

Narrative -

Part 1

Keynote Version



Key Aspect: **Narrative**

Higher Media

NARRATIVE

- This key aspect looks at the way stories and messages in media are **shaped** or **structured**.
- By examining **narrative structures**, **codes** and **conventions**, you will begin to plan how to shape your own text(s).
- When we watch a film/television programme/film trailer/advert, we are caught up in the **story** (*the narrative*) that it is telling and accept everything that happens on the screen as natural.

NARRATIVE

- In fact, everything that we see has been **carefully** chosen and **arranged** to ***appear*** natural (although not always as some film-makers deliberately set out to create an ***unrealistic*** narrative).
- Despite the fact that there are many different types of stories, **all narratives share certain common qualities**. That is, there is an *underlying structure* that can be examined and analysed in each moving-image text.

setzen

NARRATIVE

STRUCTURES

CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD NARRATIVE

Equilibrium (*normality*)



Disequilibrium (*disruption of normality*)



Process/Quest



Resolution



Return to Equilibrium (*normality*)
or **New Equilibrium** – Tzvetan
Todorov

e.g. Independence Day



TODOROV'S MODEL OF NARRATIVE THEORY

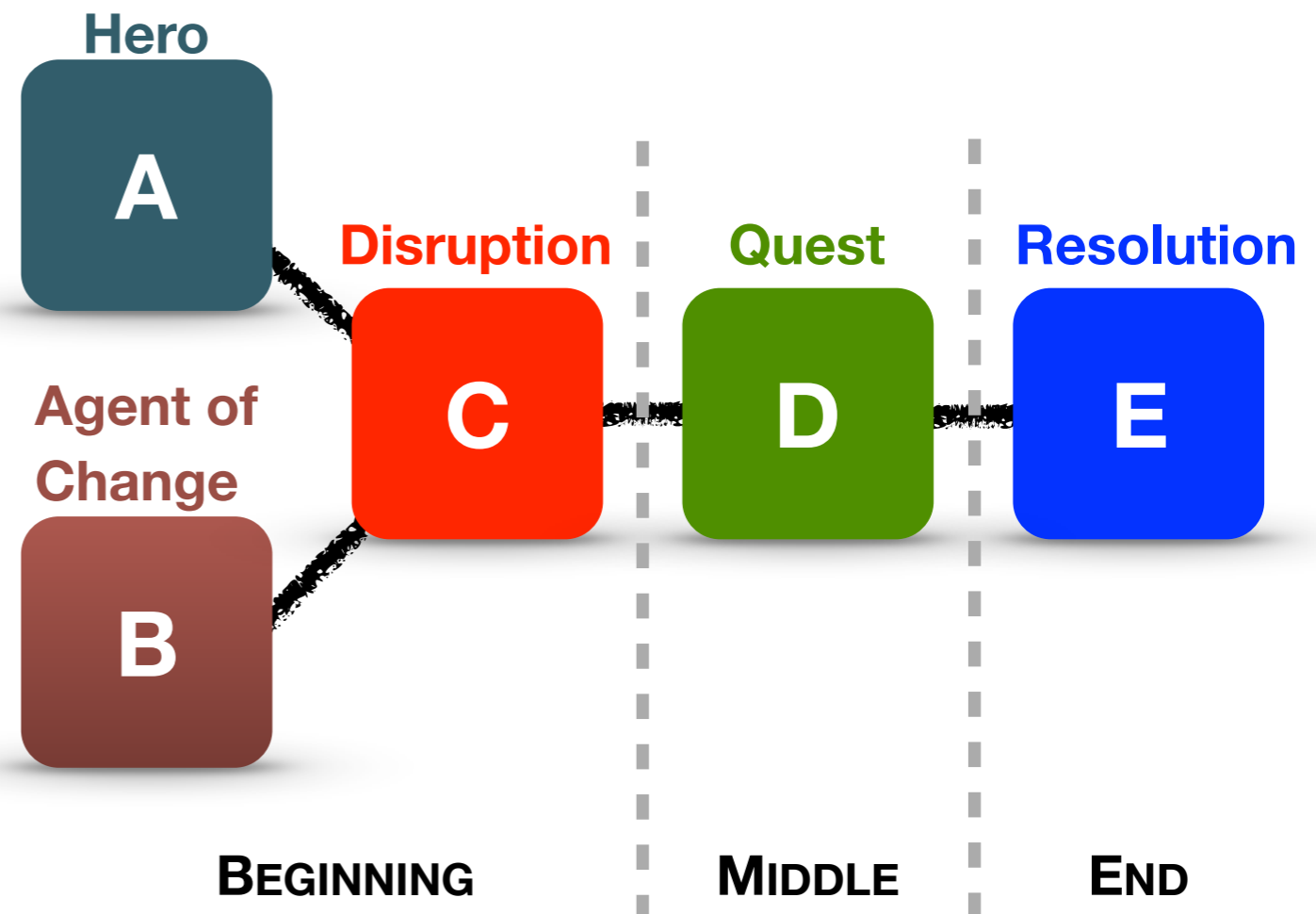
Tzvetan Todorov was a very smart French-Bulgarian who spotted that an awful lot of stories follow a similar pattern.

Todorov said that lots of stories have the following things:

- A. a Hero
- B. an Agent of Change
- C. a Disruption
- D. a Quest
- E. a Resolution

What this means is that the hero(A) has a disruption or problem(C) that is caused by an agent of change(B). The story ends when the disruption is resolved(E), and most of the story will be a quest or journey(D) to solve the disruption. A quick example might help explain this. Can you identify this film:

A big fish(B) is eating people(C) and this is causing the Chief of Police(A) a problem. He chases the fish(D) and kills it(E), thus resolving the problem.



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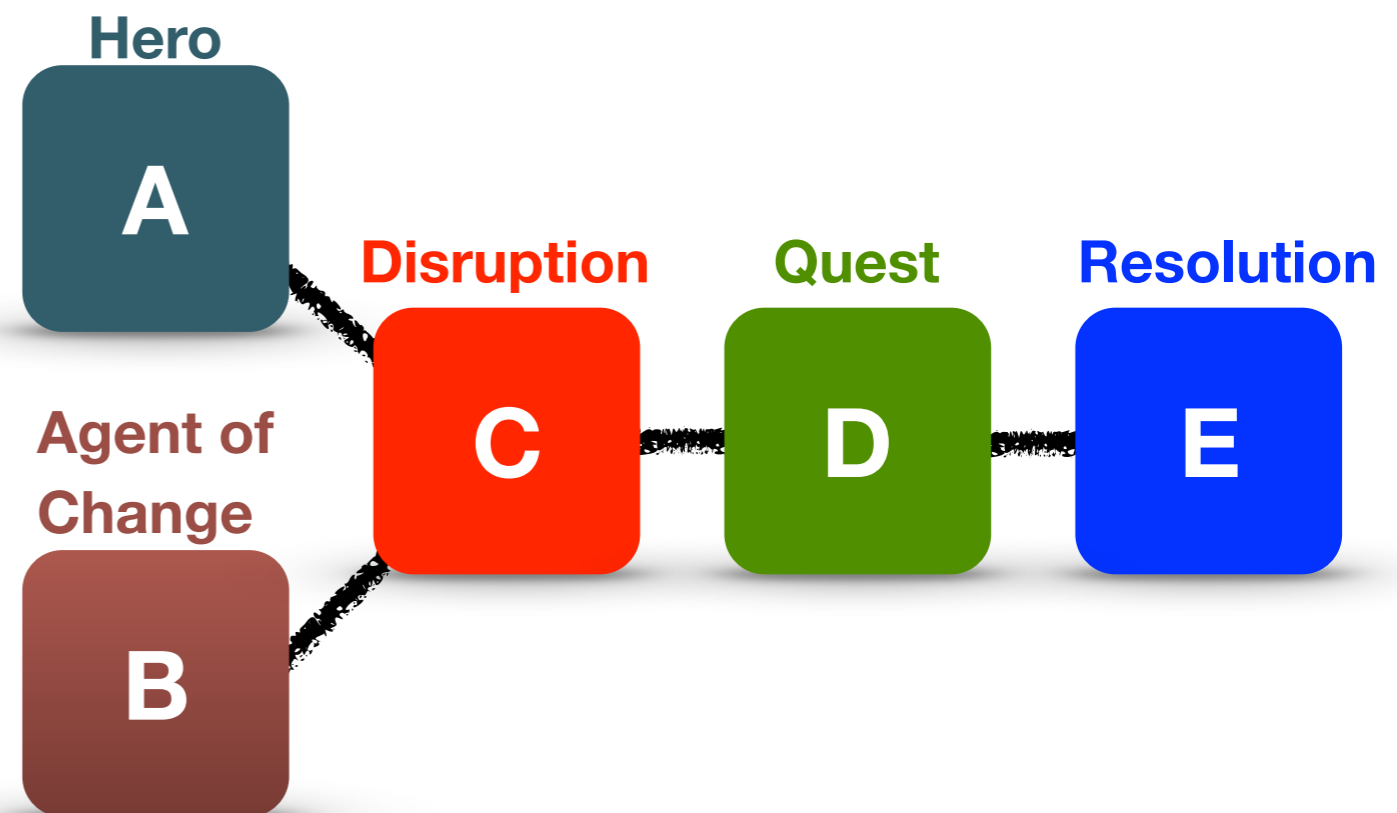
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Now, can you do a similar exercise for these well known stories?

Snow White, E.T., Shrek...

Keep watching out for this structure when you read other stories or see other films... you will spot it!

CHRONOLOGICAL

Chronological or linear –

events unfold in order (beginning, middle, end)

e.g. Cloverfield



NON- CHRONOLOGICAL

Non-chronological or non-linear

flashback/forward/dream

eg: Citizen Kane,
Kill Bill Vol. 1 & 2,
One Hour Photo,
Lost



MULTIPLE STORYLINES

Multiple story-lines or Interwoven story-lines

draws upon Vladimir Propp's*
character driven narrative

e.g. Game of Thrones

**You'll be learning about Propp before
the week is out!*

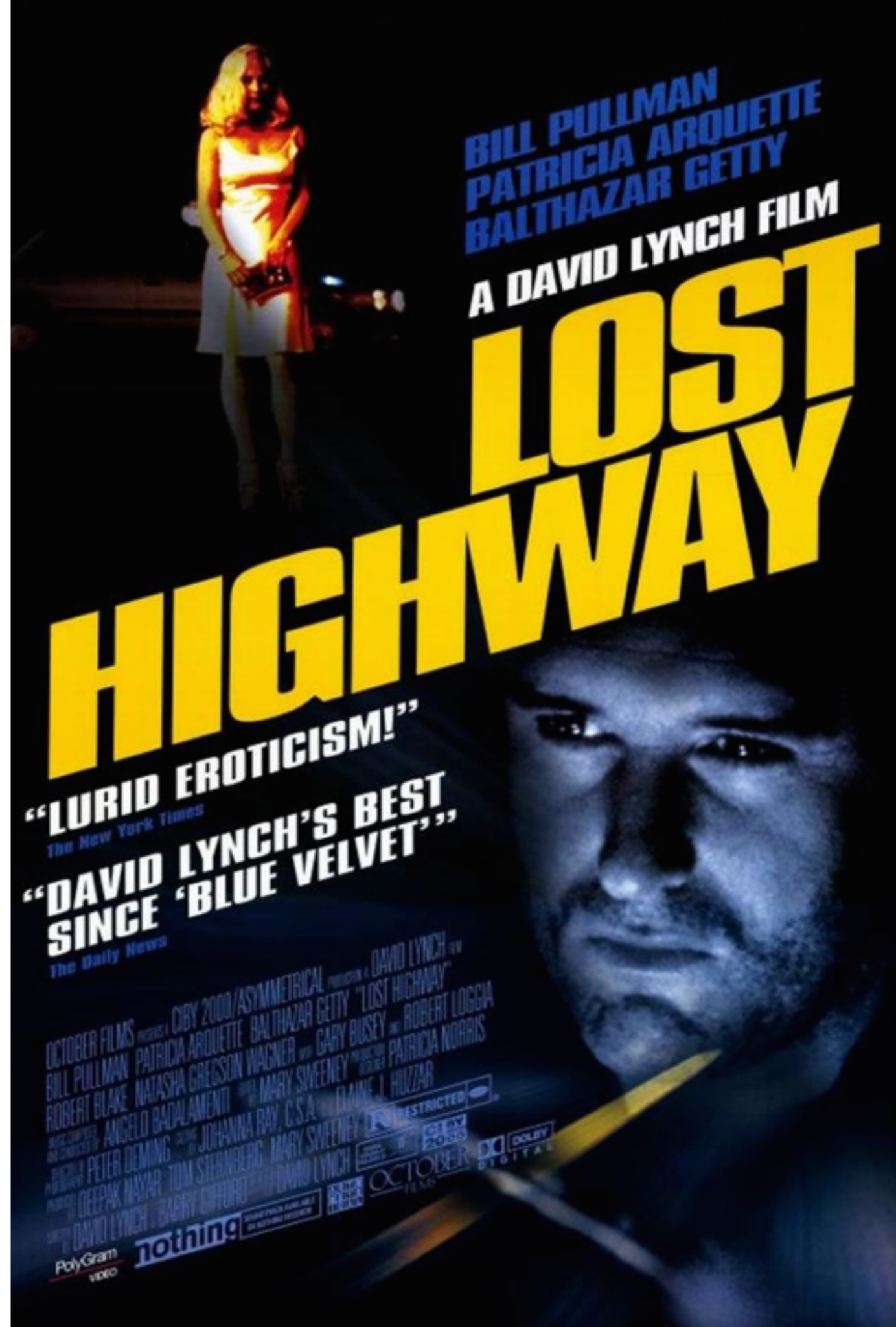


FRAGMENTATION

Fragmentation or Fragmented

narrative that needs to be pieced together, like a jigsaw puzzle, in-order to make sense

eg: Lost Highway

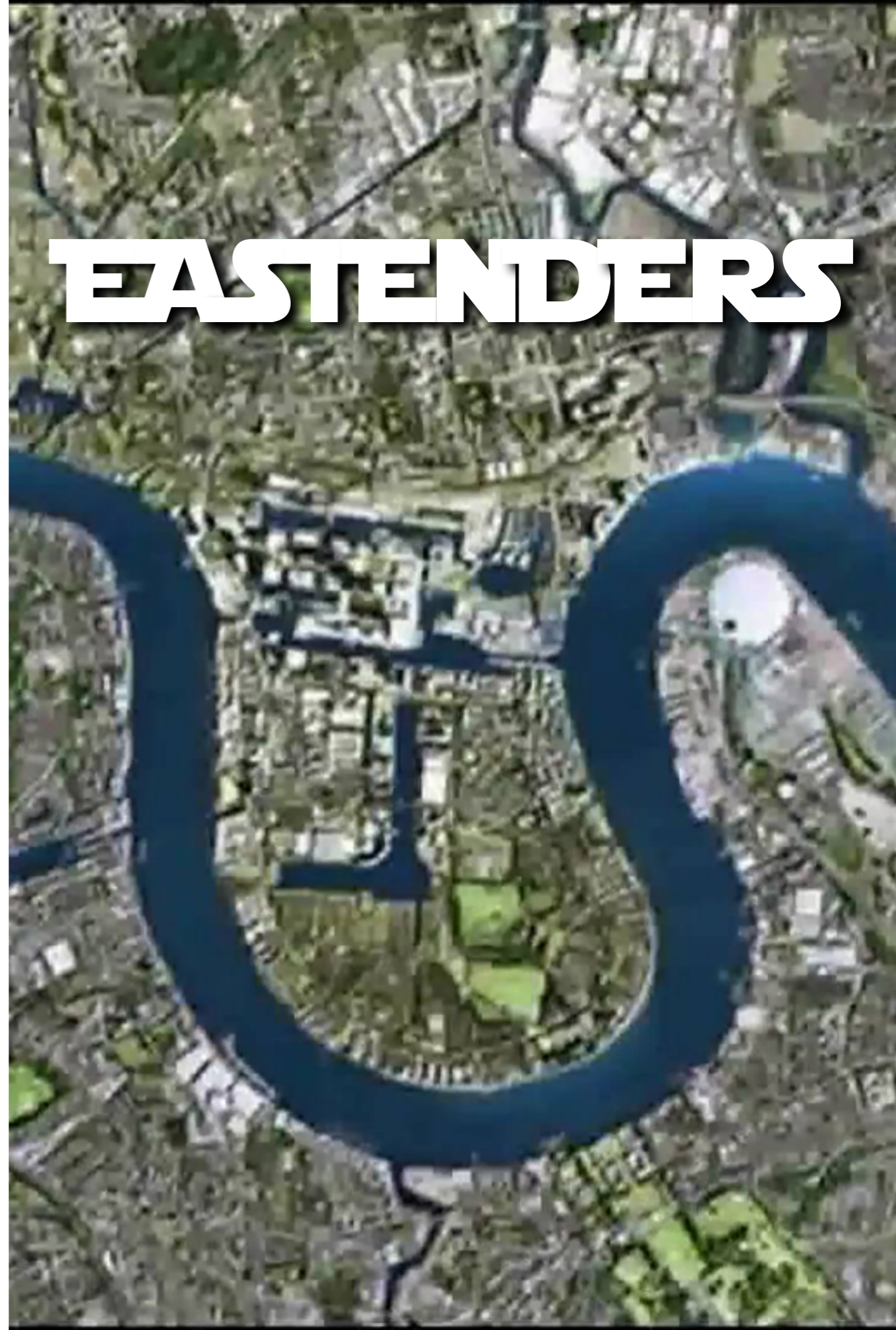


EPISODIC STORY-LINES

Episodic story-lines

TV serial and series, film trilogies/
franchises

eg: Eastenders, Star Wars



INVESTIGATION

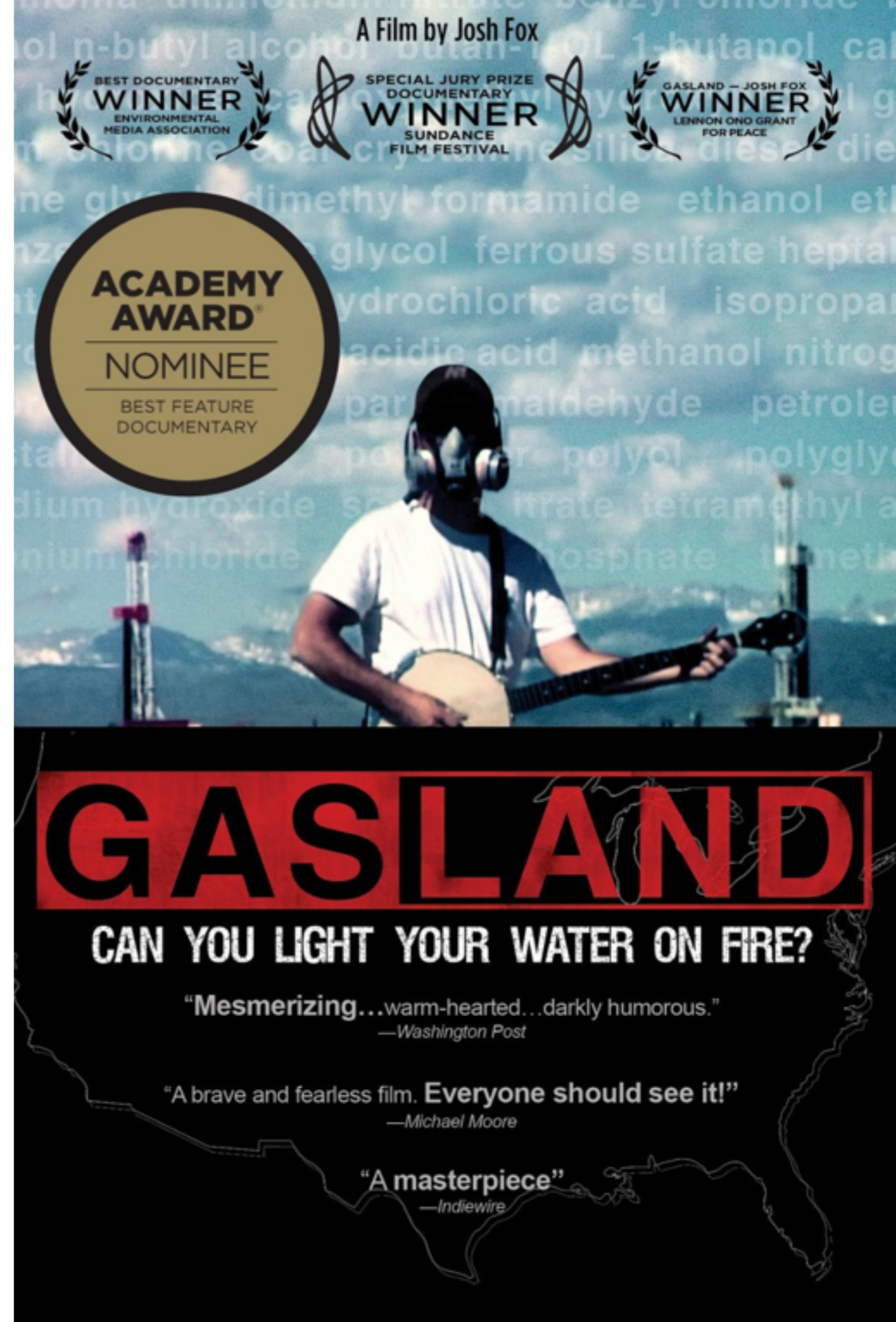
Investigation

interview, observation,
presentation of data

non-fiction documentaries using
real life

eg: *Gasland*

POM Wonderful presents...



RECAP: 7 NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

- **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*)