A Conceptual Model of The Whistleblower on a Hero’s Journey

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ABSTRACT

Whistleblowing has gained greater attention from the case of Enron to the Edward Snowdon situation. Typically, whistleblower cases are examined through the lens of “business ethics” and through the perspective of legal dimensions. There is a need for a broader, more interdisciplinary approach. This paper presents a new model of conceptualizing whistleblowing by integrating scholar Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey.

The whistleblower provides an “indispensable service” in drawing attention to many forms of wrongdoing. The whistleblower is in the unique inside position to bring wrongdoing to the fore.

The classic work of Joseph Campbell on the model of the hero’s journey provides an analogy for the journey of the whistleblower. This paper posits a new model for how we conceptualize whistleblowing using the hero’s journey. We can gain valuable insights into the whistleblower’s experience that may inform our attitudes about whistleblowing, ethics, moral responsibility, and even our own actions as members of organizations.

WHISTLEBLOWING: HISTORICAL VIEWS AND HEROISM

Much of the discussion of whistleblowing, the reporting of wrongdoing within organizations, is addressed in “business ethics” circles. (Seifert and Sweeney, 2010; Bowie, Beauchamp and Arnold, 2004). The emergence of this phenomenon in the modern era is largely explained by the classic case of fraud in the private sector by Enron, the energy, commodities, and services company. After being lauded as one of America’s Most Innovative Companies, the organization filed for bankruptcy in 2001, amid rampant, systemic, and fraudulent accounting practices. In that high profile case, Sherron Watkins was the primary whistleblower. (In fact, Time Magazine, 2002, named as Persons of the Year, three women who blew the whistle. They were: Sherron Watkins of Enron, Coleen Rowley of the FBI, and Cynthia Cooper of WorldCom).

Presently, the issue of whistleblowing continues in the case of Edward Snowden who blew the whistle on what he saw as massive governmental intrusion into personal privacy and freedom. This paper will integrate his journey in a new proposed conceptual for whistleblowing.

Relatedly, whistleblowing is approached from a legal perspective in consideration of the legislation and laws that govern this phenomenon, and in particular, those that seek to protect the whistleblower. During the last twenty years, largely emerging from the Enron case, there have been numerous laws and cases that have protected the whistleblowers’ rights and well-being (see the Dodd-Frank Act, 2010, Sarbanes Oxley Act, 2002). Legalistic books have been written such as the The Whistleblower’s Survival Guide (Devine and Maassarani, 2011), and The Whistleblower’s Handbook: A Step by Step Guide to Doing what is Right and Protecting Yourself (Kohn, 2011), etc.
This paper posits that the true whistleblower, one not acting for personal gain or financial reward, and is acting for a moral purpose, a good, higher than the self, a public good, is a hero, or acting heroically. As Bok (1980) indicates, the whistleblower provides an “indispensable service,” i.e. often whistleblowing might be the only way the public discovers a problem, or the only means that many problems get corrected. It is only through the unique inside position that an individual can report on fraud, wrongdoing, and scandal.

A hero is defined, according to the Oxford dictionary as: A person who is admired for their courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities [Italics added].

The whistleblower exhibits courage by showing the bravery to speak up against a corrupt status quo or act or series of acts. The whistleblower shows courage because he or she engages in a selfless act, working through potential moral conflicts, for the public good that may expose him or herself to derision and retaliation – genuine risks. He or she may lose his or her job, face demotion, and be blacklisted from the industry (or even face personal violence).

The outstanding achievement is in righting a wrong, thereby protecting the interests of others, whether internal or external constituencies. The achievement is inherent in that the whistleblower successfully challenges unethical or illegal practices to bring about an improved situation, through internal or external pressure, or even indictment. The achievement is also in that if the whistleblower is successful he or she may empower other would-be whistleblowers to come forth. The successful whistleblower also has the potential to achieve sending a message to others to cease wrongdoing or not commence engagement in it.

The notable qualities of the whistleblower are the conviction and high moral principles to play a role in righting a wrong. The whistleblower adheres to a moral code of right and wrong. He or she feels compelled to create a greater good and eradicate wrongdoing. The whistleblower is brave and courageous as he or she puts him or herself on the line personally and professionally.

Further, we might ask what a world might look like were there no whistleblowers holding organizations accountable for wrongdoing.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL’S HERO’S JOURNEY

Mythologist, writer, and lecturer Joseph Campbell created in 1949 in A Hero with a Thousand Faces, a model of the “archetypal hero’s journey.” In this model, he draws from philosophy, anthropology, history, psychology, and sociology. The Hero’s Journey is a motif, archetype or set of patterns of narrative that depicts how from the mundane, an individual becomes a hero through a journey of ambition achieving great deeds in the face of adversity. The hero’s journey is a cycle used throughout history illuminating the human psyche. This “monomyth” is a set of symbols a wide array (if not all) of cultures configure to describe human purpose and understanding. In narratology and comparative mythology, the Hero’s Journey is a common template for tales that involve a hero who goes on an adventure, in a decisive crisis wins a victory, and returns changed or transformed.

The model examines what is meant by boundaries and what exists beyond those boundaries (which are constructed by culture). Boundaries take on a new meaning in a world of instantaneous news and technology creates few limits on exploration. This fact may be a force of good, bad, or both. Thus, where do human limitations begin and end?

Campbell posits through his broad travels, studies, and readings, that the hero myth theme is universal and infinite, stretching across cultures and time. The Hero’s Journey is ultimately essentially
the same, “an incredibly tenacious set of elements that spring in endless repetition from the deepest reaches of the mind of man” (Volger, Christopher, *The Essence of Storytelling*). The hero in this context asks, *Who am I?* *What is good and what is evil?* *What must I do about it?* *What will tomorrow be like?*

The present construct offers a novel approach to examining the whistleblowing phenomenon. The archetypal hero presented in Campbell’s work has been the inspiration and underpinning for George Lucas’s *Star Wars* films, the Disney production of the *Lion King*; in literature, in Adams’ *Watership Down*, and some scholars have pointed to *Harry Potter* as being a model of The Hero’s Journey; as well as the television shows such as *Community* and *Lost*.

**STAGE ONE: SEPARATION (DEPARTURE): A CALL TO ACTION**

**The Call to Adventure**

The hero begins in a mundane situation of normality from which some information is received that acts as a call to head off into the unknown. Here, the hero awakens from drudgery or even despair to answer a higher calling. The call to adventure involves the hero being made aware of a place beyond what he or she has known. It is often through “blunder” or “chance” according to Campbell that the hero begins the journey. The call is an “opening of a destiny…an awakening of the self…to a zone unknown.” (Campbell, 41-42). It is a “rite or moment of spiritual passage.” (Campbell, 43). Finally, the call “lures one away from the frequented paths of man.” (Campbell, 48)

**Whistleblower Analogue:** The employee is engaged in everyday work. The employee observes or is somehow involved with wrongdoing or fraud. The call to act typically comes from within, an act of conscience. The employee may have mixed feelings about the call to a potential whistleblowing journey because of the unknown and potential feelings of apprehension. In answering the call, the employee may feel a sense of excitement, and a sense of duty to not just him or herself but of others, organizationally, societally, in terms of the public good.

Edward Snowdon as a government contractor working at the NSA on loan from Booz Allen Hamilton, Consulting, recognized in his documentarian, “If you publish the source material I will likely be implicated.” He contended that since 9/11 the US government increasingly begin spying on its citizens through the collection of metadata. He contends the Patriot Act designed to expand government powers had run amok. Snowdon recognizes the potential consequences of acting as well as not acting.

**Refusal of the Call**

Often when the call is given, the future hero first refuses to heed it. This may be from a sense of duty or obligation, fear, insecurity, a sense of inadequacy. Refusal or denial of the call reflects the would-be hero’s inability to move past the status quo. The use of magical information and a herald (below) is needed to stimulate the hero into action and the unknown. Thus, the reluctant hero needs supernatural urging. The call is “unanswered.” “Culture” can lull one into ignoring (or rejecting) “affirmative action.” (Campbell, 49). The individual is contained by conformity. According to Campbell, “[the individual] is living within the locked labyrinth of one’s own disoriented psyche.” (Campbell, 50). On the other hand, the willing adventurer gathers magical items (amulets) and advice from the protector as aid for the journey.

**Whistleblower Analogue:** The critical situation, in which the employee finds him or herself, may be intimidating. The notion of blowing the whistle, taking bold action, may be too daunting. One may not
The employee may feel inertia through living in the organization’s culture over time. The forces of the status quo prevail.

Supernatural Aid

Supernatural aid in the form of a herald provides a rationale to examine what he or she knows. The herald provides some direction to enter the adventure and typically remains as a guide. Once the hero has committed to the quest, consciously or unconsciously, his guide and magical helper appears or becomes known. More often than not, this supernatural mentor will present the hero with one or more talismans or artifacts that will aid him later in his quest. The aid represents a figure who is “benign, protecting power of destiny…[offering] reassurance – a promise that the peace of paradise…is not lost…that it supports the present and stands in the future as well as the past.” (Campbell, 59)

Whistleblower Analogue: One sees a scandal, and one is urged to act. The herald may be a past or present mentor. The encouragement may come from one’s upbringing, or past experience. In any event, the presence of moral courage is the supernatural aid that spurs the employee to act.

In the case of Snowdon, his supernatural aid came in the form of Glen Greenwald, reporter for the Guardian, and other reporters, as well as documentarian Laura Poitras. They became close to him and were his conduit for getting the stories of the alleged government overreach into private information and the mainstream media (e.g., CNN).

Crossing the Threshold

This is the point where the hero actually crosses into the field of adventure, leaving the known limits of his or her world and venturing into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are not known. The threshold is a portal of transition to adventure, danger and opportunity. Having crossed the threshold, the hero is swallowed into a great abyss. There is “darkness, the unknown, and danger…outside the normal traffic of the village.” (Campbell, 65). Crossing the threshold is part of the dream that advances beyond boundaries, “provoking the other…into a new zone of experience” (Campbell, 67). As Campbell posits: “The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown.” (Campbell, 67).

Whistleblower Analogue: Snowdon positioned himself in a discreet hotel room in Hong Kong. He was detached, isolated, but armed with his laptop and flash drives. It was there that he would reach out to documentarian Laura Poitras and journalist Glen Greenwald. He had crossed the threshold from the known to the unknown.

Belly of the Whale

The belly of the whale represents the final separation from the hero's known world and self. By entering this stage, the person shows willingness to undergo a metamorphosis. The entrance (swallowing) into the belly of the whale is a “sphere of rebirth” – swallowed into a womb-like unknown. (Campbell, 74). Campbell submits, “[a]llegorically, then, the passage into a temple and the hero-dive through the jaws of the whale are identical adventures, both denoting…the life-centering, life-renewing act.” (Campbell, 77).

Whistleblowing Analogue: Here the whistleblower undergoes personal change – he or she is fundamentally changed through the process with no return to the prior self. Instead, through the act of...
blowing the whistle, the individual may experience rebirth – a new, more experienced, professional may emerge. Any innocence is lost.

In Hong Kong, Snowdon states, “We are building the greatest weapon for oppression in our lifetimes, though the directors exempt themselves from accountability. Further he continues, “I already know how this will end for me and I accept that. I only ask that you make sure that you get this information to the American people. My personal desire is that you paint the target on my back, inevitably nailing me to the cross.”

STAGE TWO: INITIATION

Road of Trials

The road of trials is a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo to begin the transformation. Often the person fails one or more of these tests, which often occur in threes. Each task is preparation for the ultimate goal. Self-reliance occurs. There is a personal evolution from limitation to potential as the supernatural aid is a “benign power supporting [the hero] in his superhuman passage.” (Campbell, 81). Through these trials, there is a purification process as well as a cleansing and humbling.

Whistleblower Analogue: The whistleblower encounters barriers to his or her disclosure. The forces of maintaining the status quo are formidable and many have much at stake. Senior administrators, senior managers, who may have a personal and professional stage in not only continuing the wrongdoing or fraud, also have an interest in keeping any whistleblowers silent. Thus, the path of the whistleblower is perilous and fraught with resistance. There may be threats to one’s life, there may be swift termination, there may be threats or harm against the whistleblowers family and loved ones. Yet, the whistleblower is a hero and continues down the right path independent of the personal and professional risks.

The Meeting with The Goddess

The goddess represents the source of life – a mother figure, sister figure, or some “beloved.” The goddess embodies encompassing beauty, mystery, and paradoxical good and evil. Through this meeting with the goddess, the hero achieves mastery over life itself. The Woman (goddess) represents the totality of what can be known. She “lures, guides, she bids him burst his fetters.” (Campbell, 97). The Goddess can release the hero from every limitation and be a guide to the sublime. The woman is life.

Whistleblower Analogue: The whistleblower’s metaphoric meeting with the Goddess is that point on the journey when he or she sees clearly the fruits of this arduous labor and considerable risk. The meeting with the Goddess is a time when the whistleblower sees what the organization and society may look like if he or she is successful. Simultaneously, the individual achieves self-mastery – the insight and will to carry out the tasks to complete the whistleblowing acts.

Holed up in the Hong Kong hotel room, Snowden offered his rational as to why to be a whistleblower:

It is a matter of the state’s power versus the people’s ability to meaningfully oppose that power and I’m getting paid every day to design methods to amplify that power … People limit what they type into a search engine because for fear of it being recorded. This limits boundaries of intellectual orientation. I am more willing to risk imprisonment than I am the curtailment of my own intellectual freedom as well as those around me who I care for equally as I do for myself. I feel good in my human experience to know that I can contribute to the good of others.
Woman as Temptress
The negative side of women is represented by the hero giving into selfish pleasures. The woman as temptress presents peril for the hero on route to enlightenment. The temptation is often Oedipal, but with temptation comes anguish. The woman as temptress represents the reality that the world is “filled with fiery flying serpents.” (Campbell, 105).

**Whistleblower Analogue:** The negative side of the metaphoric meeting with the Goddess is that the whistleblower becomes prideful and selfish in his or her acts. This view might mean that the whistleblower indulges in selfish pleasures (monetary rewards, fame, etc.). The individual may feel power and misuse or abuse that power.

Here we have the questions of whether Snowden was tempted, despite his comments to the contrary, by the fame of his action? We can ask did he at all feel pleasure in embarrassing the US government? These answers are unclear because they are intrapsychic. We can speculate that they are a possibility.

Atonement with the Father
A father figure may be portrayed as a vengeful male threatened by the rise of the hero. Campbell submits that in the biblical story of Job, concluding “the Lord makes no attempt to justify …the ill pay out to his virtuous servant, a simple upright man, and fearing God and avoiding evil.” (Campbell, 125). The will of the father is powerful. The father and hero may come into conflict. Yet the hero has faith that the father is merciful. Reconciliation, mercy, and forgiveness ensue. The father figure may become benevolent in seeing the natural cycle of life and indeed assist the hero, even though the father recognizes he is being replaced. Like the Woman/Mother, the father may be good or evil or both, representing the duality of parenting.

**Whistleblower Analogue:** The whistleblower may be revealing information on a male mentor. Until this point, the mentor was seen through a personal and professional lens as powerful. He may have made certain organizational promotions possible for the whistleblower. However, now the individual has crossed the line into the immoral and/or illegal. The whistleblower feels an obligation to act, and does so with trepidation. The whistleblower, as always, follows his or her convictions and will deal with the consequences.

In the Snowden case, The United States Government plays the role of the father. It is the locus of power. It is the foil to what Snowdon was seeking to do. In the recent letter from Snowdon to President Obama, Snowdon asks for immunity so he can reenter the United States after four years in exile in Russia. Is this an act of contrition or atonement? It is unclear.

Apotheosis
The hero’s transformation is a realization of the essence of life and ultimate purpose. This is his or her apotheosis. By conquering an enemy or acquiring powers of selflessness – unconditional love – the hero experiences his or her unique apotheosis. According to Campbell, “the human hero who has gone beyond the last terrors of ignorance [to achieve a divine state]… [the hero] becomes free of all fear.” (Campbell, 127). Campbell continues, “pain and pleasure do not enclose him, he encloses them – and with profound repose.” (Campbell, 129).
Campbell discusses apotheosis of the hero in the context of the Buddhist *Eightfold Path*:
Right Belief, Right Intention
Right Speech, Right Actions
Right Livelihood, Right Endeavoring
Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. (Campbell, 140)

*Whistleblower Analogue:* The whistleblower through the boldness and bravery of his or her actions has come to this point of realizing his or her essence – what one is really made of. If their motives have been right and for the good, then this is a point of satisfaction on a deep psychological and philosophical basis.

Clearly, Snowdon’s apotheosis is the combination of having reached a personal and professional tipping point in being a part of the data collection and traveling to Hong Kong to contact who would be his documentarian and journalist.

The Ultimate Boon

The ultimate boon is when the goal is reached and knowledge is achieved (of the self, of the phenomenon), and wholeness is realized. The treasure is taken representing unique knowledge and even immortality. Bestowed upon the hero is a benefit, favor, or blessing (or some combination thereof).

Campbell offers on the ultimate boon, “The agony of breaking through personal limitations is the agony of spiritual growth. Art, literature, myth and cult, philosophy and ascetic disciplines are instruments to help the individual past his limiting horizons into spheres of ever-expanding realization.” (Campbell, 163).

*Whistleblower Analogue:* The ultimate boon for the whistleblower is truth and knowledge over ignorance and limitation. Whistleblowers achieve this pinnacle of self-realization through true self-knowledge – who they are and what they and of what are they capable? This self-knowledge extends beyond the physical world of knowledge to include the spiritual realm. This boon represents a great satisfaction for the whistleblower. The whistleblower is in a better position to answer existential questions such as what the nature of being, the nature of work, and the nature of being a professional.

Snowdon’s ultimate boon occurs as he sits on the bed of the hotel room in Hong Kong and watches as the stories as he has depicted to Glen Greenwald are shown all over television as breathless breaking news. That is his moment.

**STAGE 3: THE RETURN**

The Refusal to Return

Having found bliss and enlightenment in the other world, the hero may not want to return to the ordinary world to bestow the boon onto others. The hero may doubt whether the realization of the message will be heard. The hero may decide to retreat. Campbell asks, “and who shall say that this decision [is] altogether without reason?” (Campbell, 169).

*Whistleblower Analogue:* Reactions to whistleblowers vary. Some think of them as saviors, others as snitches. Some argue that whistleblowing is an indispensable service while others see it as a breach of trust. Crossing back to the world or return may not be considered simply a triumphant pass, but one that is hostile, or at the very least, mundane.
Snowdon recognizes that his life as he has known it will never be the same. Espionage charges loom in the United States. He is stranded in a world of neither here nor there.

The Magic Flight

The hero has won the blessings and is commissioned to return to the world and heal it. The protector may assist the hero on a supernatural return journey. Sometimes the hero must escape with the boon, if it is something that the gods have been jealously guarding. It can be just as adventurous and dangerous returning from the journey as it was to go on it. If the hero has been successful, then he or she prepares for the final stage of the journey, the return. The hero returns with an “elixir for the benefit of society.” (Campbell, 170).

Whistleblower Analogue: The knowledge and or evidence from whistleblowers represent the boon. If driven by good motives and obtained through fair means, heroes are bringing a boon or elixir to not just their organization, but to the public, in the service of some larger good.

At this juncture, we often find that the whistleblower is not treated as a hero, but in fact may be ostracized or even indicted, as in Snowdon’s case. The celebration of the whistleblower is controversial in that it splits duties and obligations. One person’s hero is another’s snitch. Whistleblowing is inherently complex and divisive, evoking strong reactions from both sides.

The Rescue from Without

Just as the hero may need guides and assistants on the quest, similarly he or she must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring them back to everyday life, especially if the person has been wounded or weakened by the experience. The hero might need the outside world to pull him back from the adventure. The supernatural again may be needed to resolve this final crisis. According to Campbell, “The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him.” (Campbell, 180).

Whistleblower Analogue: Whistleblowers might be stuck through their own doing or exiled through the efforts of others, e.g., by governments. The hero has done much good work and expended great energies at great personal risk. He or she may need assistance in re-acclimating to the world, a changed world, upon return.

The reintroduction of the individual after this journey may be turbulent. Snowden has reached out to the President of the United States for assistance in reassimilating into American society.

Crossing of the Return Threshold

The essence in returning is to retain the wisdom gained on the quest, to integrate that wisdom into a human life, and then ascertain how to share the wisdom with the rest of the world. The hero’s destiny is to depart the mystical world and return to the activities of life with his or her bounty. Upon return, the hero must resolve the two worlds, the diving and the human, the known and unknown, the yin and the yang. The two kingdoms are actually one. Campbell posits,

This brings us to the final crisis of the round, to which the whole miraculous excursion has been but a prelude…the paradoxical, supremely difficult threshold-crossing of the hero’s return from the mystic realm into the land of common day…The hero adventures out of the land we know into darkness; there he accomplishes his adventure, or again is simply lost to us, imprisoned, or in danger; and his return is described as a coming back out of that yonder zone. Nevertheless…the two kingdoms are actually one. The realm of the gods is a forgotten dimension of the world we know.” (Campbell, 196).
Whistleblower Analogue: Whistleblowers make a commitment to share what they have learned on the journey. Through public announcements, testimony, etc., the value of the journey is that hero and boon return home for the betterment of others. Greenwald shares with Snowden how the latter has given rise to other whistleblowers who have continued and elevated his work.

Master of Two Worlds

The unknown is a forgotten dimension of the known. By crossing the final threshold, the hero recognizes that the apparent separation in reality does not exist and the hero becomes the Master of Two Worlds. The product of the journey and return is the hero’s last task, that is, to communicate his discoveries for humanity. The hero encounters many who are incapable of or unwilling to comprehend his or her message. Others will hear the message and some may become the next heroes. Campbell submits, “Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division… not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other—is the talent of the master.” In addition, Campbell offers “the individual, through prolonged psychological disciplines, gives up completely all attachment to his personal limitations, idiosyncrasies, hopes and fears, no longer resists the self-annihilation that is prerequisite to rebirth in the realization of truth, and so becomes ripe, at last, for the great at-one-ment.” (Campbell, 196)

Whistleblower Analogue: The whistleblower lives in the world around him or her as well as the supernatural. He or she has had to muster strength and determination in the midst of others who may deride or resist. There is something inherently transcendent about the work of the whistleblower’s work. Thus, he or she lives with a memory of the past, a time innocence, and a time of experience. We can say with certainty that this applies to Snowdon.

Freedom to Live

Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past. “Having died to his personal ego, the hero no longer fears death. He is free to live, to interact in this world, without risk of returning to his former ego-centric state,” according to Campbell. (Campbell, 204).

The freedom to live is the ability to pass freely between worlds. Through his transformation, the hero has achieved one-ness within. The hero is a presence befitting the world as it perpetually remains itself, understanding perfected knowledge is imperishable.

Whistleblower Analogue: He or she has to find a new life in a new world. Usually he or she will need to find employment in another organization. Often, a whistleblower’s reputation has been tarnished. Employers may wonder if it is “safe” to hire a known whistleblower? Can he or she be trusted? What retaliation might be faced? Whistleblowers face these very real questions. While the laws have made progress to offer protection, we still find that the freedom to live cannot be taken for granted. One case in point on this issue is that of Edward Snowdon who as of 2016 continues to be of limited mobility around the Moscow, Russia, area.

CONCLUSION

Accountability for professional actions in organizations may be among the most important aspects of society. Unfortunately, we know that there are many temptations for which individuals fall victim. Greed is often a motivator. Manipulations, subtle or otherwise, can represent unethical or illegal acts that
have a deleterious impact on stakeholders. This paper submits that there is a vital role for what we call whistleblowers because they uniquely have the proximity and potential power to uncover wrongdoing. They can create great good by answering the call to blow the whistle on unethical or illegal actions.

However, we know that the laws, while making progress, have lagged in providing protection to whistleblowers. We further know that there is an inevitable backlash against whistleblowers that ranges from ostracization to potential physical threats of violence.

While we may not be eager to admit it, wrongdoing is widespread. Greed and manipulation are inherent in the human nature of many. Thus, the need for whistleblowers is pervasive. In a sense, there is a battle between good and bad within many organizations, whether in the corporate sector, in governments, in associations, non-profits, and NGOs. There is something about human nature that we find all too often that when people find themselves in positions of opportunity or power they do not do the right thing, but rather do the wrong thing. External checks and balances only go so far (e.g. laws) because they are not by definition on the inside. Whistleblowers are.

If we accept the presence of wrongdoing, and accept the unique position of whistleblowers to seek to ameliorate the situation, at great personal and professional risk, then Campbell’s model of the Hero’s Journey provides an insight into that of the whistleblower. This paper seeks to present such a novel model in the spirit of reframing how we think about and understand the story of the whistleblower. Presented here is but one model. New models to understand these intraorganizational dynamics are needed.

REFERENCES