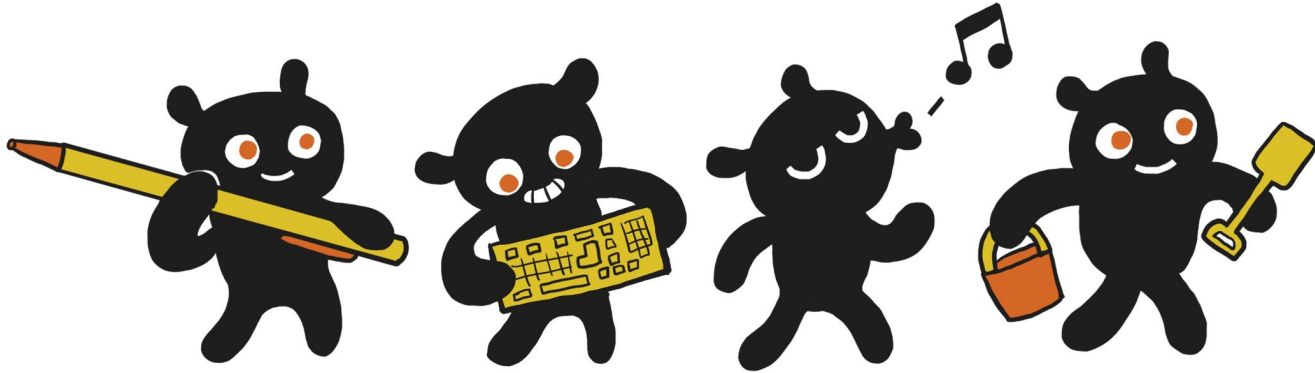


A Pen, a Keyboard, a Song, & a Sandbox Walk into a Writers' Room...



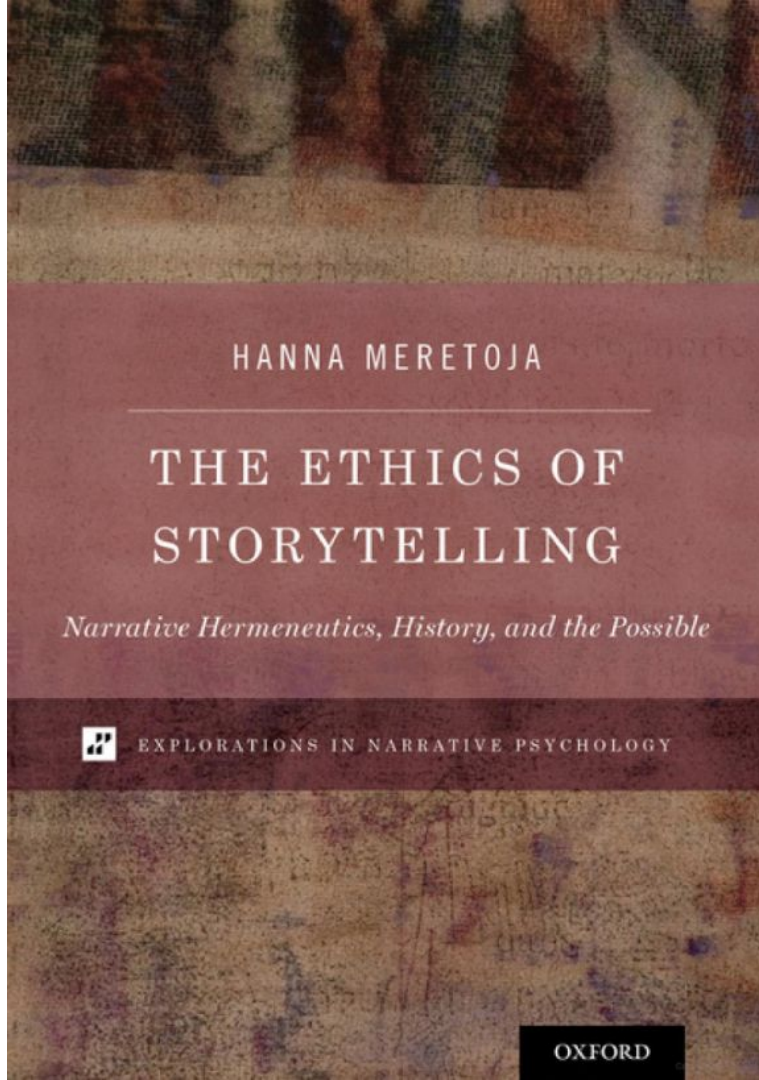
Christy Dena

Story Hack

26th June, 2020

“[N]arratives both expand and diminish
our sense of the possible.”

“[N]arrative practices can be
oppressive, empowering, or both.”



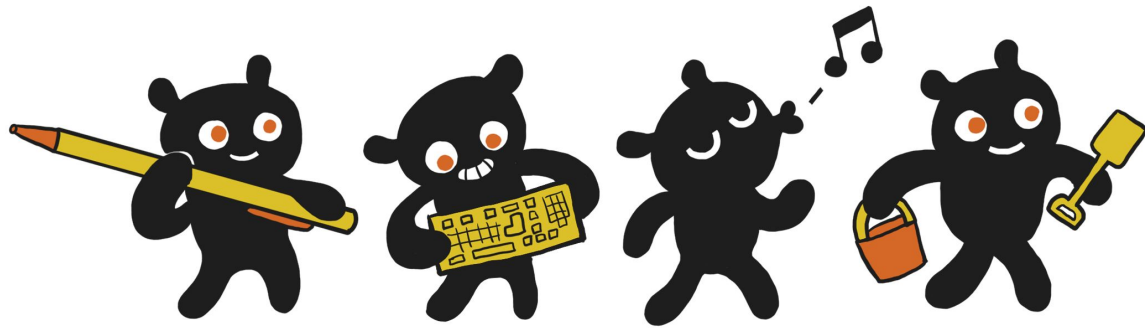
Closure

Closure

*“the satisfaction of expectations and the answering of questions
raised over the course of any narrative”*

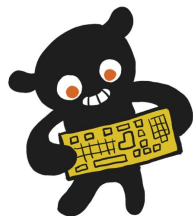
(H. Porter Abbot)

A Pen, a Keyboard, a Song, & a Sandbox Walk into a Writers' Room





The Pen...



The Keyboard...



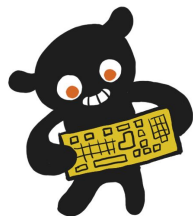
The Song...



The Sandbox...



A storyline...



B storyline...



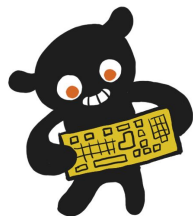
C storyline...



D storyline...



A storyline...



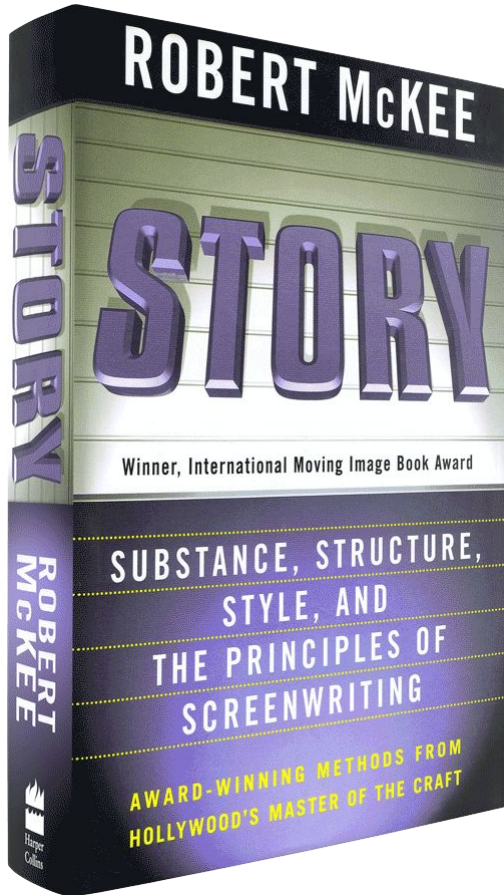
B storyline...



C storyline...



D storyline...



Endings

Closed

Ironic

Ambiguous

Open

Closed Endings

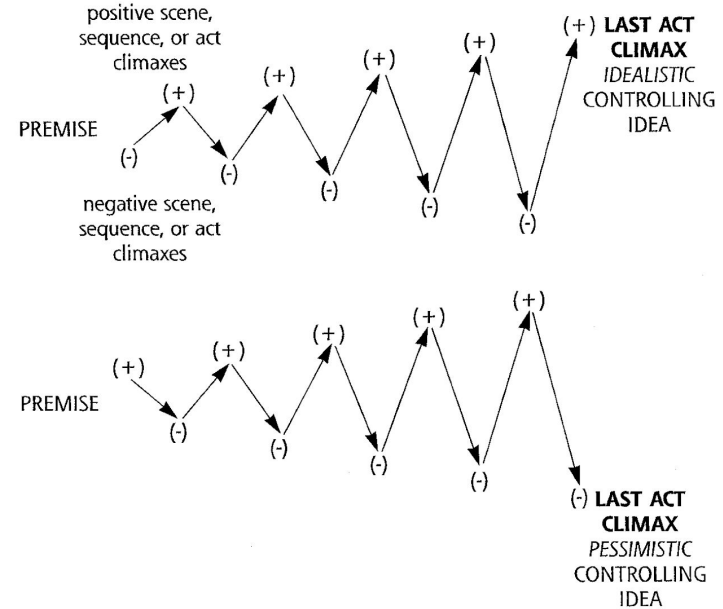
“[A]ll questions raised by the story are answered; all questions evoked are satisfied. The audience leaves with a rounded, closed experience —nothing in doubt, nothing unsated.”

1. Idealistic/Up-ending
2. Pessimistic/Down-ending

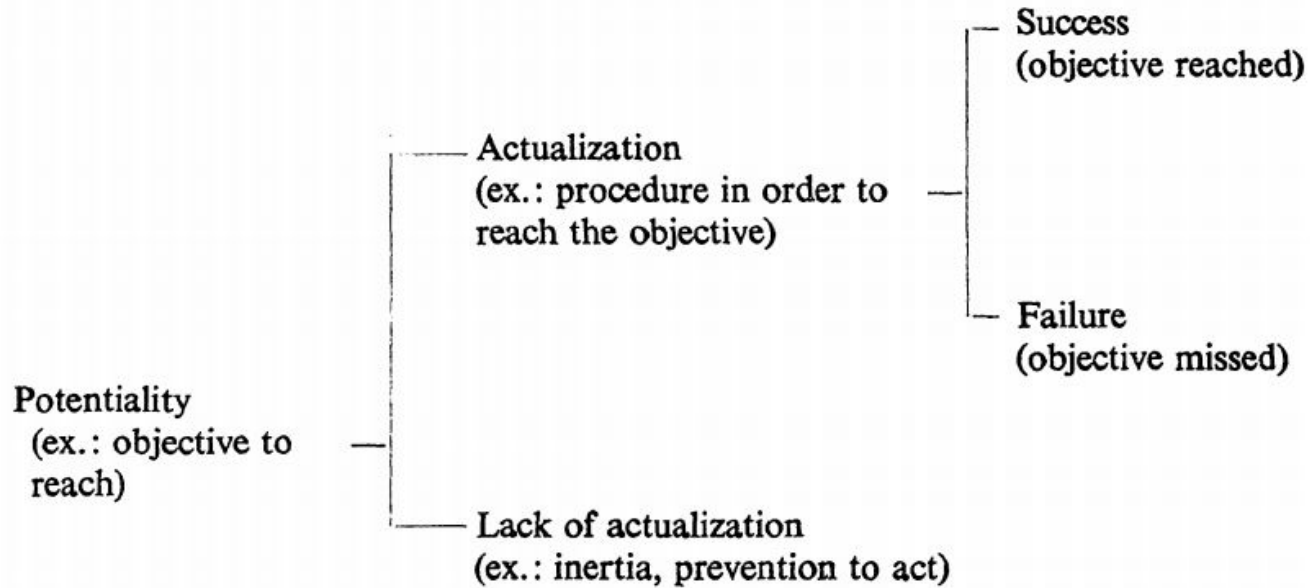
Closed Endings

“[A]ll questions raised by the story are answered; all questions evoked are satisfied. The audience leaves with a rounded, closed experience—nothing in doubt, nothing unsated.”

1. Idealistic/Up-ending
2. Pessimistic/Down-ending



Where do these ideas about a
specific desired
positive or a negative
ending come from?



Brémond, Claude (1970) "Morphology of the French Folktale," *Semiotica* 2, 3: 247-276, p.249, doi: 10.1515/semi.1970.2.3.247

[Brémond, Claude (1966) "La Logique des possibles narratifs," *Communications*, 8, 60-76.

Brémond, Claude (1973) *Logique du récit*. Paris: Seuil.]



Cinema of Choice

OPTIONAL THINKING AND NARRATIVE MOVIES

Nitzan Ben Shaul

“Standard Hollywood narrative movies prescribe linear narratives that cue the viewer to expect predictable outcomes and adopt a closed state of mind. There are, however, a small number of movies that, through the presentation of alternate narrative paths, open the mind to thoughts of choice and possibility.”



Cinema of Choice

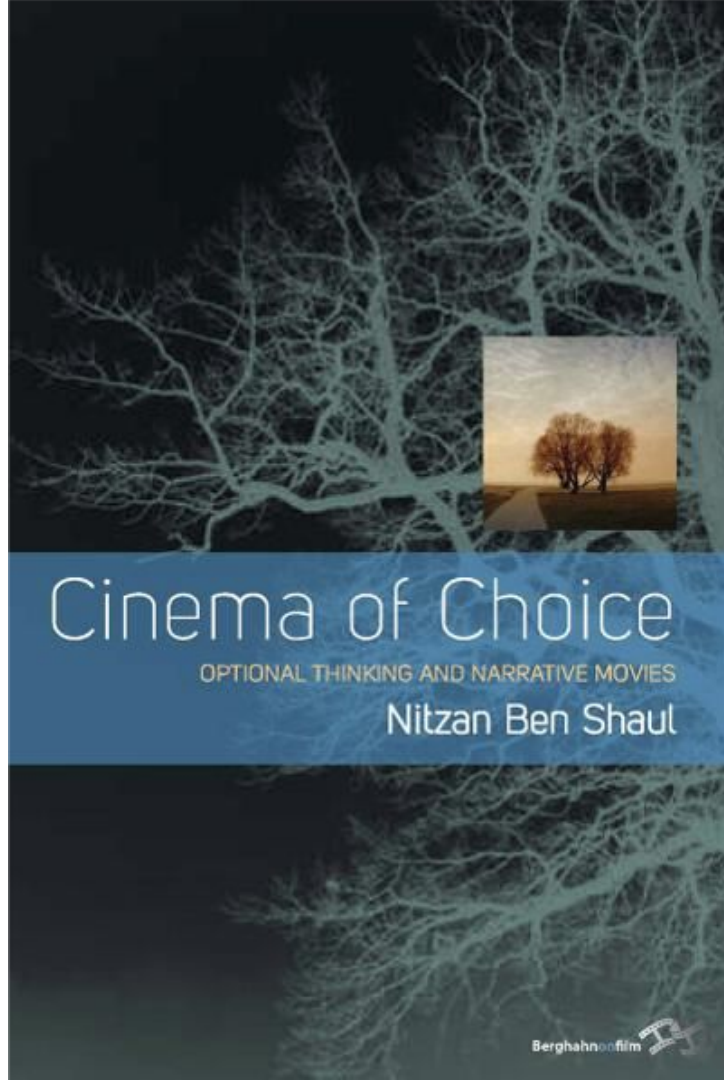
OPTIONAL THINKING AND NARRATIVE MOVIES

Nitzan Ben Shaul

“Standard Hollywood narrative movies prescribe linear narratives that cue the viewer to expect predictable outcomes and adopt a closed state of mind. There are, however, a small number of movies that, through the presentation of alternate narrative paths, open the mind to thoughts of choice and possibility.”

Optional thinking refers to “the cognitive ability to generate, perceive, or compare and assess alternative hypotheses that offer explanations for real or lifelike events.”

“There is evidence that not deploying the cognitive ability to generate optional or alternate hypotheses in real-life situations can lead to premature acceptance of inadequate or incorrect hypotheses that may result in dire consequences.”



Let's look at how we experience this in the everyday

NSW Supreme Court rules against Sydney Black Lives Matter protest

The New South Wales Supreme Court has "refused the application" for a Black Lives Matter protest to take place in Sydney today.

Rohan Smith and Ally Foster

news JUNE 6, 2020 1:40AM



The NSW Supreme Court has ruled today's planned Black Lives Matter protest in Sydney will not go ahead because it is too dangerous with protests in Melbourne over the weekend.

The NSW Supreme Court has ruled a planned Black Lives Matter protest in Sydney will not go ahead because it would endanger other members of the public and go against direct orders from NSW public health authorities.

NSW Supreme Court Justice Desmond Fagan delivered his ruling just after 8pm on

Support The Guardian
Available for everyone, funded by readers
Contribute → Subscribe →

Search jobs Sign in Search The Guardian Australian edition

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle More

Australia Coronavirus World AI politics Environment Football Indigenous Australia Immigration Media Business Science Tech

Indigenous Australians

Sydney Black Lives Matter rally: NSW court rules protest is illegal

Prime minister Scott Morrison urges Australians to stay away amid fears a series of planned weekend rallies risk spreading coronavirus

Matilda Roseley, Daniel Hurst and Elias Visontay
THE GUARDIAN 1:40 AM

618

A number of a Black Lives Matter rally in Sydney on Saturday. NSW police announced protesters to stop contact with the crowd. (Image: Simon Squire)

Scores of protesters and police are set to converge on central Sydney on Saturday despite the New South Wales supreme court ruling a rally drawing attention to police treatment of Indigenous Australians is illegal and should not go ahead.

After NSW police asked the court to call off the Black Lives Matter protest, scheduled to meet at Town Hall in Sydney on Saturday, Justice Desmond Fagan ruled there would be a public safety risk in allowing the protest - which expects 5,000 attendees - to go ahead during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Black Lives Matter

10 NEWS Melbourne Change location

Just In Politics World Business Analysis Sport Science Health Arts Fact Check Other

WATCH LIVE Victorian health authorities provide an update on the latest coronavirus cases in the state

NSW Supreme Court bans Sydney Black Lives Matter protest

By Emma Mitchell, Lily Singers and Emma Ellworthy
Posted 6 Jun 2020, updated 6 Jun 2020

Organisers were expecting up to 10,000 people to attend the protest. (AAP image: Steven Squire)

More on coronavirus

See our full coverage of coronavirus

Other languages

ABC中文 (新加坡特别报道) →
Pandemic virus corona →

Can you refuse to return to work after coronavirus restrictions lift? →

Latest figures on Australia's coronavirus cases →

When can I hug my grandchildren again? Your questions answered →

'The Lancet's got a bit of form, here' How did a →

Potentiality
(ex.: objective to reach)

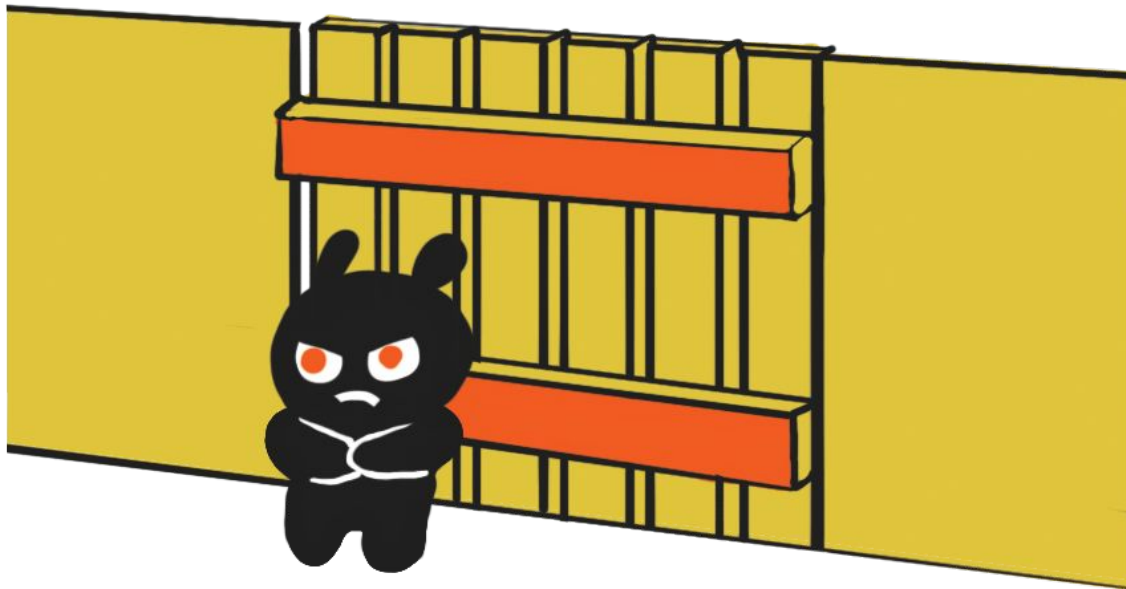
Actualization
(ex.: procedure in order to reach the objective)

~~Success
(objective reached)~~

Failure
(objective missed)

Lack of actualization
(ex.: inertia, prevention to act)

- “Justified” Police Brutality
- “Justified” Incarceration
- Definite Health Harm (Self)
- Definite Health Harm (Others)
- ...



In a world run by a closed, linear logic,
we are warned of the worst outcome,
we fear the worst outcome,
and it becomes in our head the only outcome



Sydney's Black Lives Matter protest appeal won from Dubbo

[ABC Western Plains](#) / By Madeline Austin

Posted 9 Jun 2020, updated 9 Jun 2020



Barrister Stephen Lawrence and co-counsel Felicity Graham celebrate their win in the Court of Appeal from Dubbo. *(Supplied: Stephen Lawrence)*

So how do we get beyond life as it is...to new possibilities?





More Optional Thinking...?

Open
Endings

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(Sequential)

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(ZIG ZAG)

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(Tandem)

Character
POV Shifts
(Same
Event)

Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm
Futures

Alternatives
to Objectives

Cliff Writing...

Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm

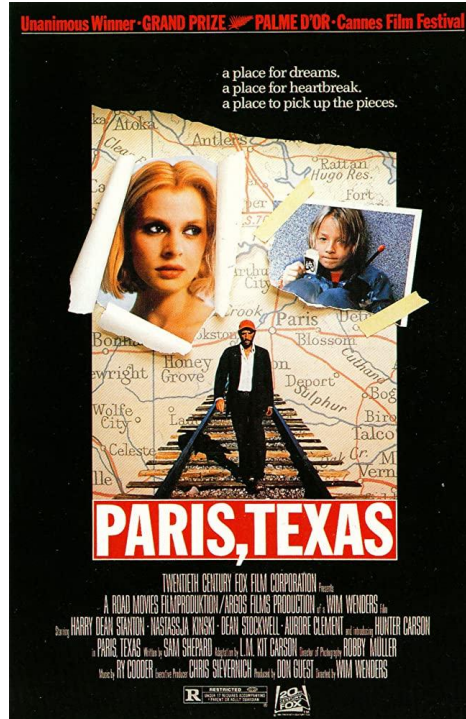
Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm
History

Narrative
Alternatives
to Previous
Work of
Fiction

Narrative
Alternatives
to History
(Counter
Factual)



Open Endings

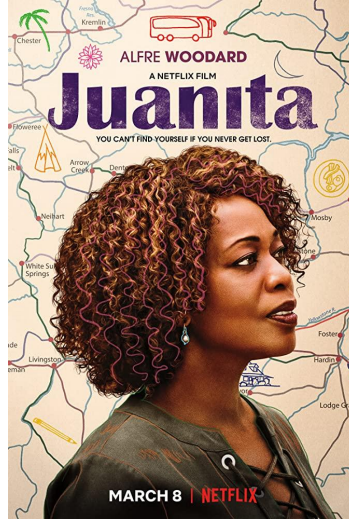
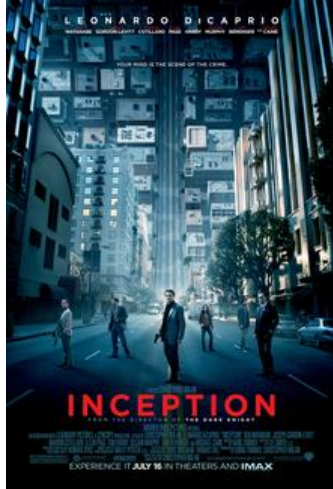


Open endings answer most of the questions raised, “but an unanswered question or two may trail out of the film, leaving the audience to supply it subsequent to viewing.”

“The answer will be found in the privacy of postfilm thoughts.”



Open Endings

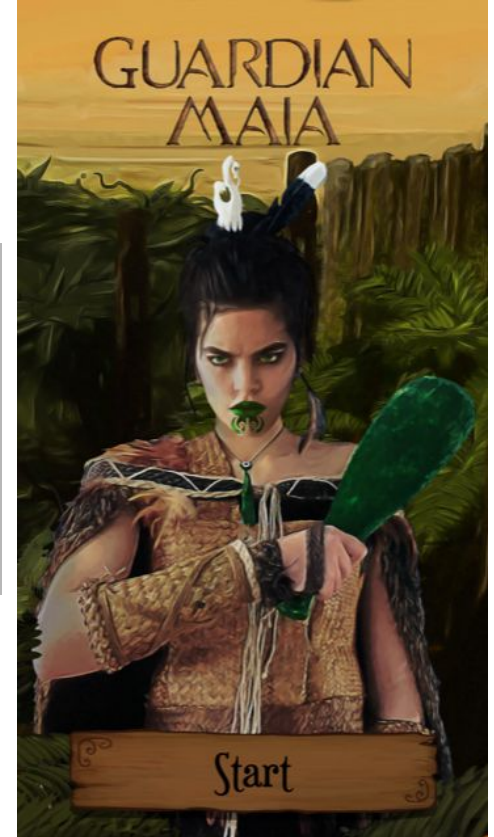




Alternate Narrative Tracks -sequential



“Such films, in their overlay of options, bring forth to the viewer’s attention the inherent probabilistic and optional nature of narrative causality...”





Alternate Narrative Tracks - ZIG ZAG



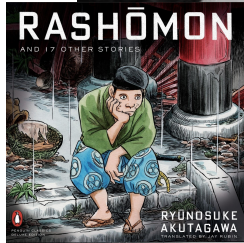
<https://www.kongregate.com/games/lemmibears/one-chance>



<https://eko.com/v/possibilia>

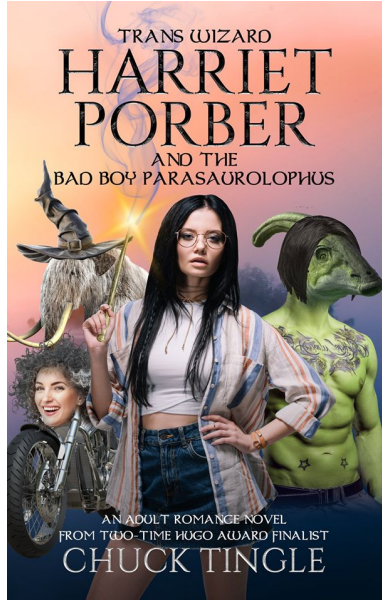


Character POV Shifts (Same Event)





Narrative Alternatives to Previous Works of Fiction



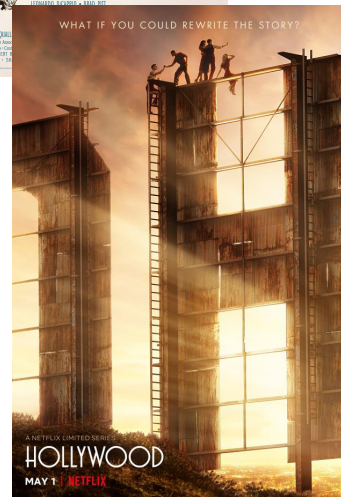
<https://twitter.com/lackingceremony/status/1276307760741666820>



Narrative Alternatives to History (CounterFactual)



“[H]istorical dramas may powerfully encourage optional thinking if [...] that history could have feasibly taken another course, encouraging not just optional thinking but also the notion of an ultimate unpredictability in the course of past events, gearing viewers toward considering viable and optional futures...”

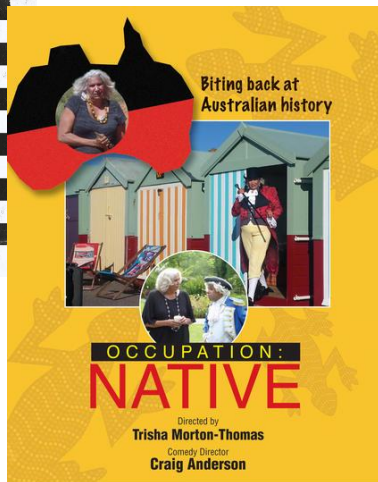
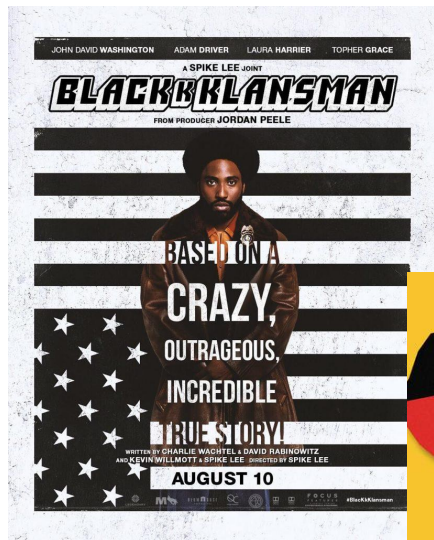


“Our job is to kick open the door of radical possibility as wide and as long as possible.”

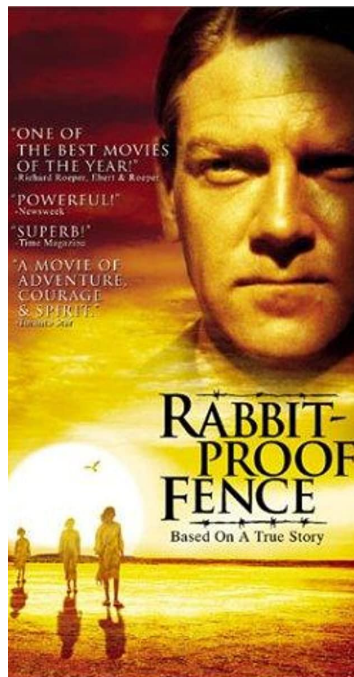
Naomi Klein, quoting colleagues at [The Leap](#)



Narrative Alternatives to Mythical Norm History



CLASSIFICATION: EXEMPT (FOR EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY)
RONIN RECOMMENDS: PARENTAL GUIDANCE (minor strong language)

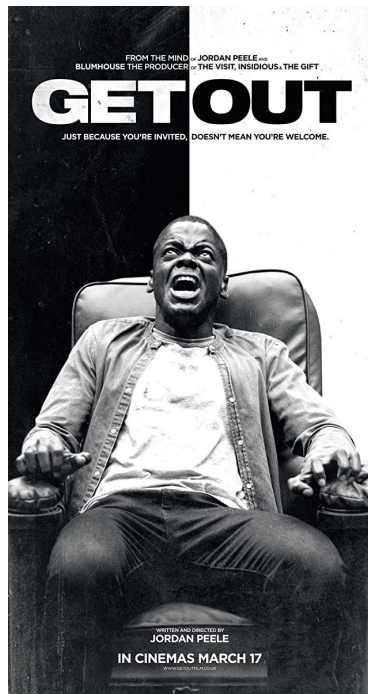


<https://www.elizabethlapensee.com/#/games>





Narrative Alternatives to Mythical Norm





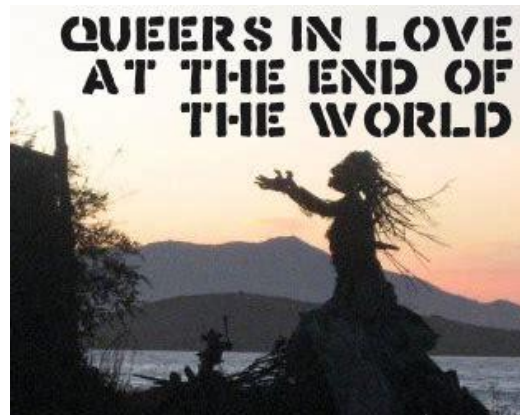
Narrative Alternatives to Mythical Norm Futures



THE DEEP FOREST



*A map game of post-colonial weird fantasy.
A re-imagining of The Quiet Year.*
Mark Diaz Truman and Avery Alder Mcaldino
Art by Jules Silver



<https://w.itch.io/end-of-the-world>

<https://buriedwithoutceremony.com/the-quiet-year>



Alternatives to Objectives



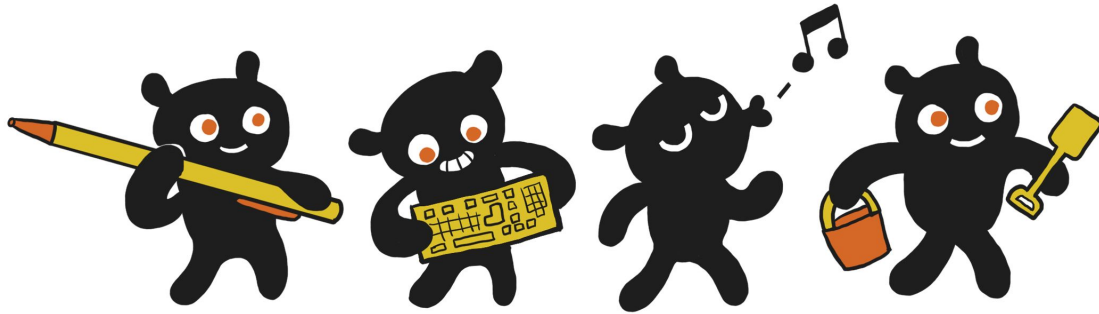
Joel Lehman and Kenneth O. Stanley (2011) "Abandoning Objectives: Evolution through the Search for Novelty Alone," *Evolutionary Computation Journal*, (19): 2, pages 189-223, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.



Alternatives to Objectives



Radically Different Futures
Cannot Be Written
With Narrative Norms
(& By The Mythical Norm)





...Optional Thinking...

Open
Endings

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(Sequential)

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(ZIG ZAG)

Alternate
Narrative
Tracks
(Tandem)

Character
POV Shifts
(Same
Event)

Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm
Futures

Alternatives
to Objectives

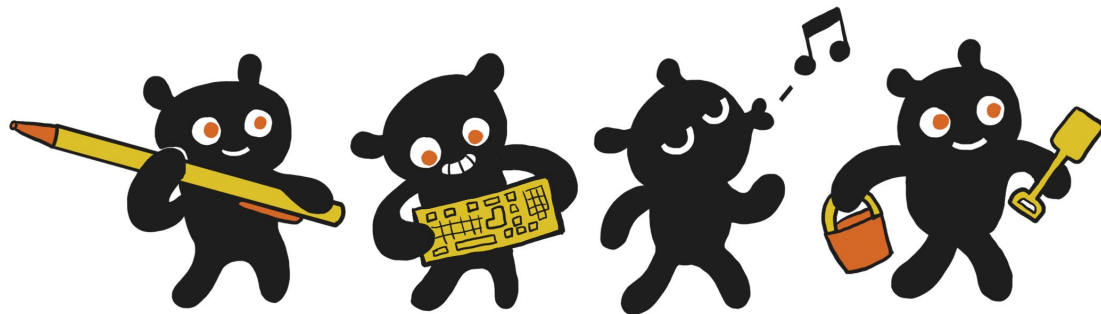
Cliff Writing...

Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm

Narrative
Alternatives
to Magical
Norm
History

Narrative
Alternatives
to Previous
Work of
Fiction

Narrative
Alternatives
to History
(Counter
Factual)



So...What Will Happen Next In Your Writers' Room?

Ask We Anything...

*Ask each
other first...*

