific amount of ticket sales). Bob and Andrea both expressed to me that the Exec. Com. did not want to "discourage" the company. They further shared that the Exec. Com. believed telling the company "how screwed we are" won't motivate them to do more work. Even though I continued to be interested in the flow of information throughout the company, I played a more active role in Operational Development and intervention. Again, there's a reason for this. We were much more concerned with Community and Effectiveness than Efficiency. One statement which has been echoed by so many company members in so many different contexts is that, "We have so many capable individuals. We can all do the work. There's no question of that." Why did we try to resolve conflicts quickly, and why did I focus so much of my energy in the Performing phase on company wide motivation and our sense of community? The answer is quite simple, and one I discovered by reading The Hero With a Thousand Faces: Alley-Oop experienced the adventure of a hero, and heroes seek tranquility.

All things are in process, rising and returning. Plants come to blossom, but only to return to root. Returning to the root is like seeking tranquility. Seeking tranquility is like moving toward destiny. To move toward destiny is like eternity. To know eternity is enlightenment, and not to recognize eternity brings disorder and evil. (p. 189)

Our destiny was to have a successful Game Day. We felt any disorder in our feelings was ultimately a result of not recognizing our joint responsibilities of making Game Day a success. Issues of trust and interpersonal relationships created in the Forming and Storming phases seemed to surface again and again in the life of our company. Several individuals including Bob, Andrea, and I were constantly aware of any tension, poor attitudes, or disagreements in the company. I know other individuals such as Jason and Leanne also played a role in this, but I'm not familiar enough with their actions to report them. I can however share the "preaching" that took place on Thursday, April 3rd, and the crucial events which led up to the intervention and how they relate to our mythological journey.

Wednesday night, April 2nd, around 10 p.m., I was speaking with Jeremy Walker in his dorm room, and he asked me how things were going with ticket sales, and if I felt we were going to break even. Although he was not a student in MG 101, he needed that information, because Jeremy, the President of Hoodwink and Hooey, was helping me make a film documenting the life of MG 101. Frankly, I let him have it. I was thoroughly disgusted with most of the negative attitudes of company members at the time, and I told him that, "people are doing just enough to get by, I told him that there was a lot of blaming going on, and that there was a general response of "that's not my job". I also told him that we might break-even but not to count on it. He job listened to me complain patiently, and then he asked, "So, what are you guys doing to sell more tickets?" I responded, "We're not." To paraphrase his reaction, he said we needed to be much more proactive. That we could no longer sit on our hands. We needed to get out in the community, draw attention to ourselves, and drag kids kicking and screaming to the tournament if we had to. He also thought we were missing an opportunity to capitalize on the interest of Bucknell basketball in the area and the recruiting that goes on. I also expressed my concerns that to compensate for low sales the college division was going to be greatly expanded which was not the intent of the tournament. Responding to his comments, I told him that, "we're not making it easy for the customer. We went around to a couple schools, asked them if they would want to play basketball, and how much they would pay. Many kids were excited to play, so we thought we had it in the bag. However, for a kid to play, they had to go to the office, pick up a form, take it home, ask their parents for permission, get money, get transportation to the tournament, possibly ask to miss church, and finally, remember to bring the form back to school." While talking with Jeremy, I came to the conclusion that "we have to do something". There was still time.

I told Jeremy that I needed "to get Andrea on board with this", and I went to get her from two doors down where she lives on my hall. I brought her in, and Jeremy and I explained what we felt should be done: having a more proactive marketing approach. We gave several examples like standing in front of Wal-Mart with a Bucknell basketball player signing autographs and handing out fliers, walking into town, going to the mall, and possibly return to the schools that had low ticket sales and physically hand out fliers. At first, she was very defensive and resistant to any suggestions we made. "That can't be done because" was her typical response. It took a while, but she slowly warmed up to our ideas, and realized that we shouldn't find reasons why this or that couldn't be done, but how something could be done. Suddenly, she said, "I have to call Bob. . ." I think Bob arrived in Jeremy's room around 12:30 a.m. Andrea and I brought Bob up to speed with the conversation. We discussed the lack of motivation members had, and we agreed that in the crunch to make the numbers balance Alley-Oop had lost sight of what it was trying to

accomplish. We didn't feel that the company had lost its vision, but that "Its vision was blurred". We also discussed ideas in which the company as a whole could play a much more active role in selling tickets and promoting the tournament. Together, we regained the excitement which we once had. Everyone shared a "let's go the extra mile" attitude. Bob said, "This is exactly what I needed to hear, and I want you to tell the company tomorrow exactly what you've just told me." He also warned that we be very careful in trying not to lay blame on the Marketing Department, but phrase our statements in a way that stressed refocusing the entire company. Bob left the room to go to bed between 1 and 2 a.m., and he said that he would catch the Exec. Com. in the morning and let them know what was happening. After Bob left, I was so excited that I couldn't sleep.

I stayed up most of the night lying in bed thinking about what I was going to say to the company, and I made a brief outline for my comments in my head. Right before lab began, Bob grabbed me and told me that he wanted to get the whole company together in the center of the room, and that after our comments we would be going back into our original strategy teams to brainstorm ideas. I remember beginning my little speech with the warning that my father was a minister, and that I was "on fire". Andrea and I talked about the current general bad attitude of the company, and we suggested that we look at things differently in a "how can we make this work" and "how can we make this the best it can be" attitude. Honestly, I didn't see much response in members' faces that early Thursday morning, but when we broke out into our original strategy teams, a transformation took place. Once again, the tone of the company changed. The room seemed livelier and brighter. It was again filled with chatter and laughing. Company members in separate departments who had not talked to each other since the Norming phase were back together. I like to say we cross-fertilized. Getting members back together from other divisions allowed different perspectives on the problem and solutions to be shared. Members were told to come up with as many ideas as they could, but also to think about how these things could be done. Not only were a lot of ideas presented, but each task was assigned to specific individuals before the end of class. It was a very successful intervention, and not only did the company regain its vision, it went out into the real world to share it. This was another step in our heroic adventure:

The Bodhisattva, however, does not abandon life. Turning his regard from the inner sphere of thought-transcending truth outward again to the phenomenal world. . . Having surpassed the delusions of his formerly self-assertive, self-defensive, self-concerned ego, he knows without and within the same repose. What he beholds without is the visual aspect of the magnitudinous, thought-transcending emptiness on which his own experiences of ego, form, perceptions, speech, conceptions, and knowledge ride... (and,) he rises, returns to them, and dwells with them.... (Campbell, p. 165-166)

With our vision and destiny clear, we turned outward to the real world. We did go back to schools to pass out more fliers, walked into town, roller bladed around campus, and redesigned our fliers to make them more appealing, etc. We surpassed the delusions of market research and the feeling that the demand was so great filling the divisions wouldn't be a problem. We also had overcome our own egos in the process, and like the Bodhisattva, we returned to the needs of our customer.

The joy of experiencing Game Day after all the obstacles we had overcome was so very sweet. Everything seemed to come together in game day. It all clicked. We were busy with activities, but the atmosphere was surprisingly relaxed. We even had fun. In many heroic myths, the end of a long journey is met with a romantic reward of a female.

The ultimate (reward of the) adventure, when all the barriers and ogres have been overcome, is commonly represented as a mystical marriage of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the World. (Campbell, p. 109)

Game Day was a very "glorious" Queen for Alley-Oop. We obtained our destiny, and our expectations were fulfilled. Whatever in the world has lured, whatever has seemed to promise joy, has been premonitory of her existence--in the deep of sleep... For she is the incarnation of the promise of perfection; the soul's assurance that, at the conclusion of its exile in a world of organized inadequacies, the bliss that once was known will be known again. (Campbell, p. 111) I like the imagery of returning to our mother's arms. As I've shown, several members took on the parental role for the company, but during Game Day, Alley-Oop experienced its vision. In a world of organized and managerial inadequacies, the promise of perfection was experienced in bliss. "(The Queen) was the totality of the universe, the harmonization of all the pairs of opposites, combining wonderfully the terror of absolute destruction with an impersonal motherly reassurance." (Campbell, p. 115) The three pairs of opposites: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Community, were integrated and harmonized in the success of Game Day. By taking a new direction in MG 101, Alley-Oop took the risk of utter failure in combining the Business and Service Projects and providing an event for the community, but Game Day was marvelous reassurance that we did it right.

### **Departure: the Adjourning Phase**

When the hero-quest has been accomplished... the adventurer still must return with his life transmuting trophy... But the responsibility has been frequently refused. Even the Buddha, after his triumph, doubted whether the message of realization could be communicated, and saints are reported to have passed away while in the supernal ecstasy. (Campbell, p. 193)

#### *Adjourning:*

My understanding was that after Game Day the attention of the company was to shift to assisting the Report Division in completing the Final Written Report and Oral Report Presentation. However, the deadline of Friday 4/18 for all documents for the written report was not kept by a majority of the departments, and assistance in writing the script for the oral presentation consisted of one hour of brainstorming with Becky and Bob. At that time, "The easy thing (for me and Andrea to do was) to commit the whole community to the devil and retire again into the heavenly rock-dwelling, close the door, and make it fast." (Campbell, p. 218) We were very angry that no one wanted to help us which they had been told very early on they would need to do. After we calmed down, we asked again for assistance and explained we really needed everyone's help. Andrea received help from the company in typing and editing the report, and Bob, Steve; Chad helped me completely rewrite the script twice. As the following quote illustrates, we had to ask Alley-Oop to come down from the emotional high of Game Day, and help us finish the work:

The Japanese tale, 'Records of Ancient Matters', is "that of the descent to the underworld of the primeval all-father Izanagi, to recover from the land of the Yellow Stream his deceased sister spouse Izanami. She met him at the door to the lower world, and he said to her: the lands that I and thou made are not yet finished making; so come back!" (p. 204-205)

Bob warned Andrea and me that "Everyone is about to give out. Don't push them because their backs are almost ready to break." As the next quote illustrates, there was more to it than just physical fatigue:

The first problem of the returning hero is to accept as real, after an experience of the soul satisfying vision of fulfillment, the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities of life. Why re-enter such a world? Why attempt to make plausible, or even interesting, to men and women consumed by passion, the experience of transcendental bliss? (Campbell, p. 218)

After some very patient pleading, we convinced Alley-Oop who had experienced the fulfillment of their soul-satisfying vision to return to the world of MG 101 and complete the final project. Although the Report Division's biggest challenge was to put our heroic adventure into words. "As dreams that were momentous by night may seem simply silly in the light of day, so the poet and the prophet can discover themselves playing the idiot before a jury of sober eyes." (Campbell, p. 218) I am proud to say we effectively captured the life and spirit of Alley-Oop, which began in Matt Yaglenski's drunken dream, and we efficiently communicated our history including the strengths and weaknesses to the Board's sober eyes.

### **My Conclusion and Recommendation**

The purpose of this case was not to provide a shallow summary of the entire history of Alley-Oop through the structure provided by Joseph Campbell in his book. The purpose was for me to make sense of the complexity of tasks and relationships I faced and the management methods I used to deal with those tasks and relationships. Having read The Hero With a Thousand Faces, the story of Company A makes sense to me. Everything we did had its part in our mythological journey. I know the concept of a company undertaking a mythological journey sounds rather foreign and maybe even like BS, but the numerous quotes and stories from Campbell have far too much similarity to our experiences and provide too much striking insight to be discounted as a bunch of hot air and whitewashing. The image of Alley-Oop experiencing the adventure of a hero is not just nice imagery. It is a useful tool to gain insight into the subsurface and unconscious currents which directed the company through the five phases. "Wherever the poetry of myth is interpreted as biography, history, or science, it is killed. The living images become only remote facts of a distant time or sky." (Campbell, p. 249) The real story of AlleyOop is not just told in context of events, decisions, personal relationships, and management theory. The real story of Alley-Oop is told with mythic poetry.

This is briefly alluded to in the LCCL on p. 3.12 at the very end of the section entitled *Organizations as Families*. To say we simply tried to be a "happy family" would be an incredibly superficial statement which would do much disservice to what I've tried to show. However, using the family as a metaphor for the company, provides a rationale for our management techniques and our approach to integrating the three major themes. Note, that this is only a symbol to be used in context of a mythological journey. It's based on perception and

emotions not explicit, known facts. If you can see Alley-Oop as a hero on an adventure, you can begin to understand the foundation for the management techniques we employed. A hero would rely on his strength, or community (p. 12.1 LCCL), to resolve crises quickly and effectively. A hero would do whatever he could to slay the dragons he faced, and he would call upon every ability he had to do it. In the midst of battle, he wouldn't worry about how efficient his fighting techniques were. It's not a question if he could slay the dragons. He is confident of his abilities. The hero only wants to kill the dragons, complete his adventure, and marry the Queen. If his fighting and efforts are effective, he will survive in triumph. Taking advantage of that paradigm, it is possible to understand why Alley-Oop was constantly concerned with Community and Effectiveness, but not Efficiency. Bob and others took on a parental role, because any conflict was seen as threatening the community we relied on to effectively overcome crisis.

On one level, you can interpret my job in Alley-Oop as a combined MIS/Report Position with close communicational links with the CEO and an outside impartial consultant, Jeremy. Although, a deeper interpretation would again include my role in the adventure as the storyteller who went along and participated. In terms of the Porter-Lawler model, during the Performing phase, the company's expectancy that our efforts would achieve the goal of a successful tournament came into question, and our motivation suffered. As the selected storyteller, it was my responsibility to be observant, and I noticed when we had lost sight of our destination. To regain lost motivation and to become more proactive in serving the customer, Andrea and I intervened and reminded the members of the value they had once placed on their vision of the tournament. In refusing to let Alley-Oop "just get by", we increased their valency, and thus, there motivation. We reminded our company that they had a destiny. "Not every (company) has a destiny: only the hero who has plunged to touch it, and has come up again." (Campbell, p. 228) I recommend that future companies follow our footsteps. In Game Day, we heroically proved a company can do much more than just sell a product. Through a combined Business/Service project, MGPCs can provide an event for the surrounding community. To the companies that do choose to follow us, I further recommend that they concentrate on how to more efficiently traverse the path we created. Alley-Oop fought the dragons. Future companies need not be afraid to follow.