TO BE BRAVE: HEROISM AND BRAVERY IN NEIL GAIMAN'S *CORALINE*

Sharanya DG
Independent Scholar, India
correspondence: sharanyadg.99@gmail.com
https://doi.org/10.24071/uc.v5i1.8442
received 22 March 2024; accepted 20 May 2024

Abstract
The paper explores the themes of Heroism and Bravery, which are abundant in Fantasy literature. With reference to the existing literature, these concepts are defined and differentiated, and their relevance in Fantasy literature is delineated. A close reading of Neil Gaiman's Fantasy novel, *Coraline* (2002), is used to exemplify the use of these themes. I argue that heroism is a socially and historically constructed trope that defines the journey of the protagonist (typically, of a male "hero"), whereas bravery lies in individual acts of courage and determination in the face of danger. This line of argument is undertaken by conducting a formal and textual analysis of *Coraline*, providing ample references to the heroism and bravery of its protagonist, to highlight further how the novel helps its young readers deal with the realities of the world they live in.

Keywords: bravery, children's literature, fantasy literature, hero's journey, Neil Gaiman

> Because when you're scared but you still do it anyway, *that's* brave.
> – Neil Gaiman, *Coraline* (2002, p. 57)

Introduction

Heroism and Bravery are themes that are aplenty in fantasy literature. The protagonists of the stories that involve adventure of any kind are sometimes referred to as "heroes" (and *some*times, "heroines") in common parlance. The heroic acts of the protagonist, and the bravery they showcase often move and compel the readers deeply. Moreover, most readers hold these protagonists in high esteem, creating fan bases for the texts themselves. *Coraline* (2002), by renowned fantasy fiction writer Neil Gaiman, is one such book where the heroism and bravery of the protagonist have moved several readers, no matter if they are young or old. Gaiman claims in the foreword of the tenth-anniversary addition of *Coraline* that people confided in him even after ten years since the book was first published, about how *Coraline* helped them get through difficult times in their lives. They claimed to think of the lovable protagonist Coraline when they were scared, which helped them make the right decision (Gaiman, 2002, p. xvii). The themes of heroism and bravery are powerful in affecting the readers' emotions and actions. It therefore becomes important to closely study these themes in the text *Coraline*.

This paper sets out to define the themes of "heroism" and "bravery" in literature, and thereby differentiate between these two terms. The paper also locates these themes in the primary text, Gaiman's *Coraline*, and assesses the relevance of Heroism and Bravery in the text. For this argument, *Coraline* is understood to be a work of Fantasy literature, unless mentioned otherwise. It is therefore within the genre of Fantasy literature that the two terms are being defined. Moreover, the history and function of the use of these themes in Fantasy literature is also drawn out to understand their use in *Coraline*.

Theory and Application
To be Heroic

The protagonist (historically, this has often been a male character) of a story with any sort of adventure is referred to as a hero in common parlance. Heroism then becomes the qualities possessed by the hero in the story. It is defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as displaying "heroic conduct especially as exhibited in fulfilling a high purpose or attaining a noble end" (n.d.). Heroism is necessarily tied to a narrative arc; it is the characteristic of the one *fulfilling a purpose* or *attaining a noble end*. The character of the "hero" is constructed in binary opposition to a villain, "whose wrongdoings are demonized and who are rejected by the community" (Ionoaia, 2020, p. 382). The term "Heroism" is heavily connected to society and its cultural aspect as well. Prominent American writer and professor, Joseph John Campbell (1904–1987) describes the concept of a hero in one of his renowned books, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). According to Campbell, every myth can be summarized by "The Hero's Journey" where a hero undergoes a journey that is similar in structure across cultures. "The Hero's Journey" or a "Monomyth" according to Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) follows the path of "separation – initiation – return":

> A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder (x): fabulous forces are encountered and a decisive victory is won (y): the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man (z). (1949, p. 23)

All mythical stories, and thus most of the stories we write and read, follow this pattern around the protagonist, or the "hero". The stories of Christ, Krishna, Buddha, and even characters from Star Wars follow the Monomyth (1988). While Campbell simply describes the structure followed by most myths, writers and creators have also adopted the structure as a prescribed journey for the hero's journey. George Lucas, for instance, is known to have built the narrative for Star Wars based on this monomyth (1988).

While Literature and Cultural Studies look at Heroism as a structured path that is followed by individuals, Psychology as a discipline defines Heroism as "to act in a prosocial manner despite personal risk" (Franco et al., 2011, p. 99) at a surface level. However, according to Zeno E. Franco, Kathy Blau, and Philip G. Zimbardo in a paper titled "Heroism: A Conceptual Analysis and Differentiation Between Heroic Action and Altruism" (2011), Heroism is contradictory in nature, making the act of heroism compelling and moving to the audience: "Heroism is a social attribution, never a personal one; yet the act itself is often a solitary, existential choice. It is historically, culturally and situationally determined" (p. 99). Heroism is also determined by antecedents to the heroic act. The paper states that "the construct of heroic imagination

is central to our view of heroism" (p. 100). Therefore, in fantasy literature, the protagonists of the stories become "heroic" when the path followed by them is that of the Hero's Journey described by Joseph Campbell.

In Gaiman's *Coraline*, the protagonist Coraline faces this very journey of heroism. Her journey has been studied in existing literature as one that transforms her into a self-reliant (Shrestha, 2022), mature young adult (Al Haqi, 2020, p. 6), through which she overcomes the dilemmas of the self (Lalhmangaihi, 2017) to allow for a self-discovery (Alkiş, 2021). A formal analysis of the narrative structure of this novel, based upon the hero's journey arc provided by Campbell, shows that Coraline encounters the "separation phase" as she is brought into an unfamiliar space. She is taken away from her sense of comfort – or as Campbell phrases – "world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder" (1949, p. 23). She has to maneuver her way around strangers like Miss Spink, Miss Forcible, and Mr. Bobo, who was known to her then as the Crazy Old Man Upstairs. Since her parents are too busy to explore this unfamiliar space with her, she is on her own (ch. 1). On crawling through the big wooden door at the end of the drawing room, Coraline finds herself in a strange world – "a region of supernatural wonder" (p. 6). Even when she returns to her not-so-familiar space, her parents are gone, thus forcing Coraline to revisit the Other World.

The second phase, "initiation," begins with the exploration of this strange other World, along with her trusty sidekick, the black cat. The cat plays an important role as a companion and guide of the protagonist through her adventure in the Other World (Azzahra & Jatmiko, 2023, p. 59). Coraline returns to the other world to bring her parents back, and befriends children whose souls were trapped by the Other Mother. She convinces the Other Mother to play a game with her to save all these souls along with her parents. These events are nothing short of "fabulous forces" that mythical heroes encounter. Through the course of the book, Coraline manages to find the souls and bring them back to the familiar world.

The final "return" phase can be considered quite plainly the return of Coraline, her parents, and the lost souls, away from the Other Mother or the bedlam, as the children call her. Coraline's parents seemed unaware of the two days' worth of adventure Coraline went through to rescue them. The lost souls, however, were given the "boon" of freedom with their souls being rescued. One of these children, who was a winged girl says, "It is over and done with for *us*…This is our staging post. From here, we three will set out for unchartered lands, and what comes after no one alive can say" (p. 142). While Coraline still has some unfinished business with the Other Mother, by saving the souls of these children, she bestowed upon them the boon of freedom to explore spaces as she herself could. Moreover, by locking up the hand of the Other Mother in the abandoned well, Coraline ensured that the Other Mother would not be able to return; Coraline as a hero ensured the safety of others from this evil being.

Moreover, the heroism of Coraline is not an isolated event; her father's act of bravery in the past works as the antecedent to her heroism. Her father's sacrifice of being stung by wasps to let her escape (pp. 55–57) became the framework for her act of heroism. It is this act of Coraline that is highly compelling to the readers: "She took her first step down the dark corridor." (p. 57).

To be Brave

While it has been established in this paper that the character of Coraline is characterized as a hero, it is also fairly clear in the course of the book that *bravery* is an important theme in the plot of the novel. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Bravery as "the quality or state of having or showing mental or moral strength to face

danger, fear, or difficulty" (n.d.). Neil Gaiman talks about the theme of bravery in the preface of the tenth-anniversary addition of *Coraline*:

> I'd wanted to write a story for my daughters that told them something I wished I'd known when I was a boy: that being brave didn't mean you weren't scared. Being brave meant that you were scared, really scared, badly scared, and you did the right thing anyway (p. xvii).

Moreover, this idea of bravery is redefined in the course of the novel as well, as Coraline's father repeats it. Coraline clearly remembers her father saying that he was not brave to stay back and get stung by the wasps, but he was brave to go back there to find his glasses when he was scared. The element of fear is highlighted, along with the courageous action in this definition of bravery.

The act of bravery is therefore more individualized than that of heroism; bravery does not require social attribution like with heroism. As bravery deals with actions in the face of danger, it also is more momentary as compared to heroism. The defined structure of the path of heroism is therefore less focused on individual acts of bravery. Moreover, bravery deals with the "mental and moral strength" in the face of adversity, whereas heroism focuses on the physical victory over the situation as well. Bravery is simply making the right choices, whereas Heroism encompasses bravery, along with the socio-political context of the situation, and also the actions that have a positive impact on the hero's life, and their society as well. The plot of *Coraline* is heavily interwoven with the theme of bravery. Through the course of the book, Coraline faces scary moments, where she is compelled to act in a brave fashion. She reassures herself each time that she is brave, and that she is not frightened. To act in these strange and unfamiliar situations, Coraline draws upon the lessons learned from her parents, whether it is remembering what bravery and making the right choice means, or drawing strength from the encouragement of those around her (Kittredge, 2021, p. 677). These acts of bravery are those that make up the events of the "initiation" phase of the Hero's Journey. In the case of Coraline, the "fabulous forces" encountered are terrifying, and therefore the decisions she takes at these moments showcase her bravery, while these decisions, along with her actions, and the victory at the end add up to her heroism as discussed earlier.

One of the most prominent scenes of her bravery is when she walks back into the Other World to rescue her parents:

> "Don't be silly," said Coraline. "I'm going back for them because they are my parents. And if they noticed I was gone I'm sure they would do the same for me."
> (p. 57)

Coraline had escaped danger and gone back to the safety of her world, but she chose to return to the lap of the Other Mother to rescue her parents. It is at this moment that she needs to choose the right thing to do. Now that she knows the magnitude of evil possessed by the Other Mother, she is aware of the risks involved in going back to the Other World and is frightened as well. Therefore, the bravery of Coraline lies in her decision to go back to save her parents.

Another important moment of bravery demonstrated by Coraline is when she takes it upon herself to save the souls of the children along with her parents. When she realizes that the children's souls have been trapped by the Other Mother, she ensures that she takes them away from the Other Mother. She challenges the Other Mother to a game where her freedom and life are at stake to escape the Other World with her

parents and the little children (pp. 89–90). The little children often advise her to run away from the Other Mother before Coraline herself turns into one of them: lifeless, soulless, and unable to remember her identity. But Coraline sticks to her decision to save everyone before she escapes (pp. 83–85; p. 101). To make this choice in that densely dangerous moment is yet another feat of bravery.

The focus on the individual acts of courage and the determination with which decisions are made despite being afraid invokes and inspires the audience. Just as Coraline is moved by her father's act of bravery, so are the readers by Coraline's actions. This effect is possibly what makes the book powerful enough for its young readers, to make the right decisions even when they are scared (Gaiman, 2002, p. xvii). As Coraline repeats to herself, and therefore to the readers, "*I will be brave*, thought Coraline. *No, I* am *brave*." (p. 59).

Heroism and Bravery as Literary Tropes

It is important to address the trope of Heroism and Bravery in literature to understand the use of such tropes in *Coraline*. The idea of heroism in literature is prevalent in medieval literature. Heroic poems that have been titled Epics have been attributed to the early Middle Ages and what is called "the medieval origins of modern literature" according to William Paton Ker in the book *Epic and Romance: Essays on Medieval Literature* (1957, p. 3). It is known that heroism and heroic bravery are crucial elements that characterize a medieval protagonist. The landmark epic *Beowulf* depicts such a characteristic hero.

According to several scholars, fantasy literature has risen along the lines of medieval literature in some ways. W.A. Senior explores this idea in the paper titled "Medieval Literature and Modern Fantasy: Toward a Common Metaphysic" (1994). According to Senior, fantasy literature borrows several conventions and elements (such as magical beings, prophesies, visions, and so on) from medieval literature (p. 33). Senior writes:

> Fantasy has followed the lead of medieval literature because it explores closely the primal human need for a clear ontology of life and all its mysteries. Each offers a coherent interpretation and explanation of existence which indicates that each life not only has worth but has a value that distinguishes it and allows it individuality and free will as it concomitantly yokes it to the rest of its world; nothing is meaningless or random. Moreover, there is a salvific function to such activity in that the end of most fantasies represents a change into a new era from which the evil or threat of the previous age has been expunged. (pp. 44–45)

It therefore becomes inevitable that fantastic elements of medieval literature, including the characterizations of the protagonist are carried over into the genre of Fantasy as well. The structure of Hero's Journey and attributes of bravery seeps into the "hero" of fantasy literature as well.

Elements of the Medieval Hero can be noticed in the pre-teen girl of Gaiman's book as well. While her father's acts of bravery set an antecedent in the plot of the book, the literary history of medieval heroes set her path to becoming the hero of the work, *Coraline*. We have already seen that Coraline follows the path of a Hero's Journey through the course of this book. However, diverging from a medieval epic, *Coraline* focuses on the ability of the individual (the protagonist, Coraline) to make the right decision in the face of adversity. The attribute of bravery becomes more important to this text than the physical feats of the protagonist herself.

Like any other genre or movement in literature, fantasy too arises as a response to the socio-political context of the world at that given time. It has often been claimed that fantasy literature was conceived to make sense of the world we live in. In an essay titled, "Roots of Fantasy" (1989), collected in his book *A Slip of the Keyboard* (2014), acclaimed fantasy fiction writer Sir Terry Pratchett claims that fantasy "superimposes order on the universe" (p. 95). The magical world of fantasy is relatable to children who are just learning the harsh truths of the world they live in. According to Carmen C. Richardson in a paper titled "The Reality of Fantasy" (1976), works of literature in the genre of fantasy "lend themselves readily to deal with the realities of life" (p. 549), even when the action of the text takes place in a world the readers may not know. By experiencing human emotions without embarrassment and exploring inner conflicts without fear (pp. 550–551), fantasy literature helps the readers – especially children – to experience being a human being:

> Because fantasy takes place in a secondary world, it allows the child to safely explore the problems and joys of being human. It makes abstract mysteries of life more concrete and definable and allows the child to come to grips with them because they are tangible, comprehensible, and, therefore, surmountable. (Richardson, 1976, p. 563)

By setting the text in such a secondary world, the young readers are given the freedom to explore the world they live in using this fantastic world. As Pratchett claimed, the fantastical world superimposes itself on the real world, helping children navigate through the latter.

It is also evident that Gaiman's *Coraline* contains elements of horror fiction as well. The story was conceived by Gaiman as he could not find any horror books for his four-year-old daughter, who used to make up stories about coming home to find her mother replaced by an evil witch. As Gaiman himself confesses in conversation with Teri Hatcher about the making of the film adaptation, "So that was where it began, just wanting to write a story that would be about fear and about doing the right thing and about being brave" (LAIKA Studios, 2020, 4:55–6:06). Gothic elements have also been recognized in this novel (Mudrová, 2022; Torres-Fernández, 2021), situating the text in the horror genre as much as it is in the Fantasy genre. The setting of the book, as well as the use of the "Unheimliche" or "Uncanny" (Freud, 1919), seems to deliberately push *Coraline* towards the genre of horror. The supernatural world that Coraline steps into through that wooden door in her drawing room is her own house but is also clearly different. The Other Mother looks like her own mother, except that her fingers are a little longer, and that she has buttons sewed in the place of her eyes. The misty day filled with boredom in the world of Coraline (Gaiman, 2002, ch. 2) is repeated in the Other World as Coraline tries to escape from the Other Mother (pp. 70–71). Jade Dillon Craig (2023) even argues that the embodiment of the uncanny in the domestic space represents the unsafe physical and psychological environment inhabited by Coraline (pp. 212–223). It is in this unsettling setting that Coraline has to be brave to navigate through during her Hero's Journey.

The function of the tropes of heroism and bravery can also be understood in these contexts. According to Pratchett, in another essay from *A Slip of the Keyboard* titled "Let There Be Dragons" (1993), the morality of the genres of fantasy and horror follows that of fairy tales (2014, p. 105). Making the right decisions in horrific and dangerous situations, doubled with good intentions is morally good, and is therefore rewarded. Young readers of fantasy literature can judge the actions of the characters of the novel in this way, thus giving them a grip on ethics and morality in the real world as

well. Katherine Rundell, in her pocketbook, *Why You Should Read Children's Books, Even Though You are So Old and Wise* (2019), contends that children's books show us what values such as bravery, generosity, will, and hope look like (p. 47). Building upon Rundell's statement, N.J. Lowe (2021) writes, "Bravery, generosity, struggle, endurance, wit, empathy, love: for Rundell, this list is not simply a catechism of universal virtues, but an inventory of values in which readers need to be able to continue to believe as adults to navigate the world for which fiction prepares them" (p. 193). According to Tuğçe Alkiş (2021), "Gaiman's story encourages [young readers] to tear down the walls which block their roads to maturation and individuation and be brave enough to explore the unknown and believe in their power of imagination" (p. 127). The tropes of heroism and bravery, therefore become the language with which the events taking place in the real-life world of the readers as well as within their selves can be understood and explored.

As mentioned earlier, the theme of bravery becomes more important to this text than the physical feats of the protagonist herself. This means that the heroism of the protagonist is secondary to her bravery. This becomes clear in the formal choices made in the text as well. The protagonist – unlike her heroic antecedents – is a young girl. Her physical bravado is not of any relevance to the plot of the book. There is no scope for romance in this text as well. Coraline never even receives the attention a mythical hero musters. Even so, as we have seen, the protagonist follows the Hero's Journey, thus saving herself a seat in the list of literary heroes. Please note the gendered expression of the term "heroes" here. It is within such a male-dominated trope that Coraline makes space for herself.

Coraline is prophesized to be in danger, according to the tea leaves read by her neighbors, Miss Spink and Miss Forcible (Gaiman, pp. 17–19). This reading deems itself true when Coraline loses her parents and faces the wickedness of the Other Mother. It is in such conditions that Coraline demonstrates her bravery. This means that Coraline is depicted as a frightened little girl. Nevertheless, she makes the right decisions each time, informed by her sense of morality and love. It is the individual actions of Coraline that make her brave, as opposed to the structure followed in the case of heroism. According to Melissa Wehler in the paper titled, "'Be Wise. Be Brave. Be Tricky': Neil Gaiman's Extraordinarily Ordinary Coraline" (2014), the ability of Coraline to empathize is crucial for her bravery throughout this book (pp. 118–121). It is her sense of empathy that pushed her to make the right choice each time she was frightened. She chose to save her parents because she loved them and knew that they would have done the same for her (Gaiman, p. 57). Moreover, she risked her life and freedom to save the souls of the trapped children even if she had just met them (pp. 83–85).

Conclusion

Heroism and Bravery are themes common to Fantasy Literature. The use of such themes helps the readers, especially children, deal with the realities of the world they live in, as seen in Gaiman's claims in the foreword to the book. The Hero's Journey traversed by Coraline in the primary text is structured and is heavily dependent on its Fantasy genre antecedents. Through this journey, *Coraline* depicts the theme of heroism. Coraline as an individual exhibits characteristic of bravery by making the right decisions in the face of danger. The characterization of the protagonist in *Coraline*, as well as the plot of the book itself gives importance to the individual acts of bravery of Coraline. As hinted in the paper before, this opens up avenues to study these themes in the context of the gender and age of the protagonist. Nevertheless, it is

important to note that these acts of heroism and/or bravery are compelling to readers, thus satisfying the function of such themes in fantasy literature. The bravery of Coraline is superimposed with the readers' everyday life: "Because when you're scared but you still do it anyway, that's brave" (Gaiman, 2002, p. 57).

References
Al Haqi, A. (2020). *Personality development on the main character of Coraline by Neil Gaiman* [Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Negeri Jakarta]. http://repository.unj.ac.id/10995/.

Alkiş, T. (2021). Deciphering the self and the world through fantasy in Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*. *Romanica Silesiana, 19*(1), 116–128. http://dx.doi.org/10.31261/RS.2021.19.10.

Azzahra, N., & Jatmiko, R. (2022). The significance of the cat as character with moral ambiguity in Neil Gaiman's Coraline. *Lexicon, 10*(2), 51–62. https://doi.org/10.22146/lexicon.v10i2.76426.

Campbell, J. (1949). *The hero with a thousand faces*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Campbell, J., Moyers, B., Flowers, B.S. (1988). *The power of myth*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

Craig, J.D. (2023). Unhomely domestic spaces in Neil Gaiman's Coraline. In E. Spencer & J.D. Craig (Eds.), *Family in children's and young adult literature* (pp. 212–223). New York: Routledge.

Franco, Z. E., Blau, K., & Zimbardo, P. G. (2011). Heroism: A conceptual analysis and differentiation between heroic action and altruism. *American Psychological Association*, *15*(2), 99–113. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022672

Freud, S. (1919). *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud, volume XVII (1917-1919): An infantile neurosis and other works*. London: The Hogarth Press.

Gaiman, N. (2002). *Coraline.* New York: Harper Perennial.

Ionoaia, E.C. (2020). *The hero paradigm in fantasy novels*. Bucharest: Bucharest University Press.

Ker, W.P. (1957). *Epic and romance: Essays on medieval literature*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

Kittredge, K. (2021). The girl-hero for the new millennia: Alice's great-great-granddaughters in post-gender fantasy worlds. In R. Bradford (Ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to contemporary British and Irish literature* (pp. 671–681). Bognor Regis: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118902264.ch62

LAIKA Studios. (May 21, 2020). *Coraline | Neil Gaiman and Teri Hatcher Talk Other Mother* [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/kGCb1Yw9vbU?si=KvdcVxbe-ngBIEmN.

Lalhmangaihi, Z. D. (2017). The fantastic as an act of resistance in Neil Gaiman's Coraline and the graveyard book. *Labyrinth: An International Refereed Journal of Postmodern Studies, 8*(2), 48.

Lowe, N. J. (2021). How to become a hero. In K. Marciniak (Ed.), *Our mythical hope* (pp. 193–209). Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Bravery. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bravery.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Heroism. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heroism.

Mudrová, K. (2022). Cognitive literary analysis of Neil Gaiman's Gothic children's novels [Master's thesis, Univerzita Karlova V Praze]. http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11956/176202.

Pratchett, T. (2014). *A slip of the keyboard: Collected non-fiction*. New York: Doubleday.

Richardson, C.C. (1976). The reality of fantasy. *Language Arts*, *53*(5), 549–551. www.jstor.org/stable/41404203.

Rundell, K. (2019). *Why you should read children's books, even though you are so old and wise*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Senior, W.A. (1994). Medieval literature and modern fantasy: Toward a common metaphysic. *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, *3*(3/4), 32–49. www.jstor.org/stable/43308195.

Shrestha, S. (2022). *Coralin's metamorphosis into the self-reliant girl: Reading Neil Gaiman's Coraline* [Master's thesis, Tribhuvan University]. TUCL eLibrary. https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/handle/123456789/16691.

Torres-Fernández, J.J. (2021). The story of Coraline(s): A gothic coming of age. *REDEN. Revista Española De Estudios Norteamericanos, 3*(1), 20–40. https://doi.org/10.37536/reden.2021.3.1423.

Wehler, M. (2014). "Be wise. be brave. be tricky": Neil Gaiman's extraordinarily ordinary Coraline. In L. M. Campbell (Ed.), *A quest of her own: Essays on the female hero in modern fantasy* (pp. 111–129). North Carolina: McFarland.