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Joseph Campbell Foundation & OPUS Archives Research Grant Summary

I would first like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Richard Buchen and Elise Collins Shields, both of whom were critical to the success of my research. It has been a tremendous gift to have access to Campbell's archives. Delving into the collection revealed a deeper portrait of Campbell—the man, the teacher, and the scholar—which I was then able to encapsulate in an encyclopedia entry on Campbell for Springer's *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion* (forthcoming in 2008). I was also able to draw on these insights to develop new ideas for the “Mythology in Contemporary Culture” panels I designed and chair at the Popular Culture Association's national annual conference.

Sifting through items such as the boxes of Sanskrit filecards and Campbell's meticulous records of the books he read—many of which served as the genesis of ideas for his own work—gave me a new appreciation for the exceptional degree to which Campbell was a wide-ranging and erudite scholar. How unjust and unfounded that any critic alleges the opposite! Campbell's notes are a window into his process of reading and engaging other works while gathering and reflecting on ideas for his own. The materials in the archive make manifest the extent to which he was actively engaged in the demands of scholarship. In putting together my article, I drew on these discoveries of Campbell the researcher in order to reveal him not simply as a popularizer and teacher, but also as a scholar.

Furthermore, some of his correspondence is uniquely illuminating. I often found his letters to express his ideas more directly than some of his published works. They also

often more explicitly reveal his thoughts on other theorists, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss. Some of Campbell's interests as represented in his notes and correspondence have given me ideas about areas to pursue in my panels and have provided me with some possible avenues of exploration

The archive offers a unique window into Campbell's scholarship and thought. It is invaluable to those in the field of Religion who study myth and seek to place it—along with Campbell's contributions—in its rightful place within the discipline. I've attached a draft of the encyclopedia article that resulted from my research. When the final version is determined (some time next year) I'll send a copy to the archive. Thank you for affording me this remarkable opportunity.