

VIDEO PRODUCTION and DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY for beginners

4th Edition

Bryan T. Quesada Ma. Kathrina S. Loreños
Mai Ryza Amante-Sison, M.A. Jaime D.L. Caro, Ph.D.



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FOREWORD

Everything is connected to everything else.

According to the chaos theory in mathematics and physics, it is possible for a butterfly to flap its wings at one end of the world and create a hurricane at the opposite end. (Hence the more popular term ‘butterfly effect.’) Similarly, the little things that we do may have an impact on society in ways that we can never expect.

Technology is a large factor in linking us to other people. Because of computers and the Internet, we are now connected to virtually everyone in the world. Furthermore, communication has never been quicker and more efficient. With the Information Superhighway, we have access to all sorts of data and gadgets. This would not have been possible a mere twenty years ago. Thus, we need to be aware that we can affect and influence others just by being able to send e-mails, design websites, create presentation reports, compile databases, or make audio/video files.

Our courseware is specifically designed to equip the students with the necessary knowledge and skills so they can navigate the terrain of present technology. Consider this book as a guide to strengthening human productivity and a tool for exploring the twenty-first century.


Jaime D.L. Caro, Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

Making videos has never been easy until now.

Interest in filmmaking has grown due to the availability of affordable digital video cameras and simple editing equipment. The popularity of the video medium is evident in the surge of local student film festivals and the increase in amateur video production outfits. Now, students and professionals alike vie for the same ground.

Recent and continuing innovations in digital technology have created tools for video production. However, digital video recording and editing equipment are merely tools. What is most important in the creation of videos is still the story one tries to convey.

LEARNING GOALS

By the end of this courseware, the student is expected to:

1. Understand and navigate the technology behind digital video production and editing.
2. Learn the three fundamental processes of filmmaking: pre-production, production, and post-production.
3. Hone his/her creative filmmaking skills.

LESSON ONE



Yes, sir. Certainly, it was I who found the body. This morning, as usual, I went to cut my daily quota of cedars, when I found the body in a grove in a hollow in the mountains. The exact location? About 150 meters off the Yamashina stage road. It's an out-of-the-way grove of bamboo and cedars.

The body was lying flat on its back dressed in a bluish silk kimono and a wrinkled head-dress of the Kyoto style. A single sword-stroke had pierced the breast. The fallen bamboo-blades around it were stained with bloody blossoms. No, the blood was no longer running. The wound had dried up, I believe. And also, a gad-fly was stuck fast there, hardly noticing my footsteps.

You ask me if I saw a sword or any such thing?

—*In a Grove*, by Ryunosuke Akutagawa

Knowing the Different Types of Film Genre

As the famous saying goes, “there are always two sides to a story.” However, in the case of Ryūnosuke Akutagawa’s short story, there are at least seven. And that’s just from a single story. There are arguably limitless ways of telling a story. Like in the short story “*In a Grove*” (adapted into the classic film, *Rashomon*, directed by Akira Kurosawa), one could take a single event and look at it from different perspectives, adding layer upon layer to the narrative as a whole.

The plot and characters may be prevalently known as the vital parts in shaping up a good story, but it is also important to consider a story’s other elements, such as the point of view, subject matter, themes, period, and narrative structure, among others. These easily-overlooked elements define the approach and particular quality that a story has. These elements can spell the difference between a good story and a great one.

In time, the different kinds of approaches to making stories have become familiar and recurring. They fall into patterns that we recognize right away. Thus, stories that have well-known conventions, tropes, and other similar qualities are categorized into a group. These are what we know as **genres**. In film, genres mostly evolved along with the advancement of technology to make movies.

Source: <http://www.doctormacro1.info/Movie%20Summaries/C/Casablanca.htm>



Casablanca
(1942)

Source: <http://radicalshappiness.blogspot.com/2008/12/lady-from-shanghai-femmes-fatales-iii.html>



The Lady from
Shanghai
(1947)



LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

1. Learn how to categorize films.
2. Learn the basic elements of a narrative film.
3. Identify the different types of film genre.



LESSON OUTLINE

1. Categorizing Films
2. Elements of a Narrative Film
3. Main Types of Film Genre

Source: <http://www.freshwap.net/forums/hddvd-bluray/102108-fistful-dollars-hd-dvd-1080p.html>



A Fistful of Dollars
(1967)

Back in the day, movies were simplistic, ranging from simple comedies, dramas, westerns, among others. Nowadays, movies about the fantastical and extraordinary are the norm, such as epic space adventures, fantasy folklore, superhero flicks, and full-length animated films using computer generated imagery. The sky is not the limit. Movies go way beyond what we know to be familiar!

Source: <http://www.fanpop.com/spots/the-matrix-images/5555259/title/agent-smith-neo>



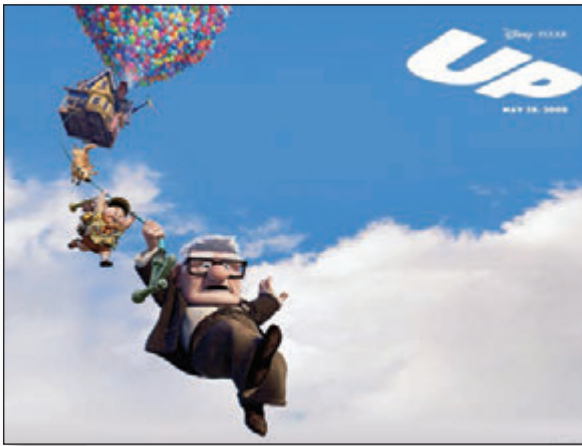
The Matrix
(1999)

Source: <http://epidi.com/tmp/>



The Fountain
(2006)

Source: <http://www.slashfilm.com/2009/04/12/early-buzz-pixars-up-2/>



Up (2009)

You must be already itching to make movies so you can tell your very own stories and win academy awards and such, but let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Before we start learning and undertaking the process of video production and filmmaking, first, it is important to know what kind of story you desire to tell. Knowing the certain qualities and characteristics of the different film genres can help you hone your skills in creating and telling your very own story.

Categorizing Films

A movie, like any story, can be comprised of many elements which we distinguish and categorize into groups called film genres. Films can be categorized in a dizzying number of ways. But for practical purposes, they are categorized between the following:

Purpose	Message or Propaganda vs. Popcorn or Purely for Entertainment
Rating	Rated (G, PG, PG-13, R, X, NC-17), vs. Unrated
Type	Local/Domestic vs. Foreign
Visual Presentation	2-D vs. 3-D or Stereoscopic
Quality	A-list (higher budget, mainstream) vs. B-list to Z-list (lower budget, more experimental)
Length	Full-length vs. Short
Basis in Reality	Fictional vs. Non-fictional



NOTE

Film genres are the categorization of various forms of film, based on consistent, recurring, and familiar filmic patterns, techniques, and conventions. The following are important when grouping films into a certain genre: story, plot, narrative events, structure, characters, motifs, styles, themes, messages, familiar icons, and characterization.

Films cannot usually be grouped exclusively into a sole genre. Most, if not all of the films released, are a combination of two or more genres and are called **hybrids**. An example is the romantic comedy, which is now more popularly called the rom-com, for short. The horror-comedy is another example that has experienced a rise in popularity recently. Other examples of hybrid-type genres are the following: science fiction-action-adventure, documentary-comedy (or “mockumentary”), and the action-comedy.

Source: http://www.daviddarling.info/childrens_encyclopedia/Build_a_Time_Machine_Chapter2.html



Back to the Future (1985) is an example of a film with a hybrid genre of science fiction-action-adventure

Source: <http://beatcrave.com/tag/spinal-tap/>



This is Spinal Tap (1984), a classic fictional musical documentary-comedy or “mockumentary”

Elements of a Narrative Film

One defining component to them is... you guessed it, a narrative! Narrative films are also called fictional films. They stand in contrast to documentary films which mainly present information. Narrative films are mainly defined by two things—the story being presented and its **narrative discourse** or how the story is told.



NOTE

The story is basically defined as a series of events, characters, and action represented within a given setting of time and place, or a world of cause and effect.

The narrative discourse is mainly evident in the strategies of presentation, specifically when the camera is used to present different perspectives and depths. This allows the viewer to be immersed in the world of the story by actually showing the faces, the actions, the movements, and the events happening. In contrast, the situations and events presented in literary fiction can only be imagined.

There are lots of styles and flourishes to be made in the narrative discourse of a film. Everything depends on what the director of the film wants to achieve with the story. These different styles can be categorized through the recurring film elements.

Theme - involves the issues, topics, or concepts around which the story revolves

Setting - the environment where and when the story takes place

Mood - emotional tone of the story

Plot - sequence of events

Main Types of Film Genre

Here are the main types of film genre.

Action/Adventure. This is exemplified by high energy scenes.



Comedy. This has one priority: to make you laugh.

Drama. This is serious in nature, and is either plot- or character-driven.



Horror/Suspense. This is designed to provoke one strong emotional response from the viewers: fear.

Westerns. This can be identified through familiar frontier-America-period or “cowboy” elements.

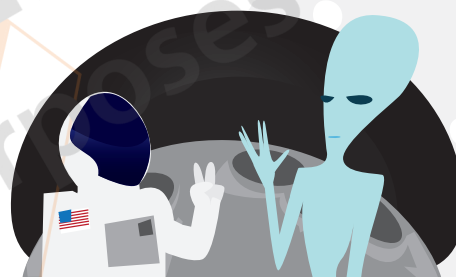


Crime and Gangsters. This deals with shady characters involving sinister actions.



Detective/Mystery. This revolves around the protagonist unraveling a particular mystery, which is the central aspect of the plot.

Science Fiction. This deals with futuristic science and technological concepts around which the plot revolves.



Fantasy. This often has the elements of myth, magic, wonder, and the extraordinary.

Biographical. This depicts the life of a person with historical importance.

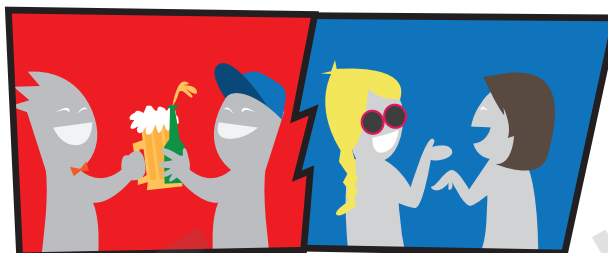


Historical/Epic. This is set in a particular period in time of interest to the audience.



Musical. This centers on musical dance performances as a main part of the narrative.

“Chick Flick”/Guy Film. The characters in this type of film are those that viewers can relate to.



Sports. The story of this type moves around a sport or sports setting.

Documentary. This presents and documents reality in different settings, situations, circumstances, and characters.

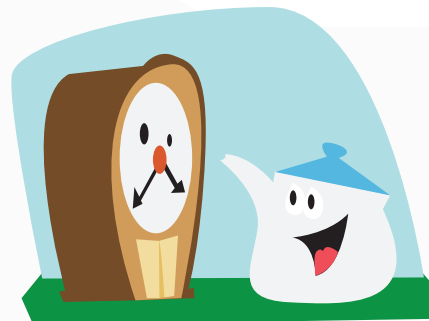


NOTE

There are degrees of “realism” in documentary films. Regardless of being generally considered as non-fictional films, fictional elements may still be used in documentaries. For example, the filming and recreation of events that truthfully happened (reenactments) can be part of the documentary process.



Animated films. This uses animation and rendered “cartoons” to present the narrative.





SUMMARY

A story can be told in many and diverse ways. It all depends on the different approaches one might take in making and telling a story. The same can be said for filmmaking. We categorize these different approaches in numerous types of ways, but we mainly group them based on recurring and familiar patterns within the story. We call these groupings film genres. A film genre is defined mainly through the story, how the story is told, and through its elements (theme, plot, mood, setting). In time, film genres have evolved along with the technology to make films.



WORD BANK

Film genre - the categorization of various forms of film, based on consistent, recurring, and familiar filmic patterns, techniques, and conventions

Hybrids - films which share the elements of two or more film genres

Story - a series of events, characters, and action represented within a given setting of time and place, or a world of cause and effect

Narrative Discourse - how the story is told, which is mainly manifested on the approach of presentation with the use of the camera

NAME: _____

SECTION: _____

DATE: _____

SCORE



SELF-CHECK

1. Besides the plot and characters, what are the other overlooked elements of a story which may define its approach and quality?

2. What is a film genre?

3. What are the elements of a narrative film? Identify and describe each.

4. What is the difference between a story and its narrative discourse?

5. Name 5 types of film genres and describe their defining characteristic.



SKILLS WORKOUT

- A. Identify two contrasting types of films for each grouping. Number 1 has been answered for you.

1. Purpose	Message or Propaganda	Popcorn or Purely for Entertainment
2. Rating		
3. Type		
4. Visual Presentation		
5. Quality		
6. Basis in Reality		

B. Choose the most appropriate type of film genre from the given selection by encircling the corresponding letter.

1. These types of films are a combination of two or more types of film genres.

- a. Narrative Film b. Hybrid c. Mixture Genre d. Film Genre

2. A type of film genre which panders to its audience, where viewers can directly relate to the characters in the story.

- a. "Chick Flick" /Guy Film b. Comedy c. Action/Adventure d. Musical

3. A type of film genre which mainly involves the protagonist unraveling a particular mystery.

- a. Crime and Gangster b. Horror/Suspense c. Detective /Mystery d. Sherlock Holmes

4. A type of film genre which has one main defining aspect: high energy scenes.

- a. Horror/Suspense b. Comedy c. Action /Adventure d. Historical/Epic

5. A type of film genre that mainly tries to present information rather than tell a story.

- a. Drama b. Documentary c. Primetime News d. Mockumentary

6. A type of film genre which has a lot of random singing and dancing.

- a. Comedy b. Drama c. Operatic theater d. Musical

C. Let's see if you can remember the little details in the lesson and identify what is being asked of you.

_____ 1. In literature, the viewer is engrossed in the story through the creative use of words. In film, what type of equipment allows the viewer to be immersed in the world of the story?

_____ 2. It is defined as a series of events, characters, and action represented within a given setting of time and place, or a world of cause and effect.

_____ 3. An element of narrative film, which involves the film's concepts, issues, subject, and other topics that the story tackles.

_____ 4. The filming and recreation of events that truthfully happened.

_____ 5. This is defined through the strategies of presentation within a story.



GROUP WORK

1. Groups of five students will do some research about other distinctive characteristics for each type of film genre discussed in this lesson. Compare and contrast the following types of film genres:

Action/Adventure vs. Drama

Horror/Suspense vs. Comedy

Historical/Epic vs. Biographical

Crime and Gangster vs. Detective/Mystery

Science Fiction vs. Fantasy

Briefly discuss your findings in class for additional insights. Summarize your output on the space allotted above for future references.

2. Think of an interesting concept for a movie screenplay (script), with a socially-relevant theme. Write a plot treatment/description for it in two to three short paragraphs. Remember to note the type of film genre (may be a hybrid) you will use for your short story treatment. Also make sure that you can produce your screenplay within your time and budget. Do your best as you will write a script and produce a video step by step in the next lessons to come. Present your screenplay to your class. Be creative and have fun!

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