

NEWS RELEASE

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Cover images available.

SALINAS STORIES EXAMINES THE HERO'S JOURNEY THROUGH FILMS AND BOOKS

Throughout August and September, the Salinas Public Library presents the *Film the Book!* series, a selection of movie and book pairings, each tracing the Hero's Journey through very different stories. This is part of Salinas Stories' summer focus on ways we tell our stories.

An open secret in the Hollywood film industry is that many Hollywood films—including many films that do not seem to be stories about heroes—are shaped according to the mythological Hero's Journey that author Joseph Campbell saw reflected in all world mythologies. Campbell, a friend of John Steinbeck, described the Hero's Journey in his now-classic 1949 book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. This work has been tremendously influential in the making of a wide variety of films, from *Star Wars* to *The Matrix*, to *Shrek*. Once familiar with these patterns, the reader (or viewer) will see them everywhere in the stories around us. The Library's film screenings will begin with a short discussion of the Hero's Journey in the core story, followed by a free showing of the film. The Salinas Public Library will also host a blog on the Hero's Journey during August and September, allowing the community to share their thoughts on the books and films in the series, as well as their own Hero's Journey.

What are the elements of the Hero's Journey? The Hero often begins in an ordinary world, and a call from a special world launches the story by luring the Hero into the unknown.

Accompanied by archetypal companions such as the Mentor, the Threshold Guardian, the Shadow, the Shapeshifter, the Trickster and others, the Hero passes through several stages of the journey, becoming increasingly committed to the Quest—and increasingly unable to turn back—as he or she continues the adventure. The Hero is often presented with magical or significant objects on the way. He or she passes through ordeals, and encounters tests, allies and enemies. Once the Hero has reached the darkest point of the conflict—usually the climax of the film, he or she begins the journey back to the “normal” world, bearing the fruit of these adventures, strengthened and confirmed in his or her essential identity. The Hero often brings back a special power to the community through surviving these ordeals.


While one might expect to find these patterns in fantasy films such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Matrix*, or *Star Wars*, a closer look at more realistic stories or even comedies through this lens will provide surprising insights. These building blocks also form the core stories of mainstream movies as varied as *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Titanic*, *The Firm*, *Field of Dreams*, *East of Eden*, *Scarface*, and *Sister Act*. In fact, they can be found in most films and stories.

Salinas Public Library Program Manager Lori Wood says, "Once we learn to recognize the patterns of the Hero's Journey, we see that this mythical structure can give us insights not only into the films, books and stories around us, but also into the potential of our own personal stories. We can experience our own ordeals and struggles as the building blocks of our own Hero's Journey. This is yet another way reading can change our lives."




All events are FREE

FILM THE BOOK! CALENDAR:



A selection of film and book pairings, each tracing the hero's journey through very different stories. Learn to see the Hero everywhere. It's a secret key to understanding the stories around us. Can you find the key? Post it to [The Hero's Journey ONLINE!](#)

 **AUGUST 1-SEPTEMBER 30 The Hero's Journey ONLINE – *The Hero with a Thousand Faces***, by Joseph Campbell This 1949 classic of comparative mythology traces the archetypes of the hero's journey through the myths of the world's cultures. This book so inspired Hollywood that it works as a secret key to understanding many of the movie characters you may never have known as heroes. Go online today and leave a comment on this book, the films and books below, or your own Hero's Journey at www.salinastories.wordpress.com





AUGUST

-  **FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *Like Water for Chocolate*** The passionate Tita is in love with Pedro but her controlling mother forbids her from marrying him. When Pedro marries her sister instead, Tita throws herself into her cooking and discovers she can transfer her emotions through the food she prepares. A sumptuous fairy tale based on the book by Laura Esquivel. In Spanish with English subtitles. Rated R. **Cesar Chavez Library**
-  **FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *The Mask of Zorro*** Twenty years have passed since Don Diego de la Vega fought oppression as the legendary hero Zorro and now he must find a successor to stop tyrant Raphael Montero, who has a plot to buy Alta California and enslave the population to work in his mines. Based on a story by Johnston McCulley. Rated PG-13. **Cesar Chavez Library**
-  **FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *Into The Wild*** After graduating from college, top student Christopher McCandless gave his savings to charity and set out on a journey across America to the Alaskan wilderness. Four months later he was dead. Was it a heroic journey, or a

foolish adventure? Based on a true story as told in the book by Jon Krakauer. Rated R. **John Steinbeck Library**

-  **FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *Minority Report*** John Anderton is a top “Pre-Crime” cop in the late 21st century, when technology can predict crimes *before* they’re committed. But he becomes the suspect when another investigator targets him for a murder charge. Loosely based on a short story by Philip K. Dick. Rated PG-13. **John Steinbeck Library**
-  **SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2:00 pm Film the Book! – *Shrek*** To save his swamp, the ogre Shrek is sent on a hero’s quest to slay the Dragon and save the beautiful Princess Fiona who has a deep, dark secret. Based on the children’s book by William Steig. Rated PG. **El Gabilan Library**

SEPTEMBER

-  **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *The Matrix*** A computer hacker searches for the truth behind the mysterious force known as the Matrix. He becomes a heroic rebel figure, but is he “The One”? This film is paired with the book *Neuromancer*, by William Gibson. Rated R. **Cesar Chavez Library**
-  **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*** The tale of an ordinary 11-year-old boy who learns that he is actually a wizard. Harry is snatched away from his mundane existence and thrown into a world completely foreign to him. He soon finds that the wizarding world is far more dangerous for him than he would have imagined. This is the first title in the Harry Potter series of novels by J.K. Rowling. Rated PG. **John Steinbeck Library**
-  **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2:00 pm Film the Book! – *Wall-E*** Human beings have destroyed Earth and left the planet, leaving the cleanup to robots. Hundreds of years later, WALL-E is the only robot left. The monotony is broken when he falls head over heels for a female probe named EVE. This film is paired with the collection of sci-fi short stories *I, Robot*, by Isaac Asimov. Rated G. **Cesar Chavez Library**
-  **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 7:00 pm Film the Book! – *The Day After Tomorrow*** An apocalyptic science fiction film that depicts the catastrophic effects of both global warming and global cooling—hurricanes, tidal waves, and the start of the next Ice Age. Paleoclimatologist Jack Hall is the heroic figure who tries to save the world and his son. This film is paired with the book *Arctic Drift*, by Clive Cussler. Rated PG-13. **John Steinbeck Library**

John Steinbeck Library
350 Lincoln Ave.
758-7311

Cesar Chavez Library El Gabilan Library
615 Williams Road
758-7345

1400 N. Main
758-7302

SALINAS STORIES EXPLORES WAYS OF TELLING STORIES FROM JULY-SEPTEMBER

From July through September, Salinas Stories explores themes in the history of Salinas from 1986 to today, and celebrate the way we tell our stories. The past 25 years have been a time of Rejuvenation and Rebirth. The Cominos Hotel (and the Iron Curtain) came down and the Salinas Auto Mall (and the Hubble Telescope) went up. Salinas’ population diversified and almost doubled. Computers came home to stay. The National Steinbeck Center was founded and has just turned ten. The Salinas Public Library was saved by public outcry and now turns 100. We’re wired, linked in, *friend*ed, and connected in ways we never imagined before. Technology advances so quickly there is no time to predict what is next. However,

through the Salinas Stories program, we can all tell the next chapter of our story and forge the future of Salinas and our world. Explore this era. Explore Salinas' Stories.

This program is part of “Salinas Stories: Cultivating Knowledge, Life & Literature,” a two-year program beginning in fall 2008, presented by the National Steinbeck Center and the Salinas Public Library. “Salinas Stories” is funded by a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and will include the Centennial year of the Salinas Public Library, founded in 1909, and celebrating its 100th birthday in fall 2009. This program, “Rejuvenation & Rebirth”: 1986-2009 (July-Sept 2009) represents the fourth of four broad periods in Salinas' history that “Salinas Stories” will have explored over the past year.

www.salinan.lib.ca.us

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This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,500 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. For more information, visit <http://www.ims.gov>.

About the Salinas Public Library: The Salinas Public Library (SPL) serves the City of Salinas and surrounding region with a mission to contribute to a community in which people enjoy continuing opportunities to broaden their knowledge, heighten their imagination, expand their global awareness and enrich their cultural values. Services are provided through three library facilities as well as an online catalog and a variety of databases available on the website. Besides providing the traditional services, SPL also offers a Digital Arts Lab, Teen Lounge, Chicano Cultural Resource collection, free Internet access, Wi-Fi, multiple audio and video formats, Spanish language materials, and literacy programs. For more information, call (831) 758-7311 or visit <http://www.salinan.lib.ca.us>.

About the National Steinbeck Center: The National Steinbeck Center is a museum and cultural institution whose mission is to tell the story of John Steinbeck's rich legacy, and to present, create and explore stories of the human condition. The Center offers three visitor experiences. The John Steinbeck Exhibition Hall houses seven themed theaters with film clips and interactive exhibits from the Nobel prize-winning author's works. The Rabobank Agriculture Museum explores the stories of the Salinas Valley "from field to fork." And the Center offers its own changing art and cultural exhibits and a variety of educational and public programs. To learn more about the National Steinbeck Center, call 831-796-3833 or visit <http://www.steinbeck.org>