# Narrative - Part 2
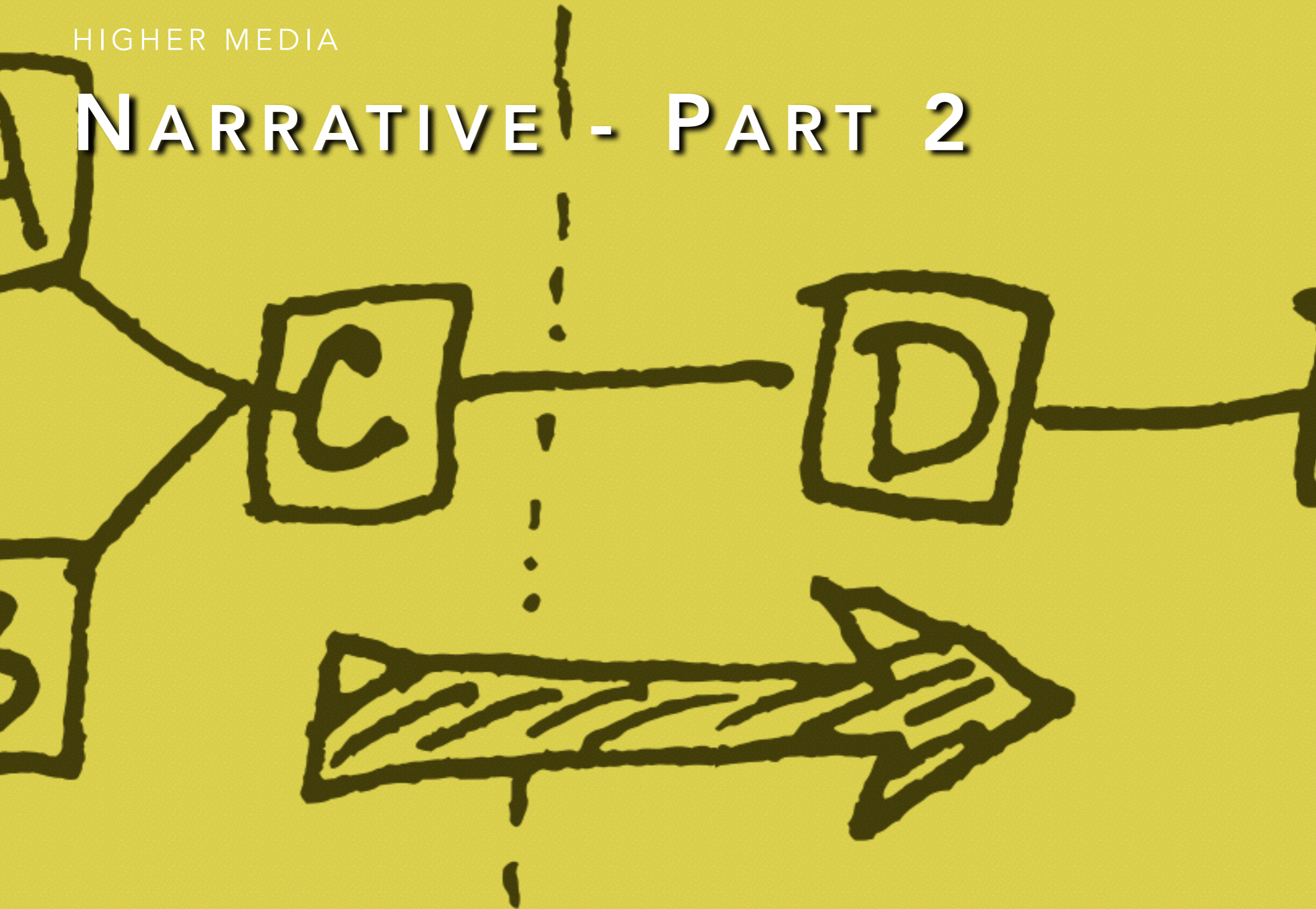
*Keynote Version*

# 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.

His whole life was a million-to-one shot.

# ROCKY

ROBERT CHARTOFF · IRWIN WINKLER · JOHN G. AVILDSEN · SYLVESTER STALLONE ... "ROCKY"

TALIA SHIRE · BURT YOUNG · CARL WEATHERS · BURGESS MEREDITH · SYLVESTER STALLONE

IRWIN WINKLER ... ROBERT CHARTOFF · JOHN G. AVILDSEN · GENE KIRKWOOD · BILL CONTI

United Artists
A Transamerica Company

# Story vs. Plot...

**Story**: Rocky, the underdog, overcomes great odds to find love and self-worth in going the distance with the champ.



His whole life was a million-to-one shot.

# ROCKY

ROBERT CHARTOFF·IRWIN WINKLER · JOHN G. AVILDSEN · SYLVESTER STALLONE ... "ROCKY"
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# Plot

- 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 legitimize 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.
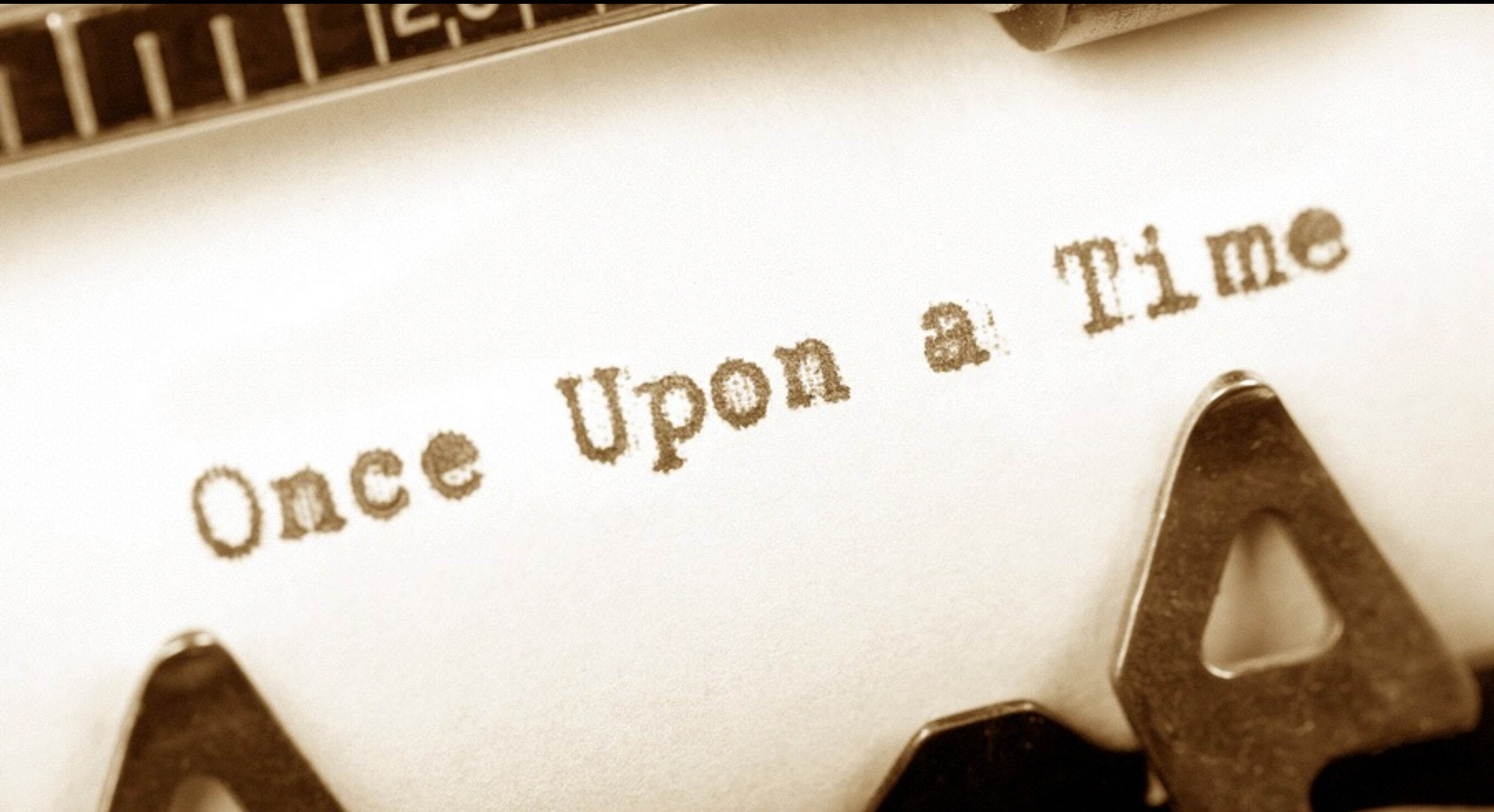
The Godfather®

• The movie is about the corruption of Michael Corleone as he takes over the family business replacing his father after his death.

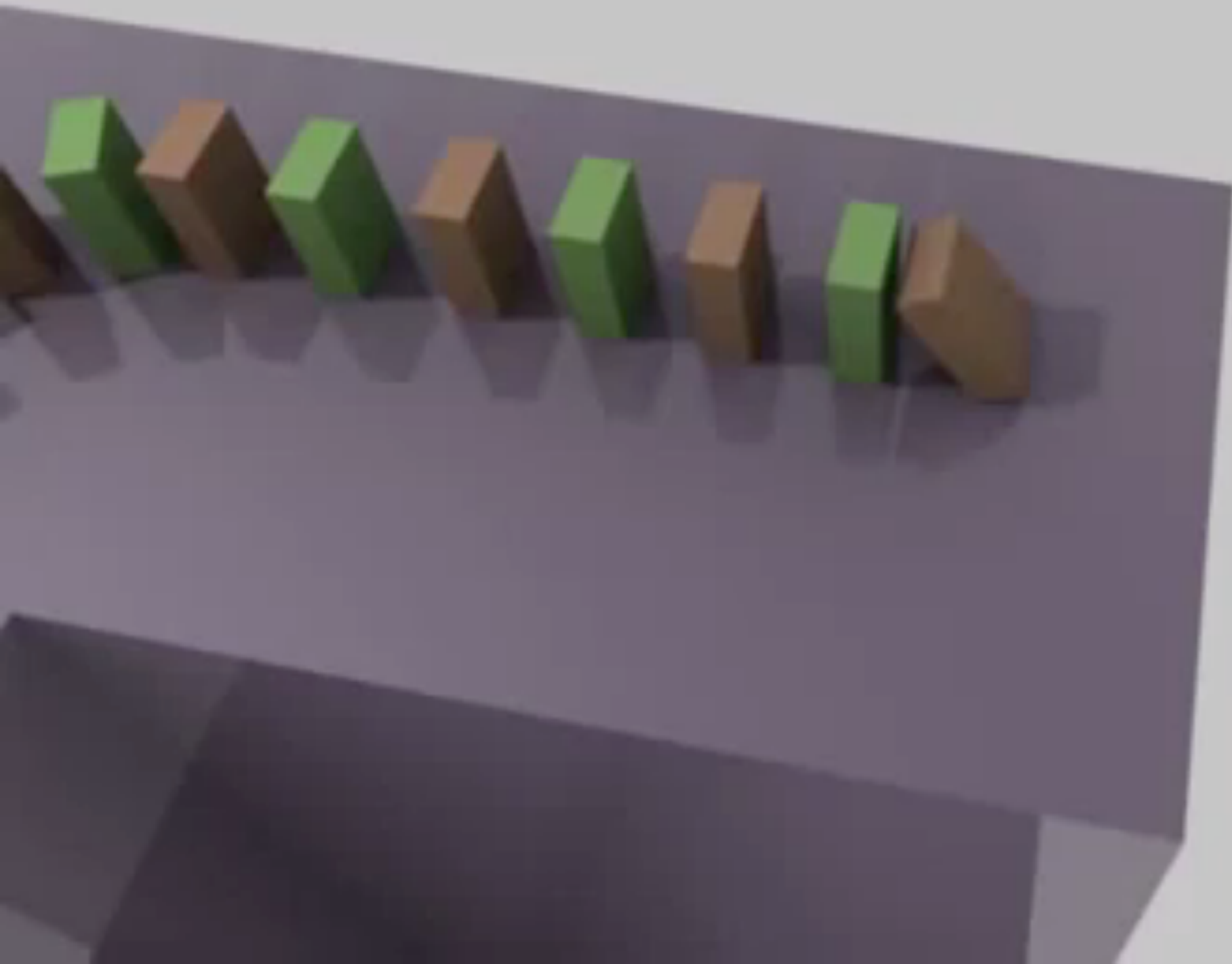# SO, JUST HOW MANY STORIES/ PLOTS ARE THERE?

7

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…

7

# 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!*

7

# 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
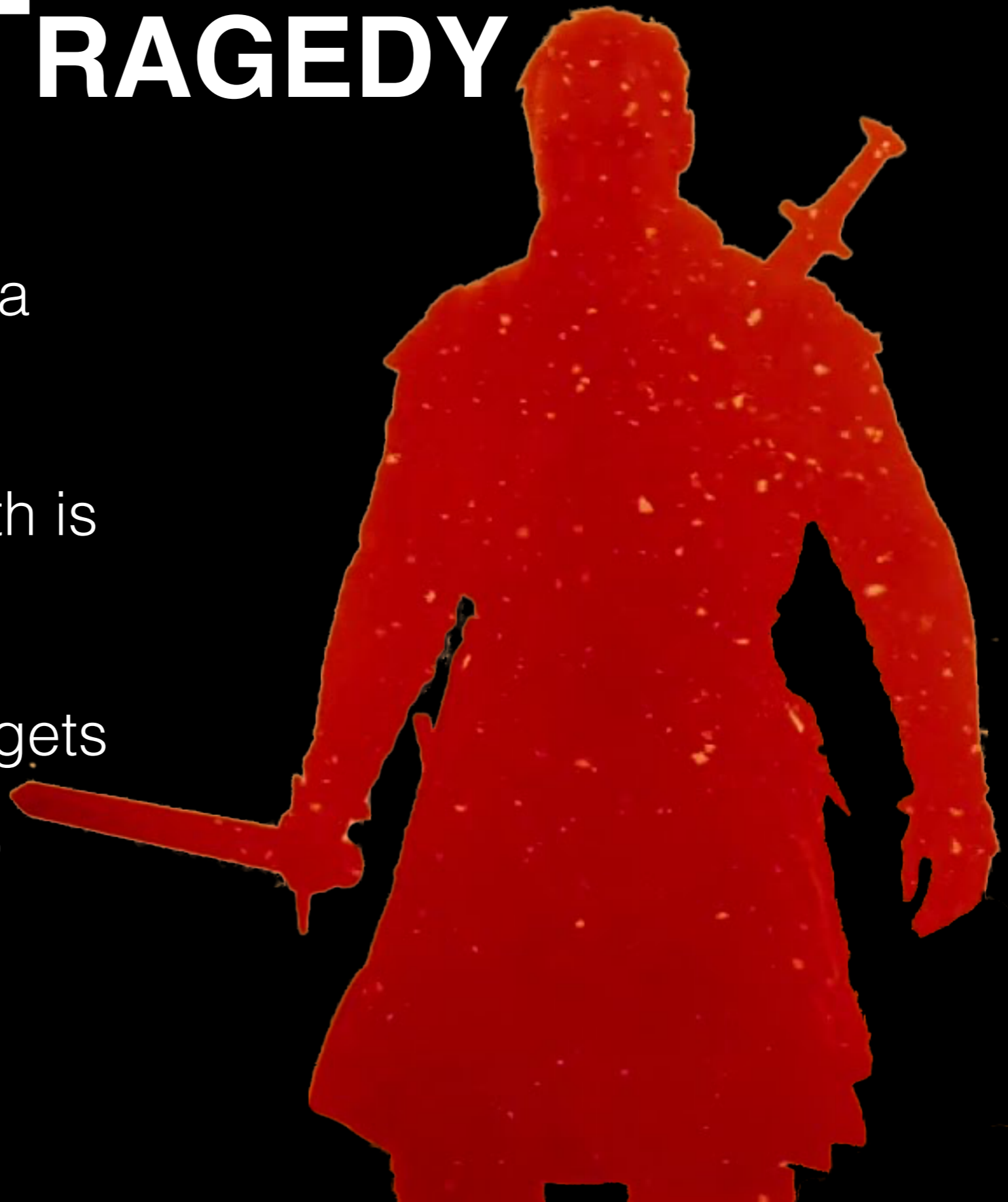
**eg:** *Mr Bean*

# 6: TRAGEDY

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.

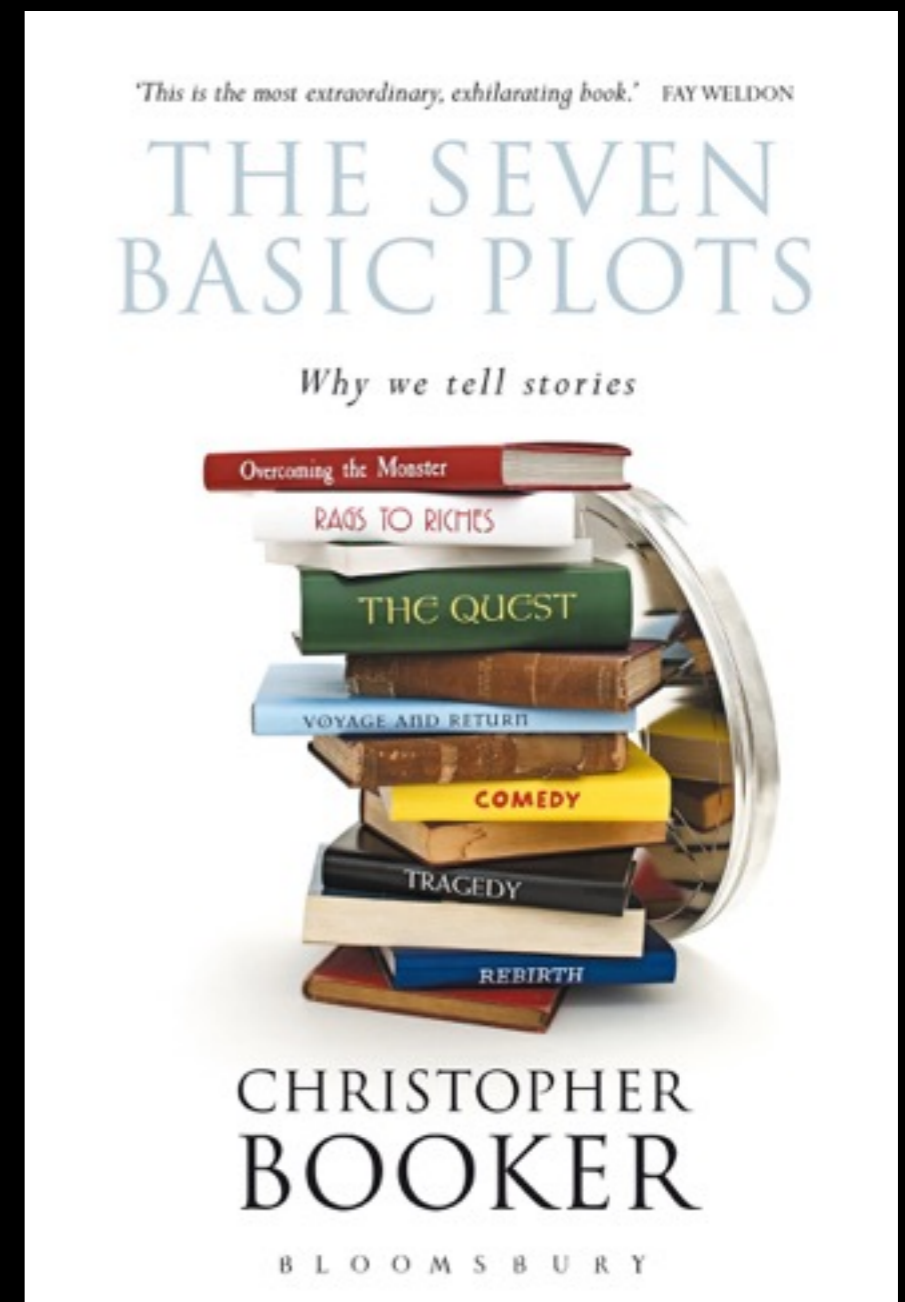**eg:** *Despicable Me*

# 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.



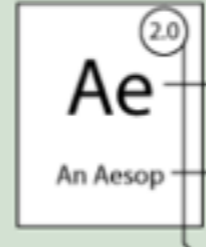'This is the most extraordinary, exhilarating book.' FAY WELDON

THE SEVEN BASIC PLOTS

Why we tell stories

Overcoming the Monster
RAGS TO RICHES
THE QUEST
VOYAGE AND RETURN
COMEDY
TRAGEDY
REBIRTH

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER

BLOOMSBURY

# The Periodic Table of Storytelling

**Legend:**
- Ae (2.0) — Identifier
- An Aesop — Trope name
- Popularity in kilowicks (thousands of links to its page within the wiki)

**"Call to Adventure" primary subtropes:**
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
Ignorant 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

## Structure
- C (.04) — Conflict
- 3as (.03) — Three Act Structure
- Re (2.5) — The Reveal
- Cmx (.03) — The Climax
- Den (.05) — The Dénouement
- End (.06) — The End
- Chk (2.4) — Chekhov's Gun
- Mcg (2.7) — MacGuffin
- Bks (1.5) — Backstory
- Ret (2.6) — Retcon
- Arc (1.1) — Story Arc
- Rar (.05) — Romance Arc
- Tri (1.5)

## Setting, laws, plots
- Ae (2.0) — An Aesop
- Srs (2.7) — Serious Business
- Msq (5.1) — The Masquerade
- Rcy (1.7) — Recycled IN SPACE
- X (1.2) — X Meets Y
- Aa (.53) — Magic A Is Magic A
- Ivc (1.4) — Sliding Scale of Idealism vs. Cynicism
- Sq (1.2) — Status Quo Is God
- Cal (.29) — Call To Adventure
- Rq (.10) — Redemption Quest
- Hj (.16) — The Hero's Journey
- Stw (.26)

## Story modifiers
- Anv (2.0) — Anvilicious
- Bti (5.1) — Beyond The Impossible
- Cl2 (1.5) — Crosses the Line Twice
- Ria (2.1) — Refuge in Audacity
- Dae (3.5) — Darker And Edgier
- Scw (3.8) — Mind Screw
- Aws (2.1) — What Do You Mean, It's Not Awesome?
- Bwb (4.1) — Fanservice
- Cry (7.4) — Tear Jerker
- Ang (1.6) — Wangst
- Jts (.74)

## Plot devices
- Phl (2.3) — Applied Phlebotinum
- Tb (.75) — Techno Babble
- Wav (2.4) — Island Wave
- Dx (1.6) — Deus Ex Machina
- Ass (1.1) — Ass Pull
- Iac (2.1) — Sealed Evil In A Can
- Aod (2.1) — Artifact of Doom
- Xan (4.1) — Xanatos Gambit
- Bdh (2.9) — Big Damn Heroes
- Pet (1.9) — Pet The Dog
- Kik (3.1)

## Heroes
- H (4.9) — The Hero
- Kni (1.1) — Knight in Shining Armor
- Bbw (1.7) — Badass Bookworm
- Ah (3.2) — Anti Hero
- Neo (1.7) — The Chosen One
- Tp (.74) — Technical Pacifist
- Ih (1.4) — Idiot Hero
- Ag (5.0) — Action Girl
- Ace (1.1) — The Ace
- Sh (.95) — Super Hero
- Pg (.95) — Plucky Girl
- Cap (.88) — The Captain
- Kh (.77) — Kid Hero
- Det (3.1) — Determinator
- Gun (.67) — The Gunslinger
- Gh (.60)
- Gb (1.1)
- Ir (.57)

## Character Modifiers
- P (.15) — Protagonist
- A (.01) — Antagonist
- Ib (1.9) — Idiot Ball
- Wb (5.5) — Woobie
- Fln (1.6) — Flanderization
- Ccl (6.1) — Cloud Cuckoolander
- Bda (7.9) — Badass
- Ham (5.1) — Large Ham
- Bb (5.8) — Berserk Button
- Rnd (.06) — Rounded Character
- Jhg (3.7) — Jerk With a Heart of Gold
- Fla (.34) — Flat Character
- Ja (9.0)
- Dyn (.04)

## Archetypes
- Mad (4.0) — Mad Scientist
- Wes (.90) — The Wesley
- Scl (.77) — Star-Crossed Lovers
- Sue (1.7) — Mary Sue
- Tsu (3.8) — Tsundere
- St (.68) — The Storyteller
- Moo (3.9) — Mooks
- Dbd (.33) — The Dumbledore
- Lei (.16) — Rebel Leader
- Red (1.2) — Redshirts
- Mus (.83) — Dumb Muscle
- Mal (.33) — Rebellious Spirit
- Mug (.90) — Muggles
- Gia (1.3) — Gentle Giant
- Kz (.27) — The Klutz
- Scr (2.8)
- Foo (.44)
- Lrg (.77)

## Villains
- Bad (13) — Big Bad
- Etw (1.6) — Evil Twin
- Rch (1.1) — Archenemy
- Emp (1.9) — The Empire
- Mgb (5.1) — Magnificent Bastard
- Ewi (.42) — Enemy Within
- Dra (4.6) — The Dragon
- Av (2.0) — Anti-Villain
- Mpb (2.9) — Manipulative Bastard
- Law (.32) — Amoral Attorney
- Mol (1.9) — The Mole
- Vp (1.8) — Villain Protagonist
- Chs (2.8) — The Chessmaster
- Ob (.80) — Obstructive Bureaucrat
- Vir (1.2) — The Virus
- 4te (1.9) — For The Evulz
- Mon (7.5) — Complete Monster
- Ws (.26) — Wicked Stepmother
- Eld (5.6) — Eldritch Abomination
- Lol (1.9) — Evil Laugh
- Om (1.7)
- Bru (.96)
- 1wa (1.9)
- Fai (.85)

## Metatropes
- T (.20) — Trope
- Ls (12) — Lampshade Hanging
- Tru (4.4) — Truth In Television
- Jt (4.2) — Justified Trope
- Rur (.74) — Reality Is Unrealistic
- Sv (3.2) — Subverted Trope
- Lr (1.1) — Like Reality Unless Noted
- Old (3.1) — Oldest Ones In The Book
- Anp (.07) — Anthropic Principle
- Roc (4.1) — Rule of Cool
- Con (.30) — Law of Conservation of Detail
- Rod (.51)
- Md (.71)

## Production
- Can (.87) — Canon
- Sho (10) — Shout Out
- Tt (4.1) — Take That
- Res (3.9) — Did Not Do The Research
- Vam (1.1) — Viewers Are Morons
- Wob (.49) — Writer On Board
- Xm (3.0) — Executive Meddling
- Lah (.46) — Getting Crap Past The Radar
- Dh (.72)

## Fandom & Audience Reactions
- Fan (1.3) — Fanon
- Sus (.67) — Willing Suspension of Disbelief
- Fri (5.8) — Fridge Logic
- Et (1.9) — Epileptic Trees
- Dlp (1.5) — Draco in Leather Pants
- Mem (6.8) — Memetic Mutation
- Wog (7.4) — Word of God
- Rad (2.5) — MST3K Mantra
- Sqi (5.7)

# The Periodic Table of Storytelling

HIGHER MEDIA
## NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

Structure

| Ae (2.0) — Identifier |
| An Aesop — Trope name |
| Popularity in kilowicks (thousands of links to its page within the wiki) |

Chart by ComputerSherpa
Special thanks to Elle, Micah, and the rest of the Tropers for inspiration
Thanks to Madrugada, Jack Alsworth, ~fourwillows,
and KirksOtherSon for corrections
Permalink for this chart: goo.gl/yvSM4

**"Call to Adventure" primary subtropes:**
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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
Ignorant Of The Call
Jumped At The Call
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Refusal Of The Call
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Fai .85 — 
Rod 3.1 — 
Md .71 — 
Dh .73 — 
Sqi .92 —

# NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

- *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

- **Classic Hollywood Narrative** (Todorov)
- **Chronological / linear** (events unfold in order)
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- **Fragmentation / Fragmented** (jigsaw)
- **Episodic story-lines** (series)
- **Investigation** (documentaries)

# TRAILERS:

| TITLE | DIRECTOR | COUNTRY | YEAR |
|---|---|---|---|
| *The Untouchables* | Brian de Palma | USA | 1987 |
| *Manhattan* | Woody Allen | USA | 1979 |
| *Memento* | Christopher Nolan | USA | 2000 |
| *Pulp Fiction* | Quentin Tarantino | USA | 1994 |
| *Babel* | Alejandro G. Iñárritu | France/USA/Mexico | 2006 |
| *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* | J.J. Abrams | USA | 2015 |
| *The Act Of Killing* | Joshua Oppenheimer, Anonymous | UK/Denmark/Norway | 2012 |