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## Character archetypes

Submitted by [diaskeaus](#) on Wed, 02/15/2006 - 02:24Tags: **Writing**

1. Willing Hero -- King Arthur; Leelu from The Fifth Element; Hercules
2. Unwilling Hero -- Bilbo Baggins from The Hobbit, Phillippe Gaston from Ladyhawke
3. Cynical Anti-hero -- Han Solo from Star Wars
4. Tragic Anti-hero --Lestat from Ann Rices' Vampire Chronicles; Darth Vader from Star Wars
5. Group-oriented Hero -- CuChulainn from Irish myth.
6. Loner Hero --Indiana Jones, Xena from Xena: Warrior Princess
7. Catalyst Hero -- Any mentor (s/he's the hero of their own stories)
8. Dark Mentor -- anti-heroic character, the inversion of heroic values
9. Fallen Mentor -- characters who are having difficulty with their own heroic journey
10. Continuing Mentor -- recurring characters in a series of stories
11. Multiple Mentors -- a hero may have more than one Mentor, learning a new skill from each one
12. Comic Mentor -- often a type of advising sidekick to the Hero
13. Shaman -- helper who aids the Hero in seeking a guiding vision to help him/her on the journey
14. The Herald -- Herald characters issue challenges and announce the coming of significant change
15. The Threshold Guardian -- Threshold Guardians protect the Special World and its secrets from the Hero, and provide essential tests to prove a Hero's commitment and worth
16. Shapeshifter -- The Shapeshifter's mask misleads the Hero by hiding a character's intentions and loyalties
17. Trickster -- Tricksters relish the disruption of the status quo,

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turning the Ordinary World into chaos with their quick turns of phrase and physical antics

18. Fool -- In Europe, the court jester was not necessarily a simpleton, and in fact, often served to remind the monarch of his own folly and humanity
19. Shadow -- the Shadow represents the energy of the dark side, the unexpressed, unrealized, or rejected aspects of something
20. The Anima/Animus -- form generally reflects either the condition or the needs of our soul presently
21. The Divine Couple -- The opposites of the outer and the inner life are now joined in marriage
22. The Child -- The Child Archetype is a pattern related to the hope and promise for new beginnings
23. The Self -- The Spirit descends as a Dove upon Jesus in the wilderness (example), true self
24. The Magician -- He once was ignorant but through the experience of taking the Fool's "step of faith" over the edge and into the unknown he has made a decision to master the Four Elements and therefore seek to balance his personal Karma
25. The Virgin/Maiden/High Priestess -- She is the guardian of the Mystery Temple of Solomon; Protectress of the Secret Wisdom that lifts human consciousness from the depths of materialism to the heights of illumination
26. The Empress -- She is the image of Fertility; the creative Life Force that perpetuates the continuity of life forms on the planet; She is Mother Nature; guardian of the natural process and rhythms of growth and procreation
27. The Authority/Emperor (King, Chief, Leader) -- He is the representative image of Father Time; in charge of the seed and the withdrawal of the Life Force when the period of Life is done
28. The Medicine Woman/Hierophant -- This Archetypal Figure represents the external Form and function of the internal Mysteries; The Hierophant stands as a barrier to those who are yet unable to comprehend the True creative Life principles and therefore the External Teaching is all that they receive. However, if they can pass beyond the Form via choice to join the Spirit of Illumination radiating from within their Souls then the High Priestess is waiting to reveal the heretofore hidden Mysteries inscribed in the Scroll she is holding in reserve for those who are truly ready
29. The Hermit -- His search has led him to the Summit of his own perfection. Now, from this great height he can see 360 degrees without obscuration. His Lantern is held high as an inspiration to all who aspire to attain the Wisdom which he has come to realize during the process of his own Soul journey. The isolation and abstinence image sometimes given to the Hermit is one of

the past; a glimpse of his travels through the physical and emotional wasteland where the misrepresentations of life as seen through the perception of the Physical Plane have been experienced and eventually transcended. This Archetype passed through a period of solitude and alienation during this walk through the proverbial "Valley of the Shadow of Death" that could have driven him Mad had it not been for the Light in his Lantern penetrating the Darkness and illuminating his Soul thus granting him hope of deliverance. The Hermit has indeed been carried through this initiatory Journey via his unwavering Faith in the Universal Source who Teaches and Guides all of us internally. The Lantern which he carries symbolizes his inner Vision provided via his "Third Eye" (Candle) which grants this Archetypal traveler a keen sense of Spiritual insight

30. The Wanderer (aka chariot) -- An invisible barrier stands between the mind of Man and the Mind of God, and this blinds the Charioteer, thus preventing his conscious realization of union with the Source, Victory in the material sense, on all levels. Mastery of the Elements, but not the Spirit which Guides them, therefore the Chariot rides in service to a higher authority even though the driver might presume that he is in complete control
31. The Hunter/ Strongman (strength) -- The senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch are directed by the sixth sense, intuition, thus resulting in perfect Harmony
32. The Judge (law, justice) -- The Dispensation of punishments and rewards according to the precepts of Karmic Law, which is represented on the Physical Plane by external legal systems: lawyers, courts, prisons, etc. However, it is the Spiritual workings of an involuntary nature of which this Archetype speaks
33. The Weaver -- Temperance, i.e. the balanced management of Life taking all things in moderation, is the means of maintaining steady progress during humanity's long Search through Limitations of material existence for eventual Transformation into Divine Beings of Light
34. Death (personification) -- Transformation via Dramatic Change, as symbolized by the image of physical Life being terminated and the Afterlife commencing. Therefore, a sudden pole reversal occurs, i.e. orientation or circumstances change is indicated. That which was the order of things has been totally shattered
35. The Sacred Messenger/ The Giver
36. The Hanged Man (meditation, suspension) -- Its symbolism points to divinity, linking it to the death of Christ in Christianity and the stories of Osiris (Egyptian mythology) and Mithras (Roman mythology). In all of these stories, the destruction of self

brings life to humanity.

37. The Devil -- The Devil is both the Ur-Adversary, and a tremendous source of strength. He represents nearly an inexhaustible source of energy. Battling him gives us strength. Submitting completely to him is ego-death.
38. The Unity of the Universe -- continually changing universe. Here is the supreme unity of attainment and joy ruled by that incalculable factor - the element of luck; This ultimately manifests as the spiral progression of the unfolding Universe. The counterbalance of Night and Day, and to a greater extent passage of the Seasons, is indicated. However, more importantly, the Cycle of birth, death, and rebirth is depicted here. This is symbolic of the proverbial "Phoenix Principle."
39. The Sacrificial Dance
40. The Tower (Babel, falsity)
41. The Star(s) -- People have always looked to the stars as a source of inspiration and hope. There is something about their twinkling light that draws us out of ourselves and up into a higher plane. When we turn our eyes heavenward, we no longer feel the distress of earth. The Star reminds one of the clear, high voice of a soprano. There is something otherworldly about it. All the harshness and density of everyday life has been refined away leaving only the purest essence. After being exposed to the Star, we feel uplifted and blessed.
42. The Moon -- The Moon is the light of this realm - the world of shadow and night. Although this place is awesome, it does not have to be frightening. In the right circumstances, the Moon inspires and enchants. It holds out the promise that all one can imagine can be obtained. The Moon guides one to the unknown so one can allow the unusual into one's life.
43. The Sun -- Throughout history, people have honored the Sun as the source of light and warmth. In the myths of many cultures, the Sun is a prominent god - full of vigor and courage. He is the vital energy center that makes life on earth possible.
44. The Spirit World
45. The World -- The World represents an ending to a cycle of life, a pause in life before the next big cycle beginning with the fool. The figure is at once male and female, above and below, suspended between the heavens and the earth. It is completeness.
46. Übermensch -- An Übermensch, (sometimes "Overman", or "superman") is a term coined by philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, in Thus Spoke Zarathustra (in German, Also sprach Zarathustra). He argues that a man can become an Übermensch (homo superior; the common equivalent English translation would be 'super-human'; see below) through the

following steps: **1.** By his will to power, manifested destructively in the rejection of, and rebellion against, societal ideals and moral codes; **2.** By his will to power, manifested creatively in overcoming nihilism and re-evaluating old ideals or creating new ones. **3.** By a continual process of self-overcoming.

47. Wise Old Man -- In works of fiction, this kind of character is typically represented by a kind and wise, older father-type figure who uses personal knowledge of people and the world, to help tell stories and offer guidance, that in a mystical way illuminate to his audience a sense of who they are and who they might become.
48. The Puer Aeternus -- (Latin for "eternal boy"), e.g. Peter Pan

### **Enneagrams:***minor archetypes*

49. One: Reformer, Critic, Perfectionist [Anger]. This type focuses on integrity. Ones can be wise, discerning and inspiring in their quest for the truth. They also tend to dissociate themselves from their flaws and can become hypocritical and hyper-critical of others, seeking the illusion of virtue to hide their own vices. The One's greatest fear is to be flawed and their ultimate goal is perfection.
50. Two: Helper, Giver, Caretaker [Pride]. Twos, at their best, are compassionate, thoughtful and astonishingly generous; they can also be prone to passive-aggressive behavior, clinginess and manipulation. Twos want, above all, to be loved and needed and fear being unworthy of love.
51. Three: Achiever, Performer, Succeeder [Deceit]. Highly adaptable and changeable. Some walk the world with confidence and unstinting authenticity; others wear a series of public masks, acting the way they think will bring them approval and losing track of their true self. Threes fear being worthless and strive to be worthwhile.
52. Four: Romantic, Individualist, Artist [Envy]. Driven by a fear that they have no identity or personal significance, Fours embrace individualism and are often profoundly creative. However, they have a habit of withdrawing to internalize, searching desperately inside themselves for something they never find and creating a spiral of depression. The angsty musician or tortured artist is often a stereotypical Four.
53. Five: Observer, Thinker, Investigator [Avarice]. Believing they are only worth what they contribute, Fives have learned to withdraw, to watch with keen eyes and speak only when they can shake the world with their observations. Sometimes they do just that. Often, instead, they withdraw from the world, becoming reclusive hermits and fending off social contact with abrasive

cynicism. Fives fear incompetency or uselessness and want to be capable above all else.

54. Six: Loyalist, Devil's Advocate, Defender [Fear]. Sixes long for stability above all else. They exhibit unwavering loyalty and responsibility, but are prone to extreme anxiety and passive-aggressive behavior. Their greatest fear is to lack support and guidance. There are two types of sixes, phobic and counter phobic. Phobic sixes will have a tendency to run from or hide from what they fear, while a counter phobic six is more likely to attack or confront said fear.
55. Seven: Enthusiast, Adventurer, Materialist [Gluttony]. Eternal Peter Pans, Sevens flit from one activity to another. Above all they fear being unable to provide for themselves. At their best they embrace life for its varied joys and wonders and truly live in the moment; but at their worst they dash frantically from one new experience to another, being too scared of disappointment to enjoy what they have.
56. Eight: Leader, Protector, Challenger [Lust]. Eights worry about self-protection and control. Natural leaders, capable and passionate but also manipulative, ruthless and willing to destroy anything and everything in their way. Eights seek control over their own life and their own destiny and fear being harmed or controlled by others.
57. Nine: Mediator, Peacemaker, Preservationist [Sloth]. Nines are ruled by their empathy. At their best they are perceptive, receptive, gentle, calming and at peace with the world. On the other hand they prefer to dissociate from conflicts and indifferently go along with others' wishes or simply withdraw, acting via inaction. They fear the conflict caused by their ability to simultaneously understand opposing points of view and seek peace of mind above all else.

### **RPG Archetypes:**

*(taken from Foxfire and Afira's Guide to Roleplaying,  
<http://www.angelfire.com/tx/afira/archetypes.html>)*

58. The Scholar: The scholar is perhaps the most underestimated type of individual that exists in character building. He can be extremely calculating, highly intelligent, rational, an excellent strategist, and extraordinarily... vain. After all, he has all this excess intelligence, why not spend a little on himself? Scholars are guided by the pursuit of knowledge and the usage and implementation thereof. This can range from the trivial, to the extensive knowledge and inner workings of political culture, computer design, or magic lore. Of course, like the rest of the archetypes, he comes in many forms. Usually the stereotypical

scholar spends 10 years in hermitville studying on his chosen craft, he wears the scholarly glasses, the slightly balding head with a bit of wildly unmanageable tufts of hair sticking out, the plain and unassuming clothes of someone living on the edge of financial existence, however, as roleplaying of this character becomes divergent from the typical Hollywood influences, many new types are becoming apparent. Jesters and technology or weapons gurus also fit into this category. Jesters for their high levels of intelligence and strong usage of, and technology or weapons gurus for the same reasons.

59. The Soldier: Strong, willful, and looking for a fight, whether it be for profit, or to avenge the death of a loved one. One type of soldier encompasses those who seek to do justice in an evil and dark world: The rugged heroes who are strong in arm and wit, but have some fatal character flaw (dealing with the death of a loved one, pride or vanity, a weakness for damsels in distress...) that will be the end of them if they don't figure out how to solve it. Another type refers to those who always use sheer force to solve any problem. Big, hairy, and usually extraordinarily stupid, these individuals are almost always hopeless at accomplishing complex tasks. Still others might seek to cause destruction or chaos to appease a higher entity or leader. Persons of action, and extreme calculation, these people tend to make fantastic villains. Overall, the soldier class of characters seek to force their will on the world, directly, or indirectly.
60. The Politician: The politician archetype usually encompasses the most diverse groupings of individuals: Poets, Rogues, and of course, Politicians. The Poet is the hopeless romantic that is usually more skilled with his instrument of choice, rather than sheer brute force. The instrument can range from musical lyres, lutes, and the like, to the musical sound an axe or gun makes when going through flesh. They are socially capable of holding conversations, but most people tend to view them as lost or dreamy souls. They tend to be stereotyped with the thin, wiry, tall, and dreamy; however, the jovial, heavy-set drunkard leaning on a wall with his mug of ale is just as susceptible to being a Poet. A Rogue is the strongly misunderstood man of the moment. Usually an attention getter striving to better himself at his trade or skill, the rogue is a drifter, never really settling down with someone or something. This could be caused by profession, reputation, or self-inflicted torture. Impulsive activity mixes with the common traits of exceptionally specialized skills in one or more areas, high levels of reflex, agility, and intelligence. They could potentially be very dangerous given the right circumstances, or alignment, for example, the Great Rogue himself-Robin Hood. Politicians are exactly as their name

implies-great talkers who love to listen to the sound of their own voice. Rather than facing conflict, they seek to beguile, distract, and utilize words to walk around it. Usually they are highly intelligent with strong social skills, specifically dominate, persuade, or manipulate.

61. The Priest: Priests, Clerics, Necromancers, Fortune-tellers, Mediums, and anything else dealing with the spiritual and supernatural world fall into this genre. These types of characters usually come in the most unlimited range of styles, body types, and personalities, as the effects of dealing with the spiritual or supernatural may have odd effects on someone's psyche and physical appearance. Your average neighborhood Catholic Priest heavy in the midsection, could mingle with your thin teenage punk kid who has more than a few run-ins with walking zombies-and won. These individuals are either guided, aided, cursed, or repulsed by an driving force in their lives, and a sense that something bigger than them exists. Hunters that seek out supernatural creatures to kill for their own means portray aspects of the priest as well, as they seek to impose a vision of the world without those creatures. The priest is above all a visionary-he can see something that no one else can, and through his faith-in himself, or something higher-everything he sees will be accomplished.

*Combinations: To some extent, gypsies fit all of these profiles and work as a good combination. Very intelligent jesters at heart(Scholar), without a sense of the limits of their own physical property, mixed with a bit of old world swindling, story-telling, and pan-handling(Politician), perhaps guided by an overwhelming guiding force that lets them see the words, "I'm naive, steal from me." in bold letters on someone's forehead(Priest), and take advantage of the situation for their own ends(Soldier).*

### **Chinese Zodiac Animal-types**

62. Rat: Essentially charming. Compassionate. Renowned for thrift and love of family, at times rather superficial.
63. Ox: Calm, patient, studied character. Takes things slow, steady pace. At times rather dictatorial. Always industrious.
64. Tiger: Very warm, loving. Independent minded. Pays scant regard for other's feelings while pursuing fun and freedom.
65. Rabbit: Also know as the Cat or Hare. Very sensitive soul. Loves spending time at home. Although quiet and discreet, still ambitious. Self-indulgent.
66. Dragon: Charismatic and colorful. Wants to be center of attention. Very arrogant.



- 67. Snake: High moral principles, mostly when applied to other. Sophisticated and charming. More than meets the eye.
- 68. Horse: Confident and proud. Prone to erratic behavior. Heart is in right place. Scatty.
- 69. Goat: Sensitive, creative and multitalented. Eccentric. Much Fortitude. Loves to be loved, hates to be pushed.
- 70. Monkey: Wily and cunning. Ignores regimented rules. Free spirit.
- 71. Rooster: Brave and enthusiastic. Notoriously picky. Highly intelligent. Rarely has wool pulled over its eyes.
- 72. Dog: Honest, loyal, sincere. Believes in justice for all. Fights for principles. Sometimes bad tempered, self-righteous.
- 73. Boar: Will do anything for anybody. Model of sincerity and honor. Occasionally fits of rage. Self-sacrificing and altruistic.

### **Carolyn Myss's Archetypes:**

*Included are many repeats, but kept for the sake of keeping her list whole*

- 74. Addict (Conspicuous Consumer, Glutton, Workaholic--see also Gambler)
- 75. Advocate (Attorney, Defender, Legislator, Lobbyist, Environmentalist)
- 76. Alchemist (Wizard, Magician, Scientist, Inventor--see also Visionary)
- 77. Angel (Fairy Godmother/Godfather)
- 78. Artist (Artisan, Craftsperson, Sculptor, Weaver)
- 79. Athlete (Olympian)
- 80. Avenger (Avenging Angel, Savior, Messiah)
- 81. Beggar (Homeless person/ Indigent)
- 82. Bully (Coward)
- 83. Child (Orphan, Wounded, Magical/Innocent, Nature, Divine, Puer/Puella Eternis, or Eternal Boy/Girl)
- 84. Clown (Court Jester, Fool, Dummeling)
- 85. Companion (Friend, Sidekick, Right Arm, Consort)
- 86. Damsel (Princess)
- 87. Destroyer (Attila, Mad Scientist, Serial Killer, Spoiler)
- 88. Detective (Spy, Double Agent, Sleuth, Snoop, Sherlock Holmes, Private Investigator, Profiler--see also Warrior/Crime Fighter)
- 89. Dilettante (Amateur)
- 90. Don Juan (Casanova, Gigolo, Seducer, Sex Addict)
- 91. Engineer (Architect, Builder, Schemer)
- 92. Exorcist (Shaman)
- 93. Father (Patriarch, Progenitor)
- 94. Femme Fatale (Black Widow, Flirt, Siren, Circe, Seductress, Enchantress)
- 95. Gambler
- 96. God (Adonis, see also Hero)

97. Gossip (see also Networker)
98. Guide (Guru, Sage, Crone, Wise Woman, Spiritual Master, Evangelist, Preacher)
99. Healer (Wounded Healer, Intuitive Healer, Caregiver, Nurse, Therapist, Analyst, Counselor)
100. Hedonist (Bon Vivant, Chef, Gourmet, Gourmand, Sybarite--see also Mystic)
101. Hero/Heroine (see also Knight, Warrior)
102. Judge (Critic, Examiner, Mediator, Arbitrator)
103. King (Emperor, Ruler, Leader, Chief)
104. Knight (see also Warrior, Rescuer)
105. Liberator
106. Lover
107. Martyr
108. Mediator (Ambassador, Diplomat, Go-Between)
109. Mentor (Master, Counselor, Tutor)
110. Messiah (Redeemer, Savior)
111. Midas/Miser
112. Monk/Nun (Celibate)
113. Mother (Matriarch, Mother Nature)
114. Mystic (Renunciate, Anchorite, Hermit)
115. Networker (Messenger, Herald, Courier, Journalist, Communicator)
116. Pioneer (Explorer, Settler, Pilgrim, Innovator)
117. Poet
118. Priest (Priestess, Minister, Rabbi, Evangelist)
119. Prince
120. Prostitute
121. Queen (Empress)
122. Rebel (Anarchist, Revolutionary, Political Protester, Nonconformist, Pirate)
123. Rescuer
124. Saboteur
125. Samaritan
126. Scribe (Copyist, Secretary, Accountant--see also Journalist)
127. Seeker (Wanderer, Vagabond, Nomad)
128. Servant (Indentured Servant)
129. Shape-shifter (Spell-caster--see also Trickster)
130. Slave
131. Storyteller (Minstrel, Narrator)
132. Student (Disciple, Devotee, Follower, Apprentice)
133. Teacher (Instructor, see also Mentor)
134. Thief (Swindler, Con Artist, Pickpocket, Burglar, Robin Hood)
135. Trickster (Puck, Provocateur)
136. Vampire
137. Victim

- 138. Virgin (see also Celibate)
- 139. Visionary (Dreamer, Prophet, Seer--see also Guide, Alchemist)
- 140. Warrior (Soldier, Crime Fighter, Amazon, Mercenary, Soldier of Fortune, Gunslinger, Samurai)

**Author Comments:**

An almost finished list and descriptions of character archetypes for stories.

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**diaskeaus**

03/30/2006

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04/25/2007

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**btff**

03/25/2008

where did you get all this information from?

very nice work btw, this is perfect, just what i needed.

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**diaskeaus**

06/01/2008

It's a list I've been compiling since about 2001. Lots and lots and lots of sources, mostly now defunct and buzzed from the web.

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**lukeprog**

01/12/2010

diaskeaus,

How many views does this list have?

**Login** or **register** to post comments**aname16**

09/07/2010

thank you for the informative and almost complete list...i had completed my assignment in literature because of your help..

THANK YOU!..^\_^

**Login** or **register** to post comments**DukTape**

12/14/2010

I like the inclusion of the various categories of archetypes. I wonder if Western zodiac types might one day be included? To me, they seem as iconic as some of those here included. Great story fodder here. Thanks so much for posting the wonderful list.

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