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successful stories revolve around characters that are not overly sympathetic, because of some of their thoughts or actions, yet characters the audience still finds compelling.

said to be about a character with whom the audience has some measure of sympathy, who strongly wants something that is very difficult, yet possible, to achieve.

are: 1. the story is about somebody with whom we have some empathy, 2. this somebody wants something very badly, 3. this something is difficult, but possible to do, get, or achieve

maximum emotional impact and audience participation in the proceedings, 5. the story must come to a satisfactory ending (which does not necessarily mean a happy ending).

middle, and end, and the reason we employ a three act structure is that it is the simplest to understand and it most closely adheres to the phases of an audience's experience of a story.

The first act gets the audience involved with the characters and the story.

The second act keeps it involved and heightens its emotional commitment to the story.

The third act wraps up the story and brings the audience's involvement to a satisfactory end.

something that viewers are consciously aware of, though they feel the emotional shifts that come with pivotal changes in the story.

film and no clear-cut changes of act, as there are in most plays. This enables a film story to be told as a continuum, on and on until the end, without stopping, without looking back.

The first act introduces the audience to the world of the story and its principal characters. It also sets up the main conflict around which the story will be built.

elaborates in ever greater detail and intensity on those difficulties, the obstacles to the character achieving the goal.

Subplots in the story are developed largely in the second act.

In the third act, the main story (the central character's story), and the subplots are all resolved in differing ways, but all with some send of finality, and that the conflict is over).

world of a story derives from two sources: the nature of the central character (in most films) and the nature of the storyteller.

around a single central character, the protagonist. The antagonist of a story is the opposing force, the "difficulty" that actively resists the protagonist's efforts to achieve the goal. These two opposing forces form the conflict(s) of the story.

a story with an outside antagonist helps make the protagonist a more complex and interesting human being.

An external source of conflict in a story where the main conflict is essentially internal helps make the two sides of the character visible, palpable, and with lives of their own.

It is far better to give the audience a peek at the inner life of a character through his or her actions.

present in both scenes, is really unnecessary for our understanding of the actions, the characters, and the outcome.

Reliance on objective drama usually leaves the audience bored and uninterested within a short time.

A film that relies on subjective drama can also lull the audience with a dearth of identifiable and anticipatable danger, a sense of uneventful safety.

For most stories, a combination of objective and subjective drama is most effective.

There are three kinds of time in a film story: real time, screen time, and time frame.

Real time is the time an action actually takes – the four minutes it takes a world-class runner to run a mile.

Screen time is the time the depiction of an action takes up on screen – perhaps the first thirty seconds, another ten seconds in the middle of the race, and the last fifteen seconds of it, edited together with shots of a significant sheering fan in between for a total of about a minute.

The time frame is a deadline or an end to an action that the audience can anticipate, in the race it is the finish line, the moment the audience knows the race is leading up to and when the action is over.

Most scenes take place in real time which is the actions we see on screen taking the same amount of time as those same actions would take in real life.

An ellipsis is the skipping over of time without shocking the audience.

Prolonging the time beyond what it would realistically take to do something is called elaboration.

Real time has been elaborated upon for dramatic impact. Slow motion is sometimes used for the same reason, to prolong our experience of an important moment.

Most major ellipses are done between scenes.

Time frame is a device the storyteller uses to help the audience store up its emotional energy for he important moments by letting them know there is a deadline or some moment when a crucial action must be completed.

Some films have a time frame set from their title on, others are only established within the story, often at the end of the first act, and still others never have an overall time frame, no deadline.

For a filmmaker to achieve his or her goals with a narrative film, one essential ingredient is to keep the audience members in their seats, paying attention to the story and caring about the outcome and characters, and this is all called participation.

Drama requires an emotional response from audience members in order to exist.

The key to keeping the audience from guessing ahead is not to keep members in the dark about what might happen, but to make it believe that maybe their hopes will come about, but that fears are just as likely to happen.

<u>Creating Characters</u>

Character development requires a character arc as a tool audience members can reflect upon to determine the maturation of the character(s) as the story progresses.

Characters define themselves through actions, dialogue, deeds, and intentions. Keep in mind that characters may say something and do other things, and their needs may be contradictory or conflict with each other.

A protagonist is the pivotal character whose specific desire drives the story.

An antagonist is the human obstacle for the protagonist who must be as strong, if not stronger, than the protagonist to pose a viable threat.

When creating a character, the first consideration is to construct a feasible biography.

BIOGRAPHICAL INCLUSIONS

Name
Where he/she is from
What he/she does professionally
Physicality
Demographics
Psychological Make-Up
Idiosyncrasies
Unique Qualities
Background
Likes / Dislikes
Present Circumstances
Goals
(AVOID STEREOTYPES)