The term *archetype* has its origins in ancient Greek. The root words are *archein*, which means “original or old” and *typos*, which means “pattern, model, or type.” The combined meaning is an “original pattern” of which all other similar persons, objects, or concepts are derived, copied, models, or emulated.

Psychologist Carl Gustav Jung used the concept of archetype in his theory of the human psyche. He believed that universal, mythic characters – archetypes – reside within the collective unconscious of people the world over. Archetypes represent fundamental human motifs of our experience as we evolved; consequently, they evoke deep emotions that reveal significant information about who we are and why we are here.

Because society is not what it was when Jung explored the concept of the archetype, the classic archetypes from long ago are not as relevant to us today.

For this unit, we will be focusing on modern society’s concept of the following archetypes:

**THE INNOCENT**

The Innocent Archetype is often the naïve, wide-eyed traditionalist, faith-based, saint-like and yearns to do the right thing. This can also be the girl/boy next door archetype.

**THE CAREGIVER/NURTRER**

This is the common “mother-figure” archetype. If there’s someone in your life who has a tendency to save, feed, or put everyone else’s needs before their own that is the nurturer archetype. They believe in compassion and generosity, while also making themselves the martyr. They’re altruistic, protective and supportive. Their deepest frustration and disdain is selfishness.

**THE LOVER/SEDUCTRESS/TEMPTRESS**

The lover’s main desire is intimacy, passion, partnership and commitment. A lover puts relationships and physical/emotional intimacy first above all things. They use their power of charm and desirability to attain and satiate their needs. This is one of the most common female archetypes in current pop culture, tv and film.
**THE RULER/BOSS**
Power is the goal with the Ruler archetype. They are competitive and dynamic. Having a position of authority and leadership is ideal for this archetype. They desire control, prosperity, and command attention/admiration.

**THE FREE SPIRIT**
The Free Spirit believes in the fanciful, in making things happen, frivolity and impulsiveness. They can also be healers, shamans, and fantastic storytellers. They do believe that dreams come true and are charismatic emotion-based influencers.

**THE BIG BABY**
Today's soft, squishy men with their jelly-bellies and superegos built for laughs may not be new, but their resurgence is something to look at. Some big babies are designed for family viewing, like Kevin James, while others, exemplified by Zach Galifianakis, skew edgier, crueler, R-rating mayhem. At the very least, their soft bodies tend to render these characters as sexually unthreatening and cuddly, redefining male sex appeal and shifting the burden of attractiveness entirely onto their usually hot female love interests.

**THE BRAVE BOY/WARRIOR**
The heroes of fairy tales tend to be youthful orphans cast out into the grown-up world to fight evil and seek their fortunes, triumphing through a mixture of guile, courage and luck. They will sometimes have problems with authority, both male and female.

**THE BACHELOR**
The Bachelor archetype tends to be desired by women who want him and men who yearn to have what he has. They tend to surround themselves with plenty of people (who often seem pathetic in comparison).
THE HERO
The Hero is an evolutionary stage reached via one of the earlier archetypes, which often persists as an alter ego. Captain America, for example, starts out as Steve Rogers, a classic wimp: skinny, dateless, more to be pitied than admired, loved or feared. While the Hero’s relationship to evil is relatively straightforward – he’s against it, though occasionally tempted by the corrupting perquisites of power – his relationship with women is ambiguous and almost definitively unfulfilled. In his world, a woman is usually on hand to be rescued or avenged, and sometimes also to be wistfully, chastely kissed before or after the big fight. The Hero’s main bonds are with other men.

THE WIMP
Born to be mild, the Wimp exists to have sand kicked in his face and submit to other, physically stronger archetypes. The Wimp tends to serve the narrative function of the sexually neutered sidekick, the nervous ninny, or the resident genius. The Wimp is sometimes able to trade on his meekness to sometimes a triumphant, even heroic end.

Adapted from: