

COMPONENT 1A: HOLLYWOOD 1930-1990 (VERTIGO & ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST)

Auteur (Bazin) Studio System Art of blocking a scene 'The Hitchcock Blonde' Fetishism & necrophilia Voyeurism Femme fatale Patriarchy Hays Code Vertigo/Acrophobia Aesthetic Classical Formalism Hitchcock Blonde Zolly shoot (dolly zoom) Dramatic irony Composition Psychoanalytic Male gaze (Mulvey)	Auteur (Bazin) New Hollywood Social realism Anti-authoritarian Psychoanalysis Dystopia Analogy – Vietnam Distinctive stylistic features Binary oppositions (Levi-Strauss) Ideology Subvert/challenge Postcolonial (Gilroy)
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Vertigo <i>(1958, dir: Alfred Hitchcock, Paramount)</i>	One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest <i>(1975, dir: Milos Forman, Fantasy Films)</i>
Studio System Era (1930-60)	New Hollywood Era (1960-90)
John 'Scottie' Ferguson (James Stewart) Madeleine Elster (Kim Novak) Judy Barton (Kim Novak) Midge Wood (Barbara Bel Geddes) Gavin Elster (Tom Helmore)	Randle McMurphy (Jack Nicholson) Candy Starr (Mews Small) Nurse Ratched (Louise Fletcher) Billy Bibbit (Brad Dourif) Turkle (Scatman Crothers)

COMPONENT 1B: HOLLYWOOD AFTER 2005 (INCEPTION & FRANCES HA)

Spectatorship Ideology Postmodernism Simulation Mise-en-abyme Demographics Alignment Allegiance Audience positioning Passive/active Preferred, negotiated, oppositional Auteur Spectacle Intertextuality	Spectatorship Ideology Mumblecore Persona B/W cinematography Spectatorship Indie Hollywood Demographics Feminist critique Mass/niche Preferred, negotiated, oppositional Auteur - dialogue
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Inception <i>(2010, dir: Christopher Nolan, Legendary/Warner Bros)</i>	Frances Ha <i>(2012, dir: Noah Baumbach, Pine District Pictures)</i>
Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio) Arthur (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) Ariadne (Ellen Page) Eames (Tom Hardy) Saito (Ken Watanabe) Yusuf (Dileep Rao) Robert Fischer (Cillian Murphy) Mal (Marion Cotillard) Miles (Michael Caine)	Frances (Greta Gerwig) Sophie (Mickey Sumner) Dan (Michael Esper) Lev (Adam Driver) Benji (Michael Zegen) Rachel (Grace Gummer) Patch (Patrick Heusinger)

COMPONENT 1C: BRITISH FILM AFTER 1995 (TRAINSPOTTING & THIS IS ENGLAND)

Narrative Ideology Performance Social Realism Britpop Character arc Aesthetic Feminist critique Auteur Cult fandom Adaptation – Irvin Welsh Counter-culture Franchise?	Narrative Ideology Performance Social Realism Nationalism Thatcherism Character arc Aesthetic Auteur Political context Franchise? Far Left vs Far Right Open/closed ending Dystopia
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Trainspotting <i>(1996, dir: Danny Boyle, Channel Four Films)</i>	This is England <i>(2007, dir: Shane Meadows, Warp Films/FilmFour)</i>
Renton (Ewan McGregor) Spud (Ewen Bremner) Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller) Begbie (Robert Carlyle) Diane (Kelly Macdonald) Tommy (Kevin McKidd)	Shaun (Thomas Turgoose) Combo (Stephen Graham) Lol (Vicky McClure) Milky (Andrew Shim) Woody (Joseph Gilgun) Cynthia (Jo Hartley) Smell (Rosamund Hanson)

EDUQAS A LEVEL FILM STUDIES KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

COMPONENT 2A: WORLD CINEMA (PAN'S LABYRINTH & CITY OF GOD)

Formalism
Historical/political context
Composition
Production design
Ideology
Auteur
Context

Pan's Labyrinth0 <i>(2006, dir: Guillermo Del Toro, Wild Bunch/New Line, Spain)</i>
Ofelia/Princess Moanna (Ivana Baquero) Vidal (Sergi Lopez) Mercedes (Maribel Verdu) Fauno/Pale Man (Doug Jones) Doctor Ferreiro (Alex Angulo) Garces (Manolo Solo) Pedro (Roger Casamejor) Carmen (Ariadne Gil)

City of God <i>(2002, dir: Fernando Meirelles, O2 Filmes, Brazil)</i>
Rocket (Alexandre Rodriguez) Li'l Ze (Leandro Firmino) Li'l Dice (Douglas Silva) Bene (Phelipe Haagensen) Shaggy (Jonathan Haagensen) Knockout Ned (Seu Jorge) Carrot (Matheus Nachtergaele) Angelica (Alice Braga)

COMPONENT 2B: DOCUMENTARY (STORIES WE TELL)

Critical debates: The significance of digital technology in film.
Filmmaker's theories
Grierson – actuality.
Kim Longinotto – invisible role of documentarian.
Nick Broomfield – participatory and performative.
Peter Watkins – docu-dramas and faux-documentaries.
Michael Moore – participatory and performative.
Metanarrative
Truth as merely a concept
Subjectivities of representation

Stories We Tell <i>(2012, dir: Sarah Polley, US)</i>
Michael Polley (Himself/Peter Evans) Sarah Polley (Herself) Diane Polley (Herself/Rebecca Jenkins) Susy Buchan (Herself/Lani Billard) John Buchan (Himself/Justin Goodhand) Mark Polley (Himself/Seamus Morrison) Joanna Polley (Herself/Allie MacDonald) Harry Gulkin (Himself/Alex Hatz)

COMPONENT 2C: SILENT FILM (BUSTER KEATON COMPILATION)

Critical debates: The realist and the expressive.
Vaudeville
Auteur
Slapstick
Persona
Aesthetic
Houdini – 'Buster'
Chaplin/Laurel & Hardy/Lloyd
Fatty Arbuckle/Virginia Rappe
Long shot vs close up
Cue cards vs gesture
Stereotypes
Two-reelers
Dramatic irony

Buster Keaton
One Week (1920) The Scarecrow (1920) The High Sign (1921) Cops (1922)

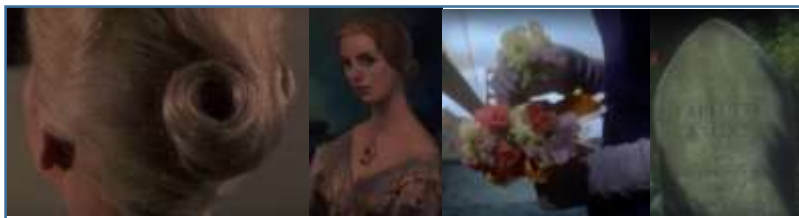
COMPONENT 2D: EXPERIMENTAL (PULP FICTION)

Auteur
Non-linear narrative
Postmodernism
Indie Hollywood
Composition
Audience positioning
Intertextual reference
Vintage soundtrack
Femme fatale
Film noir
Dialogue / screenplay
Mass/niche
Ensemble cast - star persona
Director Persona
Cult fandom

Pulp Fiction <i>(1994, dir: Quentin Tarantino, Miramax, US)</i>
Vincent Vega (John Travolta) Jules Winnfield (Samuel L. Jackson) Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman) Butch Coolidge (Bruce Willis) Marsellus Wallace (Ving RhMES) Lance (Eric Stoltz) The Wolf (Harvey Keitel) Jimmie (Quentin Tarantino) Fabienne (Maria de Madeiros) Pumpkin (Tim Roth) Honey Bunny (Amanda Plummer)

Comparing Hollywood Eras: Classical (1930-60) with New (1960-90)

Classical Hollywood	New Hollywood
<p>Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - period of US cinema production between 1930 and the 1960s dominated by five big studios who controlled film production and distribution ‘realistic’ film style, where style is subordinate to narrative (i.e. trying to tell a simple story) film actors marketed as ‘stars’ - contracted to studios emergence of directors as auteurs who became like stars themselves. 	<p>Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • period of US cinema production between 1961 and 1990 • the big studios were losing money - many had to be sold to larger corporations • a period where new writers and directors could fund controversial or challenging films because studios were ready to take risks • film narratives dominated by character and realistic situations • American auteurs, influenced by French New Wave; first generation of filmmakers who had attended film school, so formally educated in cinema • stylistic experimentation - more expressionistic use of camera, editing, etc.
<p>Classical Hollywood Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before cinema, the main visual narrative form for over a thousand years had been theatre. - Early film tried to capture the power of live theatrical performance, so a film often felt like a play/musical etc performed to camera, with few cuts or variation in camera angle/distance. - This was known as the ‘Tableau Style’ - where the action was filmed in static long-shot, with all elements crammed into the frame, and staging to add depth and movement to the film. - In the early 20th-century filmmakers like DW Griffith, influenced by Russian cinema, began to experiment with close-ups, and medium shots, and with adventurous editing techniques. - Classical Hollywood style continued to experiment with camera angle, distance and movement, but use to ‘continuity’ editing to create an easy-to-understand, fluid narrative. - David Bordwell identified two main areas of Classical Hollywood style: devices and systems. These create an ‘invisible style’ that creates a sense of realism. 	<p>New Hollywood Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just as the French New Wave of the 1960s were inspired by the cinematic style of directors they celebrated as auteurs, so the directors of New Hollywood, would take inspiration from Nouvelle vague films like <i>Breathless</i> (Godard, 1960) and <i>Jules and Jim</i> (Truffaut, 1962). • These films were populated by dissolute, morally ambiguous characters who embarked on casually sexual relationships with other outsiders. • They also utilised lighter, more mobile cameras to increase the range of camera movement and film on location. • New Hollywood was also influenced by Italian Neo-Realism. - These were films by directors like Rossellini and Visconti who portrayed a ruined Europe, devastated by two world wars, and the bleak lives of people scratching out an existence. • Films like <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> (de Sica, 1948) used non-professional actors and actual locations around a bombed-out Rome to tell stories about poverty-stricken characters who try to retain their dignity. • Often the scenes would involve cool observation of the characters engaged in pedestrian or un-dramatic tasks that captured a sense of ‘real-life’.
<p>Classical Hollywood Devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continuity editing - use of match-on-action, shot reverse-shot and 180 degree rule to make action ‘flow’ between shots cross-cutting between action in different locations - to expand ‘cinema space’ beyond the two dimensional screen ‘objective’ cinematography. - Use of establishing and master shots to establish space; - lots of medium shots; over-the-shoulder POV. - Functional rather than expressionistic cinematography composition -places human facial expressions and gestures at centre of frame realism - synchronous sound to convey info through dialogue, - realism through foley sound; - dramatic, incidental music to convey character emotions. 	<p>New Hollywood Devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘New Hollywood’ films also often display these, as well as other, stylistic traits. • frustration or challenge to ‘continuity’: unusual camera angles, jump-cuts, breaking 180-degree rule, breaking fourth wall, expressionistic montage. Deliberately tries to unsettle the spectator • lighter cameras means there is a greater range of camera movement and unusual angles - expressionistic cinematography. More CU and extreme C or sometimes events shot in ELS to add mystery/confusion • less use of match-on-action, shot reverse-shot or ‘invisible’ editing techniques • asynchronous, looped or expressionistic sound design • long periods without dialogue/music - or some sections that fuse music (often pop, rock or jazz not traditional score) with images • shot on location - in real rooms, diners, hotels, on the streets etc. Creates sense of realism • explicit sex, violence, nudity and drug taking • naturalistic acting and performance style: ‘Method’ acting where the actor ‘becomes’ the character, not performing to the camera; dialogue in group scenes often overlaps or is mumbled. Forces spectator to concentrate.
<p>Classical Hollywood Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linear, chronological narrative structure of plot - time moves in a uniform way (except for clearly indicated flashbacks) clear and simple narrative logic - beginning, middle and end, with events obeying cause and effect goal-oriented characters with clear (realistic) psychological motivation - actions creating narrative progress cinematic space is created through composition that places human facial expressions and gestures at the core of the story through: - centring (characters in centre of frame) - balancing (symmetry between characters on screen) - depth (foreground and background), directed as if they are addressing the spectator (like in theatre). 	<p>Narrative/Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narratives are disjointed, elliptical and lack closure. Critic Tom Berliner said there is a “focus on irresolution”; plot lines and character arcs aren’t concluded in a satisfying fashion • background and subplots often intrude on main plot, unbalancing the narrative. Berliner said the films show “a perverse tendency to integrate, in narratively incidental ways, story information and stylistic devices counterproductive to the films’ overt and essential narrative purposes” • characters are often anti-heroes: daringly amoral, ambiguous, occasionally violent but also tender, vulnerable and romantic. Often criminals, homeless or other outsiders, struggling against mainstream conformist culture • stories that attack, criticise or subvert authority - the (creative, rebellious) individual vs (oppressive, dehumanising) society is a common theme



Madeleine's Carlotta obsession is evident in her hairstyle, her necklace, her flowers and her suicidal actions.



Scottie's stalking is shown through cracks in doorways and POV shots.



Connotations of colour: Midge (yellow), Madeleine (green), Scottie (red). The interactions between colours acts as subtext in the narrative. Scottie wears green (revealing his desire for Madeleine) and he clothes her in his colour (red) on rescuing her and Midge tries to fulfil Scottie's fantasy by wearing red and painting herself as Carlotta. Scottie's nightmarish visions of trauma represented in kaleidoscopic red.



John 'Scottie' Ferguson (James Stewart)

Madeleine Elster (Kim Novak)

Judy Barton (Kim Novak)

Midge Wood (Barbara Bel Geddes)

Gavin Elster (Tom Helmore)

The protagonist of the film. Scottie is a former detective who quits his job when he develops severe acrophobia, or fear of heights. He is a romantic who rejects reality in favor of illusion. His obsession with the ideal woman fuels much of the action of the film.

"Madeleine" is actually a role played by Judy, who is impersonating Gavin Elster's wife. Romantic and ethereal, "Madeleine" is supposedly haunted by long-dead relative Carlotta Valdes and seems bent on committing suicide against her own will. Madeleine becomes Scottie's love interest and represents the ideal woman to him.

The true identity of the woman who impersonated Madeleine in the first half of the film. Judy played the role of Madeleine at the behest of her one-time lover, Gavin Elster. She is malleable, lonely, and a bit hard. She is willing to surrender her own identity so that Scottie will love her.

Scottie's friend and ex-fiancée. Pretty and very capable, Midge is an artist who makes her living designing women's undergarments. She is a mother figure who is still in love with Scottie and represents everyday reality.

The film's anti-hero. Gavin is an old college acquaintance of Scottie who has married into a wealthy shipbuilding family. He is calculating and manipulative, exploiting Scottie's weakness to achieve his own goals.

KEY FILMS BY HITCHCOCK BY ERA & KEY CHARACTERS IN 'VERTIGO'



1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s
The 39 Steps (1935)	Shadow of a Doubt (1943)	Vertigo (1958)	Psycho (1960)	Frenzy (1972)
The Lady Vanishes (1938)	Notorious (1946)	Rear Window (1954)	The Birds (1963)	
The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934)	Rope (1948)	North By Northwest (1959)	Marnie (1964)	
Sabotage (1936)	Spellbound (1945)	Strangers on a Train (1951)	Torn Curtain (1966)	
	Suspicion (1941)	Dial M for Murder (1954)		
	Rebecca (1940)	The Trouble With Harry (1955)		

[VERTIGO NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]








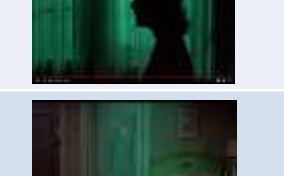
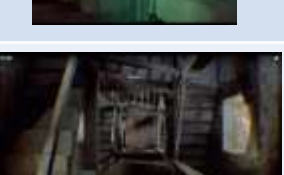

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	Exposition	Inciting Incident	Progressive Complications	Climax	Resolution
Narrative detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottie retires as a detective after vertigo halts a rooftop chase leading to the death of a fellow policeman. - Midge tries to help him get over his vertigo but all attempts fail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gavin asks Scottie to follow his wife, Madeleine claiming she is in danger. - Scottie follows her to the grave of Carlotta Valdes, a flower shop, the Mission San Francisco de Asis and the Legion of Honor art museum where she gazes at a portrait of Carlotta (who committed suicide) and watches her enter McKittrick Hotel. - Gavin reveals that Carlotta is Madeleine's great-grandmother. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottie rescues Madeleine from a suicide attempt (jumping into Fort Point's bay). - They travel to Muir Woods and Cypress Point together. - They kiss at the oceanside. She recounts a nightmare set in Mission San Juan Bautista. - Madeleine runs into the church and up the bell tower. - Scottie's vertigo returns, Madeleine plunges to her death. - Death is declared a suicide (Gavin does not fault Scottie but he becomes clinically depressed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottie's obsession with Madeleine continues (much to Midge's concern) who even paints herself as Carlotta to stir Scottie from it, but to no avail. - He bumps into Judy who seems like a brunette version of Madeleine. - He stalks her up to hotel. - Surprisingly, they have a romance which leads to Scottie dressing her up as Madeleine (same clothes, hairstyle, make up). - One detail (a necklace) triggers his memory that Judy is in fact Madeleine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottie forces her up to the bell tower to admit her deceit. - Scottie gets to the top of the bell tower, conquering his acrophobia and vertigo. - Madeleine is revealed as the double for the real Madeleine that Gavin murdered and had Judy cover for his crime up the bell tower. - Madeleine cannot cope with the shame of her complicity with the crime. On seeing a nun, she either stumbles back shocked or commits suicide.

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
Scottie (protagonist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fall in love and save Madeleine. • Conquer his vertigo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madeleine seems possessed. • Judy will not embody Madeleine. • Trauma over vertigo is reinforced several times. 	Failure: despite finally wooing Madeleine and figuring out Gavin's plot, Madeleine stumbles/commits suicide when coming confronting her complicity in the plot. Despite managing to conquer his vertigo, he has lost the one he loves.
Midge (sidekick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To woo Scottie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottie cannot perceive her as anything other than a maternal figure. 	Failure: she cannot be seen by Scottie as an erotic figure, and all her attempts through care and psychoanalytical methods fail.
Judy (sidekick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get on with her life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottie seems obsessed with her – she cannot move on without their romance. 	Failure: Scottie figures out that Judy really is Madeleine, overcome with shame for acting as a double to cover Gavin's murder of his wife leads her to stumble/suicide. She can't help but fall in love with Scottie, but it is a destructive infatuation leading to her downfall.
Madeleine (princess)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To trick Scottie. • To fall in love with Scottie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottie's obsession is both what she loves and what she wishes to run from. 	
Gavin (antagonist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use Scottie as a foil for his murder of his wife. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottie's suspicions of a conspiracy 	Success: he manages to get away with the crime, at least until the end of the film. Scottie now knows the truth.

Institutions and inspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitchcock began his film career in the 1920s, during the Silent Era. Before becoming a director, he worked as a screenwriter and art director, so he understood how to write and build mise-en-scène effectively. • The first ten feature films he made were silent, and he famously said: "The sound could go off and the audience should still have a perfectly clear idea of what is going on" • He also worked at UFA Studios in Berlin, where he learnt the techniques of German Expressionism. • This Modernist style of filmmaking aimed to represent the inner states of characters through unusual camerawork, lighting and editing. A good example is <i>The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari</i> (1920). • Soviet cinema was also a strong stylistic influence. Hitchcock particularly utilised what is known as the 'Kuleshov' technique of montage editing where an intercutting images can change the meaning of a sequence. He used this to build emotional intensity between characters and show point-of-view. For a director fascinated by spectating and voyeurism, this technique can be used to unsettling effect to make the audience feel complicit with disturbed characters • He also worked mainly in black and white - only his final 15 out of 54 features were in colour. This means when there were technological advancements in cinema, he took advantage of them fully and added another level of cinematic experience to an already rich text. • In his UK films, Hitchcock had taken a key creative role in every area of film production: from sets and costume, to script, cinematography and editing, and music. He brought this approach to Hollywood when he moved there in 1940. This was unusual in the Studio System where directors were more like stage managers than artists. 			
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound - Hitchcock was the first to make a British 'talkie': <i>Blackmail</i> (1927). He utilised music and Foley sound effects to create 'sound-bridges' that link the action (e.g. the scream of a maid discovering a body becomes the sound of a bus horn that awakens the killer), use of 'off-camera' sound effects to extend the world of the film, and expressionistic sound design (e.g. the famous 'knife' scene.) • Camera technology - Hitchcock took advantage of lighter film cameras to extend the range of photographic movement and angle. This enabled his camera to 'swoop' around a scene, almost like it is another character; or to immerse us entirely in a character's viewpoint. His powerful use of close-ups utilised the emotional intensity generated by CUs of faces to imbue inanimate objects with significance approaching symbolic. • Colour: Hitchcock took advantage of the richness of Technicolor to work colour motifs into his films, particularly the conflict between greens and reds in a range of films. 			
Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitchcock experimented with a number of narrative techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-linear narratives: plots that involved 'reveals' told in flashback or forwards • 'kettle' locations: action is limited to one, increasingly claustrophobic location such as in <i>Rope</i> (1948) and <i>Rear Window</i> (1954) • plots involving 'everymen' accused of a crime they didn't commit or accidentally stumbling on a criminal conspiracy. Characters are often 'ordinary' people caught up in events beyond their control. 			
Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes Auteurs often return to particular themes or issues and explore them using different characters and plots. One of Hitchcock's main themes was that of looking itself - how we look at other people, how it feels to look through someone else's eyes, what pleasures we get from that. In many of his films, but especially <i>Rear Window</i>, <i>Vertigo</i> and <i>Psycho</i>, the main character voyeuristically observes others (apparently) without their knowledge. Critics have said this is Hitchcock exploring the nature of cinema itself: all film spectatorship is voyeuristic; we the audience watch (in darkness) the personal lives of other people who aren't aware they are being observed. • Other consistent themes across his films are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taboo sexuality (he once described Scottie in <i>Vertigo</i> as a "necrophile - a man who wants to have sex with a dead woman") • doubles and dual or mistaken identity e.g. <i>Strangers on a Train</i> (1951) • 'the wrong wo/man' - protagonist is wrongly accused of a crime, framed, or mistaken for someone in a dangerous profession. E.g. <i>North By Northwest</i> (1959) • ordinary people suddenly plunged into extraordinary (and dangerous) situations e.g. <i>The Man Who Knew Too Much</i> (1956) • distrust of authority: from politicians to the police, people in authority who we are told to trust are actually sources of danger and fear • beautiful, blonde women in peril. Hitchcock seemed to have a fetish for blonde actresses and an urge to see them endangered. He once said "Blondes make the best victims, they're like the virgin snow" • charming villains - instead of being thuggish and ugly, the villains are often suave, well-dressed and handsome e.g. James Mason in <i>North By Northwest</i>. 			
Hitchcock as 'brand'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitchcock was one of the first directors to market himself as not just a film director, but as a kind of 'star'. There is still a soundstage in Hollywood with the famous caricatured profile of his face and a giant signature on the side. He used a variety of publicity stunts (such as forbidding audiences entry to <i>Psycho</i> after the film had begun) to create a buzz around each new 'Hitchcock Product'. Often the trailers for his films wouldn't initially feature any clips from the film itself, it would just feature Hitchcock himself, explaining in his trademark drawl about his film. He also appeared in a small cameo in every film he made. His 'brand' was further extended into a TV drama series, <i>Alfred Hitchcock Presents</i> that ran from 1955-65 (and was resuscitated in the 80s). 			
Hitchcock as 'auteur' – signature style	Lengthy, silent sections (story told visually)	Expressionistic use of camera, editing, mise-en-scene, sound effects, colours	Use of intercutting to create 'Kuleshov' effect	Innovative camera angle and movement (zoom, dolly etc)
Narrative and themes	Ordinary people plunged into dangerous situations	Doubles, imposters, dual or mistaken identities	Non-linear structure: flashbacks/ forwards, dream sequences etc	Distrust of authority
	Taboo sexuality	Protagonist wrongly accused of a crime or on the run	Blonde women in peril	Charming but sociopathic antagonist

[KEY SCENES IN *VERTIGO* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The extreme close up shot of an eye under a red lens effect with an animated spiral graphic on the iris...</p>	<p>...symbolises the state of acrophobia and the cycle of mental health dysfunction which are key themes in the narrative. The non-linear use of dream sequences that echo this introduction introduce a psychoanalytic aspect of narrative.</p>	<p>The director's intention is to create an unnerving tone and the effect on the spectator is to be beguiled and disturbed in equal measure. The unhinged non-diagetic orchestral score by Bernard Hermann heightens dramatic tension (a Classical Hollywood convention).</p>
	<p>The medium two shot of Midge discussing with Scottie: "It's a brassiere, you know they are, you're a big boy now..."</p>	<p>...highlights her maternal approach to conversing with Scottie. As his ex-fiancée, their dynamic is not flirtatious; she seems to take care of Scottie like a vulnerable man.</p>	<p>The director's intention is to show that their friendship lacks chemistry but also introduces the male gaze theme (Scottie's desires). The spectator may be amused by the light-hearted discussion on fantasy. Midge's associated colour is yellow, Scottie's is red and Madeleine's is green.</p>
	<p>The low angle two shot of Gavin Elster and Scottie positions Gavin above Scottie in his mahogany office...</p>	<p>...which depicts Gavin as a powerful man in charge. Gavin represents the charming but sociopathic antagonist. Scottie is merely an ordinary bachelor plunged into dangerous situations.</p>	<p>The director's intention is to establish the business world as a patriarchal sphere. The dynamic between these men is one where tussling for power is a game of sorts. This is represented by a complex blocking of mise-en-scene.</p>
	<p>The profile shot close up of Madeleine in a restaurant with her blonde hair up, in a black dress with a green shawl as she walks past Scottie...</p>	<p>...establishes her role as a femme fatale who seduces Scottie with her beauty. The swell of non-diagetic orchestral music signposts this moment as significant; Scottie and Madeleine's 'meet cute'. The red that surrounds her connotes Scottie's desire.</p>	<p>The director's intention is to glamorize Madeleine to ensure that Scottie will fall hopelessly for her. The spectator may swoon at the artistic composition of her beauty. Hitchcock subverts the objective cinematography of Classical Hollywood with the repeat use of close-ups.</p>
	<p>The point-of-view long shot of Madeleine sitting in front of a painting of Carlota Valdes, wearing her hair the same way and with similar props such as a necklace and flowers...</p>	<p>...represents Madeleine as deeply thoughtful in her appropriation of the figure of Carlota. Scottie is beguiled by the enigmas of her complex psyche.</p>	<p>Hitchcock intends to highlight the significance of tiny details (connotations of colour), the deeper meaning of seemingly unimportant props and the idea of life imitating art. When Scottie stalks her, diagetic silence resounds and shots linger at length.</p>
	<p>The long shot of Scottie rescuing Madeleine from drowning with the backdrop of the Golden Gate Bridge...</p>	<p>...emphasises him as a 'knight-in-shining-armor' who has entered her life in a heroic manner. The 'blonde woman in peril' stereotype is reinforced by these scenes.</p>	<p>Hitchcock gives Scottie agency to achieve his desires and woo Madeleine, appealing to the male desire to attain their ideal woman. The spectator may vicariously live through Scottie's character, aspiring to be like him.</p>
	<p>The close-up of Midge's self-portrait wearing Carlota Valdes' dress...</p>	<p>...acts as a devil in the detail when Scottie observes it. He feels that this is a psychological breach from Midge, who has accessed his obsession and tried to appropriate herself as the object of desire.</p>	<p>This romantic gesture from Midge is misinterpreted from Scottie as she realises that she has muddied the waters of his psychic despair. Films like <i>Amelie</i> are influenced by the Hitchcockian trope of beauty and horror in details.</p>
	<p>The profile silhouette of Judy in her apartment with a green glow from the hotel's neon sign lighting up the room...</p>	<p>...echoes a similar shot (motif) of Scottie seeing Madeleine in profile for the first time in the restaurant. The uncanny resemblance of Judy's profile to Madeleine's reveals that she may be the same person. Green is representative of both Judy and Madeleine for a reason.</p>	<p>Scottie's perversity is depicted by his desire to change Judy into Madeleine down to the finest detail (blonde hair, same clothing). Later, details such as her necklace (Kuleshov effect montage) reveal her role as a double.</p>
	<p>The long shot of Judy's transformation into Madeleine as she emerges from the bathroom transformed in a ghostly green light...</p>	<p>...recalls the spectre of Scottie's past and fulfils his perverse fantasy. Judy is actually Madeleine, but Scottie's insistence on changing her into his vision of Madeleine echoes necrophilia.</p>	<p>Hitchcock reveals his own perversity through the characterisation of Scottie and his deification of this moment with non-diagetic musical swells. The glow of green around her treats her objectification as a haunting spectre; a realisation of Scottie's (and Hitchcock's) uncanny fantasy. It is plausible to interpret Scottie as a fetish psychopath.</p>
	<p>The point of view dolly zoom shot of Scottie looking down the spiral clock tower from a great height...</p>	<p>...reinforces his vertigo and repeats the traumatic sense of nausea he feels in this type of scenario. His fear of falling is represented by this shot. The shot-reverse shot between Scottie's reaction and this scene adheres to Classic Hollywood continuity techniques.</p>	<p>The repetition of this motif compounds his trauma because Madeleine seemed to commit suicide and he was unable to save her. Rather than be cured of acrophobia, the condition is compounded by repeat trauma. His decision to return to scenes of trauma in order to break through is a psychoanalytic approach.</p>



J.P. McMurphy
(Jack Nicholson)

The film's protagonist. He was sentenced to six months at a prison work farm but faked a mental health illness to end up in an asylum. He acts as the dominant force challenging the establishment and the ultimate saviour of the victimized patients.



Nurse Ratched
(Louise Fletcher)

Nurse Ratched is a middle-aged former army nurse. She rules her ward with an iron hand and masks her humanity and femininity behind a stiff, patronizing facade. She weakens her patients through a psychologically manipulative program designed to destroy their self-esteem.



Chief Bromden
(Will Sampson)

Chief Bromden is the son of the chief of the Columbia Indians and a white woman. He suffers from paranoia and hallucinations, has received multiple electroshock treatments, and has been in the hospital for ten years, longer than any other patient in the ward.



Billy Bibbit
(Brad Dourif)

A shy patient. Billy has a bad stutter and seems much younger than his thirty-one years. Billy Bibbit is dominated by his mother, one of Nurse Ratched's close friends. Billy is voluntarily in the hospital, as he is afraid of the outside world.



Dale Harding
(William Redfield)

College-educated patient and president of the Patients' Council. Harding helps McMurphy understand the realities of the hospital. Although he is married, Harding is a homosexual. He has difficulty dealing with the

KEY CHARACTERS IN 'ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST'



Taber
(Christopher Lloyd)

The film's protagonist. He was sentenced to six months at a prison work farm but faked a mental health illness to end up in an asylum. He acts as the dominant force challenging the establishment and the ultimate saviour of the victimized patients.



Charley Cheswick
(Sidney Lassick)

The first patient to support McMurphy's rebellion against Nurse Ratched's power. Cheswick, a man of much talk and little action, drowns in the pool—possibly a suicide—after McMurphy does not support Cheswick when Cheswick takes a stand against Nurse Ratched.



Candy Starr
(Mews Small)

A beautiful, carefree prostitute from Portland. Candy Starr accompanies McMurphy and the other patients on the fishing trip, and then comes to the ward for a late-night party (along with Rose) that McMurphy arranges.

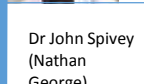


Turkle
(Scatman Crothers)

The black nighttime orderly for Nurse Ratched's ward. Mr. Turkle is kind to Bromden, untying the sheets that confine him to his bed at night, and he naively goes along with the night-time ward party.



Washington
(Nathan George)



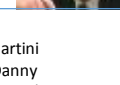
Dr John Spivey
(Nathan George)



Martini
(Danny DeVito)



Nurse Pillbow
(Mimi Sarkisian)



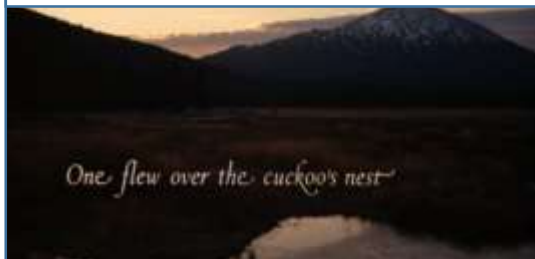
Fredrickson
(Vincent Schiavelli)



Bancini (Josip Elic)
Ellis (Michael Berryman)
Scanlon (Delos V. Smith Jr.)



The motif of both McMurphy (failing) and Chief (succeeding) attempting to break the marble basin from its foundations is symbolic of rebels seeking to break down deeply rooted systems of authority.



The significance of the circular narrative establishing shot of the landscape encapsulates the full arc of the narrative. The freedom of nature in binary opposition with the asylum and Chief's final break for freedom in honour of McMurphy.

[OFOTCN NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]






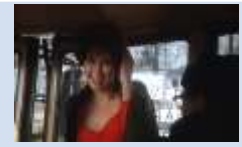






Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	Exposition	Inciting Incident	Progressive Complications	Climax	Resolution
Narrative detail	Nurse Ratched runs an orderly insane asylum where patients religiously follow a routine of 'medication time'.	Randle McMurphy gets transferred from a prison farm to the asylum and assumes it will be less restrictive but is surprised how much control Ratched has.	The battle of wills between McMurphy (wanting to watch the play-offs, illegal bus/boat trips, parties) and the inflexible Ratched escalates until all patients are affected by it.	The secret overnight party, where Billy sleeps with Candy and everyone gets drunks leads to Billy getting sanctioned (Ratched says she will tell his mother what he's done) which leads him to committing suicide and McMurphy attempting to strangle her as a result.	McMurphy is lobotomised so Chief puts him out of his misery (suffocating him with a pillow) and honours his memory by escaping by putting the marble basin through the window. Ratched survives with a neck brace.

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
<i>McMurphy (protagonist)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get a light sentence in an asylum. To challenge the psychologically oppressive system within the ward (and escape). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse Ratched's stranglehold of power over the asylum. 	Failure: he is lobotomised (but inspires Chief to rebel).
<i>Chief (sidekick)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To break free from colonial chains. To connect with people he can trust. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beyond Nurse Ratched, colonial oppression. 	Success: he escapes the ward throwing the basin through the window.
Nurse Ratched (antagonist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain order in the asylum and keep characters psychologically 'under the thumb'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rebellion that McMurphy inspires. 	Success: McMurphy is lobotomised (but his legacy leads to rebellion).

Director's background – Milos Forman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milos Forman (born 1932) grew up in the former Czechoslovakia (today's Czech Republic) until 1968 when he moved to America to escape the Soviet invasion of Prague. In his own words, he said "I feel admiration for rebels because I lived twice in totalitarian societies" His parents were arrested by the Gestapo and sent to a concentration camp, leaving the young Forman an orphan. Czechoslovakia became part of the Soviet Bloc after World War II, but despite a corrupt and repressive government, Forman and a number of artists formed a liberal counterculture known as the Czech New Wave. Other filmmakers of this movement were Vera Chytilová (<i>Daisies</i>, 1968) and Jaromil Jires (<i>The Cry</i>) 				
Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Films of the Czech New Wave were all markedly different in style and structure, but they all experimented with other forms (documentary and verité), and dealt with social conformity and political repression with absurdist humour. In 1967, Forman made <i>The Fireman's Ball</i> that used the institution of a volunteer firefighting group to explore incompetence and corruption at a larger political level - and was banned by the authorities. This encouraged Forman to look for filmmaking opportunities abroad, and he was in Paris when the liberalising Prague Spring movement was brought to an end by Russian tanks in 1968. He moved to Hollywood that year. 				
Stylistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlike some other 'auteur' directors like Coppola, Ridley Scott or Spike Lee, Forman doesn't have a 'signature' visual style. Nor does he use experimental or unsettling camera or editing styles like in other films of the New Hollywood. Instead he obeys many Classical Hollywood rules of continuity to create a naturalistic feeling. In the script and performances of his actors, Forman does share style with other New Hollywood directors like John Schlesinger (<i>Midnight Cowboy</i>, 1970) - encouraging a 'Method' or naturalistic approach that reflects 'real life'. For the Czech New Wave, naturalism was an ideological decision that rebelled against the State-sanctioned cinema Forman has also said he wants to show "all the faces in the crowd," telling the stories of a whole group of characters not just the protagonist. in terms of screenplay development, Forman does demonstrate an auteur-level of control over the material. He has said that writing the script is "half of directing" - he spent nearly five months, working five days a week with Peter Shaffer to write the screenplay for <i>Amadeus</i> (1982). 				
Thematic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auteurs often return to particular themes or issues and explore them using different characters and plots. This is where Forman could be more classed as an auteur. A consistent theme is the struggle of the Individual vs Society: <i>Valmont</i> (1986) and <i>The People vs Larry Flynt</i> (1996) featured protagonists whose permissive attitudes and sheer lust for life bring them into conflict with a repressed and conformist society. "unappreciated iconoclasts" - <i>Man on the Moon</i> (1999) celebrated the life and work of unconventional comedian Andy Kaufman, whose work would often deliberately discomfort and shock the audience. The struggle of a creative genius against conformity, such as <i>Amadeus</i> (1982). Authority figures who no longer believe in their own authority. Capturing 'eras' of American underground culture, exploring both the rebellious nature of subcultures and the failure of these rebellions, in films like <i>Taking Off</i>, and <i>Hair</i> (1979). 				
New Hollywood Traits	Continuity disrupted in editing – jump cuts	Unusual use of camera distance, angle and movements	Asynchronous or expressionistic sound design and music	Real-life locations	Naturalistic acting style
	Explicit language, sex, violence	Rebellious individuals struggling against conformity	Anti-heroes (morally ambiguous)	Traditional values challenged	Critical of authority

[KEY SCENES IN OFOTCN – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>(a). The long shot of Nurse Ratched (Louise Fletcher) entering the 'Cuckoo's Nest' asylum through a wire gate.</p> <p>(b). The diegetic sound of her footsteps as she enters the silent ward early in the morning.</p>	<p>(a). gives the impression that the asylum (Oregon State hospital) is like a prison.</p> <p>(b). highlights the haunting nature of her steps. For better or worse, Ratched is a force to be reckoned with.</p>	She is represented as a matriarch in the narrative, but arguably not a wise and empathic one. The producer's intentions are depict Nurse Ratched as an antagonist which could lead to complex and divergent readings from spectators. The ritualistic nature of 'medication time' alludes to religious traditions of Catholic communion during mass as patients join in an orderly queue, and one has the Nurse place the pill on his tongue.
	<p>(a). The close up of Nurse Ratched during a group therapy session with mental health patients</p> <p>(b). Her hair is immaculately pinned, her nurse hat is placed in her hair and her uniform is spotless. Her facial expression is stern and dominant.</p>	<p>(a). reinforces her smart presentation and her militant emphasis on routine.</p> <p>(b). It is clear that she has high expectations and runs a tight ship, although this is represented as insidious rather than professional in this narrative.</p>	The idea of painting a matriarch as an antagonist suggests that Milos Forman has a patriarchal agenda in the representation of strong women. Forman grew up in totalitarian societies in Czechoslovakia (Gestapo during WWII and Soviet Bloc after 1945). A familiar trope of his oeuvre in the Czech New Wave film movement is to critique authoritarian structures of power, even on a micro scale like in an asylum. Ratched becomes a personification and architect of social oppression. (Take note: Forman does not have a signature visual style like Hitchcock, only thematic).
	The medium long shot of McMurphy getting Chief to carry him on his shoulders during a basketball game...	...acts as McMurphy's first attempt to reach out to fellow patients. McMurphy acts as a narrative catalyst . He pleaded insanity to a statutory rape charge in order to get moved to an asylum. Whilst he initially believes that he's got an easy ride, he quickly becomes aware of the psychological austerity of the asylum.	McMurphy acts as an unlikely protagonist in the narrative. Whilst Ken Kesey's novel focuses on Chief, the film chooses to make McMurphy a central character. A post-colonial critique may criticise the platforming of a white male over a Native American,. Despite this, Chief remains the through-line of the narrative : the asylum as an allegory for the oppression of Native Americans by colonialists.
	<p>The medium shot of McMurphy trying to dislodge a marble basin after a bet is made that it is impossible...</p> <p>The continuity editing style which cuts between cutaways to other patients' reaction...</p>	<p>...reinforces the notion that McMurphy is unable to break free.</p> <p>...is indicative of the style of Cinema Verité, emphasising realism and authenticity over the artifice of technically complex approaches.</p>	One of Forman's signature themes is to have rebellious characters who struggle against an oppressive society. McMurphy is unable to break the marble basin from its foundations, but he inspires Chief to later on in the film. Unable to break free himself, he inspires others to rebel. Forman's oeuvre as an auteur is evident when comparing this to <i>The People Vs Larry Flynt</i> (1996). McMurphy is a problematic character with a heroic cause much like Larry.
	The over-the-shoulder medium shot of Randle McMurphy (Jack Nicholson) arguing with Nurse Ratched as she won't let the patients watch the World Series on TV as it will disrupt their routine...	<p>...highlights the clash between these two characters. Ratched maintains a deadpan expression as she enforces rules whilst McMurphy becomes animated and frustrated.</p> <p>Jack Nicholson's method acting style varies from other Stanislavski influenced performers (Day Lewis, Brando). He does not inhabit the role off set but prioritises authenticity in his portrayal.</p>	Instead of representing McMurphy's hysteria as dangerous, Forman illustrates an oppressor/oppressed dynamic alluding to authoritarian eras of Republican government in 1970s US under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. The ideology of the director is anti-authoritarian , positioning Ratched as Nixon and McMurphy as an anti-war Vietnam activist. Forman empathises with the iconoclast and is alienated by the Establishment. His political agenda is represented through patterns of representation.
	The medium shot of Candy in a red dress joining asylum patients on an illegal bus trip...	...emphasises how she is a creative, sexual and sensual character who acts as a catalyst whose presence stirs the patients out of their dull and drab routine.	The objectification of Candy is not rebuked in Forman's representation. She becomes a symbol of desire for the patients and sexual liberty is celebrated as a rebellion against the oppressive conservative values of the asylum. Negotiated readings may challenge the need to adhere to film noir stereotypes of femininity in film with Candy as a femme fatale . Patriarchal undertones may be interpreted due to adhering to the male gaze .
	The close up of McMurphy receiving electroconvulsive therapy as retribution for taking the patients on a bus/boat trip...	<p>...depicts the harrowing practices of asylums that use severe methods in order to command obedience.</p> <p>The revelation that Chief can speak prior to the treatment acts as the first narrative twist that sheds light on the enigma of Chief as a character.</p>	The film's BBFC certificate is an '18' partly due to gratuitous depictions of electroconvulsive treatment (beyond swearing, sex references and other violence) acts as the main reason the film is not a '15'. These scenes are more disturbing due to their realism (akin to Cinema Verité filmmaking methods).
	<p>(a). The medium close-up of Nurse Ratched turning off the lights at the end of her shift as she gazes intensely at patients</p> <p>(b). The low lighting gives the stern Ratched an austere aura and her dark clothing</p>	<p>(a). suggests that she wishes to maintain psychological control as she leaves.</p> <p>(b). highlights her severe mentality.</p>	The foreshadowing nature of this shot with cutaways of McMurphy as he plots partying with liquor and women. Despite the misdemeanours of various mental patients, it is Ratched who is represented as the menacing antagonist , revealing Milos Forman (and the original novelist Ken Kesey) for their anti-authoritarian agenda. The oppressive institution acts an allegorical microcosm of wider society.
	The medium shot of Billy being dragged by ward guards into a room to be detained after having sex with a woman the night before...	...highlights the extreme lengths that Nurse Ratched will go to psychologically manipulate and oppress patients. The emotional blackmail of the dialogue "what will your mother think when I tell her?" shows the lengths she will go to quell any rebellious traits in the patients.	Ratched's idea that disobedience to authority is a psychological flaw that must be remedied by behaviourist methods is a Conservative ideological position that believes that authority and control will lead to a more harmonious society. In 1970s New Hollywood, glamorous Studio System representations were subverted in favour of gritty, authentic depictions.
	Billy's diegetic screams...	...act as a form of grotesque social realism .	
	The long shot of R.P. McMurphy tackling Nurse Ratched to the ground and attempting to strangle her to death over Billy Bibbit commits suicide in part due to Ratched's psychological bullying, is one of the most disturbing shots in a harrowing film.	<p>Male violence against women is brought to life in this shot as McMurphy becomes hostile and aggressive yet still is represented as at least partially sympathetic in the narrative.</p> <p>When McMurphy enters a vegetative state with the retribution of electro-convulsive therapy, Chief puts him out of his misery, suffocating him with a pillow (a merciful killing in the same manner as George shooting Lennie in 'Of Mice and Men'.</p>	This scene tests the spectator with regards to any level of misogyny in their psyche: do they cheer on McMurphy as he abuses Ratched, or do we empathise for Ratched (regardless of any controversial methods of psychotherapy) as she becomes a victim of assault? The uncertainty with regards to Forman's ideological intentions in this scene make this sequence all the more disturbing.
	The medium close-up of Nurse Ratched in a neck brace for the denouement of the narrative as classical music plays...	...highlights how even an act of extreme violence cannot contain Nurse Ratched from her authoritarian role on the ward.	McMurphy has been lobotomised for his assault, the Chief escapes soon after suffocating McMurphy to death as an act of compassion and Ratched is presented as a unique antagonist that the spectator has complex emotions towards.

Useful Theories for Inception / Frances Ha Question

Spectator/ideology terminology to consider:

Social self - Make meaning in ways similar to those with similar ideological formation.

Cultural self - Makes particular intertextual references based on the bank of material s/he has

Private self - Carried the memories of his/her own experiences and who may find person significance in a film in ways very different from others.

Desiring self - Brings conscious and unconscious energies and intensifies to the film event that have little to do with the film's 'surface' content.

The 'Self' – Our response from the film draws on the whole of the Self (social, cultural, private, desiring).

Encoding - The directors intended meaning is encoded based on his/her ideologies, aims and intentions. along with the technology available to them.

Decoding - The directors intended meaning is encoded based on his/her ideologies, aims and intentions. along with the technology available to them.

Scopophilia - Sexual pleasure derived chiefly from watching others when they are naked or engaged in sexual activity; voyeurism.

The male gaze - The audience is put into perspective of a heterosexual man. e.g. a scene focusing on the curves of a woman's body.

Recognition - Simply the spectator's acknowledgement of a particular character.

Alignment - The (objective) perspective presented to the spectator by the camera.

Allegiance - The (subjective) position of spectator's moral approval of character's actions. Our emotional engagement with the characters. This depends partly on the moral evaluations we make about the character's actions and personality.

Preferred reading - The message is fully accepted.

Negotiated reading - On the whole, the view is agreed with but slightly altered.

Oppositional reading - people disagree with the message and reject it.

Focalisation - When the subject is made our sole focus through camera work and soundtrack - to make us focus on them and respond emotionally.

Subjectivation - Spectator is emotionally engaged but with awareness of techniques to elicit this response from them.

Distanciation - Spectator is aware of the 'made' aspect of the work.

Passive spectator – preferred reading of text / susceptible to encoded messages.

Active spectator – reacts, questions, debates, challenges messages in any given film text.

Polysemy – multiple meanings, open to interpretation from spectators in different contexts.

Audience positioning – how producers manipulate spectator to respond in specific ways.

Mass audience – mainstream film production for many audiences.

Niche audience – indie film for specific demographic.

Emotional contagion – to mimic others and converge emotionally.

Dominant ideology – The view of the world that tends to prevail in a given time and place.

Consciousness raising – A film that raises awareness about a specific cultural or political issue.

Hegemony – Dominance.

Alienation – Emotional distancing.

Hierarchy of voices – Platforms of representation mediated by those in power.



Cobb
(Leonardo DiCaprio)

Arthur
(Joseph Gordon-Levitt)

Ariadne
(Ellen Page)

Eames
(Tom Hardy)

Saito
(Ken Watanabe)

Dom is the protagonist. He is a dream extractor, a spy-sort of character who using futuristic technology infiltrates people's dreams to confront them in their vulnerable states and get them to reveal their secrets. He has a deep inner torment about his wife who died by suicide because she could not handle the dreamscapes.

Arthur is essentially the "sidekick" of Cobb, acting as the planner, organizer, and researcher for all his missions. However, Arthur is considerably more important in the team's infrastructure; he is the glue holding the task force together, the professional who can always be relied on in a crisis. Dom trusts him immensely.

Ariadne is a bright, young architecture graduate student. She helps Dom and his team to create a dream inside a dream. Ariadne's intelligence and cleverness quickly wins over Dom, and she ultimately helps Dom get over his intense long-term guilt over his wife's death which manifests itself in his dreamscapes.

Eames is the dry-humoured and suave member of the mission team. However, he is also an experienced navigator of dreamscapes but most importantly, he is a very good forger and faker. He has the ability to morph into the appearance of other people within the dreamscape which is crucial in order to deceive Fischer in the Inception process.

The businessman who hires Cobb to infiltrate Fischer's dreams, starting the team's biggest mission yet: to simulate a dream inside a dream. He is strong and powerful, with a razor-sharp mind and an ambitious disposition.

KEY CHARACTERS IN 'INCEPTION'



Yusuf
(Dileep Rao)

Robert Fischer
(Cillian Murphy)

Mal
(Marion Cotillard)

Miles
(Michael Caine)

Maurice Fischer
(Pete Postlethwaite)

Nash
(Lukas Haas)

Browning
(Tom Berenger)

Tadashi
(Tai-Li Lee)

Blonde
(Talulah Riley)

Philippa and James

Yusuf is another "sidekick" on the Inception mission supervising the extraction team in a van, rendering them unconscious into a deeper layer of the dreamscape. As Fischer's mind is heavily militarised, he must battle to keep himself and the team alive.

The heir to a powerful business empire, and the target of the team's main mission. Fischer is an emotionally immature character, spoiled and petulant, and the team is able to lure into a dreamscape and get him to reveal important information.

Dom's late wife who committed suicide when mistaking the real world for a dreamscape. She now haunts Dom's unconscious, appearing in dreamscapes as a figment of Dom's imagination. Arthur tells Ariadne that she was lovely in real life but her behaviour in the dreamscape manifests as volatile, dangerous and unpredictable.

A professor who teaches Ariadne (his star pupil), mentors Dom and is the minder of Dom's children who Dom is unable to contact due to a court ruling that he is unfit for parenting after Mal's suicide. Miles is a wise and reflective elder for Dom to seek for guidance.

The 5 Levels Of INCEPTION

LEVEL **WHO DREAMED IT?** **WHO GOES THERE?** **WHY ARE THEY THERE?** **THE KICK**

LEVEL 1 REALITY **No one...**
We think Cobb, Arthur, Ariadne, Eames, Saito, Yusuf and Robert Fischer Jr. To drug Fischer Jr. and bring his subconscious into a dream. There isn't one. The timer counts down and the machine shuts off.

LEVEL 2 VAN CHASE **Yusuf**
"The Chemist" Cobb, Arthur, Ariadne, Eames, Saito and Robert Fischer Jr. Fischer Jr. is kidnapped. They force him to give them random numbers which are used later, and begin planting the idea in his head that his father wants him to break up the company. Yusuf drives the van off a bridge. That fails. A second Kick occurs when the van hits the water.

LEVEL 3 THE HOTEL **Arthur**
"The Point Man" Cobb, Arthur, Ariadne, Eames, Saito and Robert Fischer Jr. Fischer Jr. is tricked into believing Browning is a traitor. He joins the team for their next mission. Arthur blows up an elevator, simulating freefall.

LEVEL 4 SNOW FORTRESS **Eames**
"The Forger" Cobb, Ariadne, Eames, Saito and Robert Fischer Jr. Fischer Jr. must be taken to the fort, where the idea they wish to plant will finally take hold. Eames blows up the supports of the fortress, dropping it and causing freefall.

LEVEL 5 LIMBO **No one**
It's a shared state Cobb, Ariadne, Saito, Robert Fischer Jr. and Mal's projection To get Fischer Jr. and Saito out. Ariadne and Fischer fall off a building. Cobb and Saito shoot themselves.

Inception as a left-wing film

Representation of Capitalism: Saito's whole motivation for the mission is to prevent the Fischer's controlling almost all the energy in the world. This is an anti-capitalist sentiment that implies corporate control can have a bad effect on the world.

Cobol Industries, who initially commissioned Cobb's team to break into Saito's mind, are a threatening,

The bland, faceless and interchangeable architecture of global capitalism is utilised by Cobb and his team to construct environments and costumes that Fischer will find 'real' and believable. The cities and locations in the dream could be anywhere: Dubai, London, Hong Kong, Chicago. This could be seen as an aesthetic representation of the anonymising effect of globalisation.

Representations of family: Cobb's family structure is unorthodox: Mal, the traditional mother figure has taken her own life to escape her family (which she believes aren't real - or which don't feel real enough to her); the father, Cobb, is on the run; and his father takes care of the children.

Representations of Gender: Both men and women are portrayed in a way that challenges stereotypes. Cobb is a 'flawed hero', whose guilt is personified by Mal. Despite being a very masculine hero is some ways (reckless, quick-thinking, capable) he is also vulnerable and in need of support (especially from Ariadne). Robert Fischer is also portrayed as a male character left with trauma due to the relationship with his father. The other male characters also play with ideas of masculinity depending on which level of dreaming they are on. E.g. Eames, who seems quite camp and affected in 'reality' becomes a ridiculous action hero in the snow fortress sequence. These elements question gender roles, how they are constructed, and to what extent performed.

Inception as a right-wing film

Saito wants to break up Fischer's market dominance (using industrial espionage) to encourage free market capitalism (a right wing, pro-capitalist approach).






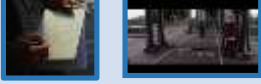



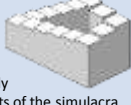
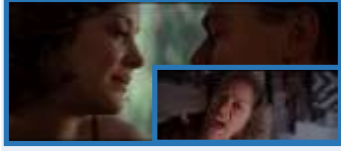

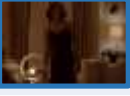













The wider economic effects of the team's mission are never really discussed. The only characters are CEOs of massive corporations - or the thieves they employ. The 'little people' are rarely seen.

The mise-en-scène could be said to fetishise the style of corporate America: mirrored skyscrapers, men in sharp business suits, limos, company jets, swish minimalist cocktail bars and hotels. As one critic said "who knew dreams would look this dull!"

Cobb's family structure is portrayed as disruptive - and implied as unhealthy for all concerned. Cobb's father warns him that the children are forgetting him; Cobb himself is tormented by the fact he can't be there due to the actions of his psychotic/neurotic wife. This could be read as a very conservative and patriarchal view of family; that what is needed is the stabilising, loving father figure (which is what Robert Fischer also lacks in his life)

The male characters all take traditional roles - businessmen, bodyguards, thieves, soldiers; sons and fathers' relationships are also foregrounded (the effect of Mal's suicide on her children isn't really discussed, but the absence of Cobb from their lives is). One could argue that many of these are part of Fischer's subconscious, so reflect his values and lifestyle; but in 'reality' the men mostly behave in stereotypically heroic and masculine ways: driving fast cars, shooting bad guys, fist-fighting in zero gravity. This offers a very patriarchal view of the world.

[KEY SCENES IN *INCEPTION* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The slow motion medium shot of troubled protagonist, Cobb, falling from a chair into a filled bath as non-diegetic whirrs punctuate the fall...</p>	<p>...triggers the kick which sends him layers up in the dream. Cobb's team are professional extractors that perform corporate espionage using experimental military technology to infiltrate the subconscious of their targets and extract valuable information through a shared dream world. Inception is a heist narrative with a sci-fi twist.</p>	<p>Japanese businessman Saito has set up mission himself as an initiation for a bigger job: inception (hoping to break up the energy conglomerate of ailing competitor Maurice Fischer, to convince son/heir Robert to dissolve father's company). He identifies the simulation of the rug not matching reality,</p> 
	<p>Cobb's motivation for "inception" – Saito to clear Cobb's criminal status which prevents him from returning home to his children – this exposition acts as a New Equilibrium stage of an Experimental Blockbuster narrative.</p>	<p>The totem is a symbol which is used to help extractors identify if they are still in a dreamworld or the real world. The postmodern concept of hyperreality and the uncanny is explored, as simulations of reality are presented.</p> 	<p>According to Uses & Gratifications Theory, these set piece sequences appeal to the spectator's cognitive needs (complex psychoanalytic and philosophical portrayals of the subconscious) as well as their desire for escapism and spectacle. An intertextual reference to sequences that show the mainlining of drugs to enter the dreamworld, echoes 1962 sci-fi classic, <i>La Jetee</i>, which consists only of a montage of photographs and a poetic voiceover. Active spectatorship is required to mediate such a complex narrative.</p> 
	<p>The tilting establishing shot of a cityscape architecture folding on top of itself. Ariadne is one of the team of "inceptors" preparing for manipulating the dreamworld as an architect assigned with creating a maze-like dream layer in Fischer's mind.</p>	<p>The wide angle shot of her placing two mirror doors opposite of each creates a mise-en-abyme effect (infinite copies) and acts as an extended metaphor for the metanarrative.</p> 	<p>Nolan aligns the spectator towards Cobb as leader of the mission and Ariadne as the precocious, wide-eyed recruit. The spectator's allegiance towards Cobb is challenged by Mal's stabbing of Ariadne in the dream space. Mal is just a projection of Cobb's subconscious (committed suicide in real life) but projection is dangerous as a psychological manifestation of Cobb's guilt (complicit in Mal's descent into madness). Ariadne declares: "that's quite a subconscious you've got there!"</p> 
	<p>The direct address wide angle shot of characters in the sub-conscious starring at Ariadne, only for Mal to approach and stab her (leading to her waking instantly from the dreamworld unscathed)...</p>	<p>...highlights the self-conscious nature of the metanarrative. Cobb rebukes Ariadne for recreating real locations as this could lead to the blurring between real and simulated worlds – hyperreality and the curse of 'the uncanny'.</p> 	<p>This could be perceived as an intertextual reference to Penrose Stairs which influenced Escher's perspective defying artwork. The limitless circular quality of these steps has a hyperreal quality which acts as an apt metaphor for Inception's self-reflexive metanarrative. Motifs in <i>Inception</i> frequently refer to postmodern concepts of the simulacra.</p>  
	<p>The crane shot reveal of paradoxical architecture where Arthur and Ariadne stand on a perspective altering staircase...</p>	<p>Whilst Arthur trains the Architect Ariadne, the walls seem to be closing in on Cobb (wide angle shot) when he meets with Eames and must escape authorities - wanted man for espionage crimes.</p> 	<p>The spectator is aligned towards Cobb, who indulges in romantic memories of his late wife. Mal has died, but she lives on in his subconscious. Spectators may identify with the Cobb's psychological rumination, but may be alienated by this unsympathetic, obsessive trait, and not offer their allegiance to the protagonist. Cobb is a flawed hero whose projections are volatile due to his rumination. The darkest floor of his subconscious is anniversary night, where Mal has trashed the room and commits suicide (cannot distinguish dream/real) – postmodern condition.</p> 
	<p>The close-up two shot of Cobb and Mal inside layers of a dreamworld indicating by floors with lift access...</p> 	<p>...uses proairetic codes to represent the subconscious: each memory in Cobb's mind is accessible like a lift to each floor. Ariadne is spying on Cobb's memories highlighting the theme of voyeurism: peoples' desire to know each others' secrets, often without permission.</p> 	<p>Two types of masculinity are represented here: Eames (the macho alpha male) and Arthur (the sensitive beta male Metrosexual). Their personality clash highlights two common identities with regards to gender. Arguably, Nolan aligns the spectator towards Eames as the dry and witty Forger but the spectator may have allegiance with the sidekick Researcher Arthur who is mocked to the point it is hard not to sympathise with him.</p> 
	<p>The medium two-shot of Eames entering the frame with Arthur and an automatic weapon...</p>	<p>...declaring "you mustn't be afraid to dream a little bigger darling"...acts as comic relief to break the tension. Repair: team realise mission is high stakes with risk of life in Limbo.</p> 	<p>Disruption stage of narrative: Fischer's subconscious is heavily militarized (wide angle long shot of freight train chugging through rain-soaked city streets as Fischer is held in a taxi at gunpoint.</p> 
	<p>The special effects gravity-defying fight sequence involving Arthur and projections...</p> <p>The parallel editing shots between layers of the dreamworld as all team members try to synchronise their incepting efforts.</p>  	<p>Cause and effect between dream layers – the car tumbles on Level 2, lower levels experience gravity defying situations – temporality (time) is also manipulated – 5 seconds in Level 1 could be 100 years in Level 5 limbo – it is a high stakes extraction mission as death could lead to being trapped in Limbo forever. - Repair stage of the narrative – last attempt to incept the mind of Robert Fischer Jr.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Layers of dreamworld: Reality on Plane (Level 1), Van Chase with Chemist Yusuf (Level 2), Hotel with Point Man Arthur (Level 3), Snow Fortress with Eames (Level 4), Limbo with Cobb/Ariadne/Fischer/Mal's projection (Level 5). 'The kick' knocks inceptors up the dream layers and the trigger is Edith Piaf's Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (intertextual reference: Marion Cotillard who is Mal played Edith in a French biopic). Limbo is represented by ruins, where Mal and Cobb were stuck for many years.   
	<p>The wide angle medium two shot of Robert Fischer Jr. in Level 5 limbo meeting his father on his deathbed in order for inceptors to alter a key memory with a will and a childhood memory of a windmill.</p> <p>New Equilibrium – the inception was a success, all survive, and Cobb is seemingly reunited with his son and daughter as a reward.</p>  	<p>'Inception' refers to planting an idea organically in a subject's brain which leads to a fundamental change. Strategy: access relationship with the father (Eames' idea) – instead of his father calling him a "disappointment" in real life, the scene on his death bed will reveal that his father was truly proud of him. Intended result: Robert Fischer Jr. will dissolve the Fischer conglomerate, choosing a compassion rather than an elitist life, paving the way for competitor Saito to form an oligopoly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-linear narrative that shifts frequently between past, present, future and layers of the dreamworld – distinctive colour gradients in cinematography is the only sign which helps the audience distinguish between these layers – the narrative is meant to be like a complex maze with Nolan as the architect demanding active spectatorship to engage with its material – however, there is enough spectacle for the passive spectator to engage without having to deconstruct these hermeneutic codes. Inception conforms to Hollywood Mainstream spectacle influenced by conventions of the Heist sub-genre but also is far more conceptually experimental and cerebral than most. Nolan could be perceived as an auteur who is intellectualising Hollywood cinema on a £200 million+ budget. Final Hermeneutic code, the spinning top leitmotif – is this reality? 

[INCEPTION NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	<i>Exposition</i>	<i>Inciting Incident</i>	<i>Progressive Complications</i>	<i>Climax</i>	<i>Resolution</i>
Narrative detail	<p>- Dominick "Dom" Cobb and Arthur are "extractors": they perform corporate espionage using experimental military technology to infiltrate the subconscious of their targets and extract valuable information through a shared dream world.</p> <p>- Their latest target, Japanese businessman Saito, reveals that he arranged their mission himself to test Cobb for a seemingly impossible job: implanting an idea in a person's subconscious, or "inception".</p> <p>- To break up the energy conglomerate of ailing competitor Maurice Fischer, Saito wants Cobb to convince Fischer's son and heir, Robert, to dissolve his father's company.</p> <p>- In return, Saito promises to use his influence once the job is done to clear Cobb's apparent criminal status, which prevents him from returning home to his children.</p> <p>- A team of "inceptors" are gathered by Cobb.</p>	<p>- The team abducts Fischer, but they are attacked by armed projections from his subconscious, which has been specifically trained to defend against such intruders.</p> <p>- The team takes Robert and a wounded Saito to a warehouse, where Cobb reveals that while dying in the dream would normally wake Saito up, the powerful sedatives needed to stabilize the multi-level dream will instead send a dying dreamer into LIMBO: a world of infinite subconscious from which escape is extremely difficult, if not impossible, and in which a dreamer risks forgetting they are in a dream.</p>	<p>- Despite these setbacks, the team continues with the mission.</p> <p>- Eames impersonates Robert's godfather, Peter Browning, to suggest Robert reconsider his father's will.</p> <p>- Yusuf drives them around in a van as the rest are sedated into the second level, a hotel dreamed by Arthur.</p> <p>- Cobb persuades Robert that he has been kidnapped by Browning, and that Cobb is his subconscious protector.</p> <p>- Cobb persuades Robert to go down another level to explore Browning's subconscious (in reality, it is a ruse to enter Robert's subconscious).</p> <p>- The third level is a fortified hospital on a snowy mountain dreamed by Eames.</p> <p>- The team has to infiltrate it and hold off the guards as Saito takes Robert into the equivalent of his subconscious.</p> <p>- Yusuf, under pursuit by Robert's projections in the first level, deliberately drives off a bridge, thus initiating his kick too soon. This causes an avalanche in Eames' level, and removes the gravity of Arthur's level, thus forcing Arthur to improvise a new kick synchronized with the van hitting the water.</p> <p>- Mal's projection emerges in Eames' level and kills Robert; Cobb kills Mal, and Saito succumbs to his wounds. Cobb and Ariadne enter Limbo to rescue Robert and Saito, while Eames sets up a kick by rigging the hospital with explosives.</p> <p>FLASHBACK</p> <p>- Cobb reveals to Ariadne that he and Mal went to limbo while experimenting with the dream-sharing technology.</p> <p>- Sedated for a few hours of real time, they spent fifty years in a dream constructing a world from their shared memories.</p> <p>- When Mal refused to return to reality, Cobb used a rudimentary form of inception by reactivating her totem (an object that dreamers use to distinguish their dreams from reality), and reminding her subconscious that their world was not real.</p> <p>- However, after waking up, the inception had taken root and Mal still believed that she was dreaming. In an attempt to "wake up" for real, she committed suicide and framed Cobb for her death to force him to do the same.</p> <p>- Facing a murder charge, Cobb fled the U.S., leaving his children in the care of his father-in-law.</p> <p>- Through his confession, Cobb makes peace with his guilt over Mal's death.</p>	<p>- Ariadne kills Mal's projection and wakes Robert up with a kick. Revived at the fortified hospital, he enters a safe room to discover and accept the planted idea: a projection of his dying father telling him to be his own man.</p> <p>- While Cobb remains in limbo to search for Saito, the other team members ride the synchronized kicks back to reality.</p> <p>- Cobb eventually finds an aged Saito in limbo and reminds him of their agreement.</p> <p>- The dreamers all awake on the plane and Saito makes a phone call.</p>	<p>- Upon arrival at Los Angeles Airport, Cobb passes the U.S. immigration checkpoint and Professor Miles accompanies him to his home.</p> <p>- Using Mal's old totem—a spinning top that spins indefinitely in a dream world but falls over in reality—Cobb conducts a test to prove that he is indeed in the real world, but he does not observe its result and instead joins his children in the garden.</p>

Modernism – philosophical movement – transformations of 20th century Western society – rejected certainty of Enlightenment thinking and religious belief – “make it new” – stream-of-consciousness novel, abstract art, self-conscious style, experimental form, rejection of realism – creative revolution (science, art, technology) – power of human beings to create, improve and reshape environment – progress and growth emphasised.

Post-modernism – as cultural production peaked, post-modernism became a new movement that critiqued the modernist era with scepticism, deconstruction and a post-structuralist mode of analysis – it is marked by a cyclical return to previous styles but adding new contextual meaning through bricolage.

Music video and postmodernism

- the ‘three minute culture’ – the MTV generation length of peoples’ attention spans – fast editing, intense imagery
- Relevant theory: Lyotard/Baudrillard/Jameson – ‘structures of feeling’ and ‘cultural logic’
- Guy Debord - Society of the spectacle – overly visual culture that pursues high levels of stimulation

Simulacra and Simulation (Baudrillard)

- Blurred boundary between the real and imagined
- Distinction between media and reality has collapsed
- Reality defined by images and representations
- This meta-conceptual realm is a form of *hyper-reality*
- Deals with the ambiguity of polar opposites – artifice and authenticity

Causality – many stories no longer follow a structured cause-and-effect pattern but mess with linearity and consequence – some stories decide to subvert the notion of ‘meaning’.

Meta-narratives – disjointed narrative structures that play with causality and linearity – usually associated itself with avant-garde movements.

JEAN BAUDRILLARD

What is post-modernism?

Deconstructing – picking apart media to find out the motive and purpose of a product, to the point of abstraction

Subversive – challenging the conventions of previous media – anti-conformist in nature

Hybridity – the blurred boundary between high culture and popular culture – genres blend, sources of influence vary – media forms are juxtaposed

Hall-of-mirrors/ paradoxical – from Escher’s drawn architectural illusions, to story-in-a-story-in-a-story narratives – to oxymoronic notions such as ‘loving hate’ – ambiguity and illusion reigns in the post-modern world

Hierarchies of taste - - Blurring of high and low culture to create new meaning

Self-conscious – one could argue that post-modern thinking is very narcissistic – looking in on oneself, taking one out of an experience and into the theoretical – conceptual art for conceptual art’s sake (the Emperor’s New Clothes effect)

‘Truth’ is merely a concept

- there is no right or wrong, merely interpretations
- propaganda or ‘taste’ are the deciding factors regarding which ‘truth’ prevails at any given time
- Sense of reality dominated by media images
- Cultural forms can no longer hold up a mirror to reality because reality itself is saturated by advertising, films, TV, video games and print media
- Truth claims via images are more problematic thanks to Photoshop technology – reality is distorted to either beautify or implicate, sometimes unrealistically
- Mediation – media reality is the new reality – society must mediate between cultural forms in order to decide on the prevailing ‘truth’

The zenith of cultural production – culture ‘eats itself’ – everything has been made – therefore, culture must remake itself in abstract and cyclical forms of self-reference

- Many artistic products are influenced by its predecessors to the point of parody, homage and intertextuality
- anything can be art
- Reflection of an ‘alienated’ society – personas and characters are reinvented (ie. Madonna, Michael Jackson, David Bowie) as the pursuit for identity subverts conventions

Bricolage

- fusing two cultures can change its meaning – punk socialists (particularly bands like The Clash) would have a very different ethos to swastika sporting neo-Nazi punks
- Iconography can be adapted when combined with icons from another cultural expression, and therefore create a very new meaning

[FRANCES HA NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	Exposition	Inciting Incident	Progressive Complications	Climax	Resolution
Narrative detail	Frances Halladay is a 27-year-old dancer who lives with her best friend Sophie in Brooklyn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When Sophie decides she wants to relocate to her dream neighborhood of Tribeca, Frances is unable to afford it and is forced to find someplace else to live. - As a result, she moves to Chinatown and shares an apartment with her friends Lev and Benji. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She visits her Sacramento hometown Christmas where she sees her family and reconnects with high school friends who are more successful. - Frances laments her lack of money, her poor prospects as a professional dancer, and her increasingly strained relationship with Sophie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She returns to Vassar, her alma mater, to work as a waitress and summer RA, but finally returns to New York and reconciles with Sophie after crossing paths at a party. - Sophie argues with Patch and they break up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The romance of friendship is emphasised between Frances and Sophie. - Benji starts talking to Frances after the show and calls her 'undateable' but in a way where he seems to fancy her now.

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
Frances (protagonist)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: To maintain a close friendship with Sophie. 2: To succeed as a dancer with her own show. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: Patch is settling down with Sophie. 2: Her mediocre ability and wandering mentality. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: Success – Sophie and Patch break up. 2: Success – she directs her own dance show which impresses.
Sophie (sidekick)	To get married and settle down with Patch and help Frances move on.	Her fallout with Frances which means that they can no longer be friends.	Success – friends reunite.
Colleen (helper)	Wants to see Frances find her career niche as a dance teacher/performer/writer.	Aware of Frances' limitations as a dancer – unsure how she can help.	Success - gives Frances the opportunity to lead her own show.
Patch (antagonist)	To settle down with Sophie.	Her close friendship with Frances. They move away so that Frances is not near.	Failure – Frances and Sophie finally reunite and Sophie dumps Patch.

Other characters: Benji, Rachel, Nessa, Lev – all encounter Frances as acquaintances with different reactions. Benji patronises her as 'undateable' but gradually becomes more impressed by her. Frances attempts to replace Sophie with Rachel, who doesn't play fight the same way, Nessa is a high society yuppie who briefly takes Frances under her wing only to be distanced by her, and Lev initially flirts with her and fails to bed her despite being a 'stud' type and then just becomes an acquaintance/friend.

Mumblecore films

- **Directors:** Andrew Bujalski, Joe Swanberg, Noah Baumbach, Duplass Brothers.
- *Funny Ha Ha* (2002)
- *Hannah Takes The Stairs* (2007)
- *Mutual Appreciation* (2005)
- *The Puffy Chair* (2005)
- *Drinking Buddies* (2013)
- *Happy Christmas* (2014)
- *Tiny Furniture* (2010)
- *Safety Not Guaranteed* (2012)

Mumblecore conventions

- Sub-genre of independent film.
- Naturalistic acting and dialogue.
- Semi-improvised scripts.
- Black and white cinematography.
- Low-budget film production – real location shooting (as opposed to studio sets or soundstages).
- Emphasis on dialogue over plot.
- Focus on relationships of aimless white twentysomethings and thirtysomethings in Middle America uncertain both professionally and in their personal lives.
- Limited soundtracks – usually indie music.
- Unable to articulate their own hopes and desires.

FRANCES HA

What influenced mumblecore?

- French New Wave 1960s films by Eric Rohmer, Jean-Luc Godard and Francois Truffaut – ones that focused on romantic intrigues of characters with lengthy conversations.
- *Manhattan* (1979, dir: Woody Allen)
- John Cassavetes films – "Slackavetes" is term to describe scene.
- Richard Linklater films – *Slacker* (1991) and *Before Sunrise* (1995).
- Reality television.
- Cheaper filmmaking technology – Panasonic AG-DVX100 video camera, desktop video editing software such as Final Cut Pro.

Possible answers

- 'Everywoman' female protagonist
- Gerwig's performance aligns you with Frances and she often seems genuine when other characters are false, also she never desponds and is always cheerful and optimistic.
- However she can be irritating and some spectators may not want to give their allegiance to her, also the ironic and self-conscious tone of the film can create a critical distance between film and spectator which may cause a problem with alignment.
- The intertextual references to the French New Wave, *Manhattan*, *Girls* may increase spectator pleasure or feel too artificial and deliberate.
- Consideration of gendered responses – where is the pleasure for a male spectator here?






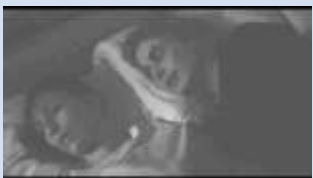

Ideology Theories

- What are the core messages and values of *Frances Ha*? (consider: sexuality, gender, race, class).
- What is the dominant ideology of the film?
- If neither left-wing nor right-wing, it could be considered liberal for its social liberal representations.
- What social group are being represented? What position on the demographic scale would be?
- What advantages and disadvantages exist for the characters?
- Do you sympathise/emphasise with the characters or are you alienated by them and why?
- Why represent characters with a lack of motivation in an endearing manner?
- What messages and values can be drawn from the character arc and narrative progression?
- Why is there less conflict in this film than action films? What does that show with regards to the film's value system?
- Is the film challenging or reinforcing hegemonic attitudes to particular social groups or concepts?
- Does the film engage with politics directly or is it in the subtext?
- How was the film funded and how does that impact its ideological agenda?
- Which character(s) are the spectators encouraged to align themselves with and what is their dominant belief system?

Spectatorship Theories

- **Active and passive spectator.**
- **Preferred, negotiated, oppositional readings.**
- **Uses and Gratifications** (Audience needs: escapism/diversion, education/information, personal identification, social interaction).
- **Multiple Spectating Selves** (Social, Cultural, Private, Desiring).
- If you didn't like the film, why were you alienated by characters in this production?
- What response did you have to the choices cinematography, music, editing, characterisation? What did these choices reveal?
- What subtext is formed in the film? (consider: sexuality, class, gender, race)
- Could *Frances Ha* be seen as a feminist film? (Male director but collaboration with Greta Gerwig).
- Does *Frances Ha* subvert from or conform to patriarchal gender representations such as: **Passive Female Traits:** Physically weak, Insecure, Scantly dressed, Easily scared, Hysterical, Sexually passive)
- **Active Male Traits:** Assertive, Wealthy, Cool and calm, Technologically adept, Brave, Quick-thinking, Physically strong, Resourceful, Sexually successful.
- Metz on Freud and Lacan - cinema screen acts as a 'mirror' to the spectator. - we create an idealised character on the screen.
- How does *Frances Ha* act as a mirror to the spectator in the characterisation of Frances?

[KEY SCENES IN *FRANCES HA* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The long two shot of Frances and Sophie play-fighting in the park with lo-fi black and white cinematography...</p>	<p>...highlights the awkward, child-like and nerdy quality of the genre as well as Frances' and Sophie's friendship.</p>	<p>Oppositional readings of the sub-genre of mumblecore as included in S&S is "synonymous with smug hipsterism, suggestive of endless, self-indulgent navel-gazing from characters who were almost invariably white, straight and middle-class".</p>
	<p>The long shot of Frances and her average ballet dancing...</p>	<p>...depicts Frances as an 'everywoman' whose trials and tribulations are met by the majority of society. She is no superhero, damsel in distress or profound historical figure, she is just making her way through everyday life.</p>	<p>Preferred readings of the genre will discuss how their "low-to-non-existent production values have a wry and self-conscious interest in the everyday trials and tribulations of young Americans struggling to come to terms with the often dispiriting realities of adulthood".</p>
	<p>The medium two shot of Frances having a meal with Lev...</p>	<p>...which the spectator is uncertain if it is a date or two friends hanging out and getting to know each other. Lev's failed attempt at seduction as Frances makes a duck noise when he puts his hand on her shoulder highlights the awkwardness of their interaction.</p>	<p>The conversational improvised style of low tension interactions echoes films by John Cassavetes, John Sayles and Richard Linklater. Noam Baumbach is dipping into a celebrated slice of indie cinema melodrama.</p>
	<p>The over-the-shoulder shot of Sophie play-fighting with Patch as Frances observes...</p>	<p>...plays on Frances' jealousy of their closeness. She mimics their interaction, but tension in the scene escalates as a result of Sophie's news.</p>	<p>At the inciting incident (Stage 2 Disruption) in the narrative, Frances argues with her best friend Sophie about her leaving the city with Patch. This means that Sophie must become more independent and is ultimately more lonely as a result.</p>
	<p>The long shot of Frances and her old high school friends at the dinner table...</p>	<p>...includes cringey conversations between Frances as an awkward wanderer who hasn't found her place yet and former friends who are now engaged in elite society. The film explores the role of the inbetweener yet to settle down.</p>	<p>Issues of class are explored in this table scene but highlight the role of meritocracy on those that succeed and others that fail to find their place in society. At Progressive Complications stage (Stage 3 Recognition), Frances becomes aware that her limbo means she has fallen behind by comparison.</p>
	<p>The wide angle group shot of Frances at a university function as a waitress who persistently breaks working etiquette to talk to guests...</p>	<p>...highlights her unprofessional work mentality but also with a wide-eyed sincerity which transcends naivety. Her happy-go lucky personality supersedes her flaws because it is so endearing.</p>	<p>At the climactic stage (Stage 4 Repair), Frances encounters Sophie in a friendship style 'meet cute' where their serendipitous meeting leads to reuniting and the break-up between Patch and Sophie. These mundane coincidences are indicative of mumblecore conventions in <i>Mutual Appreciation</i>.</p>
	<p>The medium close-up two shot of Frances and Sophie lying in bed together...</p>	<p>...illustrates that their friendship is the true romance of the film.</p>	<p>Their chemistry is platonic, but it is prioritised over relationships. Negotiated readings could debate over whether there is a suggestion of a bisexual connection between the two that goes beyond the platonic, and that the film could have been clearer about this ambiguity.</p>
	<p>The long shot of Frances' choreographed and curated group performance...</p>	<p>...highlights Frances' creative growth as she now gains fuller purpose in her career-based identity.</p>	<p>The New Equilibrium illustrates Frances' progress. Her character arc develops from a childish dance teacher to a choreography director. Whilst she remains in a middling existence, she has gained some independence, not fully tied to Sophie as her sole identity.</p>



**Frances
(Greta Gerwig)**



**Sophie
(Mickey Sumner)**



**Dan
(Michael Esper)**



**Lev
(Adam Driver)**

Frances is a happy-go lucky dance school apprentice who is in limbo about what to do with her life. She becomes increasingly lonely as her best friend has a relationship which causes a rift between them. Frances goes on an existential search as a result.

Sophie is Frances' best friend. They have an argument once Sophie's relationship with Patch becomes serious. The intimacy of their friendship acts like a non-sexual relationship and is the film's core element.

Dan is Frances' ex-boyfriend. When Dan attempted to buy a cat for the two of them to live with, France felt the relationship was getting too serious too quickly and broke up with him. Dan then met someone else and moved on as a result.

Lev is a flirtatious, stylish, young New Yorker whose charms do not woo Frances. When he touches Frances' shoulder after a night out, she flinches, and he realises that their chemistry is merely platonic.

KEY CHARACTERS AND DETAILS FOR 'FRANCES HA'



**Rachel
(Grace Gummer)**



**Colleen
(Charlotte d'Amboise)**



**Nessa
(Justine Lupe)**



**Patch
(Patrick Heusinger)**

Frances becomes friends with Rachel once Sophie has moved on. Frances' attempt to replicate the zany antics of her former friendship fail with Rachel who is more reserved in her demeanour.

Colleen is the Head of the Dance school where Frances is an apprentice. She is aware that Frances is not a natural dancing talent but still helps Frances find her niche within the company.

Nessa is Dan's new girlfriend once he splits up with Frances. She is a New York socialite with an upper-middle class background and has an aspirational ethos.

Patch is Sophie's boyfriend who unwittingly causes a rift between these best friends when their relationship gets more serious.



**Benji
(Michael Zegen)**

Plot Summary - Frances lives in New York, but she doesn't really have an apartment. Frances is an apprentice for a dance company, but she's not really a dancer. Frances has a best friend named Sophie, but they aren't really speaking anymore. Frances throws herself headlong into her dreams, even as their possible reality dwindles. Frances wants so much more than she has but lives her life with unaccountable joy and lightness.

Benji is a typical hipster New Yorker who is understated but thoughtful. He finds Frances fascinating but we are unsure if their chemistry is platonic or anything else.

- **Genre** – Comedy / Drama / Romance.
- **Cinematic movement** – Mumblecore.
- **Production company** – RT Features, Pine District Pictures, Scott Rudin Productions.
- **Distribution companies** – IFC Films (US), Metrodome Distribution (UK).

- **Writer-Director** – Noah Baumbach, Greta Gerwig (co-written).
- **Year** – 2012.
- **Country** – USA .
- **Main actors** -
- Greta Gerwig – Frances.
- Adam Driver – Lev.
- Michael Zegen – Benji.
- Mickey Sumner – Sophie.
- Grace Gummer – Rachel.
- Michael Esper – Dan.
- **Other characters** – Nessa, Patch, Waitress, Colleen.

[TRAINSPOTTING NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	Exposition	Inciting Incident	Progressive Complications	Climax	Resolution
Narrative detail	Introduction to group taking heroin, stealing and swindling. Worst toilet in Scotland	Renton meets Diane. 'Attempts' to quit heroin Spud job interview	Home porn video theft Baby's death (Sick Boy) Renton is not going to jail – Spud goes down. Heroin withdrawal.	Moves to London (literally crossing a bridge (London Bridge) Tommy's death Heroin exchange – Renton leaves with the money whilst Begbie and co. are asleep (Spud is shocked). Getting rid of Sick Boy and Begbie.	Renton collects the money from his safe and runs away.

Other considerations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postmodernism (Britpop cultural references [Iggy Pop, Underworld], breaking the fourth wall with Renton, hyperreality of 'cold turkey', Baudrillard's simulacra and simulation). Gritty kitchen sink realism (Loach, Leigh) with surreal sequences which reflect the experience of a drug addict. Film noir (The Public Enemy in the Hays Code era who gets his comeuppance) but Renton gets away with it theft – he is a problematic complex hero. Auteur theory – Danny Boyle – distinctive stylistic signature. Post-Thatcherite – rejection of free market capitalist survival of fittest paradigm – “there is no such thing as society”.



NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
Renton <i>(anti-hero protagonist)</i>	#1: To get a hit #2: To woo Diane #3: To not get caught #4: To get clean #5: To get a job and make a living	#1: Not enough money #2: She's too young #3: All his friends are going down #4: Life without heroin is boring – easily tempted #5: The old way of life	Success – escapes the dangerously violent Begbie and the criminal Sick Boy with enough money to make a new life for himself.
Spud <i>(sidekick)</i>	To get by and spend time with the guys	The trouble his friends get him into.	Failure – witnesses Renton escape – probably stuck with Sick Boy and Begbie.
Sick Boy <i>(sidekick)</i>	To live the high life, to hustle, to be a know-it-all	Baby's death, addiction issues	Failure – he has ended up in calamitous situations over and over with Begbie.
Diane <i>(princess)</i>	16 going on 30 (growing up too fast)	Her youth (she wants to be a woman not a girl)	Ambiguous – she is an underage schoolgirl who sleeps with Renton but her reaction to Renton's shock about her age is not shown beyond the school gates.
Begbie <i>(antagonist)</i>	To be top dog, to be toughest, no-one matters but himself and his alcoholism	Everyone trying to appeal to his humanity, undermined by drug addicts	Failure – he is a slave to his psychopathic nature and destroys everything in his path.

IDEOLOGY

Left-wing	Centre-ground	Right wing	Far Right
Socialism	Liberalism	Neoliberal and Traditional Conservative	Fascism, Communism, Totalitarian
No such thing as the undeserving poor Liberty and equality	Freedom of expression Identity politics	Thatcherite Conservative (80s), New Labour (90s) Free market economics and meritocracy - pull yourself up by the bootstraps mentality Equality of opportunity not outcome Law, authority, hierarchy - war on drugs	Violence towards the opposition in the name of any cause (extremist ideology).
Humanising of marginalised people in society – so many Scottish people below the poverty line. Even a heroin addict should be considered a key member of society. Anarcho-capitalist illegal rave culture	Boyle's nuanced attitude towards drug culture, class, gender politics etc. Feminist interpretation – Diane as a smart, powerful self-assured teenage woman.	Renton becomes an estate agent (free market – self-employed businessmen - entrepreneur) Sick Boy (business swindler, hustler)	Begbie – psychopathic violence, sadistic, transphobic reaction. All male characters - women as conquests (misogyny). The chaotic lifestyle of Renton and co. (anarchist).

[KEY SCENES IN *TRAINSPOTTING* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The point-of-view shot of a driver who has been stopped by a running shoplifter anti-hero Renton giving direct address. The intertitle Renton appears.</p>	<p>This highlights the protagonist's role as a rebel with a heroin addiction who will do anything to score the next high: the live fast, die young ethos in motion.</p>	<p>The non-diegetic soundtrack is of a punk icon Iggy Pop singing 'Lust For Life' as Renton's voiceover dictates a poem with a series of imperatives called 'Choose Life'. This occurs as the Exposition (Stage 1) or Equilibrium of the narrative.</p>
	<p>The medium shot of Renton diving into a faeces-ridden toilet in 'The Worst Toilet in Scotland' before it cuts to an underwater sequence as he searches for his suppository.</p>	<p>Director Danny Boyle wishes to represent the grotesque life of heroin addiction in Scotland which highlights drug use as a cautionary tale.</p>	<p>However, oppositional readings of the text suggest that the film glamorizes drug culture with its banter and pop culture references.</p>
	<p>The extreme close up of the heroin baking process with a spoon of powder heated...</p>	<p>...highlights a core theme in <i>Trainspotting</i>: hardcore drug use and drug addiction. The fact that the spoon is grubby, illustrates their grimy lifestyle.</p>	<p>A similar focus on the intake of hard drugs is also present in the postmodern Tarantino film <i>Pulp Fiction</i> (1994, US).</p>
	<p>The long shot of Diane in school uniform as Renton is eating breakfast at the dinner table with her parents...</p>	<p>...reveals that she is underage. This is particularly disturbing as Renton met her at a club the night before and they had sex.</p>	<p>This theme in connection with heroin addiction is meant to highlight how extreme both things may be: being a 'skag' addict and a paedophile. This scene is Stage 3 of the narrative (Recognition).</p>
	<p>The long shot eyeline match shot of Renton in cold turkey at the room's perspective distort with a dolly zoom...</p>	<p>...depicts coming off heroin as an absurd nightmare with hallucinations and grotesque moments of suffering.</p>	<p>Renton is positioned as the unsympathetic protagonist. His method of</p>
	<p>The slow panning shot to reveal Tommy dead in a squalid apartment after a heroin overdose with a sweet cat wondering around...</p>	<p>...which is made more tragic because Tommy only found heroin due to his friends, and was fairly 'straight edge' beforehand.</p>	<p>Boyle's cautionary tale remains that heroin destroys lives. There is an intertextual reference of an Iggy Pop poster in the background as one prop in a sparse and unfurnished room. This could suggest that the rock'n roll dream is dying.</p>
	<p>A close-up of antagonist Begbie screaming violently after his football team wins...</p>	<p>...emphasises his psychopathic nature: the need to live life aggressively which in turn intimidates his friends, particularly Renton.</p>	<p>Boyle positions Begbie as the antagonist of the narrative. He is an alcoholic rather than a heroin addict, which suggests that commentary which simply villainises heroin addicts is inaccurate, as there are many anti-social alcoholics as well.</p>
	<p>The long shot of all Sick Boy, Renton, Spud and Begbie walking across a street in Central London all suited and booted...</p>	<p>...gives the impression that they are gangsters about to land a serious drug deal. They come across as rock'n roll rebels when in reality, they are just naïve fools.</p>	<p>This shot acts as an intertextual reference to the Beatles' 'Abbey Road' vinyl cover. This scene is the 'Repair' (Stage 4) of the narrative.</p>
	<p>The medium shot of Renton taking money out of his safe...</p>	<p>....shows that he has a way out of his situation. He may be a criminal, but one that the audience are more likely to identify with and root for as an anti-hero.</p>	<p>This is Stage 5 of the narrative: the New Equilibrium. The mirroring effect of the cinematography echoes a postmodern trope known as the mise-en-abyme effect.</p>



Renton
(Ewan McGregor)

Spud
(Ewen Bremner)

Sick Boy
(Jonny Lee Miller)

Begbie
(Robert Carlyle)

Antihero protagonist and saner member of his group. He narrates his daily life – from supporting his heroin addiction with dole money and petty theft to interacting with the "normal world" – with a cynical, black-humoured eye. He is capable of fitting in well enough to common society, is relatively good-looking and of above-average intelligence, but is misanthropic and depressed using heroin to escape life and find meaning.

Naive and childlike, Spud is both the whipping boy and only real source of comfort among Renton's circle of friends; they feel genuinely protective of him, even as they repeatedly mock and take advantage of him. Spud represents the product of a society indifferent to social ills; he uses heroin because it feels good and because the simple truth is that he would not be able to achieve anything even when sober.

A slick, promiscuous, amoral con artist, and Renton's oldest friend. He picks up women with ease and flaunts this quality in front of his friends. He is often on the lookout for potential scams, and despite his friendly, charming facade, he generally regards the women he seduces with little more than contempt. He becomes even more amoral after the death of his daughter Dawn, who asphyxiates while her mother Alison and Sick Boy are on a heroin binge.

A violent psychopath, Begbie terrorises his "friends" into going along with what he says, assaulting anyone who angers him. He expresses loyalty to his friends though he considers junkies to be lowest form of life, despite being addicted to alcohol, and the adrenaline rush of violence. He is part of the YLT (Young Leith Team) street gang.

SYNOPSIS & KEY CHARACTERS IN 'TRAINSPOTTING'



Diane
(Kelly Macdonald)

Emerging from a nightclub after shunning the advances of a clubber, she is pursued by Renton with an air of desperation. She responds to his pathetic chat-up attempt with an icily cruel speech that leaves him totally crestfallen. When she leaves her taxi door open for Renton to follow, it becomes apparent that the knock-back may have been merely a device to establish sexual power over him.

Plot Summary – A wild, freeform, Rabelaisian trip through the darkest recesses of Edinburgh low-life, focusing on Mark Renton and his attempt to give up his heroin habit, and how the latter affects his relationship with family and friends: Sean Connery wannabe Sick Boy, dimbulb Spud, psycho Begbie, 14-year-old girlfriend Diane, and clean-cut athlete Tommy, who's never touched drugs but can't help being curious about them...

Director – Danny Boyle
Producer – Andrew Macdonald
Writers – Irvin Welsh (novel), John Hodge (screenplay)
Year – 1996
Country – US
Genre – Drama
Production company – Channel Four Films

Tommy (Kevin McKidd)



Swanney (Peter Mullan)



Gail (Shirley Henderson)



Mr. Renton (James Cosmo)



Allison (Susan Vidler)



Mickey Forrester (Irvin Welsh)



Mrs. Renton (Eileen Nicholas)



Lizzy (Pauline Lynch)



Dealer (Keith Allen)



[THIS IS ENGLAND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	<i>Exposition</i>	<i>Inciting Incident</i>	<i>Progressive Complications</i>	<i>Climax</i>	<i>Resolution</i>
Narrative detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 1983, on the last day of the school year, 12-year-old Shaun gets into a fight at school with a boy named Harvey after the latter makes an offensive joke about his father, who was killed in the Falklands War. - On his way home, Shaun comes across a gang of young skinheads led by Woody, who feels sympathy for Shaun and invites him to join the group. - They accept Shaun as a member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combo, an older skinhead, returns to the group after a prison sentence, accompanied by a knife-wielding man called Banjo. - A charismatic sociopath, Combo expresses extremist English nationalist views - This leads the group to split, with young Shaun, the belligerent Pukey, and Gadget, who feels bullied by Woody for his weight, choosing Combo over Woody's apolitical gang. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shaun finds a mentor figure in Combo, who in turn is impressed by and identifies with Shaun. - Shaun goes with Combo's group to a National Front meeting. - After Pukey expresses doubt over their racist and nationalistic politics, Combo throws him out of his group and sends him back to Woody. - The gang then engages in bigoted antagonism of, among others, shopkeeper Mr Sandhu, a Pakistani shopkeeper who had previously banned Shaun from his shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combo becomes depressed after Lol, Woody's girlfriend, rejects him when he admits that he has loved her since they had sex years before. - To console himself, Combo buys cannabis from Milky, the only black skinhead in Woody's gang. - During a party, Combo and Milky bond while intoxicated, but Combo becomes increasingly bitter and envious when Milky shares details of his many relatives, comfortable family life and happy upbringing, everything that Combo lacked. - Enraged, Combo enters a frenzied state and brutally beats Milky unconscious, while Banjo holds down Shaun, and Meggy watches on in horror. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The film cuts forward to Shaun, who is in his bedroom looking at a picture of his dad who died in the Falklands conflict. - He is reflecting on the incident and brooding about what happened, with his mother Cynthia assuring him that Milky will be all right. - Shaun is then shown walking near the beach and throwing his St George's Flag, a gift from Combo, into the sea.

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

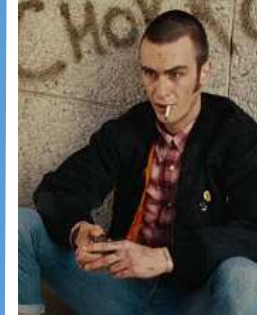
Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
<i>Shaun (protagonist)</i>	- To find a father figure after his dad's death in the Falklands war, to make new friends, to get a girlfriend.	- Woody is a flawed father figure and Combo is the worst possible example. He may have a girlfriend but she is way too old for him, and his new friends are leading him astray.	Failure – the group he ends up belonging to are extremist sociopaths. He makes the right decision and leaves.
<i>Combo (antagonist)</i>	- To get back together with Lol, to lead the gang and to start up a racist nationalist movement.	- His sociopathic tendencies scare those closest to him. Woody leaves the group when he becomes racist.	Failure – Combo goes back to jail after a racist beating of Milky, and Lol rejects him.
<i>Milky (helper)</i>	- To settle in as a small-time drug dealer and generally affable member of the gang.	- Combo becomes increasingly racist towards him and he quickly becomes isolated by Combo's evil motives.	Failure – Combo nearly murders him. Thankfully, Milky just survives.
<i>Woody (helper)</i>	- To lead the gang, bring Shaun into the group and have a good time growing up and having a laugh.	- The return of Combo sours everything with the group – he decides not to get involved, aware just how evil he is.	Failure – he cannot protect Shaun even though he tries.
<i>Lol (helper)</i>	- To have a happy life with Woody and the gang and bring Shaun into the group.	- The return of Combo makes her a target for his dangerous affection (they had a relationship when she was underage).	Failure – Combo sours all the joy from the group.

[IDEOLOGY]

Left	Centre	Centre-right	Right	Far Right
Socialism Democratic Socialism Statism Social Democrat Libertarianism Socialism	Liberalism	Liberal Conservative Neoliberalism Libertarianism	Traditional Conservative Capitalism Authoritarianism	Fascism and Nationalism
No such thing as the undeserving poor Liberty and equality For the many not the few	Freedom of expression Identity politics Multicultural Corporate Federalist	New Labour Thatcherite Conservatism Free market economics Equality of opportunity but not of outcome Meritocracy	Law, authority, hierarchy, tradition Pull yourself up by the bootstraps mentality War on drugs Military industrial complex (Neocon)	Anti-immigration Jingoistic Racist Dictatorial rule
Woody is arguably a Socialist or Anarcho-Socialist character.	Meadows may have wanted to make a soft case for the legalisation of cannabis use.	Margaret Thatcher represents the neoliberal / conservative orthodoxy of the English 1980s as shown in the first montage.		Combo embodies this movement.

[KEY SCENES IN *THIS IS ENGLAND* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	The medium shot of sample footage of Margaret Thatcher in a tractor...	...shows her efforts as Prime Minister (1979-92) to act as a 'woman of the people'. She	The film was made in 2004 but depicts life in the Midlands in the 1980s, during the Thatcherite era which include the miner's strike, Falkland's War and free market capitalist neoliberal/ Conservative drive.
	The two shot of Woody consoling Shaun with a mocking impression of Harvey (Shaun's bully) as a posh idiot...	...depicts their opposition as middle and upper-class people who undermine them.	Woody seems ideologically representative of Anarcho-Socialism, whose petty crimes of vandalism are against the establishment (Thatcherite policy) that has arguably oppressed them.
	The two shot of Shaun after he has 'snogged' his new girlfriend Smell with an age gap (12/15)...	...which becomes more disturbing by how young and boyish he looks and how post-adolescent she seems.	The gratuitous close-ups of their snogging including the noises are meant to be grotesque highlighting the awkward of a first kiss. Meadows highlights the naivety of youth. An oppositional reading may find these representations exploitative.
	The close up of Combo as he gives political speeches with shot-reverse shots to show the reactions of Woody, Milky, Lol, Shaun and other people present...	...may be full of charisma and impassioned rhetoric, but becomes increasingly concerning as racist nationalist ideologies are spouted against foreigners.	The director's intentions are to show the carcinogenic effect of those who platform themselves whilst spreading toxic ideologies . Woody feels coerced by Combo's rabble rousing and realises that the party has stopped.
	The long shot of a nationalist gathering at a local village club with the St. George's flag as a key symbol...	...depicts a political meeting that showcases grassroots far right nationalist movements. 'Common enemy' tactics against multiculturalism exist on the far right.	Meadows wishes to show the fine line between hard left and far right ideologies which both give a populist message for those disenfranchised within the working classes against the establishment.
	The medium close-up two shot of two Islamic Pakistani boys are threatened with racial abuse by Combo's nationalist gang which includes Shaun...	...which illustrates the extremist attitude of white nationalists against multiculturalism .	Meadows' representation of these two boys as innocent and wrongly scapegoated (just like the shopkeeper) highlights his rebuke against extremism. Preferred readings would show that Meadows has an important progressive intention.
	The close-up of Milky smiling defiance at Combo's threats, aggression and racism...	...showcases the dignity in civil rights , that when someone is racially abused, they can still stand tall and be proud of who they are.	Milky is sympathetic and wrongly marginalised figure in the narrative. This climactic scene (Stage 4 'Repair') highlights the brutality of nationalism but also the profound pacifist nature of Milky, who has a powerful grace.
	The low angle medium shot of Combo limbering up as he talks to Milky about privileges...	...highlights his physically threatening and intimidating nature.	The foreshadowing regarding his character builds up tension in this scene as we anticipate his violence against Milky. The tone of the scene shows how easily extremism can ingrain itself in culture.
	The point-of-view shot of Shaun looking at a picture of his father who died in the Falklands...	...highlights the deification of militarism but also the tragedy of politicians who send soldiers to their graves.	Shaun was easily manipulated by Combo through using the anger Shaun had against his dad's death which could be transferred into the nationalist cause. Combo's methods were propagandist in nature.
	The long shot of Shaun throwing St. George's flag into the sea...	...is a final symbolic gesture which rejects the extremism of nationalist anti-immigrant scapegoating .	This is Meadows' message: to rebuke dehumanisation of 'the other' wherever it crops up, and how patriotism can be misused for jingoistic causes.



Shaun
(Thomas Turgoose)

Combo
(Stephen Graham)

Lol
(Vicky McClure)

Milky
(Andrew Shim)

Woody
(Joseph Gilgun)

Having lost his dad in the Falklands War, he had a hard time fitting in at his school. He was a 12 year old school boy who joined a skinhead gang led by Woody. However, Combo is an old friend of Woody's, returned from prison and divided the gang by introducing racist views to them. Shaun, wanting to make his father proud, sided with Combo and attended National Front meetings. This takes him into a criminal underworld.

Upon release from prison, a 32 year old Combo returns to Woody and the gang at a party at Gadget's house, and is greeted warmly. It was here that Combo met Shaun, a new member of the skinhead group, whom he takes to a National Front meeting where they become members of the political party. He is a violent psychopathic racist whose return raises hell and endangers Shaun's future, both physically and mentally.

Lol (Woody's girlfriend) shaves Shaun's head to make him a true skinhead, but is reprimanded by Cynthia, though she nevertheless thanks the group for cheering Shaun up and buying him clothes. Later, Combo returns to the group after a three year prison sentence he served for Woody, and shares an uneasy reunion with him. When she was 16, she had one night with Combo which he has become obsessed with.

Woody and Milky were the leaders of a gang of skinheads including Gadget, Kes and Pukey. Milky is a warm, calm and friendly member of the gang. Being the only black member, he becomes the focus of Combo's racial hatred. Later Milky met Combo and agreed to get some cannabis for him, to the chagrin of Milky's girlfriend, Pob. Milky and Combo smoked together, but the night turned sour when Combo calls uses racial slurs against him and violently beat him unconscious.

Woody was the leader of a rather large gang of skinheads. One friend of his was Combo, though the friendship was somewhat strained due to Combo's racist nature and tendency to bully Milky. At one point, Woody and Combo got into trouble with the police, but only Combo was sentenced to prison while Woody went free. Woody would hold a sense of gratitude towards Combo from then on. Woody's girlfriend is Lol.

SYNOPSIS & KEY CHARACTERS IN 'THIS IS ENGLAND'

Cynthia
(Jo Hartley)



Meggy
(Perry Benson)



Pukey Nicholls
(Jack O'Connell)



Kelly
(Chanel Cresswell)



Smell
(Rosamund Hanson)



Banjo
(George Newton)



Mr Sandhu
(Kriss Dosanjh)



Trev
(Danielle Watson)



Gadget
(Andrew Ellis)



Lenny
(Frank Harper)



Harvey
(Michael Socha)



Plot Summary - 12 year old Shaun lives with his widowed mother in a small town in Britain. His father, an army officer, was one of the Falkland casualties. A loner, he is befriended by some older skinhead youth, who shave off his hair, date an older young woman, and subsequently introduce him to ex-convict Combo. Shaun unwittingly volunteers to be part of Combo's gang, and is taken to a meeting hosted by Britain's right-winged National Front, which openly advocates ethnic cleansing; re-defines Racism as Reality; and Nazism as Nationalism. Combo then takes his followers on a spree of sword and knife-wielding terror, looting a corner store run by Sandhu, all eventually get stoned and violence ensues.

Director – Shane Meadows.

Writers – Shane Meadows.

Year – 2006.

Country – UK.

Genre – Crime / Drama.

Production company – FilmFour, UK Film Council, Warp Films, Big Arty Productions, EM Media, Optimum Releasing, Screen Yorkshire.



[SHAUN OF THE DEAD NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	<i>Exposition</i>	<i>Inciting Incident</i>	<i>Progressive Complications</i>	<i>Climax</i>	<i>Resolution</i>
Narrative detail	- Shaun is a salesman at an electronics store with no direction in his life. His colleagues disrespect him, he does not get along with his stepfather Philip.	- After he fails to get dinner reservations and suggests they go to the Winchester, the pub at which they spend most of their evenings, his girlfriend Liz breaks up with him. - After the break-up, Shaun drowns his sorrows there with his housemate and best friend Ed. At home, their housemate Pete, complains of a bite wound from a mugger and Shaun and Ed playing Electro at four o'clock in the morning whilst he has to fill in at work; he berates Shaun to get his life together.	- By morning, a zombie apocalypse has overwhelmed London, but Shaun and Ed are slow to notice until they encounter two zombies in their garden and kill them with blows to the head. - They form a plan to rescue Shaun's mother, Barbara, and Liz, then wait out the crisis in the Winchester. - They escape in Pete's car, and pick up Barbara and Philip, who gets bitten shortly after. - They then use Phillip's car to pick up Liz and her friends Diane and David. Philip makes peace with Shaun before turning into a zombie. - The group abandons the vehicle and continues on foot, sneaking through backyards and evading zombies by pretending to be them. - They seek refuge inside the Winchester, where Shaun discovers that the Winchester rifle above the bar is functional. - Barbara reveals she has been bitten and turns undead after giving Liz and Shaun her blessing. - David attempts to shoot Barbara, but Shaun stops him, causing them and the rest of the group to start arguing. - Liz is able to stop them, and Shaun, distraught, is forced to shoot Barbara.	- Zombies break into the pub. - David is disemboweled, and an enraged Dianne grabs David's leg and rushes into the horde. - The zombified Pete appears and bites Ed, after which Shaun shoots Pete and sets fire to the bar. - The fire sets off the rifle ammunition while Shaun, Liz, and Ed flee into the cellar, where they contemplate suicide. - Ed volunteers to stay behind with the rifle while Shaun and Liz escape through a hatch that opens to the street. - The Army arrives and guns down the remaining zombies.	- Six months after the outbreak, civilisation has returned to normal, and surviving zombies are used as cheap labour and entertainment. - Liz has moved in with Shaun, while Shaun keeps the zombie Ed tethered in his shed, where they play video games together.

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
Shaun (<i>protagonist</i>)	To get back together with Liz, hang out with Ed and drink at the Winchester	Told by Pete that he needs to grow up, Liz breaks up with him because he is too immature and Ed holds him back from growing up. Then there's a zombie apocalypse, so he must survive.	Success: he staves off the zombie and Liz is impressed by his heroism and gets back together with him. Shaun stays friends with now zombified Ed.
Liz (<i>princess</i>)	To move on with her life or help Shaun learn to take responsibility.	Shaun is stuck in a rut but can't let her go,	Success: Shaun learns to 'man up' and she survives zombie apocalypse.
Ed (<i>sidekick</i>)	To hang out with Shaun and have a laugh.	Pete and Liz are unimpressed with him and feel he holds Shaun back.	Failure/success: becomes a zombie but still gets to hang out with Shaun.
David (<i>antagonist</i>)	To woo Liz.	In a relationship with Diane and is love rivals with Shaun.	Failure: killed by zombie apocalypse, Liz didn't see him that way.
Zombies (antagonist)	To eat human flesh.	Characters like Shaun and the gang.	Failure: finally defeated when the army arrives.

Other characters: Diane, Pete, Barbara, Philip – most of them eventually get eaten by zombies although Shaun's parents patch things up with him.

[KEY SCENES IN *SHAUN OF THE DEAD* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The medium shot of the centrally framed protagonist Shaun smoking a cigarette in 'The Winchester' pub whilst a shot-reverse shot reveals Liz dumping him...</p>	<p>...depicts Shaun as a deadbeat loser whose average life is too mediocre for Liz – video games, pub, dead-end job, scruffy appearance, lazy.</p>	<p>The Tarantinoesque use of an eclectic soundtrack to convey the scene originates from horrors like <i>Dawn of the Dead</i>, and 80s tunes like 'Ghost Town' from ska band <i>The Specials</i>, 'Panic' from indieboys <i>The Smiths</i>, two tunes by glam-pop band <i>Queen</i>, two from 90s indie rockers <i>Ash</i>. These all position the audience towards a Generation X and Millennial spectator demographic.</p>
	<p>The panning wide angle shot during the opening credits with checkout assistants acting like synchronised zombies...</p>	<p>...who act like Shaun in being zombified by the everyday drab experience of suburban middle-class life.</p>	<p>Director Edgar Wright works with his comedy duo from the hit Channel 4 TV show 'Spaced' in which these two leads act as if they are in a buddy movie.</p>
	<p>The wide angle two shot of Shaun and Ed singing theme tunes as they spot a silhouetted man (now zombified) in the distance stumbling as if drunk...</p>	<p>...builds suspense and the increasing number of signs that these characters are in the throes of a zombie apocalypse.</p>	<p>Pete has already been positioned as an antagonist who tells Shaun to "sort your life out" as a flatmate who has had enough with his childish antics.</p>
	<p>The high angle shot of Shaun and Ed at the bottom of the stairs nervous that Pete may have been turned into a zombie...</p>	<p>...which highlights them as vulnerable to intimidating forces.</p>	<p>Pete has already been positioned as an antagonist who tells Shaun to "sort your life out" as a flatmate who has had enough with his childish antics.</p>
	<p>The wide angle shot of Shaun with his crew of friends in a line from foreground to background behind him...</p>	<p>...positions Shaun as the leader of the group. Despite being presented as a 'loser', he seems to be taking control.</p>	<p>The composition of characters in the frame highlights Wright's deliberately framed cinematographic style and his snappy, rhythmic editing.</p>
	<p>The wide angle shot of a horde of flesh-eating zombies breaking their way into 'The Winchester' where Shaun and the gang have hidden...</p>	<p>...celebrates B-movie gore in a postmodern manner, exploring the juxtaposition between the real and the simulated.</p>	<p>Intertextual references to <i>Dawn of the Dead</i>, <i>Night of the Living Dead</i> etc. but with a comedic take on the sub-genre.</p>
	<p>The medium two shot of Liz and Shaun bruised and bloodied with 'The Winchester' on fire behind them and Shaun wearing a headband like Rambo...</p>	<p>...highlights Shaun's character arc from loser layabout to assertive hero and protector. His narrative arc is redemptive.</p>	<p>There are allusions to the action genre in this scene.</p>
	<p>The wide angle shot of Shaun and the now zombified Ed in the cellar playing video games...</p>	<p>...reinforces a key trope in the film: the romance of friendship, which is a distinctive auteur feature of Wright films.</p>	<p>This scene progresses a motif of Shaun and Ed by the television but that their friendship remains beyond Ed's transition into becoming a zombie.</p>

COMPONENT 1A: HOLLYWOOD 1930-1990 (VERTIGO & ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST)

Auteur (Bazin) Studio System Art of blocking a scene 'The Hitchcock Blonde' Fetishism & necrophilia Voyeurism Femme fatale Patriarchy Hays Code Vertigo/Acrophobia Aesthetic Classical Formalism Hitchcock Blonde Zolly shoot (dolly zoom) Dramatic irony Composition Psychoanalytic Male gaze (Mulvey)	Auteur (Bazin) New Hollywood Social realism Anti-authoritarian Psychoanalysis Dystopia Analogy – Vietnam Distinctive stylistic features Binary oppositions (Levi-Strauss) Ideology Subvert/challenge Postcolonial (Gilroy)
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Vertigo <i>(1958, dir: Alfred Hitchcock, Paramount)</i>	One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest <i>(1975, dir: Milos Forman, Fantasy Films)</i>
Studio System Era (1930-60)	New Hollywood Era (1960-90)
John 'Scottie' Ferguson (James Stewart) Madeleine Elster (Kim Novak) Judy Barton (Kim Novak) Midge Wood (Barbara Bel Geddes) Gavin Elster (Tom Helmore)	Randle McMurphy (Jack Nicholson) Candy Starr (Mews Small) Nurse Ratched (Louise Fletcher) Billy Bibbit (Brad Dourif) Turkle (Scatman Crothers)

COMPONENT 1B: HOLLYWOOD AFTER 2005 (INCEPTION & FRANCES HA)

Spectatorship Ideology Postmodernism Simulation Mise-en-abyme Demographics Alignment Allegiance Audience positioning Passive/active Preferred, negotiated, oppositional Auteur Spectacle Intertextuality	Spectatorship Ideology Mumblecore Persona B/W cinematography Spectatorship Indie Hollywood Demographics Feminist critique Mass/niche Preferred, negotiated, oppositional Auteur - dialogue
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Inception <i>(2010, dir: Christopher Nolan, Legendary/Warner Bros)</i>	Frances Ha <i>(2012, dir: Noah Baumbach, Pine District Pictures)</i>
Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio) Arthur (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) Ariadne (Ellen Page) Eames (Tom Hardy) Saito (Ken Watanabe) Yusuf (Dileep Rao) Robert Fischer (Cillian Murphy) Mal (Marion Cotillard) Miles (Michael Caine)	Frances (Greta Gerwig) Sophie (Mickey Sumner) Dan (Michael Esper) Lev (Adam Driver) Benji (Michael Zegen) Rachel (Grace Gummer) Patch (Patrick Heusinger)

COMPONENT 1C: BRITISH FILM AFTER 1995 (TRAINSPOTTING & THIS IS ENGLAND)

Narrative Ideology Performance Social Realism Britpop Character arc Aesthetic Feminist critique Auteur Cult fandom Adaptation – Irvin Welsh Counter-culture Franchise?	Narrative Ideology Performance Social Realism Nationalism Thatcherism Character arc Aesthetic Auteur Political context Franchise? Far Left vs Far Right Open/closed ending Dystopia
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Trainspotting <i>(1996, dir: Danny Boyle, Channel Four Films)</i>	This is England <i>(2007, dir: Shane Meadows, Warp Films/FilmFour)</i>
Renton (Ewan McGregor) Spud (Ewen Bremner) Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller) Begbie (Robert Carlyle) Diane (Kelly Macdonald) Tommy (Kevin McKidd)	Shaun (Thomas Turgoose) Combo (Stephen Graham) Lol (Vicky McClure) Milky (Andrew Shim) Woody (Joseph Gilgun) Cynthia (Jo Hartley) Smell (Rosamund Hanson)

EDUQAS A LEVEL FILM STUDIES KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

COMPONENT 2A: WORLD CINEMA (PAN'S LABYRINTH & CITY OF GOD)

Formalism
Historical/political context
Composition
Production design
Ideology
Auteur
Context

Pan's Labyrinth0 <i>(2006, dir: Guillermo Del Toro, Wild Bunch/New Line, Spain)</i>
Ofelia/Princess Moanna (Ivana Baquero) Vidal (Sergi Lopez) Mercedes (Maribel Verdu) Fauno/Pale Man (Doug Jones) Doctor Ferreiro (Alex Angulo) Garces (Manolo Solo) Pedro (Roger Casamejor) Carmen (Ariadne Gil)

City of God <i>(2002, dir: Fernando Meirelles, O2 Filmes, Brazil)</i>
Rocket (Alexandre Rodriguez) Li'l Ze (Leandro Firmino) Li'l Dice (Douglas Silva) Bene (Phelipe Haagensen) Shaggy (Jonathan Haagensen) Knockout Ned (Seu Jorge) Carrot (Matheus Nachtergaele) Angelica (Alice Braga)

COMPONENT 2B: DOCUMENTARY (STORIES WE TELL)

Critical debates: The significance of digital technology in film.
Filmmaker's theories
Grierson – actuality.
Kim Longinotto – invisible role of documentarian.
Nick Broomfield – participatory and performative.
Peter Watkins – docu-dramas and faux-documentaries.
Michael Moore – participatory and performative.
Metanarrative
Truth as merely a concept
Subjectivities of representation

Stories We Tell <i>(2012, dir: Sarah Polley, US)</i>
Michael Polley (Himself/Peter Evans) Sarah Polley (Herself) Diane Polley (Herself/Rebecca Jenkins) Susy Buchan (Herself/Lani Billard) John Buchan (Himself/Justin Goodhand) Mark Polley (Himself/Seamus Morrison) Joanna Polley (Herself/Allie MacDonald) Harry Gulkin (Himself/Alex Hatz)

COMPONENT 2C: SILENT FILM (BUSTER KEATON COMPILATION)

Critical debates: The realist and the expressive.
Vaudeville
Auteur
Slapstick
Persona
Aesthetic
Houdini – 'Buster'
Chaplin/Laurel & Hardy/Lloyd
Fatty Arbuckle/Virginia Rappe
Long shot vs close up
Cue cards vs gesture
Stereotypes
Two-reelers
Dramatic irony

Buster Keaton
One Week (1920, dir: Buster Keaton, Metro Pictures) The Scarecrow (1920, dir: Buster Keaton, Joseph M. Schenck Productions) The High Sign (1921, dir: Buster Keaton, Joseph M. Schenck Productions) Cops (1922, dir: Buster Keaton, Joseph M. Schenck Productions)

COMPONENT 2D: EXPERIMENTAL (PULP FICTION)

Auteur
Non-linear narrative
Postmodernism
Indie Hollywood
Composition
Audience positioning
Intertextual reference
Vintage soundtrack
Femme fatale
Film noir
Dialogue / screenplay
Mass/niche
Ensemble cast - star persona
Director Persona
Cult fandom

Pulp Fiction <i>(1994, dir: Quentin Tarantino, Miramax, US)</i>
Vincent Vega (John Travolta) Jules Winnfield (Samuel L. Jackson) Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman) Butch Coolidge (Bruce Willis) Marsellus Wallace (Ving RhMES) Lance (Eric Stoltz) The Wolf (Harvey Keitel) Jimmie (Quentin Tarantino) Fabienne (Maria de Madeiros) Pumpkin (Tim Roth) Honey Bunny (Amanda Plummer)



Ofelia / Princess Moanna
(Ivana Baquero)

A child who comes to believe she is the reincarnation of a princess from the underworld. She loves books, has a rebellious streak, is remarkably brave and despises Vidal.

Vidal
(Sergi Lopez)

Ofelia's new stepfather and a Falange officer in post-Civil War Spain. Vidal is the embodiment of dictator Franco. He acts extreme violence against his adversaries. He is married to Carmen. Ofelia, who retreats into her imagination to escape her stepdad.

Mercedes
(Maribel Verdu)

Vidal's housekeeper. She is servant-hearted, respecting the orders of Vidal's troops, cares with compassion for Ofelia and Carmen but is also is an anti-Francoist like Doctor Ferreiro and Pedro awaiting the outcome of war as a spy.

Fauno
(Doug Jones)

The Faun (also known as Pan) is a creature that informs Ofelia of her true identity as Princess Moanna and guides her through the tasks that will allow her to return to the Underworld to be with her true parents.

KEY CHARACTERS IN 'PAN'S LABYRINTH'



Doctor Ferreiro
(Alex Angulo)

A doctor in the service of Vidal, but an anti-Francoist. Ferreiro refuses to bow down. Ferreiro shows that there are many ways to oppose an institution. He doesn't need to be staging rebellion: he simply helps the sick, the wounded...and the pregnant.



Garces
(Manolo Solo)

One of Vidal's lieutenants. He revels in murder and completing the orders given from Vidal. Evil men like Garces ensure the supremacy of fascist regimes.



Pedro
(Roger Casamajor)

Mercedes' brother and one of the rebels and Mercedes' love. He leads a rebel faction against Vidal's Francoist fascist regime and resides in the woods awaiting a battle with Vidal's forces.



Pale Man
(Doug Jones)

Grotesque monster in the underworld who only breathes into life if any food is eaten from the banquet. He places eyes in the socket within his palms and sees when he places his hands over his face.



Carmen
(Ariadna Gil)

Ofelia's mother and Vidal's wife. Married to Vidal and sick with a serious illness. She also discourages Ofelia from believing in fairy tales and is torn between love for brutal husband and imaginative daughter.

Padre (Eusebio Lazaro)
Serrano (Cesar Vea)
El Tarta (Ivan Massague)
Frances (Gonzalo Uriarte)
Sacerdote (Francisco Vidal)



- **Plot Summary** - In 1944 falangist Spain, a girl, fascinated with fairy-tales, is sent along with her pregnant mother to live with her new stepfather, a ruthless captain of the Spanish army. During the night, she meets a fairy who takes her to an old faun in the center of the labyrinth. He tells her she's a princess, but must prove her royalty by surviving three gruesome tasks. If she fails, she will never prove herself to be the the true princess and will never see her real father, the king, again.
- **Writer-Director** – Guillermo Del Toro.
- **Year** – 2006.
- **Country** – Spain / Mexico / USA.
- **Genre** – Drama / Fantasy / War.
- **Production company** – Estudios Picasso, Tequila Gang, Esperanto Filmoj.
- **Distribution co.** – New Line (US), Picturehouse (US).

[PAN'S LABYRINTH NARRATIVE STRUCTURE]

Todorov	Equilibrium	Disruption	Recognition	Repair	New Equilibrium
McKee	<i>Exposition</i>	<i>Inciting Incident</i>	<i>Progressive Complications</i>	<i>Climax</i>	<i>Resolution</i>
Narrative detail	Protagonist Ofelia travels with her pregnant but sickly mother Carmen to meet Captain Vidal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insect appears in Ofelia's bedroom, where it transforms to a fairy and leads her through the labyrinth. - There, she meets the faun, who believes she is the reincarnation of Princess Moanna. - Vidal murders two local farmers detained on suspicion of helping the rebels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ofelia completes tasks for Faun and puts mandrake root under Carmen's bed as mythical cure. - Vidal interrogates and tortures a captive rebel. - He asks Doctor Ferreiro to tend to the captive, whom Ferreiro euthanizes instead. - Vidal realizes that Ferreiro is a rebel collaborator and kills him. - Vidal catches Ofelia tending to the mandrake root, which he considers delusional. - Carmen agrees and throws the root into the fire. - She immediately develops painful contractions and dies giving birth to a son. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vidal discovers that Mercedes is also a spy. - Mercedes and Ofelia secretly leave but are caught. - Ofelia, mistaken as a traitor, is locked in her bedroom. - Mercedes is taken to be interrogated and tortured. - Mercedes frees herself, stabs Vidal, and rejoins the rebels. - The faun returns to Ofelia to give her a chance for the third task and tells her to bring her baby brother into the labyrinth. - Ofelia complies and Vidal pursues her as the rebels launch an attack on the outpost. - Mercedes enters the labyrinth and comforts a motionless but breathing Ofelia. - Drops of Ofelia's blood fall down the center of the spiral stone staircase onto an altar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ofelia, well dressed and uninjured, then appears in a golden throne room. - The king of the underworld says that she passed the real final test, which was to choose to spill her own blood rather than that of an innocent. - The faun praises Ofelia for her choice, and addresses her as "Your Highness". - The queen of the underworld, her mother, invites Ofelia/Moanna to sit next to her father, and rule at his side. - Back in the stone labyrinth (in the real world), Ofelia smiles as she dies. - The epilogue completes the tale of Princess Moanna, stating that she ruled wisely and left quiet traces of her time in the human realm "visible only to those who know where to look."

COMPONENT 2A – WORLD CINEMA – EUROPEAN FILM – PAN'S LABYRINTH

[NARRATIVE/CHARACTER ARC]

Character	Goals	Obstacles	Success/failure
Ofelia (protagonist)	To complete the Faun's tasks, look after her mum, escape the evil Vidal and realise her destiny as Moanna.	Vidal is a powerful fascist dictator who could murder Ofelia at any moment if he wished it.	Failure: dies in the real world. Success: passes the test due to putting Carmen's son's life before her own to become Princess Moanna.
Vidal (antagonist)	To conquer Spain as a Captain for Francoist Spain and to find a male heir to the throne.	Carmen is sick and has had near miscarriages, rebels are approaching and is gaining opposition from women (Ofelia, Mercedes) and Dr Ferreiro in his quarters.	Failure: he dies in disgrace and dishonour as one of the most villainous characters in cinema history.
Pale Man (antagonist)	To kill whoever eats at the banquet table.	Ofelia's attempt to escape his evil clutches.	Failure: she survives...just.
Mercedes and Doctor Ferreiro (helpers)	To infiltrate Vidal's quarters to help the rebels defeat the fascist regime.	Vidal's suspicions that they may be spies sent to kill him.	DF - Failure: killed by Vidal after he euthanizes a tortured rebel. M – Success: becomes mother of Vidal's son on the dictator's death.
Faun (guide)	To guide Ofelia on a series of tasks to become Princess Moanna.	Ofelia's rebellious personality meant that she failed not to eat food at Pale Man's banquet.	Success:

Other characters: Pedro (husband to Mercedes) – communist revolutionary succeeds in conquering part of the Francoist regime.

COMPONENT 2A – WORLD CINEMA – EUROPEAN FILM – PAN'S LABYRINTH

Aesthetic
 Distinctive colour palettes initially used to distinguish between different worlds but gradually blur to avoid simplistic binarism.
 1. Cool, dark blues – associated with Vidal's brutal ideology.
 - the Faun initially black/green as a seemingly sinister figure.
 2. Rich crimson and gold – to represent fantastical world of Princess Moana entering the throne-room as a contrast to the cold, austere reality of the real world.
 - luscious colours at banquet table that may have outer beauty but a grotesque interior (excessive wealth, sinister guests, fascist context).
 - Magic realism conveyed in dark fantasy sequences.

Del Toro art as alchemy
 To purify and mature base metals into noble metals by process of transmutation.
 Consider: his combination of lowbrow (slasher films, comic books, horror) and highbrow influences (Goya paintings, surrealist and social realism photography, gothic allegories, Spanish and Mexican historical context) that fuse by subversive methods to create masterful art.

Cinematography
 Restless fluidity that matches the queering and questioning nature of the central child figure.

Fairytales for adult audiences
 - Monster movie as serious artform.
 - Bleak or ambivalent denouements.
 - Children as victims of violence – graphically portrayed – danger is real not imaginary.
 - Refusal to allow safe passage for child characters.

Challenging gender stereotypes
 Ofelia is a heroically rebellious and resistant young girl who contradicts female passivity

Ambiguity/role reversal of heroism and villainy
 Some monsters as misunderstood and alienated
 Some humans with a moral void that is monstrous
 - plays on Victor Frankenstein/Monster concept.

Fairytales subtext
 Ofelia is orphaned in a turbulent world but originating from a mystical monarchy – allusions to paganism.

Companion piece to Del Toro's earlier film The Devil's Backbone
 - Child's eye view of war and horror
 - Trauma, childhood, testimony
 - From Spanish Civil War to WWII – only four years apart

Symbolism
 Fig tree as imagery for fallopian tube – traumatic birth of Fascist 'clean new Spain' – painful iconography.

Fantastical horror
 Vampires
 Ghosts
 Insectoids
 Demons
 Reptilian monsters

Allusions to Victor Frankenstein
 Creates from used, diverse, discarded sources leading to monstrous results.

Hybrid genre
 Horror
 Sci-Fi
 Fairytale
 Political

Narrative tropes
 Figure of the child as cipher witness

Alchemist
 Ofelia transforms tale in Quest Narrative.

Ambiguity/role reversal of heroism and villainy
 Some monsters as misunderstood and alienated
 Some humans with a moral void that is monstrous
 - plays on Victor Frankenstein/Monster concept.

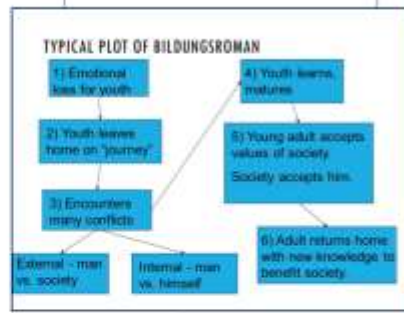
Intersection of fantasy and realism
 Juxtaposition of fairytale and historical war context



Undermining rule and order
 Fascist rule, logic, simplistic binaries of good and evil – catalyst of dark chaos, disorder and madness.

Metaphor
 Time as metaphor for mortality.

Heroine in Bildungsroman
 Context – Franco's 'clean new Spain'



Feminism
 Resistance of male hegemony from Ofelia and Mercedes.

Representations
 - Benign fairy kingdom.
 - Resourceful, determined and egalitarian guerrillas.
 - Caring Mercedes (assertive spy) and Carmen (submissive wife).
 - Firm but fair Faun.
 - Vidal – obsessively patriarchal (wants firstborn son more than an elf wife and is dismissive of stepdaughter).
 - Patriarchy is finally exhausted in Vidal's character arc.

PAN'S LABYRINTH

Motif
 Hunting rabbits as an allegory of violent class conflict.

Three worlds of Pan's Labyrinth
 1. Fascist militarism
 2. The Forest (guerrilla revolutionaries)
 3. Fantastical realm

Peasants who are arrested in Pan's Labyrinth – Del Toro alludes to CNT.

Subversive
 Allusions to Catholic complicity with dictatorship



Savage rebuke of Fascist Franco regime

Durruti Column
 (Spanish Civil War anarchist faction affiliated to CNT trade union)



Golden cinematography – rich aesthetic reflects the wealth represented at the banquet table. Visual warmth does not echo warmth of scenarios.

Allusion between Vidal and the monstrous Pale Man – representation war and famine

Context: Francoist WWII 1940s Spain

Bourgeoisie

Submissive female figure (Carmen, Vidal's wife) who props up patriarchy

Vidal - Military dictator – head of the table – impeccable uniform - suggestion of the fires of hell behind him

Catholic Church supports military dictatorship rather than Marxist - theocracy

Ofelia subverting the stereotype of feminine submission by disobeying order not to eat from the banquet table, without horrifying consequences.

Ofelia must not touch the banquet food – reflection of peasants not invited to the banquet table.

When the Pale Man eats the fairies, it could be an allusion to the dictatorship devouring the hopes and dreams of the Spanish peasantry.

Both banquet table scenes echo each other and reveal the monstrous parallels between political dictatorships of fantastical monsters.

Central composition – exact banquet arrangement

Rabbits as a symbol of the peasants

Mayor – “one ration card per family is not enough”
Priest – “he has already saved their souls. Their body does not matter.”
Crusade Allegory

COMPONENT 2A – WORLD CINEMA – EUROPEAN FILM – PAN’S LABYRINTH

Gothic writers

Bram Stoker – Dracula
HP Lovecraft – At the Mountains of Madness
Mary Shelley – Frankenstein



Demonic visions

Painters

Goya – Saturn Devouring His Son (1823)
Hieronymus Bosch
Symbolist (late C19th)



Victorian fairytales

Brothers Grimm – Rapunzel
Charles Perrault – Cinderella
Hans Christian Andersen – Snow Queen
John Ruskin – King of the Golden River
William M. Thackeray – Rose and the Ring
Robert Southey – Story of the Three Bears
George MacDonald – The Golden Key



Fairy tale context of PL and Dweil's Backbone

The Spirit of the Beehive

(1973, dir: Victor Erice, Spain)
Central girl protagonist who develops an imaginative space in response to dramatic political contexts (Spanish Civil War) and personal trauma (echoes *Pan's Labyrinth*).



Del Toro's stylistic intertextual signature

Combination of highbrow and lowbrow intertexts

"I am not meta, I am really earnest"

BRICOLAGE

The postmodern interplay of intertextual references altered, upturned and blended in order to find new meaning

1970s Slasher B-Movies

Halloween
Texas Chainsaw Massacre
A Bay of Blood
The Last House on the Left
The Town That Dreaded Sundown



Horror elements in Pan's Labyrinth – purposeful grotesquerie.

Surrealist photography

Man Ray
Joel Peter Witkin

Opening scene of bleeding Ofelia.



Social Realism photography

Robert Capa
Henri Cartier-Bresson

Representation of poverty and war-torn Spain.

Children's Illustrators

Arthur Rackham
Frank Franzetta

Fairy tale context

Comic book artists and videogame developers

Mike Mignola
Dark Horse Comics



Opening scene of bleeding Ofelia.

Spanish Army symbolism

CNT anarchist propaganda, 1937 Civil War context.

Anne Frank

Ofelia as an Alice-type figure. Child escaping through story.



Alice in Wonderland

Ofelia as an Alice-type figure going down the fantastical rabbit hole.

References to mythology

[KEY SCENES IN *PAN'S LABYRINTH* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The medium shot of the protagonist Ofelia holding books in deep focus to reveal Mercedes and Vidal on arrival...</p>	<p>...highlights her imaginative personality and love of narratives. She enjoys the fantasy world of books which helps her to escape the brutal reality of dictatorial Spain during WWII.</p>	<p>The film is set in the historical context of World War II in Spain during Franco's fascist regime in 1944.</p>
	<p>The wide angle deep focus shot of Vidal at the head of the table for a banquet with other fascist soldiers...</p>	<p>...sets the authoritarian tone of Vidal's leadership, whose exact manner is indicative of a fascist soldiers...</p>	<p>Guillermo Del Toro's auteur signature involves a detailed production design where mise-en-scene is meticulously arranged and the composition is framed purposefully. In this scene, he represents the excess of elite society in a fascist regime.</p>
	<p>The medium-close up two shot of Carmen (foreground) and Vidal (background) at the dinner table...</p>	<p>...highlights her nervousness around him. Her body language is submissive and fearful: her head is down, her attire is meticulously formal and she complies with the etiquette that Vidal expects.</p>	<p>This mentality is indicative of a patriarchal system of governance and marital dynamics. Carmen is at the mercy of Vidal, whose authority must not be questioned within fascist ideological praxis.</p>
	<p>The extreme close up of red ink which permeates on the page like blood...</p>	<p>...acts as a premonition of a bleeding, potentially fatal near miscarriage of Carmen.</p>	<p>The supernatural aspects of the narrative highlight the lines between reality and the fairy tale. However, this film subverts conventions of the fairy tale genre with gory and grotesque elements that make for an adult film.</p>
	<p>The close up of a grotesque antagonist (the Pale Man) with eyes inserted into his palms...</p>	<p>...depicts the monstrous underworld that Ofelia must encounter in order to earn her place as Princess Moanna.</p>	<p>Del Toro's auteur signature involves monstrous creatures who represent the fantastical, imaginative, and at times, horrific underworlds within magical realms. Del Toro subverts this representation in <i>The Shape of Water</i> with a sympathetic 'monster'.</p>
	<p>The extreme close up of a pocket watch that Vidal holds...</p>	<p>...reiterates the importance of time to Vidal and the narrative. He demands promptness, expects perfection and analyses meticulously. It also represents how he monitors others with suspicion and authority.</p>	<p>Del Toro's auteur signature includes motifs which can become an allegory for the narrative, as well as the political context surrounding it. During WWII, the Gestapo were renowned for oppressive surveillance methods against their opposition.</p>
	<p>The close-up two shot of the Faun and Ofelia...</p>	<p>...gives the impression that this creature might be evil due to his monstrous, demonic appearance, yet he turns out to be a guide for the underworld who wishes to help Ofelia find her calling.</p>	<p>The dark cinematography has an ominous tone yet it seems that Del Toro wishes to subvert the spectator's expectations with regards to the complexities of characterisation.</p>
	<p>The long shot of Ofelia, now transformed into her role as Princess Moanna in the fairy tale world where she meets her mother and father again...</p>	<p>...is the dramatic payoff for a bleak narrative. She, her family and the whole of Spanish society have suffered during WWII, but in this fantasy world, there is an afterlife filled with happiness and a new form of justice.</p>	<p>This acts as the New Equilibrium of the narrative with a redemptive character arc for Ofelia who transforms from a rebellious rich girl to a responsible and selfless woman. Her tale is similar to Chihiro in <i>Spirited Away</i>. Both films act as a rites-of-passage for young girls destined to become heroines.</p>

				
Rocket (Alexandre Rodrigues)	Benny (Phelipe Haagensen)	L'il Ze (L'il Dice) Leandro Firmino/Doug Silva	Angelica (Alice Braga)	Knockout Ned (Seu Jorge)
The main narrator. A quiet, honest boy who dreams of becoming a photographer, and the only character who seems to keep from being dragged down into corruption and murder during the gang wars. His real name is Wilson Rodrigues	Zé's longtime partner in crime, he is a friendly City of God drug dealer who fancies himself a sort of Robin Hood, and wants to eventually lead an honest life.	A power-hungry, serial-killing sadist. Benny's death drives him over the edge. "Dado" is a common nickname for Eduardo, "dado" also means "dice". When he turned into an adult, he changed his name to Zé Pequeno in ceremony of Candomblé, a religion of African origin, since it was chosen for him at that moment it may also be unrelated to his actual name. Zé is a nickname for João, while pequeno means "little".	An old friend and love interest of Rocket, and later Benny's girlfriend, who motivates him to abandon the criminal life.	A handsome, charismatic ladies' man. Zé rapes his girlfriend and then proceeds to massacre several members of Ned's family. Ned joins forces with Carrot to retaliate against Zé. His name was changed for the English subtitles because in English, "chicken" is a term for a coward (in Brazil it denotes popularity among women). "Mané" is a nickname for Manuel.
			KEY CHARACTERS IN 'CITY OF GOD'	
Carrot	Marina Cintra	Shaggy	<p>Tiago - Angelica's redheaded boyfriend, who later becomes L'il Ze's associate and a drug addict.</p> <p>Goose - One of the Tender Trio, and Rocket's brother.</p> <p>Lampiao - Child leader of the Runts gang.</p> <p>Stringy - Childhood friend of Rocket.</p>	
A smaller-scale drug dealer who is friendly with Benny but is constantly threatened by Zé.	A journalist for Jornal do Brasil, who hires Rocket as a photographer. Rocket has his first sexual experience with her.	Older brother of Bené ("Benny") and the leader of the Tender Trio ("Trio Ternura"), a group of thieves who share their profit with the population of the City of God.	<p>Steak With Fries - A young drug addict hired by Zé's gang.</p> <p>Uncle Sam - weapons dealer.</p> <p>Touro - An honest police officer.</p> <p>Clipper - One of the Tender Trio. Later gives up crime and joins the church.</p> <p>Marcos Junqueira - Child leader of the Runts gang.</p>	
Additional characters: Carrot's gang, L'il Ze's gang, Police.				

Introduction

- spend no longer than 2 minutes introducing film, year of production, production company, director, chosen film sequence (opening sequence in 'Cidade de Deus' favelas), key characters, stage of the narrative etc. and contain links to the question such as 'reflect its production context.'

Relevant theory: Todorov's narrative (equilibrium, disruption, recognition, repair, new equilibrium) – circular narrative (chapters).

Film form (micro features)

- *editing*: frenetic, breaking 180 degree rule of continuity (Cinema Verite influence), in sync with music, slow motion and freeze frames.
- *cinematography*: high contrast lighting, gaudy aesthetic, handheld camera, extreme close up, canted angle shots., low angle shots of gangsters, birds eye view of favelas, tight walls.
- *mise-en-scene*: favelas (shanty towns for Africans and homeless veterans), kids in ragged clothing holding guns, chickens roaming, honking cars, sweltering heat, sunny city.
- *sound*: non-diagetic Brazilian samba music (Seu Jorge), diagetic sounds of sharpening knives, shouting kids, honking horns.
- *performance*: introduction of teenager with camera, Rocket (protagonist) and gun-toting gangster, L'il Ze (antagonist).

Connotations

- *chopping chicken heads*: threatening, claustrophobic, unhygienic, hustler culture.
- *upbeat Samba music*: frenetic, lively culture – never dull, often chaotic.
- *teenage gun with machine guns*: the loss of innocence is exploited in poor Brazilian communities, crime endemic.
- *slow motion introduction of L'il Ze*: announces him as a notorious criminal
- *police running away from gang*: streets are owned by gangs not authorities.

[KEY SCENES IN CITY OF GOD – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The frenetic, tightly framed montage sequence includes beheaded chickens, sharpening knives, non-diegetic samba music and kids in the favelas chasing down chickens and teenage ganglords fire pistols into the sky...</p>	<p>...creates an impression of Rio de Janeiro's Brazilian favelas life as a raw and anarchic community filled with violence, poverty and vibrancy.</p>	<p>This sequence frames the Rio favelas as a vibrant and dangerous culture where the chicken could act as an allegory for those growing up in a shanty-town of crime: vulnerable in a claustrophobic context.</p>
	<p>The parallel editing sequence of L'il Ze's gang chasing and shooting at a runaway chicken (handheld camera) and Rocket and his friend discussing his new life as a journalist/photographer, only for him to be caught in the middle of a police vs gang stand-off...</p>	<p>...highlights a frightening confrontation between two institutions of power: law enforcement vs favelas. Danger is reinforced by the direct address of Ze and his gang pointing guns. The favelas has far more power than the police.</p>	<p>The calm of Rocket's interaction contrasts the manic aggression of L'il Ze.</p> 
	<p>The 360 degree panning shot of Rocket stuck in the middle of a gang/police stand-off with a camera (time manipulation effects – slow-motion/fast-forward)</p>	<p>...which presents Rocket as an adolescent caught between two worlds: bourgeois society as a journalist, and a favelas boy who grew up on the streets.</p>	<p>Intertextual reference – Sergio Leone Westerns - close-up parallel edits. - Quentin Tarantino – use of freeze frames and intertitles (elliptical edit to 'THE SIXTIES')</p> 
	<p>The birds-eye-view shot of Shaggy (one of the 'Tender Trio' who robbed motels and gas trucks) is killed by police, sending shockwaves throughout the favelas community...</p>	<p>...highlights the backstory of the favelas and the run-in they have had with law enforcement. The resentment of the police runs deep in the favelas.</p>	<p>Contrasting cinematography between different eras distinguishes past from present – 60s with yellow/sepia hues.</p> 
	<p>The medium two shot of Angelica kissing Rocket's cheek on the Copacabana beach sitting next to each other in bathing costumes...</p>	<p>...creates a glamorous tone for 'THE SEVENTIES' era prompted by intertitles. Cinematography has distinctive multi-colored glow to distinguish itself from sepia hued Sixties.</p>	<p>Rocket's rites-of-passage is represented by romantic desire of an unattainable woman. Angelica is ultimately wooed by the 'Playboy' Bene, as Rocket's interaction with her does not develop beyond friendship, despite his wish for more.</p>
	<p>The parallel editing shots of a low angle close up of L'il Ze as a murdering kid to a ganglord murdering teenager...</p>	<p>...reinforces his character as intimidating, psychopathic and brutal. He is the arch-antagonist of the narrative who is a menace with no conscience for his crimes.</p>	<p>- Elliptical edit between young L'il Ze (L'il Dice) and as a teenager with a matched cut is to highlight his evolution into a fully fledged criminal by trade.</p>
	<p>The close up shot of Bene smoking weed and creating smoke cloud highlights his role in the narrative as the cool 'Playboy' bachelor who is far more charismatic than L'il Ze.</p>	<p>He is represented as a fashionable and at times effeminate Metrosexual that other gang members mock but also idolise with envy.</p>	<p>Bene represents the party animal who everyone wanted to be like: a DJ, a local legend and all-round cool guy.</p> 
	<p>The wide angle long shot of L'il Ze shooting two young boys' right feet in a favelas corner whilst laughing with a crowd of gang members present.</p>	<p>...emphasises L'il Ze's role as a merciless psychopath. His violence towards children shows that he has no conscience. This is his regime. The streets have no mercy.</p>	<p>The contrast between L'il Ze as a powerful gang member and his inability to woo women at parties shows that his psychopathic demeanour masks his vulnerabilities.</p>
	<p>The parallel editing sequence of L'il Ze's gang chasing and shooting at a runaway chicken (handheld camera) and Rocket and his friend discussing his new life as a journalist/photographer, only for him to be caught in the middle of a police vs gang stand-off...</p>	<p>...has new significance the second time around. Rocket is a journalist who showcases the favelas gangs for Rio's newspapers. He has a significant media role beyond simply being a passer-by stuck in the middle of a stand-off.</p>	<p>This sequence has been repeated at the Repair stage of the narrative as well as the Equilibrium stage, creating a circular narrative effect. With new context, we perceive this event in Rocket's life as not just a coincidence, but a profoundly pivotal moment that impacts the future of the favelas and his role within it.</p>
	<p>The high angle close up shot of Lil Ze with multiple bullet wounds dead on a favelas street, murdered by a rival gang of children. Rocket takes a photograph of him.</p>	<p>Ze no longer seems intimidating, he is beyond vulnerable. His destructive power has been purged forever.</p>	<p>The new equilibrium has been established. Rocket evidences the end of the Ze regime heralding the dawn of a new era in Rio.</p> 

STORIES WE TELL



Michael Polley
(Himself/Peter Evans)

Sarah Polley
(Herself)

Diane Polley
(Herself/Rebecca Jenkins)

Susy Buchan
(Herself/Lani Billard)

John Buchan
(Himself/Justin Goodhand)

Michael raised Sarah as her daughter and has bittersweet memories of his late wife Diane who may have had an affair which may mean that Sarah is not his biological daughter. The dilemma over nature and nurture underpins the story.

Sarah is both director and daughter in this documentary. She features as an 8-year old girl in reconstructed footage and is included in interview scenes with her family members. She takes on an investigative approach so they all face unresolved mysteries of the past.

Sarah's charismatic late mother Diane is the initial focal point of the story. There is a mystery surrounding an affair that could mean Michael is not Sarah's biological father. She was the life and soul of the family unit: the glue which held everyone together. Memories are bittersweet.

Sarah's sister-in-law.

Sarah's brother.



Mark Polley
(Himself/Seamus Morrison)

Joanna Polley
(Herself/Allie MacDonald)

Harry Gulkin
(Himself/Alex Hatz)

KEY CHARACTERS IN 'STORIES WE TELL'

- Other Key Characters**
 Cathy Gulkin
 Marie Murphy
 Robert MacMillan
 Anne Tait
 Deidre Bowen
 Victoria Mitchell
 Mort Ransen
 Geoffrey Bowes
 Tom Butler
 Pixie Bigelow
 Claire Walker
 Wayne Robson


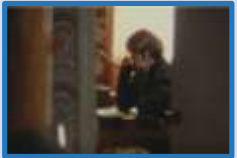


Mark is an intelligent and witty brother to Sarah.

Sarah's sister.

Sarah's biological father.





COMPONENT 2B – DOCUMENTARY– STORIES WE TELL

[KEY SCENES IN *STORIES WE TELL* – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]




Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	The wide angle deep focus of a sound recording studio with Sarah and Michael Polley in the recording booth in the distance. Polley does not use 'voice of God' narration, opting for her stepfather Michael to VO.	Highlights the Reflexive mode and metanarrative nature of the <i>SWT</i> documentary. Polley is creating a stories about stories, mediating on the process of representation that goes beyond the specific anecdotes within the account.	Sarah's role as documentarian is to play the mediator. Grierson's defines documentary as 'the creative treatment actuality'. Applied to <i>SWT</i> , to authentically portray her family history and those involved in the story of the Polley family. The non-linear narrative structure provides an enigmatic account.
	The so-called stock black-and-white footage of Diane Polley with the non-diegetic sound of Bon Iver's indie-folk track 'Skinny Love'... (40% is Super 8 archive footage).	...mythologises the late Diane as a charismatic figure who has left a whirlwind of unresolved family enigmas that Sarah wishes to deconstruct as an investigative documentarian. 	Polley seemingly attempts to "present factual information" (Bordwell and Thompson) about Diane to respond to. Notions such as the reliability of documentary form and objective truth are explored with the representation of Diane and the Polley family.
	The Talking Heads (medium close-up) montage of family member that Sarah Polley's interviews throughout the documentary (Susy, John, Mark, Joanna, Harry). Harry (Sarah's biological father - only voice of dissent of Sarah's framing of the doc).	Emphasises Sarah's attempt to represent multiple sides to Diane's story. Subjectivities of representation are present in the retelling of Diane's story. Every interviewee has their 'truth' about who Sarah's father is and how they feel about the process of the documentary.	The mode of documentary could be perceived as 'Participatory' based on Sarah's involvement in the story. It includes: handheld archive footage, photographs, reconstruction footage, The documentary uses a 'Talking Heads' premise. The framing of Michael elevates him as most important.
	The voiceover narration by Michael who gives an autobiographical account of his experiences with Diane (they first met in a Theatre Production)...	The fictional context of the play, told in anecdotal form by Michael, highlights the artifice present within the frame of this documentary. Allusions to Sarah's Jewish heritage feature in representation of WWII in the play.	The story-within-a-story framing echoes metanarratives that create a self-reflexive intertextual map, highlighting the richness of story as a fuel for life and understanding human nature. 
	Stock footage from a 1964 film starring Sophia Loren, 'Marriage Italian Style' with the line "one of the three is your son"...	...acts as an intertextual reference to represent Diane. There are parallels as Michael may not be Sarah's biological father, it could be that Harry had an affair with Diane. Sarah provides feminist reading of mystery.	Spectator as voyeur looking behind closed doors into Polly family secrets. 
	60% of footage is reconstructed using Canon 1014 AZ, Canon 1014XLS and Nikon R8 with the illusion of a fly-on-the-wall archive footage quality.	The blurred line between authentic archive footage and reconstructed footage is ambiguous. The film reveals actors playing the role of Diane and Michael – telling these apart is intentionally ambiguous.	'Poetic' documentary mode less about 'objective truth' of Harry as biological father, mediating stepfather Michael as Sarah's authentic father. The subjectivity of framing reveals a deeper truth of the role of father beyond the factual.
	The roving camera on an image of Sarah Polley on acting set as a cavewoman checking her mobile phone messages whilst a voiceover of an anecdote about her reflection on her family history...	Renov's 'Four Tendencies' (record / reveal / preserve, persuade / promote, analyse / interrogate / to express) are all present in <i>SWT</i> .	Hyperreal postmodern representation of different layers of simulation probes at the nature of non-fiction documentaries and how 'truth' is presented in multiple forms and how versions can lack reliability. 
	The medium shot of Mark Polley asking Sarah "What is this documentary really about? / Am I breaking the fourth wall here, turning the camera around?"	...reverses the role between interviewer and interviewee. The 'Performative' role of documentarian is reinforced akin to Broomfield or Moore. 	Intertextual reference: 'Medium Cool' where the camera turns towards the audience at the denouement to elicit active spectatorship and reinforce the artifice of simulated filmic representation. 
	Geoff Bowes declares "I have to tell you that we did sleep together once" after saying earlier in the documentary that his dynamic with Diane was always just friendship.	The metaphorical rug is pulled from the spectator as the documentary spent the duration framing Harry as the biological father, but the enigma over Geoff's involvement remains at the New Equilibrium. Its flippant framing is comically portrayed.	This Canadian documentary used Sony CineAlta HDW-F900R digital camera footage for Talking Heads scenes which acts as a contrast to archive and reconstruction footage.

[COMPONENT 2C – SILENT FILM - BUSTER KEATON– TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]




ONE WEEK

Film Still	Denotation/Connotation	Other key shots / other micro features	Macro analysis
	The long shot of Buster with one hand and foot on each speeding automobile which highlights the love triangle as a narrative catalysts - Handy Hank is jealous of newlyweds Groom/Bride, treating the Groom (Buster Keaton) as a love rival as he creates obstacles for them, attempting a sort of sabotage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling wall trademark gag – long shot to reveal Buster’s relationship with environment. Actor-director Keaton employs long takes to construct stunts within the mise-en-scene rather than camera trickery – long takes and long shots allow the spectator to marvel at his stuntwork and acrobatic skill (performed without a stunt double). 	Context of spectatorship – vaudeville theatre with piano accompaniment. Narrative structure divided into seven days of the week, signposted by the iris effect on each calendar date.
	The long shot of a misshapen house once built (once, a portable house construction kit) with tampered instructions – design alludes to Cubism – surrealist architecture – dramatic irony of love rival swapping building instructions for comic effect. Buster Keaton films reside in slapstick comedy genre – mise-en-scene precisely crafted to create spectacle (Expressionist?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The house ‘merry-go-round’ storm sequence with long shots of the entire house spinning intercut with full shots of guests flailing from end-to-end indoors – hydraulic device: a turntable which was theatrical practice since 1890s. Breaking the fourth wall POV shot of hand over lens as wife gets out of bath whilst smiling at the camera (iris effect – Expressionist!). 	This stylised representation could allude to Expressionist style (see: idealised realism of German Expressionism) even though there are no canted angle shots or high contrast lighting techniques.
	The long shot of Buster placing a ‘For Sale’ sign on the destroyed house on the railtracks acts as comic relief as playful misdirection with the suspense of one train hitting the house missing, only for another one to hit. The comedy of errors narrative acts as an auteur feature of Keaton’s work – precise comic timing is instrumental in the pacing and editing of the gag – comedy created through potential of location shooting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train gag is shot in one long shot to create restricted narration – when train flies past the house, we are just as surprised as the young couple. Keaton’s auteur signature was visual – avoided title cards and focused instead on gesture and action – comedy rooted in Vaudeville background. Two-reelers like One Week are mostly shot outdoors in daylight hours. 	Keaton moves beyond comedy and melodrama to capture a sense of grand/epic spectacle. Failure to build a conventional, stable middle-class life and indifference toward destruction of house.





COPS

	The eyeline match medium two shot of Buster behind bars talking to Mayor’s daughter (love interest) suggests he is in jail, when a long shot cut reveals he is just behind a gate. This visual trick could be perceived as an Expressionist trait. There are no Soviet Montage elements or canted angle German Expressionist features in his film which suggests he may represent Realist movement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study: Roscoe ‘Fatty’ Arbuckle (partnered on 14 shorts 1917-1920) but he was found guilty of rape/manslaughter of Virginia Rappe – ‘Cops’ seems like a reflection on the fall from grace of a close friend. Keaton characters aspire to be the provider but female characters are not charmed by Buster’s aspirations without success – 5ft 5ins, not an alpha male, not rich, not powerful. 	Keaton’s trademark poker face deadpan expression serves as a blank slate on which the audience can project emotions – master of visual comedy.
	The deep focus long shot of Keaton on a plank of wood balanced on a fence as policeman try to capture him seems to symbolise a see-saw or the scales of justice. This iconography could be reflecting on Arbuckle’s trial as belies the Realist tradition of filmmaking. Quantity of police officers and large stunt situations create an Expressionist aesthetic but cinematography also presents a sense of naturalism found in the Realist movement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bazin argued that realism is the most important function of cinema. His call for objective reality, deep focus and lack of montage – Keaton films arguably have elements of the Realist style (unmediated, simple, truth, reflection) and Expressionist (highly mediated, highly constructed, manipulated scenes, agitating the spectator). Keaton’s set pieces are too constructed to be fully Realist and these scenes are highly mediated to stir spectator response. 	Andrew Sarris (The American Cinema, 1968) declared Keaton “pure cinema” and Chaplin “theatrical cinema”.
	The long shot of two policemen attempting to arrest Keaton but bumping into each other creates a sense of dramatic irony as Buster is blissfully unaware but highly fortuitous. Slapstick comedy conventions are used with a very visual and physical gag. Keaton positions the audience in favour of the runaway and against the cops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive location shots without artificial lighting reflects Realist tradition of filmmaking – also, no pants, tilts, tracking, dolly, crane shots, canted angles and montages present in Keaton’s shorts – neutrality of technical filmmaking suggests he generates sense of realism allowing audience to interpret action for themselves. Denouement – woman rejects, gets deliberately caught by police he’s spent most of the film doing a good job outwitting. 	Continuity editing, match-on-action used (Realist tradition), transitions/cross fades (Expressionist tradition) – use of elaborately choreographed set piece stunt routines. Unconventional ideology.

THE SCARECROW

	The wide angle long shot of a house shared by a roommate features contraptions made from household objects (levers, strings, ropes, pulleys for salt/pepper, utensils, plates, etc) – makeshift time-saving gadgets. Symmetrical composition of cinematography and strong geometrical arrangements - Folding furniture (Expressionist?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long shot encourages audience to look around the frame and see the joke for themselves (Realist tradition). Strictly speaking, Keaton’s work is realist – he films reality in front of the camera. However, this ‘reality’ is a seemingly endless series of comic gags, sometimes including unimaginably dangerous stunts. (Nuance between Realist and Expressionist filmmaking traditions). 	Props are an important element of Keaton films – kitchen sequence, they have a duel function: bookshelf is a refrigerator and salt and pepper pots dangle from the ceiling.
	The long shot of Buster pretending to be a scarecrow whilst sabotaging his love rival’s attempt to propose to his love interest - Changing identity (dramatic irony).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mise-en-scene: partially Realist (unmediated shots), partially Expressionist (exaggerated with exact composition) Keaton as subtler performer to Chaplin, Lloyd or Laurel & Hardy – deadpan – he believed that narrative and emotion should be communicated “through facial expressions, gesture and movement alone” 	Keaton loves to explore the seemingly real in juxtaposition with the deliberately artificial (plays with both Realist and Expressionist approaches).
	The medium shot of a vicar marrying Buster and Farmer’s daughter in a river they all have just fallen in. Keaton’s character gets married by accident on a motorbike which then crashes into a river and coincidentally collides into a vicar who marries them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keaton once said “I never realised I was doing anything but trying to make people laugh” – enormously ambitious, creative set pieces and stunt work – generates humour and spectacle – deliberately artificial, exaggerated, absurd (Expressionist tradition). Flippant parody suggests Keaton was sceptical of social convention – trivialising marital vows for comedic purposes. 	Reassuring and romantic resolution – films with three act narrative structure – clear set up, extended period of rising action, clear resolution – content: parody, rejecting established power, social conventions and morals.

THE HIGH SIGN

	The long shot of Buster’s target practice and the pulley he touches with his feet to make a bell ring to trick people into thinking he hit the target - dramatic irony employed for comedic effect- we know he’s cheating, gun shop does not – his lies led to comedy of error, propelled into criminal underworld.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding newspaper prop (Expressionist?) Trap doors and revolving walls in the house. Clothes rarely well fitting despite formal (aspiring Middle Class outsider) 	Keaton, once again, plays the outsider – cue card: “Our hero came from Nowhere – he wasn’t going Anywhere and got kicked off Somewhere”.
	The medium two shot of Buster and Blinking Buzzard member by the gang sign which reveals their weight and height difference highlights that Buster is no macho man – his genius to trick others is his strongest weapon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audio cues are given in silent films with props such as ringing bells, gun shots despite Silent Film limitations. Dialogue is represented through cue cards although Keaton depended more on visual representation than most Silent Films. Keaton outwitting The Blinking Buzzards and “getting the girl”. 	Keaton challenged conventional concepts of masculinity – Buster is no alpha male (Big Joe Roberts is presented as contrast) – materially unsuccessful – aspirational paradigm.
	The medium two shot of Keaton and Miss Nicklenurser embracing at the resolution of the narrative highlights how “getting the girl” is a typical auteur feature of Keaton films. He acts as an unconventional hero who is not an alpha male but has a chance to succeed in his goal as an outsider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the most convoluted of the four shorts. Realist tradition – deep focus, wide shots, location shooting, static camera, low contrast lighting, continuity editing, long takes, unsatisfactory narrative resolution. 	Conventionally moralist melodrama – clear cut protagonists and antagonists with love stories. Elaborate set designs and composition showcase Expressionist elements.

COMPONENT 2D – EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA – PULP FICTION



**Vincent Vega
(John Travolta)**

Vincent Vega is a heroin addict who, like Jules, is an associate of Marsellus Wallace's. Despite being an addict and a murderer, Vincent can also be likable and sensitive, such as when he explains to Jules the finer qualities of a foot massage, or when he mobilizes to save Mia's life. Vincent is killed by Butch in Butch's apartment after going to the bathroom and leaving his weapon behind.



**Jules Winnfield
(Samuel L. Jackson)**

Jules Winnfield is a remorseless killer, a hitman for the crime-lord Marsellus Wallace. Jules never eats pork, and invokes the Bible before performing executions. Jules's cool disposition is occasionally ruffled by his partner Vincent, with whom he quarrels about issues both small and large. After Jules is miraculously spared by a hail of bullets, an act he considers "divine intervention," he reconsiders his life of crime as he negotiates with Pumpkin in the final scene.



**Mia Wallace
(Uma Thurman)**

Marsellus's wife, she is one of the most potentially dangerous characters for Vincent to interact with in the entire film. Mia is a failed actress who was in a television pilot named "Fox Force Five" that never made it to air. A cocaine addict, Mia mistakenly snorts Vincent's heroin and immediately overdoses, but is revived when Vincent successfully plunges a syringe full of adrenaline into her heart.



**Butch Coolidge
(Bruce Willis)**

Butch is a late-career boxer whose father died in World War II, and he is the only character who the film shows as a child. He first appears in the film taking a bribe from Marsellus to throw a boxing match, which he reneges on. Butch's ill-fated attempt to retrieve his most prized possession, a gold wristwatch, forms the basis for his chapter of the story. Butch survives the events of the plot, successfully riding away with his girlfriend Fabienne on a chopper named Grace.



**Marsellus Wallace
(Ving Rhames)**

Drug dealer who is the central node connecting every character in the film, save Pumpkin and Honey Bunny. Feared by everyone, especially Vincent, who must race to save Mia's life lest Marsellus order his execution. Marsellus orders Butch to be killed after Butch reneges on a prearranged deal to throw a boxing match, but calls a truce after Butch saves him from the hands of Zed and Maynard.

KEY CHARACTERS IN 'PULP FICTION'



**Lance
(Eric Stoltz)**

Lance is a small-time drug dealer who sells Vincent heroin, claiming to give him a special "friend discount." He has quirks, such as eating cereal in bed while watching cartoons, and mounting high heels on his walls. Lance reluctantly helps Vincent save Mia's life, finding a small black medical book with instructions on how to administer an adrenaline shot. He only helps because he is afraid that Marsellus will kill both him and Vincent if unsuccessful.



**The Wolf
(Harvey Keitel)**

Winston Wolfe is a professional fixer for career criminals, well known to Marsellus and Jules. Jules is immediately relieved upon hearing that Marsellus has called Wolfe to come handle the problematic circumstances of Marvin's death. Wolfe's consummate professionalism is his defining quality, especially his ability to get things done within a narrow window of time. His business-like demeanour annoys Vincent.



**Jimmie
(Quentin Tarantino)**

Jimmie is Jules's friend, who allows Jules and Vincent to decamp at his house while they decide how they will clean up Marvin's body. Jimmie's main concern is leaving the men out of his house before his wife Bonnie returns from his night shift as a nurse. Jimmie also complains to Winston when the men use his aunt and uncle's special bedsheet to wrap the car's bloody upholstery, but relents when Winston offers him a hefty bribe.



**Fabienne
(Maria de Madeiros)**

Fabienne is Butch's girlfriend, who waits anxiously for him in a motel while he goes to retrieve the wristwatch she mistakenly left behind. Fabienne talks about the appeal of a pot-belly on a woman, insinuating she might be pregnant, and asks Butch to perform oral sex on her. Only Fabienne is able to coax Butch into behaving sweetly, such as when he asks her what she had for breakfast, before they both ride off together on Zed's chopper motorcycle.



**Pumpkin
(Tim Roth)**



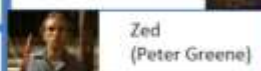
**Honey Bunny
(Amarda Plummer)**



**Brett
(Frank Whaley)**



**The Gimp
(Stephen Hibbert)**



**Zed
(Peter Greene)**

Buddy Holly (Steve Buscemi)
Esmerelda Villalobos (Angela Jones)
Marvin (Phil LaMarr)
Jody (Rosanna Arquette)
Paul (Paul Calderon)
Trudi (Bronagh Gallagher)
Roger (Burr Steers)

COMPONENT 2D – EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA – PULP FICTION

[MICRO FEATURES]

Cinematography	Mise-en-scene	Editing	Sound	Performance
<p>35mm/65mm cinematography Traditional attitude to filmmaking – frequent use of wide angle shots - auteur feature: QT's love of cinema is represented in film production technique as much as narrative content.</p> <p>Low-lighting, high contrast - Neo-noir aesthetic that alludes to pulp fiction written by Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett – seen most vividly in scenes with Esmerelda and Butch in the taxi, the kidnapping of Butch and Marsellus in the Mason-Dixon basement, Lance's drug den as Vincent tries to revive Mia by stabbing her with the giant syringe, Marsellus and his mob in the empty stripclub doing business.</p>	<p>The MacGuffin – The Briefcase - Driving force of the narrative and a catalyst for conflict – arguably contains Marsellus's soul and becomes a priceless object to those who encounter it – the enigma of its contents is open to interpretation.</p> <p>Important prop – The Gold Watch - Priceless to Butch but irrelevant even to his girlfriend, Fabienne – represents his family legacy, enough that he would risk his life to retrieve it.</p> <p>Drab, suburban apartments - The mundane realism of LA settings that feature in the narrative (with the exception of the glamorous Jack Rabbit Slim's) creates a dichotomy between everyday life and a violent underground that permeates reality.</p> <p>Yellow dominant production design - Props, settings and costume frequently allude to the gold aesthetic (gold watch, the briefcase)</p> <p>Professional killers in suits - Similar costume to <i>Reservoir Dogs</i> but Vincent and Jules have less swagger. - The Wolf wears a suit in pristine condition with upright posture to highlight his professionalism in contrast with Vincent and Jules.</p> <p>Drug dealers in dressing gowns - There is no glamour in the representation of dealers like Lance – eating bowls of 'Fruit Brute' cereal slouching around the house watching TV.</p> <p>Red blood splatter - in basements, cars, apartments, boots, drug dens, daytime, night-time, on the road – nowhere is safe in the Tarantinoverse from violence and the artistry of its slasher style gratuity.</p>	<p>- Sally Menke (1953–2010) was behind the editing of <i>Pulp Fiction</i> - long-time collaborator in Quentin Tarantino's work, and edited all his films until she died. - Sally Menke's cutting style was a crucial element in Tarantino's work. - <i>Pulp Fiction</i> follows editing style of Walter Murch's 'Rule of Six' - principles made to convey good visuals within storytelling – Menke adheres to them. - During the scene that Vincent injects Mia with an adrenaline shot after overdosing, Menke switches between an extreme close-up, then cuts to a close-up of the needle, and then cuts to Mia's lifeless face. - Menke accompanies this by a parallel editing dolly zoom shot between characters as if a gun-toting standoff in a 1970s Leone Western. - Edits in sequence timed to a 1-2-3 rhythm in time with the soundtrack. This editing style brings authenticity in tone to rile up tension and suspense. - Murch's principle - captured in is during the scene that Butch escapes from Zed but eventually returns to save Marsellus. Butch takes his revenge, however, Menke and Tarantino both play their part in blocking the revenge scene by using movement and cut scenes. - Menke follows an untraditional editing technique to follow a crooked storyline, which gives the audience an opportunity to connect the dissimilar events and timeline. Through the film - beginning with robbery at restaurant, Butch's 'Gold Watch' story where we witness Vincent's death, and denouement (end), we're taken back to diner events (circular non-linear narrative) - Vincent alive beyond the grave as diner robbery takes place. - Menke breaks the rules of editing, allowing Tarantino to use continuous and stealthy camera angles and strays from the 180-degree rule. - Menke uses fading to black rarely in Pulp Fiction, but when it is used it is to illustrate the passage of time between the action (elliptical edit). - Menke didn't edit her cuts to Tarantino's soundtracks but would tweak her editing after Tarantino laid the tracks over it.</p>	<p>- Opening credits - non-diegetic S/T – <i>Dick Dale & His Del Tones</i> (Misirlou) - radio static – non-diegetic morphs into diegetic sound of <i>Kool & The Gang's</i> Jungle Boogie (gives the impression that Jules and Vincent are switching between songs whilst driving) – the use of freeze frame on Honey Bunny and the abrupt sound edit into the opening credits track is both darkly comic and increases the sense of spectacle. - The use of a sound bridge between Butch's childhood (picking up the gold watch from Koons) and the bell at the Coolidge vs Wilson boxing match – semantic link connecting past and present. - The diegetic patter of dialogue has all the informal intonations and emphases you expect from everyday conversations rather than staged Shakespearean grandstanding. - The diegetic noise of gunshots, swearing and screams of agony from the pain of violence create an audible coarseness which discomforts the average spectator. - The use of Surfer music connects to the LA context of the narrative – 1960s/70s tunes – nostalgia – recontextualising past art into present interpretations (postmodern). - Dialogue excerpts are included on the S/T to emphasise the poetic value of the script. - Use of conflicting tones – Al Green's 'Let's Stay Together' over Marsellus's bribe of Butch. - 'Son of a Preacher Man' underscores theme of temptation Mia/Vincent.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jules Winnfield (Samuel L Jackson) - most profound character arc – professional killer who (incorrectly) quotes Ezekiel 25:17 when he carries out murders for Marsellus – once a hidden figure emerges from the bathroom, shoots and misses him – he believes it is 'divine intervention' and decides to turn his life around. - he quotes (incorrectly) Ezekiel 25:17 to Pumpkin but gives mercy not vengeance at the denouement – he is spared. Vincent Vega (John Travolta) - high-functioning gangster with heroin addiction. - from beyond the grave – killed by Butch but is resurrected thanks to a non-linear narrative (endpoint is a mid-scene) – walks out of diner unscathed at denouement. - lacks empathy over murderous day job but has moral code not to succumb to temptation for infidelity (having sex with Mia) out of fear and respect for boss, Marsellus. - character arc – does not give up crime lifestyle after 'divine intervention' and pays the price. Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman) - femme fatale with a near death experience – flirts with Vincent and toys with forbidden – Louise Brooks costume (Pandora's Box) – once saved by syringe of adrenaline, game of sex takes second place to a reality check – arc: reflects on fragility of life. Marsellus Wallace (Ving Rhames) - enigmatic, powerful, merciless boss who is anally raped by Mason-Dixon pawn shop owners – spares Butch for saving his life out of honour. Butch Coolidge (Bruce Willis) - the noble character who wants to honour his father's memory – series of near-death coincidences with Marsellus, Vincent, Mason-Dixon pawn shop, Wilson in boxing match – survives on "Grace" Chopper with Fabienne at end of "GOLD WATCH". Captain Koons (Christopher Walken) - the dispatcher/helper who leads Butch on his path by giving Butch his father's gold watch as a child. Zed and Maynard - arch-villains – gang-rapists, Confederate nationalists, kidnappers – own a gimp who is enslaved in their basement – murdered by Marsellus and Butch.

[REPRESENTATION]

Ethnicity	Gender	Auteur	Context/institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy use of the racist term "nigger" even by white characters – Spike Lee has challenged Tarantino who feels he is disrespectful and exploitative of black history (accusations of cultural appropriation). Inclusive director who casts Black and Asian men and women in his films – Pulp Fiction: Jules and Marsellus Wallace – criminals with a moral code. Marsellus - developed beyond a stereotypical mob boss – seems calm and collected, a man to be respected, not uninged. His wife is his weakness – never see them together (a rift perhaps?) – violent jealousy over a henchman giving her a foot massage – passions rage over cool exterior – he retains calm even after being sodomised. Jules – only character with transformative journey – epiphany and revelation after so-called near death 'divine intervention' sets him on a new path – changes his quoting of Scripture (same verse – but from vengeance to mercy) – final scene: spares Pumpkin out of moral seriousness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contentions over whether QT is a "male feminist" (due to giving great roles for women) or "covert misogynist" (foot fetish male gaze and women as victims of violence). Mia – does have power and is clearly in charge of her own destiny (despite heroin overdose) – something Vincent clearly is not – she is not a conventional femme fatale or stereotypical gangster's moll – backstory as a failed actress intriguingly developed in conversation with Vincent – never shot a scene with her husband – uses cocaine heavily – bored thrill-seeker – erotic dance encounter with Vincent – sexually consummated affair would have led to Vincent's death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-linear narratives F-word laden (265 in <i>Pulp Fiction</i>) '18' rated films. Soundtracks underpinning narrative construction Vibrant yellow aesthetic Hyperreal Tarantinoverse (elements of realism juxtaposed with supernatural undertones) Retro costume, props and settings Revenge fantasy narratives Meticulous intertextuality: pastiche and bricolage Representation of femme fatales Re-appropriates low-brow film culture Subverting genre conventions – neo-noir Allusions to French New Wave Postmodernism – ironic, intertextual, self-referential, homage and pastiche, playful and stylish, style over substance, subversive representation, ambiguous ideological agenda, rejection of grand narratives. Collaborative role of Sally Menke and actors who re-appear in many of his films (Samuel L Jackson, Uma Thurman, Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget = \$8.5 million, Box office = \$200 million worldwide. <i>Miramax's</i> first fully funded film (producer Harvey Weinstein). Tarantino's <i>A Band Apart</i> production com named after 1964 French New Wave Godard film <i>Bande a Part</i>. The film was originally the property of <i>Columbia Tristar</i> but fell out of favour while still in the development stage. <i>Pulp Fiction</i> was the first major production of Miramax once they had been bought by Disney in 1993 for \$60 million). Bruce Willis signing onto the picture guaranteed good overseas sales due to his waning but still potent star status meaning the picture soon went into profit.
	<p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious juxtapositions between young and old – youngest are 20-something students who Vincent and Jules kill – out of their depth in a world where innocence is crushed. Elderly characters are wise and dignified – Mr Wolfe and Captain Koons – both quirky – Jules not Vincent gains maturity through his encounter with Mr Wolfe and 'divine intervention', Vincent maintains immaturity and ultimately, death. 		



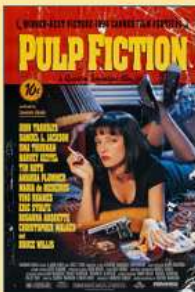
[Film Noir]

- Film Noir**
- Translated into 'Dark film', the filmmaking's style is defined by cynical attitudes, stark lighting contrasts, frequent use of flashbacks, intricate plots and sexual motivations.
 - Originating in the 1940s and 50s, the lowkey lighting takes influence from German expressionism (Hitchcock was inspired by this as an auteur too)
 - The clichés of Film Noir are commonly hinted in modern films
 - A subgenre known as pulp noir takes influences from film noir and the fiction with pulp magazines created between the late 1800s to the 1950s. It uses classic noir techniques with urban influences; *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) is a classic pulp noir film in which a private detective takes on a case that involves three eccentric criminals, a gorgeous liar, and their quest for a priceless statuette.

Film Noir	Pulp Fiction
Grey main characters with a shadowy trait/secret, with a strong viewpoint in how they view the world	This type of character reflects Marsellus and how the spectator never sees his face once in the movie; his enigma is never revealed.
A dark and cynical storyline with no super natural or science fiction elements	Despite the supernatural predictions about the briefcase containing Marsellus' soul, there are no direct elements in the film that are completely out of this world
No sugary romance, more like sexual motivations instead	Vincent is advised to only that Mia out to DINNER, as he tells himself 'this is not a date'. However, you cannot deny the chemistry they have when they go out, and then they return to Mia's home and kiss.
The concept of a mood that sticks throughout the whole film	Tarantino is successful in portraying an unsettling mood during every section of the film. He does this using gore, violence, drugs and criminal activities.
All characters have strong opinions	Every character has their own individual ambitions, for example Jules in wanting to pursue a better religious life away from crime.
The 'matter-of-fact' attitude considering the alluring and disturbing atmosphere	The scenes involving extreme violence or crime are more memorable than the others, but in actual fact there is a balance between ordinary and unusual scenes within the film. They always seem to go about their normal life after the extreme scenes occur, taking the problems as the come.



- Film Noir and Women**
- Film noir is accustomed to fulfilling specific constructions of gender roles in this aesthetically driven cinema style, creating very specific false archetypes for women within the ongoing history of film noir.
 - The roles that women play in film noir are the stylistic innovations of the heteronormative patriarchy, set up to be harmless supplements for the narrative.
 - However, upon further investigation, they directly translate to the dark reality of re-oppressed post-WW2 role (domestic stereotype, passive).
 - The females in *film noir* were either of two types (or archetypes) - dutiful, reliable, trustworthy and loving women; or *femmes fatales* - mysterious, duplicitous, subversive, double-crossing, gorgeous, unloving, predatory, tough-sweet, unreliable, irresponsible, manipulative and desperate women.
 - The film noir narrative is set up to combat a melodramatic aesthetic - the "women's perspective" of film, as opposed to the typical gaze that is fixated on male desire.
 - The interest that media and popular culture had with feminine psycho-sexuality is directly revealed in the visual cues and dark, sexual narratives in classic titles of Film Noir, such as *Phantom Lady*(1944), *The Reckless Moment* (1949), and *The Big Sleep* (1946). – This type of character in known as the femme fatale (an attractive, seductive woman with a dangerous side).



- Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman)**
- Miramax searched for a well-known actress to play the role.
 - Nominated for Best Supporting Actress for Mia Wallace at 1994 Oscars.
 - Cover girl style image on film poster.
 - In *Pulp Fiction*, wife of enigmatic Marsellus Wallace.
 - Flirtation with Vincent at Jack Rabbit Slim's – character toys with forbidden.
 - She mistakes the heroin in Vincent's pocket as cocaine and consequently overdoses when snorting it. She is revived by an injection of adrenaline to the heart.

[French New Wave]

- French New Wave** (*La Nouvelle Vague*) is a French film movement which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s borne out of the *Cahier Du Cinema* film critics magazine which featured film theorists like Andre Bazin.
- One of the most influential movements in the history of cinema – chose to break the rules of cinema and develop its language in a new direction.
- A group of critics created the film movement (Young Turks Chabrol, Rivette, Godard and Truffaut).
- It began as a movement against the traditional path that French Cinema followed (Truffaut dubbed "Tradition of Quality"), which was more like literature.
- French New Wave had the potential to bring a radical change to French cinema. It was a motion against the traditional French cinema, which was more literature than cinema.
- Aim: to develop original technical to substitute traditional methods – they learned the craft then chose to subvert its conventions.
- Many directors have produced hundreds of movies to the French cinema industry and their involvement created a tremendous impact on the success of French New Wave. As a result, many other French directors were influenced by it.
- Documentary, fly-on-the-wall style subverting styles of "Cinema du PaPa" with frequent use of non-sequiturs – every shot did not have to be necessary to the narrative.

French New Wave → Pulp Fiction

- Shooting on real location (*Bande a Part*)**
 - The shooting locations from *Pulp Fiction* are include casual places such as coffee shop, apartment, corridors and clubs.
- Camera movement – POV (*Une Femme est une Femme*)**
 - Pulp Fiction* example, the camera tends to follow Butch's movement in the Marcellus Wallace's Bar. The camera panned and follows his moving, at the same time emphasizes on his emotion with a close-up.
- Extra-diegetic rectangle (*Shoot The Pianist*)**
 - Pulp Fiction* example: extra-diegetic shape drawn by Mia when she says "don't be a square" to Vincent in the car (*Pierrot Le Fou*).
- Breaking the fourth wall (*Pierrot Le Fou*)**
 - Non-linear narrative is a self-reflexive trait which takes the spectator out of full immersion – *Pulp Fiction* subverts linearity by reintroducing Vincent beyond death (switching 2nd and 3rd Act).
- The jump cut (*Breathless*)**
 - When Marsellus orders Butch to take a fall in the fifth, there are cuts between close-up and medium shot with break the 180-degree line of action – mismatch/discontinuity for effect.
- Asynchronous non-diegetic sound (*Vivre Sa Vie*)**
 - Blurring of non-diegetic sound with radio tuner between two songs (title music or radio music from Jules' and Vincent's car?).
- Director as auteur- le camera stylo (Godard, Truffaut)**
 - From tracking shots of Butch in his old neighbourhood, to the adrenaline syringe suspense shot, QT used the camera like a writer used a pen.
- Chapter titles (*Vivre Sa Vie*)**
 - Pulp Fiction* uses 3 chapter titles: Vincent Vega & Marsellus Wallace's Wife, The Gold Watch, The Bonnie Situation.
- Elliptical edit (*Breathless*)**
 - Cut between Butch's childhood (collecting gold watch from Koons) to adult (in boxer's changing room before bout).
- Freeze frame (*Jules et Jim*)**
 - Opening scene with Honey Bunny holding diner customers hostage by gunpoint as dramatic punctuation.

Notable Films



Vivre Sa Vie
(1962, dir: Jean-Luc Godard)



Breathless (1960, dir: Jean-Luc Godard)



The 400 Blows
(1959, dir: Francois Truffaut)



Bande a Part
(1964, dir: Jean-Luc Godard)



Cleo from 5 to 7
(1962, dir: Agnes Varda)



Jules et Jim
(1962, Francois Truffaut)



Hiroshima Mon Amour (1958, dir: Alain Resnais)

[KEY SCENES IN PULP FICTION – TEXTUAL ANALYSIS SCAFFOLD]

Film Still	Denotation	Connotation	Macro analysis
	<p>The wide angle long shot of Pumpkin and Honey Bunny discussing their robbing exploits until Pumpkin asks “People never rob restaurants, why not?” whilst having coffee and cigarettes in Hawthorne Grill.</p>	<p>...conveys a juxtaposition between innocuous discussion and their criminal history as armed robbers. Their flippant manner of discussing their crimes as something casual is jarring. This scene establishes the equilibrium of the narrative.</p>	<p>Tarantino as auteur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The use of the long take. - Informal anecdotal dialogue. - Pumpkin’s Hawaii shirt - Wide angle cinematography (Panavision Panaflex Platinum Camera and C Series Anamorphic Lens) - Filmed on 35mm celluloid.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The medium shot Jules and Vincent discussing continental branding of burgers in chain stores with reference to the metric system. - How late capitalist commodities float free of what they signify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The long take gives a sense of two friends who are simply shooting the breeze. - Here, QT is challenging scriptwriting conventions and breaking rules of continuity with intent – it is a master of the craft who knows the rules well enough to know how to break them for effect. 	<p>French New Wave influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsequential dialogue (banter about inane topics) – reminiscent of Godard’s French New Wave films such as <i>Breathless</i>. • Foreshadowing - downpoint between light-hearted conversation and their role as professional killers. • Postmodernism - Burger chains as globalised signifiers of late capitalism.
	<p>The wide angle long shot Jules discussing with Brett his meal: Big Kahuna Burgers (a Hawaiian burger joint). Jules takes a bite and shares the ‘Royale With Cheese’ anecdote of globalised marketing strategies for Burger King. Marvin stands up against the wall.</p>	<p>Jules plays with Brett’s expectations. Is it a social visit or an execution? Suspense builds – downs drink of Sprite whilst staring him down. Enigma is broken with the dramatic punctuation of the murder of Roger as he states “oh I’m sorry, did I break your concentration?”</p>	<p>The MacGuffin</p> <p>Briefcase with Marcellus’s soul (hyperreal: intertextual – <i>Kiss Me Deadly</i> and <i>OUATIA</i>).</p> <p>Ezekiel 25:17 - Ironic Biblical appropriation</p> 
	<p>New Intertitle: “VINCENT VEGA & MARSELLUS WALLACE’S WIFE”</p> <p>The direct address POV shot of Marsellus giving bribe money to Butch to fall down in the fifth in the boxing ring. The jump cut to an over-the-shoulder shot of Marsellus telling Butch “fuck pride”.</p>	<p>The slow pace of Marsellus’s dramatic pauses and the poetic nature of his request create an enigmatic mood, and the delay of seeing Marsellus adds to the anticipation. Only the back of Marsellus’s head is revealed. On first viewing, the significance of the Band-Aid is unknown.</p>	<p>Metaphysics and postmodernity</p> <p>The significance of the Band-Aid on Marsellus’s neck – is the film’s MacGuffin (in the briefcase) in fact Marsellus’s soul?</p> <p>The jump cut – used in French New Wave in films like <i>Bande à Part</i> which broke continuity editing (180 degree line of action) rules.</p> <p>Scene establishes Marsellus as an intimidating mob boss, and the concealment of his face creates a mythology around his persona.</p>
	<p>The wide angle shot where Mia draws an extra-diegetic square whilst declaring to Vincent “don’t be a square”...</p> <p>Godard Intertextual: <i>Shoot The Pianist</i> <i>Pierrot Le Fou</i></p> 	<p>Ironic retro dialogue saying words like “daddio” and “cool cats” highlights their appreciation for vintage culture.</p> <p>Intertextual references: Godardian close-ups of Mia’s feet.</p> 	<p>The hyperreal Tarantinoverse</p> <p>Self-referentiality as a polysemic postmodern trope.</p> 
	<p>The direct address POV shot of Captain Koons telling the story of retrieving Butch’s father’s gold watch (survived WWI, WWII and Vietnam War) on the battlefield to give back to him.</p> <p>Butch watching cartoon <i>Clutch Cargo</i> before Koons’ story becomes more absorbing.</p>	<p>Butch’s world is framed around marine military duty, the sacredness of little things and what it means to be a man according alpha male masculine ideals.</p> <p>Koons represents a surrogate father figure after Butch’s father dies in the Vietnam War. Semi-autobiographical (QT raised by single mother).</p>	<p>“THE GOLD WATCH” chapter</p> <p>Scene inspired by wanting to pass on everything about the war to his son, from <i>Apocalypse Now</i>.</p> <p>Sub-narrative within a multi-story narrative – intersecting plot web.</p> <p>The rejection of television and the postmodern condition explored through Butch’s character.</p>
	<p>The over-the-shoulder shot of Butch with Vincent’s semi-automatic shotgun as he returns from the toilet. Cut to: pop tarts emerging from toaster, and Butch’s instinctive response – shooting Vincent.</p> <p>Butch is searching for the watch in his apartment only for Vincent to be sent by Marsellus to kill him.</p>	<p>Dramatic punctuation of editing – pop tarts as trigger for violence.</p> <p>Vincent plays the fool in the narrative – an incompetent professional killer.</p> 	<p>Recurring motif</p> <p>Bad things happen when Vince is on the toilet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jules and Vincent meet Pumpkin and Honey Bunny robbing the diner. 2) Mia overdoses. 3) Butch is waiting to kill him. <p>Intertextual reference: reads pulp fiction <i>Modesty Blaise</i> on toilet.</p> 
	<p>The underexposed medium two shot of Butch and Marsellus gagged with snooker balls by Zed and Maynard in the basement of the Mason-Dixon pawn shop.</p> <p>Confederate flag in pawn shop suggests they are racist redneck hillbillies.</p> 	<p>Underworld of Mason-Dixon pawn shop (debased, hell, grotesque) in binary opposition with Jack Rabbit Slim’s (glamorous, utopian, dreamlike) – uncanny figure of Gimp is a reducto absurdam of the human being diminished entirely to the status of commodity.</p>	<p>Bad nihilism – transgressive grotesque</p> <p>Intertextual references: rape scenes in <i>A Clockwork Orange</i> and <i>Deliverance</i>.</p> <p>Bad nihilism (Mason-Dixon pawn shop) and fun nihilism (Jack Rabbit Slim’s). When Butch escapes from gimp – weapon (axe, chainsaw, sword, gun) suggests slash subgenres.</p> 
	<p>The medium two shot of Jules and Vincent in blood-soaked suits drinking a cup of coffee at Jimmie’s house in the kitchen...</p>	<p>The collision between a mundane activity like drinking coffee and the after effects of extreme violence is intentionally comic and jarring.</p>	<p>Self-reflexive postmodern style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarantino - cameos like Hitchcock. • Tarantino stars in sequence, playing with Keitel’s persona and legacy (from Scorsese’s <i>Mean Streets</i>). • Controversy: Tarantino’s use of the <i>n</i> word comes across as cultural appropriation. 
	<p>The over the shoulder shot of Pumpkin looking in amazement into the briefcase which Jules has opened...</p> <p>Role of the circular/non-linear narrative</p> <p>Vincent’s non-linear survival at denouement despite dying mid-narrative acts as a hyperreal miracle – narrative transcends causality to resuscitate his role – irrational and postmodern.</p>	<p>The enigma over contents of the briefcase is often interpreted as the soul of Marsellus Wallace with the plaster on the back of his neck as a foreshadowing signifier.</p>	<p>MacGuffin, the uncanny and ‘blind spot’ in hyperreality</p> <p>“If the briefcase’s magical presence seems to gesture toward another kind of movie than the kind of movie PF is, it is precisely because its symbolic role in the film is to suggest an object beyond the limits of language or representability: the ‘blind spot’ in hyperreality.”</p>

Modernism – philosophical movement – transformations of 20th century Western society – rejected certainty of Enlightenment thinking and religious belief – “make it new” – stream-of-consciousness novel, abstract art, self-conscious style, experimental form, rejection of realism – creative revolution (science, art, technology) – power of human beings to create, improve and reshape environment – progress and growth emphasised.

Post-modernism – as cultural production peaked, post-modernism became a new movement that critiqued the modernist era with scepticism, deconstruction and a post-structuralist mode of analysis – it is marked by a cyclical return to previous styles but adding new contextual meaning through bricolage.

Music video and postmodernism

- the ‘three minute culture’ – the MTV generation length of peoples’ attention spans – fast editing, intense imagery
- Relevant theory: Lyotard/Baudrillard/Jameson – ‘structures of feeling’ and ‘cultural logic’
- Guy Debord - Society of the spectacle – overly visual culture that pursues high levels of stimulation

Simulacra and Simulation (Baudrillard)

- Blurred boundary between the real and imagined
- Distinction between media and reality has collapsed
- Reality defined by images and representations
- This meta-conceptual realm is a form of *hyper-reality*
- Deals with the ambiguity of polar opposites – artifice and authenticity

Causality – many stories no longer follow a structured cause-and-effect pattern but mess with linearity and consequence – some stories decide to subvert the notion of ‘meaning’.

Meta-narratives – disjointed narrative structures that play with causality and linearity – usually associated itself with avant-garde movements.

Deconstructing – picking apart media to find out the motive and purpose of a product, to the point of abstraction

Subversive – challenging the conventions of previous media – anti-conformist in nature

Hybridity – the blurred boundary between high culture and popular culture – genres blend, sources of influence vary – media forms are juxtaposed

JEAN BAUDRILLARD

What is post-modernism?

Hall-of-mirrors/ paradoxical – from Escher’s drawn architectural illusions, to story-in-a-story-in-a-story narratives – to oxymoronic notions such as ‘loving hate’ – ambiguity and illusion reigns in the post-modern world

Hierarchies of taste - - Blurring of high and low culture to create new meaning

Self-conscious – one could argue that post-modern thinking is very narcissistic – looking in on oneself, taking one out of an experience and into the theoretical – conceptual art for conceptual art’s sake (the Emperor’s New Clothes effect)

‘Truth’ is merely a concept

- there is no right or wrong, merely interpretations
- propaganda or ‘taste’ are the deciding factors regarding which ‘truth’ prevails at any given time
- Sense of reality dominated by media images
- Cultural forms can no longer hold up a mirror to reality because reality itself is saturated by advertising, films, TV, video games and print media
- Truth claims via images are more problematic thanks to Photoshop technology – reality is distorted to either beautify or implicate, sometimes unrealistically
- Mediation – media reality is the new reality – society must mediate between cultural forms in order to decide on the prevailing ‘truth’

The zenith of cultural production – culture ‘eats itself’ – everything has been made – therefore, culture must remake itself in abstract and cyclical forms of self-reference

- Many artistic products are influenced by its predecessors to the point of parody, homage and intertextuality
- anything can be art
- Reflection of an ‘alienated’ society – personas and characters are reinvented (ie. Madonna, Michael Jackson, David Bowie) as the pursuit for identity subverts conventions

Bricolage

- fusing two cultures can change its meaning – punk socialists (particularly bands like The Clash) would have a very different ethos to swastika sporting neo-Nazi punks
- Iconography can be adapted when combined with icons from another cultural expression, and therefore create a very new meaning