Narrative - Part 2

Keynote Version
HIGHER MEDIA

NARRATIVE - PART 2
Narrative: Recap

- Classic Hollywood Narrative (Todorov)
- Chronological / linear (events unfold in order)
- Non-chronological / non-linear (flashback/forward/dream)
- Multiple story-lines / Interwoven story-lines (Propp)
- Fragmentation / Fragmented (jigsaw)
- Episodic story-lines (series)
- Investigation (documentaries)
**Narrative: Delving Deeper**

- Story
- Plot
- Narrative Structures
- Resolution and moral of story
- Conventions used to tell the story
- Codes that affect the narrative
- Audience engagement/hooks
- Narrative theories
**Story vs. Plot...**

**Story:** The actual events that *happen*, in the order they happen (i.e. *the audience’s reconstruction of events*).

**Plot:** The way the creator of the text *arranges* the story (e.g. could use flashback to tell the story). Plot is the *sequence of events* that happen within a text.

*Story* is what we *construct* from the *plot*.

*Plot* is what we have experienced/seen.

This is an important difference and needs to be remembered.
**Story vs. Plot...**

**Plot:** The champ, Apollo Creed, needs a new opponent when his scheduled opponent pulls out due to injury. In a decision of promotional genius, Creed gives a title shot to down-on-his-luck journeyman Rocky Balboa on the country’s 200th anniversary. Rocky goes on to shock the world by going the distance with Creed in a competitive fight.
Story vs. Plot...

**Story**: Rocky, the underdog, overcomes great odds to find love and self-worth in going the distance with the champ.
Michael Corleone, the son of Mafia kingpin Don Vito Corleone, returns home from the war. In a meeting with other mob bosses, Don Corleone refuses to get into the heroin business. Someone attempts to murder Don Corleone who is shot several times in the attempt. Don Corleone’s top man, Tom Hagen, is abducted and an ultimatum is issued to Sonny, the oldest Corleone son. Sonny retaliates by killing the son of another mafia boss.

Michael, the lone Corleone son who stayed away from the family business, volunteers to kill a mob boss and a corrupt cop to avenge his father and succeeds in doing so. Michael is sent to Sicily for his protection and Don Corleone is distraught to learn that Michael has taken up the family business. Sonny is gunned down at a toll booth. Don Corleone meets with the mob bosses and agrees to back the drug trade in an effort to end the mob war.

Michael returns from Sicily and takes over the family business. He promises to his girlfriend Kay that he will legitimate the family business within five years. Michael attempts to get into the casino business and is forced to resort to tactics even more brutal than his father’s to get his way. He also confronts his older brother Fredo, who was passed over because of his weakness, and warns him to never again takes sides with anyone against the family.

Vito passes away from a heart attack. Michael arranges for the murder of the heads of the Five Families. This completes Michael’s rise to power as the new “Godfather” and finishes his revenge against those who attacked his family.
The movie is about the corruption of Michael Corleone as he takes over the family business replacing his father after his death.
SO, JUST HOW MANY STORIES/PLOTS ARE THERE?
In a way, the **plot** is a bit like a domino rally. One thing makes something else happen until we reach the end.
Seven Plots

So, if we cut out all the extra bits from all the stories we know, we will find that there are only 7 different plots that are used in them all…
Seven Plots

Now get ready, because you’re going to find them useful…

HINT: Just copy down the title at the top of each slide, you’ll get a handout with the details!
1: OVERCOMING THE MONSTER

A terrifying, all-threatening **monster** has been terrorising a community and must be defeated by the **hero**

eg: Shrek
2: RAGS TO RICHES

The story of an ordinary insignificant person, usually overshadowed by someone else, who turns out to have special qualities

eg: Aladdin
3: The Quest

The hero and some companions set out to acquire an important object or to get to a location, facing many obstacles and temptations along the way.

*eg: The Lord of the Rings*
4: Voyage and Return

The hero goes to a strange land and, after overcoming the threats it poses to him or her, returns with nothing but experience.

eg: Alice in Wonderland
5: COMEDY

Light and humorous character(s), with a happy or cheerful ending; often after triumphing over difficult circumstances

eg: Mr Bean
The main character is a villain who falls from grace and whose death is a happy ending (or, sometimes, he or she gets away with their deeds)

eg: Macbeth
7: REBIRTH

During the course of the story, an important event forces the main character to change their ways, often making them a better person.

eg: *Despicable Me*
TASK

Look at your list of stories.

Can you identify which plots they have used?

*Write down at least 3 different examples (give the TITLE of the story and the PLOT it uses).*
THE SEVEN BASIC PLOTS

• The plot of a film is not the same as the narrative structure.

• In his book *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, Christopher Booker outlines the 7 basic plots that he sees as being in all stories.

• His theory took him 34 years to write, and references thousands of stories he read in formulating it.
### The Periodic Table of Storytelling

**Chart by ComputerSherpa**

Special thanks to Elle, Micah, and the rest of the Troopers for inspiration.

Thanks to Madrugada, Jack Alsworth, ~fourillows, and KicksOtherSon for corrections.

Permalink for this chart: goo.gl/yvSM4

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#### Structure

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<tr>
<td>Tri</td>
<td>Stw</td>
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#### Settting, laws, plots

- **C**: Conflict, laws, plots
- **3as**: An Aesop
- **Re**: The Reveal
- **Cmx**: The Climax
- **Den**: The Denouement
- **Chk**: Checkers
- **Mcg**: MacGuffin
- **Bks**: Backstory
- **Ret**: Retcon
- **Arc**: Arc
- **Rar**: Romance
- **Tri**: Trilogy

#### Story modifiers

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#### Plot devices

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#### Heroes

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<tr>
<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ah</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Sh</td>
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<td>Re</td>
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<td>Mal</td>
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<td>Fl</td>
<td>Flamboyant</td>
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<td>Le</td>
<td>League</td>
<td>Mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri</td>
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#### Villains

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<td>Stw</td>
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#### Archetypes

- **Heroes**: The hero, the anti-hero, the shapeshifter, the clock, the berserker, the redhead, the flamboyant, the muggle, the obstructive, the league, the trilogy, the trilogy

#### Metatropes

- **Production**
- **Audience**
- **Fandom**

#### Trope Subtropes

- **Call to Adventure**: Subtropes include:
  - Adventure Rebuff
  - Burning Building Rescue
  - The Call Has Bad Reception
  - The Call Knows Where You Live
  - The Call Left a Message
  - The Call Put Me on Hold
  - Call Reception Area
  - Desperately Looking For A Purpose In Life
  - Forgot The Call
  - Got The Call On Speed Dial
  - I'm Dying, Please Take My MacGuffin
  - Ignoring Of The Call
  - Jumped At The Call
  - Missed The Call
  - Red Pill Blue Pill
  - Refusal Of The Call
  - Refused By The Call
  - Regular Caller
  - Resigned To The Call
  - Screening The Call
  - Take Up My Sword
  - Two Roads Before You

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#### Chart Information

- **Production**
- **Audience**
- **Fandom**

#### Trope List

- **T**: Trope
- **Ls**: Lamplight
- **Tru**: Truth
- **Rr**: Reality
- **Rt**: Rose
- **Et**: Epileptic Trees
- **Vam**: Vampires Are More
- **Dlp**: Dripping In Leather Pants
- **Xm**: Xmas
- **Wog**: Word of God

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#### Credits

- **Can**: Canon
- **Fan**: Fanon
- **Sho**: Shout
- **Sus**: Suspect
- **Doubt**: Suspension of Disbelief

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#### Author

- **Chart by ComputerSherpa**

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#### Acknowledgments

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#### Permalink

goo.gl/yvSM4
NARRATIVE STRUCTURES
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- **Narrative** plays an important part in our lives.
- **Narrative** acts as an *organising principle* that allows us to make sense of the world.
- **Narrative** also has the potential to *shape and influence our behaviour* (take sides).
- **Narrative** allows people within media to shape and organise sometimes random and incoherent events into a *logical form that the audience can understand*. 
RECAP:

NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

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<table>
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<td>Woody Allen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memento</td>
<td>Christopher Nolan</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pulp Fiction</td>
<td>Quentin Tarantino</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babel</td>
<td>Alejandro G. Iñárritu</td>
<td>France/USA/Mexico</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Star Wars: The Force Awakens</td>
<td>J.J. Abrams</td>
<td>USA</td>
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