



Literature & Media 2021

Reboots, Sequels, and Reconsiderations

Introductory Questions (Jutin & Xavier)

- **What was your favorite book growing up? Was it part of a series?**
 - The most difficult question in the curriculum is finding a favourite book. I'd say that the books that were most influential on me growing up, and the ones that I enjoyed the most were Percy Jackson: The Last Olympian and Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. These two books were part of a series, being the final book out of five and the fourth out of seven respectively. I feel that younger kids often end up reading series, as once you've started reading about this incredible fictional world, you can't stop consuming it, resulting in (more often than not) a book in a series being your favourite book throughout your childhood.
 - **Comments from Jut:** Not to mention that if you like one book in a series, you'll probably consume more if not all of the books. This means more time and more sentiments toward the characters and world of the book. We like art when it becomes personal to us, not because it is "objectively" the best.
- **What is the best sequel you can remember? The worst?**
 - High School Musical 2 is the best sequel. Troy dramatically singing in a golf field is iconic, the relationship between Troy and Gabriella face more complex, genuine, and realistic hurdles, and the song "I Don't Dance" subtly tips its hat to nuanced character dynamics, relationships, and growth. HSM 2 is the best in the trilogy. Prove. Me. Wrong. Also, I extremely have personal biases regarding the entire series.

The worst I've ever seen would most probably be one of the Disney straight-to-video sequels. Cinderella II is pretty up there in mediocrity and general poor animation quality. Although Cinderella III was actually entertaining and gave the villains more of a personality and character arc which I loved. The prince also had charisma in Cinderella III,

hurray!

~Jutin

- **Should different authors be allowed to write book sequels?**
 - (Xavier) Often, there is a necessity for different authors to write sequels to a book. Authors, despite how amazing they may seem, also have lives just like the rest of us, and when they eventually die, it's likely they'll have some book that they haven't finished.

Then, there is a possibility that this author will wish for the series to be completed, in which case they will recruit someone new. There's also the idea of collaborative book series, with different books written by different authors! The most well known of these is likely 'The 39 Clues' series, as well as 'Spirit Animals.' Each of these has a different author write each book, resulting in an overarching story with differing styles. It's certainly an interesting experience.

- **Should different directors be allowed to direct movie sequels?**

- It depends. More often than not, when sequels are made to movies of different directors, it becomes a stylistic horror show. If the intention is to create a continuation of the original with the same tone and feel, then it's almost impossible to pull off successfully. For instance, take the recent DC films. For their DC Extended Universe films, Warner Brothers hired Zach Snyder to direct the movies leading up to Justice League. Snyder did just that; he also directed Justice League but since Man of Steel wasn't very successful and the long awaited Batman v Superman didn't even make a quarter of its expected revenue, Warner Brother asked for Jos Whedon, the director of Marvel's The Avengers, to reshoot about 80 pages worth of content. A two hour film should have an average 120 script pages assuming that each page is a minute long. This resulted in a frankenstein-esque film that was visually confusing, cinematographically inconsistent, and all in all, fell very flat with audiences. Whedon had to work with Snyder's sets and costumes for Justice League which were all made to fit Snyder's gritty and dark vision of the DCEU. When in-post edits, CGI, and colour correction were made, all the costumes looked out of place and comical in Whedon's signature pop-y and vibrant style of directing superhero films. The contrast between each director's work is so apparent that viewers can differentiate which scenes were directed by Whedon and which were by Snyder. Here's a fun video showing how jarring that experience actually is!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gIqa3OGazo>

I know that the example given wasn't entire a sequel but you can compare Justice League to Batman v Superman and see how the two films clearly have different tones, atmosphere, and feel that each director brought. If a sequel wanted to maintain the same integrity as the original, then stick with the same director. Think of it this way, if Kill Bill Volume. 2 was directed by anyone but Quentin Tarantino, it'd cause an outrage.
~Jutin

- **What movie or television show would you reboot, if you could?**

- The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl. With what we can do with CGI right now, it'd be interesting to see a more believable rendition of Max' dreams and the world he created. The movie also didn't age very well but it was such a memorable part of my childhood that I'd love to see a modern recreation of it. The film celebrates imagination and creativity despite of how cheesy it is and it's something I think kids should be told more often.
~Jutin

- **Are there any new stories, or only new ways of telling old ones?**

- Oh this is a fun question to answer. Stories is, I would say, humanity's number one entertainer. We've always loved to tell, record, and recall stories since prehistoric age. It can be argued that cave paintings did tell stories, not your standard plot mountain format but it was a snapshot of something that happened. Aesop wrote stories with a lesson. Shakespeare wrote stories about death, love, and even satire. Artists like Taylor Swift write stories of heartbreak. Point is, we've always shared stories so this brings the question, are there novel narratives?

My personal opinion on this is not really. Yes, not all stories are the same. Lord of the Rings doesn't share the same plot as High School Musical, Star Wars, or Harry Potter but it follows the same beats and patterns. The comfortable main character or characters are introduced to the audience. Something changes in their world and they're called into the unknown. Here they face trials and tribulations to success, only to find that that triumph comes at a great price. At this point, the main character pays that price, learns from it, takes steps to mend their mistakes and return to their comfortable beginnings as a changed person. Literally almost every story follows this pattern and once you're aware of it, watching anything that isn't Indie or experimental becomes predictable! I. DON'T. KNOW. WHY. I. STILL. WATCH. FILM.

In short, there aren't really novel ways of telling a good story but that doesn't mean that you've seen everything. Differences in character, style, and world building can still make a seemingly generic story be extremely engaging. Just look at Avatar: The Last Airbender!

- **More info:**
The pattern I described is called the Hero's Journey and you can actually trace it to as far as the Bible. Jesus is thrust into an unknown and unfamiliar world of mere humans where he faces the struggles of man and their follies. As Jesus is already perfect, growth is seen in his environment rather than himself. When Jesus "peaks" and is happily with his followers, he's betrayed and reaches the lowest point of his story when he dies at the cross. He's reborn, not as a person like most protagonists, but he is literally resurrected from the dead and convinces the world around him to be believers of God through his own suffering. TLDR; the Hero's Journey is everywhere.
~Jutin

- **If you could write a sequel to any story that doesn't have one yet, what story would you pick?**
 - (Xavier) Cue me running upstairs and checking my bookshelf, full of sequels... However, one book that I would love to have a sequel for is Artemis, by Andy Weir. This book depicts a city on the moon, and the issues that come from living up there. I'd love to see expansion within this universe and see what else humanity is capable of within the series. Possibly seeing the main character as an adult and watching the world prepare to explore Mars or moons throughout the solar system would be incredibly interesting.

- **What role should fans have in the shaping of new stories by existing authors and franchises?**

- Fans' input should be encouraged, but authors should not feel under pressure to change their story based on the input of the fans. Let's consider an example. Say that J.K. Rowling has decided to write a new Harry Potter book (sounds impossible, I know) and she wants to write it about Harry whilst he's training to become an Auror (magician police basically). However, a large portion of the fans instead wish to see Harry becoming a teacher at Hogwarts, teaching Defense Against the Dark Arts. Of course, Rowling could take the fans opinions into consideration, but at the end of the day, it's her story and the opinions of the fans may not fit the existing canon of the story.
~Xav

- **What seemingly "dead" character from a work of fiction would you like to see brought back to life?**

- Asuna from Sword Art Online. She's technically not dead but her personality was sent to the slaughterhouse to fit the generic save-the-princess archetype by the second arc of the anime. In the beginning of the series, Asuna was spunky to say the least. She was proud, assertive, and stood her ground while not falling into the generic aggressive female lead archetype. Her kind-hearted, selfless, and determined attitude easily made her the best character in the show. However, by the events of ALfheim Online, the second story arc to SAO, Asuna becomes complacent and lost all her resolve just so that the protagonist had someone to save. She's not so subtly depicted as a bird trapped in a cage by literally putting her in a cage prison for a majority of ALO. She barely tries to defend herself against the antagonist and overall, acted very out-of-character in contrast to how she acted in SAO. The almost brash heroine and only other player that combated the protagonist's skill turned into a damsel in distress. It ruined her character deeply and I'd love to see her drive and badassery return in the newer installations of the show.
~Jutin

- **For what series would you like to see one more novel published, season made, or film produced?**

- Another season of Firefly, Merlin, Anne with an E, Hannibal, the list goes on. All of these have been cancelled and it really put an unnatural end to the series' plots or left many loose ends with their "endings". Merlin and Hannibal (literally) ended on major cliffhangers which make it even more infuriating.

A lot of really good shows sometimes just keep going and going and it makes shows stale over time but an early end to an otherwise thriving series is unfortunate. When the audience is wanting more after the natural finale of something, that's a good sign that the show was very satisfying but that doesn't mean that it should continue with 5 new films or 10 new seasons.

~Jutin

- **If you could spend a day in the world of any novel, television series, or film, what world would you select?**

- Easy. Xavier and I (Jutin) would more than gladly join the Doctor for a trip throughout time and space. You can go anywhere and at anytime with the TARDIS and you can practically turn one day into months or even years. Visit Medieval England, the prehistoric age, the day the Earth dies, an unfamiliar planet with an entirely new species, or even just be a hermit inside the spaceship; Ten was able to fit a swimming pool in there, there's probably an adventure waiting in your transport vehicle as well. Doctor Who's world and premise is so expansive that it has the potential to be endlessly original and continuous. Your imagination truly is your limit.

Interlude 0: Time & Turning (Xavier)

- [New Year](#) | **Bei Dao**

- Bei Dao is a contemporary Chinese author, and this poetry describes Chinese New Year, whilst also representing the New Year as a whole. This beautiful poem, full of thought-provoking and impactful imagery, tries to convey the passing of time, and the significance of both the moment when the New Year begins and the time following it.

We begin with the description of a child, walking, conveying forward movement and a sense that this new year is welcome (as the child carries flowers). We also get a glimpse of how brief the moment of the New Year is, with it being described as "the shortest pause." The only individual who is able to detect it is a conductor, someone well versed in sound as a whole. Within the second stanza, we see mention of the "Lion Dance," a Chinese cultural tradition where two dancers wear a lion costume and perform ceremonial dances, meant to bring good luck in the New Year.

The final stanza very much gives the poem a sense of completion, with the line "each and every moment's a shortcut" seemingly describing how each opportunity that we have in the New Year (moment) can bring us further forward (shortcut). We conclude with the phrase "closing death's door." Though rather morbid, I believe that this conveys a sense of hope that we have survived one more year. In our chaotic and ever-changing world, one more year of life is certainly something to celebrate.

- [Praise Song for the Day](#) | **Elizabeth Alexander**

- This poem has some story behind that, and I will explain that regard of it before I begin to analyse the poem. Elizabeth Alexander was asked by Barack Obama (!) to write this poem, which would then be read at his 2009 Presidential Inauguration. This was, of course, an incredible honour, and Alexander wrote a poem which related directly back to the particular inauguration.

The poem begins by describing many issues that a group known as "we" currently have while also describing the group as a whole; this group does not interact enough with each other but they make music and they repair what needs to be repaired. Alexander then discusses how "we encounter each other in words, spiny or smooth, whispered or declaimed," further making the group seem foreign to us.

However, during the 9th Stanza, there is a major tonal shift, beginning with the line "Say it plain, many have died from this day." From there, we are told that those who died for this day are those who "laid the train tracks, raised the bridges, picked the cotton and the lettuce." From these two moments, we are able to realise the purpose of this poem, and who the group of "we" are. This group of individuals are African American individuals, those who in the past were discriminated against, and still are today. Alexander is celebrating a new age of the United States, one beginning with the first-ever African American President. Alexander asks us to recognise all of the sufferings that Black Americans have experienced, and how momentous of an occasion this finally is. Alexander then says "Praise song for struggle, praise song for the day." This reflects the importance of having Obama as president, as he is being described (in a way) using words that would generally be related to religion. Overall, this poem tries to explain the significance of Obama as a president to the world, and is a poem of celebration, asking what the future of Obama as president may bring.

- [Burning the Old Year](#) | Naomi Shihab Nye

- We do not often consider how much of what we use throughout the year is fragile, temporary, and irrelevant. Naomi Shihab Nye explores this idea within her poem and discusses the feeling of the New Year.

The first two stanzas of the poem deal with all that is flammable, discussing how these items' existence is fleeting. The items described include notes from friends, letters, lists of food, and half-completed poems. Between the 2nd and 3rd Stanzas, the items are set ablaze, and we then hear about how that affected Nye. Firstly, she says that when there is nothing, "an absence shouts, celebrates, leaves a space." This represents the small moment between the old year and the new year, where there is a moment of absence, in which people around the world rejoice that a new year has begun. This also acts as a moment of pause, some would even say leaving a space. The following line "I begin with the smallest numbers" can be taken rather literally, with the fact that a new year starts back at 1 / 1 as the date, or can instead represent how Nye begins her year, with the small things, building up to the larger events as the year progresses.

In the final stanza, Nye makes a comment on the human psyche as a whole — "Only the things I didn't do crackle after the blazing dies." The crackling here represents our memories, and only the things that weren't done throughout the year are what we remember whilst all of the other useless memories were set aflame. However, I partially disagree with this. If my memories were set on fire, the ones that would continue to crackle would be those strong memories of WSC friendships and proud achievements from throughout the past year, not those failures that may have occurred. Though they remain part of our memories, these failures do not create the noise of this burning blaze; it is rather our positive memories that do so.

- [Urban Renewal](#) | Yusef Komunyakaa

- Within the poem of Urban Renewal, Yusef Komunyakaa is making a comment on our construction industries, particularly the process of destroying buildings and creating new ones. However, Komunyakaa convinces us that this is a horrific process, one that destroys the heart and soul of this old building and causes excessive harm to the ecosystem of the building. The overall tone of the poem, combined with sections such as “even when backbones / are I-beams braced for impact” and “Wrecking crews / men unable to catch sparrows without breaking / wings into splinters” convey the aggressive, almost disfiguring nature of destroying a building. It asks us whether it’s fair to destroy these buildings and whether instead, it’s a better idea to preserve it, keeping the pigeons cooing in the eaves from having their feathers fall into the parking lot below.

Beginning with Part 2: The Paradox of Sequels (Xavier)

- **In every genre, sequels dance between different masters. They must be more of the same; they must be new and fresh. They suffer from the burden of elevated expectations: there usually wouldn’t be a sequel if a work hadn’t succeeded enough to demand one, and that means the sequel needs to succeed too. Be sure to look up the following terms to help set the stage (and screen) for the guiding questions below:**
 - **sequel | prequel | midquel | sidequel | reboot**
 - **Sequel:** A literary, cinematic or televised work continuing the course of a story that began in the preceding one. Example: Toy Story 2, Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back.
 - **Prequel:** A work whose story precedes that of an earlier work. Examples: Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them, and The Hobbit.
 - **Midquel:** A midquel is a work that is a prequel to one work and a sequel to another. For example, if the third film in the series was set in between the events of the first film and the events of the second film, then it would be a midquel. For example, Rogue One.
 - **Sidequel:** A work or, more commonly, a portion of a work that portrays events that are occurring at the same time as previously documented events. For example, the Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D TV series is a sidequel to the Marvel movies.
 - **Reboot:** Generally a series of films / TV programmes that stopped being produced but were then restarted or revived. Often, the canon of the previous series is ignored. For example, 2016’s all Female Ghostbusters.
 - **trilogy | paraquel | franchise | retcon**
 - **Trilogy:** A group of three related plays, novels, films or other forms of media. Often, if a sequel to a film occurs, a trilogy is created as well, as it allows a rise in tension and then a natural finish. Trilogies include Lord of the Rings or Back to the Future.
 - **Paraquel:** A story that takes place simultaneously with another story, such as how the Aeneid is a paraquel to the Odyssey.

- **Franchise:** A series of (most commonly) films that are about the same characters and are set within the same universe. For example, the Marvel Cinematic Universe would be considered a franchise.
- **Retcon:** A piece of new information that results in a different interpretation on previous events, generally used to allow for a dramatic plot shift or to fill in a previous inconsistency.
- **Poetry**
 - **Poetry is not a genre in which we normally think about sequels. No one expected Robert Frost to write “Part 2: The Road I Took”. But there are exceptions of different kinds.**
 - **Homer’s Odyssey is often seen as a sequel to the Iliad—and Virgil’s Aeneid as a kind of Roman counterpart to them both. Work with your team to decide the best way to describe their relationship. Would it affect your analysis to know for certain whether Homer actually wrote both the Iliad and the Odyssey?**
 - Okay, the relationships here seem rather complicated, but really they’re not. The Odyssey is considered to be a sequel to the Iliad, but the Aeneid is where it gets complicated. There are twelve books within the Aeneid, with each of them being set at a different time chronologically. The first two books of the Aeneid are set at the same time as the Iliad, whilst books 3 - 12 are set at either the same time as the Odyssey or between the Odyssey and the Iliad. That makes the Aeneid both a sidequel to the Iliad and a midquel, whilst also possibly being a sidequel to the Odyssey. I think it doesn’t really matter whether Homer wrote both the Iliad and the Odyssey, as the Aeneid is already written by a different author, Virgil.
 - **Though not strictly poetry, some of Shakespeare’s most famous history plays are direct sequels to one another. Consider the following monologues from his “Henriad”, which show the evolution of a misbehaving prince into a grand English king, and discuss with your team: are there other series you can think of where a character demonstrates this kind of growth from one installment to the next?**
 - Henry IV, Part I | [To Imitate the Sun](#)
 - Henry IV, Part II | [Ascension of King Henry V](#)
 - Henry V | [Crispin’s Day Speech](#)
 - Prince Henry begins as an obnoxious and narcissistic individual, who believes that he is as bright and beautiful as the sun, and is kind to allow the clouds (representing other men) to cover him up for a time period before he shows his true beauty and majesty. However, he does recognise that he can make a change and become a truly great king. “And, like bright metal on a sullen ground, my reformation, glitt’ring o’er my fault, shall show more goodly and attract more eyes than that which hath no foil to set it

off.” Basically, due to how drastic his transformation will be, it will truly be perceived as great.

- The second monologue here depicts Prince Henry just as he has become King Henry IV, after his father died. He is not a perfect individual by any stretch of the imagination, stating “Sorrow so royally in you appears that I will deeply put the fashion on and wear it in my heart.” Basically, he does not feel sad after his father’s death, but everyone else looks so noble in their sorrow that he too will try and feel the sorrow they are feeling. He also comments on how there is much sorrow now that he will bring joy instead, showing that his narcissistic nature still remains. However, he no longer treats the individuals surrounding him as truly inferior, and more as equals (or as equal as they can be when he’s the King).
- In the final monologue, Henry is giving a rousing speech to his soldiers before they head off into battle, calling them the “Noblest English” and reminding them that they have the blood of their ancestral heroes coursing through their veins. He no longer is treating the commoners as those who are inferior but instead treating them as brave soldiers who are about to go and fight for England. The transformation across these monologues is incredible, and it’s hard to believe that these are all the same character.
- Book series with similar transformations definitely come to mind, primarily kids books. The first two that I could think of were the Artemis Fowl series, with the titular character being the one who changes, and Percy Jackson, with the character who changes being Nico di Angelo.
 - **Comments from Jut:** don’t forget to send love to Zuko from Avatar: The Last Airbender. His character development was mwAH~
- **Poets have written sequels—or paraquels—to famous stories of the past, sometimes taking new perspectives. In Mrs Midas, Carol Anne Duffy imagines the plight of King Midas’s wife. What would it be like to have a husband who turned everything to gold? The modern Greek poet Nikos Kazantzakis wrote an entire epic sequel to the Odyssey, and others have written shorter pieces: consider Kim Lasky’s “[The Bed that is a Tree](#)” and Lord Tennyson’s “[Ulysses](#)”.**
 - “Mrs Midas”, by Carol Anne Duffy, portrays the terror that King Midas’s wife feels once Midas receives the ability to turn anything he touches into gold. She hides the cat and the phone so that he’s unable to reach them,

and sends him off to a separate room to sleep in, barricading her own room so that she can't be reached whilst she's sleeping. However, the poem is also mournful, as she still craves his love and embrace, but is unable to receive it without being turned into gold.

Nikos Kazantzakis wrote, "The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel" from 1924 – 1938 when it was finally published. It tells of the further adventures of Odysseus after he tires of his quiet family life, during which he rescues Helen of Troy, and meets many important historical or fictional figures, such as the Buddha, Jesus, and Don Quixote. He travels further south, travelling through Africa before finally arriving at Antarctica, and being crushed by an iceberg. This poem isn't accepted at all as part of the literary canon of the Odyssey and is instead more perceived as fanfiction.

Now we come to the two shorter poems. The "Bed that is a Tree" tells the story of Penelope, the wife of Odysseus, who believes that Odysseus is dead and that she will never see him again. The bed, mentioned in the poem's title, was a wedding present to show their eternal love for each other. The poem is full of longing and sadness, as Penelope doesn't know that Odysseus is actually still alive. I'm unsure about the full meaning of "Ulysses" by Lord Tennyson but I believe that the general gist of it is that it tells the story of how Ulysses (also known as Odysseus) wishes to continue his adventures, not simply stay at home with his ageing wife, showing his desires as he travels off on a voyage.

- **Some poets' works are collected into books later, but there are also those who write and publish them in collections of their own design. Consider the Instagram poet Rupi Kaur, whom many would argue is [renewing the entire genre of poetry](#) for our generation. (Others would contend that she is writing, at best, unoriginal "[pop poetry](#)".) Kaur's first poem collection, *Milk and Honey*, was a publishing sensation—a global bestseller. In interviews, she noted that [she struggled](#) with writing her second book, *The Sun and Her Flowers*. Check out her poems "[Pace Yourself](#)" and "[The Year is Done](#)" for a sense of her work, then discuss with your team: is Instagram a good thing for poetry? What would you advise Kaur, and any author, struggling to write a sequel to a collection of poems? You may want to research the concept of "second book syndrome".**
 - Kaur's poetry could definitely be described as brief, but I understand where she's coming from in the writing of her poetry. "Pace Yourself" is only a few lines long, and I personally dislike the "poem" but I really enjoy "The Year is Done"! The conversational tone which the poem holds combined with the title being placed at the end, as well as the short length, makes this a perfect poem for those who wish to begin reading

poetry! In particular, it fits in the constraints that Kaur has to work with. As an Instagram poet, she only has the space of a smartphone screen to write a poem, and so she aims for impact within that small space. I think that Instagram is a good thing for poetry, as it exposes more people to poetry as an art form, but we must ensure that we don't only write short poetry, condensed so that someone can quickly read it. Often, longer poetry carries just as much meaning as a shorter poem, and therefore we should ensure that there are forms which can have shorter poems written in them.

As a poet myself, I know the incredible pain of writer's block. The main advice that I would give would be to (rather ironically, based on the poem in the curriculum) pace yourself. Sit down for 20 mins and try and write, and if nothing comes, that's ok. Keep repeating that, and hopefully poetry will come from it. Another thing which I find incredibly useful is being around other writers. Even if you aren't talking to them, you feel a sense of camaraderie that drives you to write. Second Book Syndrome is definitely relevant here, as it refers to how an author's second book in a series often doesn't live up to the first book, as the author is working as hard as possible to ensure that their book is just as good as the last one. This is, of course, an incredible challenge for Kaur, considering how her books were a New York Times Bestseller, and it now feels as if she has to live up to this and once again create an amazing book of poetry. It's hard, and really, there isn't an easy solution other than sitting down and getting going, and not deleting every single thing you write.

Interlude I: Words Renewed (Xavier)

- [Poetry](#) | **Marianne Moore**
 - This is technically a single poem, but there is some story behind it. Marianne Moore is a well known American Poet who regularly revised poetry that she had already published. This revision didn't simply include changing a few words, often poems would entirely change! "Poetry", in particular, was revised six times, and I'd recommend that you read the three revisions in that link. The first version of the poem is 12 lines long and conveys the idea that we write poetry about the things that we understand because we do not find enigmas entertaining. The second version is over 30 lines long and generally elaborates on the points of the first version, adding more examples. However, the ending instead seems to conclude that those who look for the raw feeling behind poetry, as well as all that makes it poetry, are those who are truly interested in it. Finally, we come to the third version, which is only 3 lines long. I'll let you read that one and interpret it yourself. The poems show that a poem is never truly finished, even when it's published, and it instead continues evolving in the poet's mind.
- [An Essay on Criticism](#) (Parts 1 & 2) | **Alexander Pope:**

- This poem discusses how critics should criticise the work of authors, in particular poets. Part 1 mainly deals with good critics should do, criticising the lack of taste that critics often have, as well as stressing the importance of writing in a similar way to “The Ancients” meaning Ancient Greece, implying that you should follow tradition whilst writing. Whilst he says this, he also says that it is important to break these same rules.
- Part 2 is more of a criticism of critics (rather ironic), bad habits whilst critiquing pieces of work and things that should not be praised within poetry, though critics often do. Some of these things that shouldn’t be praised include small segments of great writing, ornamentation, a fancy style that doesn’t convey anything or dragging out a portion of your writing for too long. In general, this piece provides criticism of critics whilst also giving advice to the average writer.
- [Fledgling](#) | **Kevin Phan**
 - This poem has the narrator giving advice to a younger individual (a fledgeling, if you will) surrounding life in general. At first the advice starts out incredibly literally; “Rinse burns with vinegar,” “While clutching a live wire / wear work gloves and hope.” Within the second half of the poem, it begins to instead address you personally, conveying that this individual, this child will struggle through life, and it will not be easy for them. By the end of the poem, we have the child wake up, and they are described as having a “sad pilgrim heart.” What this poem seems to convey to me is that every single individual is a child in the eyes of the universe, and we must make sure that we begin by following these rules before we can break them as we grow older.
- [In the Library](#) | **Charles Simic**
 - The library, such a magical place, and Charles Simic perfectly capture the power that the library has within this poem. It begins with the narrator opening a book about angels, and finding it is from at least 50 years ago. He then discovers all about these angels, and how they were plentiful in the past. The poem ends as the librarian, Miss Jones, walks around and listens to the books that are sitting on the shelves. She can hear them, but the narrator cannot. In my opinion, the angels act as a metaphor here for stories. Whilst previously, they were plentiful all around (when people told stories by word of mouth), now you must search for them in books, and when you listen very carefully, you can still hear the words from within the books whispering back to you.
- [Echeverría](#) | **Enrique Perez Lopez**
 - This short story, originally written in Tzotzil and then Spanish, is almost parable-like in how it is written. It describes an unnamed individual who goes from being a farmhand in the village to a construction worker within Villahermosa, a Mexican City, to earn money for his family back in his village. Whilst there, he ends up wearing what we would consider normal clothes (a wide brimmed hat, a blazer, ties, nice shoes). However, his co-workers laugh at him and call him Echeverria, the name of the current President of Mexico, most well known for making promises that he’d never keep. Instead of taking this as an insult, the man embraces it, going and buying more clothes as he returns to his village, and then acting in an incredibly “westernised” way, asking for popular songs within the city and declaring himself to be the President. All the other inhabitants of the

village then call him Echeverria as he leaves the next day, and he continues to go by that throughout the rest of his life. He then returned to the city and became a drunkard, making promises and never keeping them until the day he died, making him truly like Echeverria. The story conveys the power of names, and how a change in name can change yourself as well.

Beginning with Part 2: The Paradox of Sequels: Part 2 (Xavier)

- **Video Games**

- **Released in 1980, Pac-Man quickly became the world's most popular video game, especially in the United States. Enter the sequel, Ms. Pac-Man. Learn more about its [origins](#) as a harder-to-master clone of Pac-Man, then discuss with your team: would it still have succeeded by its original name, Crazy Otto? Was Atari right to accuse the creators of intellectual property theft, and was coming to an arrangement with them ultimately the right move for the Pac-Man franchise? For context, consider this actual sequel from the original game makers--[Pac-Man 2](#)—which came out a decade later. Was it too different from the original to find great success, or was it the right product for its time? Discuss with your team: how would you redesign Pac-Man for the year 2020?**

- Firstly, video games are in the curriculum! This is incredibly exciting and allows us to now provide in-depth analysis of these games, so of course, we must play them (of course, make sure you have some time for studying as well, kind scholars).
- Everyone has heard of Pac-Man, but surprisingly not as many have heard of Ms. Pac-Man, despite it actually being a more successful game! You would expect that this blockbuster would have been created by Namco, the company who created the original Pac-Man. However, it was actually created by a group of MIT students who dropped out of college to start their own company, known as General Computer Corporation (GCC), not exactly a revolutionary name by today's standards, but more than enough in the 1970s! The creation of this company began with an unlikely source, pinball. The two founders of the company, Steve Golson and Doug Macrae, ran a pinball-arcade across different parts of the campus, placing pinball machines in different areas (generally dorms) and in return gaining the profit spent playing them. Eventually, as this began to develop into a successful business, they decided to expand into the world of Arcade Games. The first game that they acquired was Missile Command, a 1980s arcade game published by Atari which involved defending your cities from incoming lasers. Each one of these games was making approximately \$600USD a week, but the issue that Golson and Macrae found was that as people got better at the games, they could play for a longer period of time on a small amount of money. Therefore, they set up creating what is known as an “enhancement kit.” These were pieces of hardware that could be plugged into a game system and would make it more difficult thanks to modifications within the game. They

named this version "Super Missile Attack" and made \$633,000USD selling copies! After this, when their business was expanding, they decided to create an enhancement kit for Pac-Man, which they named 'Crazy-Otto.' This contained major graphical differences (so that they could not be sued over it), as well as smarter Ghost AI, different maze layouts and moving fruit. Overall, it was designed to be a much more difficult version of the original Pac-Man.

After Crazy Otto was designed, GCC was sued by Atari for creating Super Missile Attack, as Atari believed that they had infringed their copyright claim. However, what ended up happening was that Atari gave the members of GCC a job, designing games for them, as they believed this was easier than trying to convince them to take these enhancement boards off of the market. After taking on what was, at the time, one of the giants of the videogame industry, GCC decided to consult Midway (the U.S. company responsible for distributing Pac-Man) before they released Crazy Otto to the public. In the end, the President of Midway ended up seeing Crazy Otto in person, and asked that it actually be created as the sequel to Pac-Man! The game was reskinned and then became what we now know as Ms. Pac Man! Under the name of Crazy Otto, the game would have likely seen a limited amount of success, but nowhere near the amount that it received as Ms. Pac Man (#1 selling arcade game in history within the U.S.!).

Atari's move to accuse GCC of intellectual property theft was certainly justified and understandable, as it felt like someone had created a version of your game, except harder. In the 1970s and 80s, there wasn't a community who created 'mods' for games at the time, so this would have simply been like stealing to Atari. However, the decision by Midway to market Crazy Otto as Ms. Pac Man generated revenue for the company and promoted it in general, as the game was of a high enough quality to be something that they would make.

- You would expect that the sequel to Pac Man, aptly named Pac Man 2, to maybe have some updated graphics, some new mechanics, but generally to remain rather similar. However, Pac Man 2 is actually a point & click adventure game, during which you have little control of Pac Man. This complete change in genre is likely what resulted in its very mixed reviews because in the end, it didn't feel like a Pac Man game.
- In terms of redesigning Pac Man for 2020, I would take the route that Tetris 99 took. I would create a Pac Man battle royale. Though this does sound completely ridiculous, using a similar design from the original game with updated graphics and possibly having a system where when x number of people complete a Pac-Man maze, the bottom Y% is eliminated. Other mechanics such as collectable powerups, negative power-downs (?) to send at other players and an increase in the game speed could all make this an entertaining and very stressful game. The

most important thing is that we use the classic Pac-Man design, as it's the most iconic thing about Pac Man, not the 3D model.

- **Pac-Man inspired a [Saturday morning TV series](#)—the first time a TV series was ever [based on a game](#). In one episode the ghosts steal a space shuttle. Discuss with your team: should successful products and ideas be extended into as many forms of media as possible? What other video games do you think would make successful television series—or movies?**

- The Pac-Man cartoon series, aptly named “Pac-Man,” depicts the everyday lives of Pac-Man, his wife Pepper, their baby (named Pac-Baby), their dog (named Chomp Chomp) and their cat (named Sour Puss). Together, they live in the wonderful world of Pac-Land, where everything is fine until the ghosts show up. These minions of the evil Mezmaron are trying to control the source of the power pellets (what the Pac-Men and Pac-Women eat) resulting in him having full control over the food supply, and therefore control over Pac-Land! This is done in many rather chaotic and interesting ways, including running a Pac-Land Olympics, creating a giant earthquake machine or stealing a space shuttle (as mentioned above). This TV show ran for two seasons, and though it wasn't incredibly popular among kids, advertisers found it incredible. Pac-Man had become a worldwide phenomenon by this point, and so advertisers were willing to pay outrageous amounts of money to run an ad during the Pac-Man TV show. However, this resulted in the ad breaks being twice as long, which likely didn't keep the attention of the target audience, children.
- In terms of whether successful products should be expanded across all forms of media, that depends on the level of success. What you have to ensure whilst expanding into other forms of media is that it doesn't feel like you are simply doing it for the money, otherwise fans will revolt. As well as this, you mustn't make drastic changes to the series as a whole or put issues of continuity in. There are definitely examples of where this has succeeded, such as Marvel (Comics, Video Games, Movies, TV Shows, Musical) and Spongebob Squarepants (TV Show, Movies, Musical). It will not always work, but when there are good intentions towards it, it is more likely to succeed.
- The most successful video game-based movies / TV shows would (rather logically) be those that are rather narrative-driven. It is much more likely that we would see a God of War movie than a Tetris movie. The other incredibly successful video game based movies are those with a large, passionate fanbase, such as fans of the Legend of Zelda or Mario. Personally, I think one awesome television show based on a video game would be the Legend of Zelda series. The long-running franchise has so much canon to build out of, that they could make an entertaining movie incredibly easily. In the more recent games, some would even say that the open-ended exploration makes it feel like you're watching a movie play out in front of you.

- **Comments from Jut:** passion or not, films based on video games haven't had a good track record. The Silent Hill games were turned into a horror franchise and it wasn't really well received, even if it was made by a dedicated fan. Gaming gives such a different experience to watching a movie that translating games to film is very difficult without disappointing or angering the fans. Just look at the 2016 World of Warcraft film or even the Resident Evil series. Not to mention the up and coming Sonic movie. Pokemon is in a weird middle ground because it's equally known as a game and a TV series.
- **The 1980s also saw the rise of the first immersive simulations and role-playing games—one of the most influential was the [fourth installment of the Ultima saga](#). Explore the role of its creator, Richard Garriott and the idea of authorship in video games. Are individuals such as Garriott and Civilization's [Sid Meier](#) best described as writers, artists, producers, or something else entirely?**
 - Ultima was one of the first-ever open-world RPG games, and the series revolutionised the genre as we know it, in particular, Ultima IV. Richard Garriott often received letters about the previous Ultima games and how people would improve it if they were developing it. However, what he was very surprised to find was how people were playing the game. Generally, in this fantasy world that Garriott had created, players were undertaking immoral actions in an attempt to advance their own interests, such as stealing gold from a blind merchant. With this in mind, Garriott based Ultima IV around making people think about their decisions. Firstly, he made them create their own character, answering a series of questions to determine what their most important 'virtue' was, and assigning them a class based on this. Then, instead of having the player attempt to conquer anyone, they had to instead max out eight virtues, such as compassion, or bravery. These virtues alter the chances of companions appearing, as well as changing an NPC's opinion of a player. Within the final challenge, known as the Stygian Abyss, the character has to locate the Codex of Wisdom, designed to make the player consider and truly overthink their decisions. For example, the player might find a room which contains a replica of their party (e.g. a cleric, a bard and a warrior) and wonder if killing this party will decrease one of their virtues, not knowing they are in fact monsters that are disguised as humans. This system of morals, and how they then influenced the actions of the player, was truly instrumental in the development of further open-world games, as well as RPGs as a whole. Authorship within video games is often much more complicated than authorship in other genres, with the first issue being that many do not even consider those who create video games to be authors. However, many modern games (and many games from the past) have overarching plots which require writing. However, writers within video games are often forgotten about in the majority of cases, with the developers being the ones who are most likely to become famous. We also have the anomaly of people who are so

synonymous with a video game series that they seem to act in almost every role. These individuals, such as Sid Meier, are so involved in their games that it's impossible to assign them the role of producer, or writer, or anything else. The closest role would likely be a director, but roles such as game designer don't come into it. At its heart, these individuals are an amalgamation of many roles.

- **Consider the following additional games from the 1980s. Which ones had sequels, and in which cases were those sequels successful? Were any of them also turned into TV shows—or movies?**

- **Centipede | Mario Bros | Donkey Kong | SimCity | Tetris**

- **Centipede:** Centipede is an Atari game, published in 1981. It, like many other games of the time period, had rather limited graphics but had a lot of stories behind them. Within the game, you control a gnome who is defending his mushroom forest from spiders, scorpions fleas and of course, centipedes. Using your magic wand, you aim to eliminate these creatures before they reach the bottom of the screen. Each time one of these centipedes gets hit, it leaves a mushroom in its place, and also splits into multiple creatures. The centipedes also move down one row each time they either hit a mushroom or the edge of the screen. If a creature ever touches the gnome, the gnome will lose one life. [Here](#) is a link to some gameplay footage. The game was one of the more popular arcade games of the early 80s, and was followed up by a sequel, named Millipede. This game has similar mechanics, though you are now an elf defending a mushroom forest using your magic arrows (what a difference...). Millipede also added new insects with different movement patterns, bombs and bonus levels! Though this game was not as successful as the original, it does show how to do a sequel correctly. There were additions to the main game that would allow long time fans of the series to enjoy it, but it was still something that anyone could play.

One sequel of Centipede that was not as successful, and frankly was highly unusual, was Centipede: Infestation. Released in 2011, this game is set within the Centipede Universe, where you are living in a post-apocalyptic world, fighting off bugs in a run-and-gun / tower defense style whilst also planting new plants in an attempt to reinvigorate the world. This game was only released for the Wii and Nintendo 3DS, and only within the United States.

Though Centipede has not had a standalone movie, it was featured in the 2015 Movie Pixels. This film had aliens taking the form of classic video games and attacking the Earth, with Centipede only being one of many.

- **Mario Bros:** Mario is one of the most iconic gaming characters, having been in over 200 games (quite a lot of sequels!). However, he actually

began his games not named Mario, but named Jumpman. In the arcade game of Donkey Kong (which we will get to soon), Jumpman had to rescue Pauline from Donkey Kong, the giant monkey. He did so by climbing up ladders and scaffolding whilst avoiding the flaming barrels that Donkey Kong would throw down the sloped scaffolding. This game was developed by the Japanese company, Nintendo. Eventually, Mario received his own game, but not the one you're expecting. Mario's first game as the main character was [Mario Bros](#), a platforming arcade game where the aim was not to get to the end of the level but to kill enough enemies to reach the next wave. This was done by hitting the blocks underneath them. Mario was also accompanied by Luigi, his green-clothed brother.

However, the first-ever truly 'Mario' game, and one of the most well known, is Super Mario Bros for the NES (Nintendo Entertainment System). This game introduces many mechanics key in Mario Bros games, such as collecting power-ups, jumping on enemies to kill them and touching the flagpole to complete a level, as well as having the boss of 'Bowser,' King of the Koopas (which are another type of enemy that Mario and Luigi fight. This game was highly successful, being the 6th highest selling video game of all time, and getting many people into video gaming as a hobby. Since then, there have been many, **many** sequels to Super Mario Bros, including Super Mario World, Super Mario 64 (one of the first popular 3D games) and Super Mario Galaxy. However, what we should discuss here is the video game that came directly after Super Mario Bros, or should I say games. After the success of Super Mario Bros, development immediately began on a sequel. This game, named Super Mario Bros 2, introduced many other interesting mechanics, such as wind, springs, negative power-ups that disadvantage you and Luigi being a different character from Mario (besides simply swapping the colour of the clothes). However, after this game was tested within Japan, it was deemed too difficult by Nintendo of America executives for U.S. audiences, and therefore was only released within Japan. Because of this, a different game was reskinned and released as Super Mario Bros 2 outside of Japan, with the original game being Yume Kōjo: Doki Doki Panic. Since then, Mario Bros has been one of the most successful franchises of all time, with many sequels spanning multiple consoles and multiple decades.

Mario Bros has also had multiple forms of media including comic books, a highly unusual TV show and an even more highly unusual movie. The TV show, known as The Super Mario Bros Super Show, wasn't

particularly successful, garnering mediocre reviews at best. This was likely due to the mix of live-action and animated segments which didn't fit together particularly well. Also, having both Mario and Luigi as live-action characters is not a great idea. However, if the TV show was bad, the movie was so much worse. The script had an insane amount of changes made to it, resulting in a movie that didn't really feel like Super Mario Bros, and instead felt like someone had played Super Mario Bros for about 15 seconds and then thought 'I could do that!' I personally have not seen the film, do not wish to and do not recommend that any scholars do. However, Nintendo is planning to release an animated Super Mario Bros movie in 2022, so hopefully, they will redeem themselves there, and begin the great multimedia franchise of Mario. The main reason why Mario hasn't been very successful across other forms of media is that he's been so incredibly successful within video games that he is now a gaming icon, and that's not easily transferable into other forms of media.

- **Donkey Kong:** Donkey Kong, one of the original video game villains, but someone who's become a hero within their own right throughout their series. Donkey Kong's first game was, quite logically, Donkey Kong. In this game, Donkey Kong is the villain, who has stolen Princess Pauline (known simply as "Lady" within the game) and is now attempting to destroy Mario by tossing barrels and similar objects down scaffolding. In the game, Donkey Kong is defeated by Mario multiple times (if the player manages to play for long enough) until we reach the kill screen. Donkey Kong was one of the most successful arcade games from the golden age of the arcade, but it wasn't expected to be so successful. When it was first sent to Nintendo of America (as once again, this is a Nintendo game) it was heavily criticised for being a platforming game, something which seems absurd today, but at the time, platforming games were a rarity, and the most popular games were generally shooters. However, Donkey Kong was Nintendo's most profitable game for two years straight, making \$280,000,000 USD!

Of course, with such a successful game, a follow up would have to occur. Instead of having Mario as the hero this time, it had Mario as the villain! Donkey Kong Jr was released in 1982, only one year after the release of Donkey Kong, and had Donkey Kong's son (DK Jr) rescuing his dad from Mario, who had trapped him in a cage. This game was moderately successful, not on the level that the original Donkey Kong was, but was still an incredibly profitable arcade game. This remains the only time that Mario has ever been a villain within a game. Donkey Kong sequels continued over the next few years, but none were ever quite as good as the original. Roughly 10 years later, in 1994, Donkey Kong got his own

game as the hero! This SNES game, known as Donkey Kong Country, had Donkey Kong and his nephew, Diddy Kong, attempting to rescue their banana hoard from the evil King K. Rool. Both DK and Diddy were playable characters, and you were able to swap between the two at any time (as long as both were still alive). Running and jumping returned from the original Donkey Kong, but this time the characters were also able to roll! This was the 3rd best selling SNES game (9 million copies!) and received incredibly positive reviews. This game put Donkey Kong back into the spotlight, and he's been a mainline Nintendo mascot ever since.

Donkey Kong has been featured in some limited forms of media, including his own TV show! Donkey Kong Country (the TV show) was created by a Canadian / French animation company and received 40 episodes. Donkey Kong is the protector of the magical Crystal Coconut, which is able to grant wishes (I don't know either...). Throughout the series, King K. Rool and his minions attempt to steal the Crystal Coconut from DK, with limited amounts of success. Donkey Kong was also featured in the film Pixels and was the 'final boss' of the game.

- **Comments from Jut:** I always thought that King Kong and Donkey Kong were the same characters but with different names so I was confused when Xavier said that there was very little media surrounding the character. Giant monster taking a pretty woman as a hostage on top of a tall building is as generic as you can get. Even Disney's Enchanted, a film that was supposed to divert tropes, used it. DK is probably inspired by King Kong somehow.
- **SimCity:** SimCity was an anomaly in the video games of the 80s, in that it didn't fit the mould in any way. The creator of SimCity, Will Wright, was inspired by Urban Planning, and wished to create a game about it. He began development in 1985, creating what we now know as SimCity. SimCity is a sandbox-esque city management game, in which you are the mayor of this new town, and you must keep it happy and running. This involves building the three main types of areas (residential, commercial and industrial), with an emphasis being placed on keeping these three types of areas balanced in size to maximise your citizen's (or Sim's) happiness. The game also allows you to alter taxes, build infrastructure and keep the environmental situation of your city under control. Finally, you can be hit by natural disasters, such as flooding, fires or monster attacks (!) which can set back or even destroy your city. The main issue with the game, at least to Video Game Executives at the time, was that there were no action elements, no platforming elements and no concrete

ending, as you were able to continue playing and expanding your city for as long as you like. However, in 1989, Broderbund published the game, despite the fear of commercial failure. However, quite the opposite occurred. The game sold 300,000 copies on personal computers, with it being one of the top ten best selling computer games for seven years! 2,000,000 copies were also sold on the SNES, and this is considered the more polished version of the original game. This success marked the beginning of the urban simulation genre, and the beginning of Maxis (Will Wright's company) making non-linear simulation games.

There have been many sequels to SimCity, including The Sims, SimCity 2000, and the Sims 4. However, the direct sequel to SimCity was SimEarth, released one year after SimCity. This game has you controlling the development of a planet, with the large challenge being to evolve a developed species and a complex civilisation. This game adds a high amount of control, with you being able to regulate the rate of continental drift by up to 3 decimal places! However, the most well-known sequel to SimCity was The Sims. This game sees you controlling a specific individual, regulating every aspect of their life, house and job. The Sims 4 has sold 10 million copies (!) and is one of the most successful games in the "Sim" Franchise.

Though there haven't been any T.V shows or movies of the Sims or SimCity, there has been one rather interesting piece of media: a collectable card game. This, however, was not successful in any way, and Will Wright has since stuck to creating video games.

- **Tetris:** Tetris, a game so simple, yet so infuriating when things go wrong. Tetris is a puzzle game where you have tetrominoes (shapes made from four squares) falling from the top of the screen. When they reach the bottom, they are then locked into place. If an entire row is filled with squares, then that row is eliminated, giving you more space to place tetrominoes. The game was created in 1984 by Alexey Pajitnov, an AI Researcher within Soviet-Era Moscow. He wished to test the capabilities of the hardware that he was working on and created this very basic game. However, after his colleagues played it and thoroughly enjoyed it, he decided that it may be worth marketing. Despite many struggles to get the game out of Soviet Russia, it finally was released to a worldwide market in 1986, with the IBM Computer version. However, this wasn't particularly popular, as not many people had access to an IBM Computer. The first truly popular version of Tetris was the 1989 Nintendo version, on the handheld console the "GameBoy." This game sold 35 million copies, and was the best selling game on the system!

Tetris has had many, **many** sequels, having sold 175 million copies across 70 different game consoles and platforms. However, the first-ever Tetris sequel was Welltris, which kept the idea of 2D blocks falling but turned it into a 3D area that they could fall down. As blocks descend down the well, each of them can be moved around to the different walls before it reaches the ground. However, if a block ever ends up on a wall, then that wall is temporarily frozen. If all four walls are frozen, then the game ends. If this explanation doesn't make sense, you can see a video of it [here](#). This game was not as popular as Tetris (as it was only on PC) but still received positive reviews. Many other Tetris-like games have been released, with some of the particularly well-known ones including Puyo Puyo Tetris (which mixes the puzzle game Puyo Puyo with Tetris), Tetris 99 (a Tetris Battle Royale Game) and Tetris, The Grandmaster (which added more difficult modes such as ones where the pieces disappear when you place them).

Regarding other forms of media, I was unable to find much more information on this, as it seems that Tetris has simply stayed within the video game market. There are some rumours that a Tetris Movie is in development, which will be the first part of a sci-fi trilogy, but no reputable sources seem to discuss this.

- The WSC Discord server Xav and I are running have regular Tetris battle royals weirdly enough! ~Jutin

- **Long-Form Narratives**

- **Even podcasts have sequels now, and they struggle with the same challenges as sequels in any medium. Consider the once-groundbreaking podcast Serial—the first podcast to reach an audience of millions. Like a Netflix show designed for binge viewing, it offered a serialized storyline meant to hook listeners from one episode to the next. In its second season, listeners stopped taking the bait. Read this [review](#), and discuss with your team: do you agree that high expectations were ultimately to blame? Is the best way for sequels to meet high expectations to continue doing what worked the first time, or to try something new?**
 - After reading this review of Serial, it seems like the main issue was a change in content. The original Serial covered a crime that hadn't been well publicised and went incredibly in-depth about it. The particular crime that they covered in Season One was the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee. The fact that this murder hadn't been particularly well covered by the media, combined with the mystery and drama behind it that allowed the podcast's writers to create logically positioned cliffhangers resulted in a highly successful podcast, which has had over 80 million downloads!

However, the second season of the podcast received fewer downloads and was generally reviewed in a more negative way. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the story that they covered in the second season, the desertion of U.S. soldier Bowe Bergdahl, was already rather high-profile, and therefore was covered in other media outlets. Secondly, the story didn't have a lot of the cliffhanger moments that made people come back to listen to the story again. These were two major reasons that the podcast went into a decline during its second season.

High expectations may not have been fully to blame, but they definitely would have played a part. After the incredible success of the first podcast, there likely was some pressure to cover a more well-known event as it may have been seen as 'safer.' However, this, in turn, resulted in the sequel not doing what worked so well the first time. When we are creating a sequel something, we cannot do exactly the same thing that worked last time, but by developing and adding onto it in a way that doesn't take away from the spirit of the original, we get wonderful works.

- **Comments from Jut:** A good example of a sidequel that doesn't take away from the spirit of the original would be DeltaRune! It's not a sequel or a prequel to Undertale but I like thinking of it as essentially the same canon but in a different dimension/universe.
- **Podcasts were not the first audio works with serialized storylines—radio dramas once did something similar every week. Premiering in the 1920s, they soon ranged from works by the era's most acclaimed authors to pulpish soap operas to the adventures of superheroes you would still recognize today. You can find one example [here](#). While radio dramas faded in popularity after the rise of television, they didn't disappear entirely: in 1981, one radio station made [a successful investment in the rights to Star Wars](#). Explore the history of radio dramas and discuss with your team: could they (or their podcast-equivalent) could become popular again? Are there stories that are better suited for this medium than they would be for TV or the written word?**
 - For those who do not know what a radio drama is, imagine a film with no actual picture, or the equivalent of closing your eyes during a film. Because of this, radio dramas depend on sound effects, dialogue and music. Radio Dramas first began in the 1920s in the UK and U.S.A, but didn't really become popular until the late 1930s, with the UK releasing 400 radio dramas a year!. One of the most interesting stories regarding radio dramas of that period was that of Orson / H.G. Welles' "War of the Worlds," which depicts a Martian invasion. When people heard this radio drama, they actually believed an invasion by aliens was occurring! By this time, people had realised that simply adapting plays to radio dramas

didn't work, and had begun to write works specific to the medium. Some of the most popular forms of radio drama were soap operas (shows set in everyday situations, but full of melodrama), as well as serials (shows with plots that unfold between and across episodes). However, despite the boom that radio dramas were experiencing, it all began to come crashing down in the 1950s and 60s with the advent of television. Though there were efforts to revive radio drama from the 1960s to 2000s (such as the above Star Wars one), none were particularly successful. In more recent years, we have seen a slight resurgence in radio dramas, thanks to the advent of the internet and the ease of distribution of audio-based media, primarily using podcast websites. Also, the popularity of both audiobooks and podcasts has resulted in an increase in production. The popularity of radio dramas is definitely possible, though a more correct these days might be audio dramas, based on the internet-based distribution.

- **Comments from Jut:** Welcome to Nightvale is a really popular podcast that attributes lots of its success in gaining a very active online presence. It's worth looking into if you're into podcasts.
- In regard to some stories fitting the medium better than others, those with high amounts of internal monologue, as well as easily conveyable sound effects and lots of dialogue are ideal for radio dramas. Also, radio dramas have a very interesting use in reviving past forms of media. Actors and actresses' appearances will change over time, resulting in them being unable to continue in the role. However, voices often don't drastically change, resulting in them being able to star in radio dramas and keep a series alive!
- **Novels were once commonly released in serial form too—not book by book, but [chapter by chapter](#). Consider the [first three chapters](#) of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, and discuss with your team: does each chapter end with a serial-style cliffhanger—and would novels published in this way, one chapter per week, be popular today?**
 - Though I am not a particularly large fan of Victorian Fiction, I have to admit that Charles Dickens is wonderful at creating cliffhangers. The first chapter primarily serves as an introduction, but so much is left unsaid; who are the characters within this story, why is there discussion of England and France? These questions make us want to continue reading, and result in us coming to chapters 2 and 3, both of which contain a bit more substance. The second chapter finishes with us wondering about Jerry and the message he has to deliver, and what the phrase 'recalled to life' truly means. In the third chapter, we finish asking why the passenger of the messenger is discussing being buried alive for eighteen years. These unusual cliffhangers result in us wishing to read on. However, if novels were published one chapter at a time these days, there would be

both positives and negatives. On the positive side, our access to the internet results in the easy distribution of each chapter, and it's easy enough to read past chapters. In fact, it could be argued that writing such as fanfiction, which is released in multiple chapters, is a type of serial. However, we must also consider the two main issues of attention spans and busy lives. It is very easy for us to forget to do something, and with so much information at our fingertips, forgetting to read the newest chapter is something that could very easily occur. I could see serial novels having success, but you would need a great writer to do so.

- **Comments from Jut:** not to mention each new chapter would need to be bought and manufactured in mass for each release which would add more to production costs. Waiting for episodes or chapters bit by bit is increasingly becoming less preferred in our world today. Binge-culture is the norm and services like Netflix aim to accommodate that.
- **Charles Dickens died before releasing the back half of his final novel: “The Mystery of Edwin Drood”.** Many people have tried to finish it in his absence, including [at least one ghost](#). In the years since, the process of completing a series after an author's death has become more formal—as when [Guy Gavriel Kay](#) helped complete The Silmarillion for the Tolkien estate, and [Brandon Sanderson](#) the final books of Robert Jordan's Wheel of Time. Pay special attention to Kay's realization about mistakes in the writing process, then discuss with your team: **if someone other than the original author finished your favorite book series, would you view it as an authentic ending? Why do people seem more accepting of different movies in the same series having different screenwriters and directors, than they do of different novels in the same series having different writers?**
 - Before we even begin discussing the questions above, we must first mention “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” spirit pen version. After Dickens' death, the publisher (who was also a medium) said that they heard Dickens' voice from beyond the grave, describing what had to be done to finish this half-completed book. The book includes a preface from the medium, as well as a preface from Dickens himself.
 - Now that we've got that discussion out of the way, let us move onto the discussion of other books that were completed after an author's death by a living author. The issue of a different author finishing a book series is built on many variables, the main one being if the original author had left instructions behind. When this occurs, and the new author attempts to emulate the writing style of the original, you can get beautiful writing. However, it can easily go wrong, and we must be careful that it does not occur in that manner. We must also acknowledge the incredible challenge that the new writer has in finishing off a series in a satisfying way,

something that is considered difficult even for the original writer! To quote Guy Gavriel Kay, who finished ‘The Silmarillion’ by J.R.R. Tolkien, “I learned a lot about false starts in writing. I mean that in a really serious way. His [Tolkien’s] false starts. You learn that the great works have disastrous botched chapters, that the great writers recognise that they didn’t work. ... That it’s not instantly magnificent. That it’s laboriously so, but it gets there.” There are major difficulties that these writers will face, and we must respect their decisions, even if they are misguided to us fans.

I think the main reason that people are so much more accepting of directors changing instead of authors is that directorial styles do not have as much of an impact on a film as a writer’s style does on a book. We also must consider that when a writer is creating their piece, they are generally working alone and then sending it off to editors and proofreaders. However, when creating a film, directors are collaborating with scriptwriters, producers and other staff, resulting in them not having the total creative freedom to, say, destroy the whole series.

- **Comments from Jut:** For clarification, Xav means that society doesn’t perceive directors to be as impactful on their work in comparison to authors on a book. Directors play a very big role in the style and tone of a film because they oversee the atmosphere and feel not only visuals but the audio and editing as well. DIRECTORS ARE AS STYLISTICALLY IMPORTANT AS AUTHORS.
- **Sometimes, a television or movie series that goes on long enough will need to replace the actor playing a character. There are two traditional approaches: in one, the change of actor is explained in the story itself. Consider [the Doctor](#), or [Dax](#). In another—as with James Bond or the Hulk in the Marvel Cinematic Universe—a different actor assumes the role, but the storyline continues as if nothing has changed. Today, there is a third option: CGI can be used to [reanimate the dead](#)—as in the forthcoming James Dean film Finding Jack. Discuss with your team: is it better when stories acknowledge a recasting or when they ignore it? Is the use of CGI to recreate actors something that audiences will eventually embrace?**
 - Let’s walk through each of these approaches one at a time. Firstly, we have both the Doctor and Dax, whose actor replacement fits within the story. Dax, a character featured in Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, is a symbiote which bonds itself to a host. When the host dies, the symbiote can bond with a new host. This allowed Terry Farrel, who played Jadzia Dax, to leave the show after the 6th season and be replaced by Nicole deBoer, who went on to play Ezri Dax for the remainder of Deep Space

Nine. The Doctor, the main character of the TV show Doctor Who (which everyone should watch, by the way), is a Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey. This race of humanoids (which has two hearts, fun fact!) is able to regenerate 12 times, resulting in them living 13 separate lives (this has since been semi-retconned, as they'd had too many Doctors, and wished to continue the series). The main reason that this was implemented is because William Hartnell's health was deteriorating, and he'd be unable to continue playing The Doctor. However, the showrunners wished to continue creating episodes with the time-travelling alien, and so decided to have William Hartnell regenerate into Patrick Troughton. Since then, we've even had our first female Doctor, with Jodie Whittaker!

- The second option, of just continuing on, often makes more sense in franchises where an actor change was needed, but the precedent for it to occur wasn't truly established. Both the MCU and James Bond would have issues justifying a completely changed person, and so instead just ran with it. In terms of whether it's better to acknowledge or ignore a recasting, it's highly dependent on the TV show or movie. In James Bond, it theoretically could be set in the same world that we live in, and therefore it's impossible for him to 'regenerate.' In my opinion, the decision must make the most logical sense, whether it be regeneration or simply ignoring it.
- However, we now come to the interesting idea of recreating actors using CGI. Already, this has been done with movies such as Rogue One (which recreated Peter Cushing as Grand Moff Tarkin), with such detail that I didn't realise until I left the cinema and read an article about it! James Dean, a long-dead actor, will be starring in a film in the future, using CGI to recreate him and another actor to say his lines. This may be accepted by audiences in the future, but currently, it's very unusual. Audience acceptance will depend on both marketing and how effective the CGI is. If an uncanny valley effect occurs, then it's very unlikely it will be successful.
 - **Comments from Jut:** Not to mention watching a realistically animated version of a dead person is kind of uncomfortable and hard to watch. I would hate to watch a CGI Robin Williams if studios decided they wanted to show the iconic actor.
- **Those fans who wanted a new Harry Potter story finally got one in 2016—but perhaps not in the form they were expecting. [Harry Potter and the Cursed Child](#) premiered as a play in London. In an interview, series creator J.K. Rowling explained that “when audiences see the play, they will agree that it is the only proper medium for the story”. Discuss with your team: when is a story best continued in a different medium—and what makes a story perfect for one medium or another?**

- The scenario of a story being continued in a different medium is rather narrow but is still possible. Of course, we have seen the Cursed Child as an example, but there aren't many other high-profile cases or really that many cases at all. Stories are probably best continued in a different medium when it is impossible to tell the story in another way. The actions that are taken within a Cursed Child are best shown on stage, where it is both live (making it incredibly impressive) and where you can see the actual human acting without lines of description beforehand unlike the book.
 - **Comments from Jut:** switching mediums from record to live or vice versa can add or remove to the story depending on the work being adapted. When Harry Potter got adapted on stage, the CGI and depiction of magic weren't the same or as fantastical but the essence of Harry Potter was still there. If Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them were on stage, it would've been difficult to replicate the mythical creatures on stage so it made more sense as a movie. Some things make better sense live as well. Take Cats the musical, there's very little plot the musical and the sheer human athleticism in acrobatics, ballet, and dancing helps add to the viewing experience. In the movie, that element is completely gone because you don't know to which extent is human feats or animation. It was a weird middle ground. Method affects delivery and how a piece of work is received.

Interlude II: Worlds Renewed (Xavier)

- [Create the Future](#) | Darryll Suliaman Amoako
 - This spoken word poem attempts to raise awareness of the risks that must be taken for a business to be effective and to continue to thrive in our continually developing society. It describes how the Television, Telephone and Computer were all considered products that could never be technologically successful, yet here we are today with them in nearly every house. It also makes comparisons between Kodak and Instagram, as Instagram is thought to have assisted in killing off Kodak. Contrasts are made between the number of employees that Kodak (140,000) and Instagram (13) had, and the irony that Kodak invented the digital camera, which eventually drove them out of business. Overall, the message of the poem is that you have to take risks if you wish to succeed and that those individuals who believe in their idea, even if it's a kid in an apartment trying to recreate something he saw on Star Trek, will be the ones who succeed in the end, and will be the people who create the future for us all.
- [The Poems of our Climate](#) | Wallace Stevens
 - This is a short, three-stanza poem that attempts to explain humanity's obsession with perfection, and how imperfection drives us to make change. Before I begin, there's a wonderful analysis of the poem within the above link, and I'd recommend that you read

that if you have time. However, for those scholars who are just about to begin the challenge, here's a quick summary. The first stanza of this poem describes a tranquil scene, with a clear bowl, pink and white carnations and the light acting within the room as "snowy air." The overall message conveyed within this stanza is the idea of simplicity, which is then addressed further within the second stanza. The poem states that even if this "complete simplicity" could remove all of your sufferings and make you whole again, humanity would still want more. When we consider whether we would want this apparent perfection, where everything is cleansed and that's all that happens, we realise that it actually sounds rather boring, despite its description as simplicity. No matter how perfect this room we are sitting in maybe, the mind will wander, and will always think about what comes next, and how "the imperfect moves us." I believe that what Stevens is trying to convey here is that no matter how perfect our society and our surroundings may be, we will always look at the imperfect we believe is there, and use that to drive us forward, creating a better world. Frankly, a truly perfect world sounds rather boring.

- [I Dreamed All Day](#) | **Rauf Pardi**

- With a specific focus on the Uzbekistani city of Bukhara, this poem attempts to convey the feeling of daydreaming that you experience when you travel to a historic location for the first time. Throughout the poem, the narrator dreams about "dizzy minarets" (a tower used to call Muslims to prayer to a neighbouring mosque), rosegardens, History itself and a sky-blue flame. The repetition of many of these phrases and the melding of them together create an accurate representation of a daydreaming train of thought, as the narrator imagines how Bukhara must have been in the past when it was a large and influential city along the Silk Road. This daydreaming, it could be argued, presents an interesting depiction of the past and makes us consider how we want this city to be in the future. We can apply this daydreaming to anything, and it can help us to consider the future of anything that we wish to think about and imagine.

- [A Map to the Next World](#) | **Joy Harjo**

- This truly beautiful poem has the narrator (who we assume is a member of a Native American tribe, based on Harjo's own experiences) describing the changes that have occurred to our society with the development of advanced technology, talking about what has been remembered and what has been forgotten. The map within the poem appears to be a metaphor for the memory of the land, as well as the heritage that has also been lost. Occurrences like "the proliferation of supermarkets and malls" have caused us to forget the language of the land, the original names of the birds. Now, all that is left is passed on by word of mouth and creates an incomplete map of this past. In general, Harjo warns us about how we must preserve our past traditions as the world continues to develop, and how we are going to have to leave our children a half-completed map and then allow them to create new traditions to carry into the future.

- [The Sliced-Crosswise Only-on-Tuesday World](#) | **Philip Jose Farmer**

- Imagine a world in which we developed suspended animation. What would we do? Philip Jose Farmer depicts a world in which people only live one day a week, and lie in

suspended animation for the other six. Because of this, there are seven separate societies, each utilising the same world. Within the short story, Tom Pym (an actor and TV presenter) finds a stoned woman (the term of suspended animation) within his house, as she is one of the people who live in it on Wednesdays. After some limited communication using recordings, he then becomes enamoured with her and begins the process to transfer his life from Tuesday to Wednesday, a long and complicated process involving meetings with psychiatrists and forms. However, as he transfers over, he finds that his love has also transferred over to Tuesday, and as you can only transfer once in your lifetime, he will never be able to meet her.

This sci-fi story raises many ethical issues surrounding suspended animation and its possible uses in extending human lives to see so much more, as though Tom Pym is only in his 30s, he has technically lived for over 200 years. The impacts of it are unusual, and it may feel intrusive to us to share our house with 6 other people/families, but we must consider that this has been their normal lives. However, I think that this short story obviously shows that when there are other possibilities, we will always desire them over what we currently have.

- [Sanctuary](#) | **Allen Steele**

- Sci-fi, what a wonderful word! Science Fiction is, in my opinion, the most creative form of fiction, as it's one of the only ones that allow you to break the laws of our reality and justify it! This science fiction story is absolutely incredible, and it deals with something that we're currently doing, the search for inhabitable planets. In Sanctuary, the flight crews of two spaceships from Earth are preparing to colonise Tau Ceti-e, an Earthlike planet that, from previous observations, doesn't appear to have advanced intelligent life on it. However, as the crews of the Santos-Dumont and Lindbergh prepare to reawaken people from suspended animation, they realise that there is actually intelligent life in a tribal stage of development. After they land on the surface to survey the area and then return to the ship, system failures begin occurring, and they realise that plastic objects are beginning to degrade. The crew then realise that the Earth of Tau Ceti-e, which they landed on and brought back up to the ship, is actually a bacteria that consumes petrol-based products, including plastic. Because of this, the alien inhabitants of Tau Ceti-e are actually much more advanced than expected, but they are unable to build with plastic or similar materials. The colonisers then land on the planet, and all of their supplies begin to degrade, and they realise they are going to truly have to cooperate with this alien civilisation.

This story paints a picture which is all too real. We are generally unable to know much information about exoplanets unless we (theoretically) sent a rover there and landed it on the planet, and that's incredibly costly. Also, this story is based in reality, as there are bacteria that are able to consume oil-based products. Because of this, the planet of Tau Ceti-e is something that could scientifically occur, and therefore this story seems to

serve as a warning, telling us that before we colonise exoplanets, we need to be sure of everything about them.

Second Time's the Charm | Reboots & Revisions (Jutin and Xavier)

- In 2011, the prime minister of Poland gave President Obama a copy of *The Witcher II*, a popular video game [based on fantasy novels](#) by Andrzej Sapkowski. Netflix was soon producing its own *Witcher* series—one of many new shows [designed to attract viewers](#) still hungry for dragons and dark magic after *Game of Thrones*. In much the same way, *Star Wars* “inspired” *The Last Starfighter* and *Battlestar Galactica*, and after the success of *Twilight* bookstores stocked their shelves full of novels about vampires. Discuss with your team: should shows, books, and academic competitions that take advantage of other works’ popularity be criticized for lack of originality, or praised for finding new ways to satisfy audience demand? Are such “copycat” works ever better than the originals?
 - While one could easily look at works as *Battlestar Galactica*, *The Last Skyfighter*, and *The Witcher* series, and say that they are trying to ride off of the success of the original works that inspired them, that stance is equally as compelling as looking at these influenced works in the lens of which the original work is framed as the innovator or the father of the genre. Prior to *Twilight*, vampire films and books existed but not your teenage, angsty, romance vampire novels. The books and films created an entire sub-genre within the vampire category. The same can be said with *Hunger Games* for the apocalyptic genre as seen with *The Maze Runner* or the *Divergent* series. *Star Wars* for Sci-Fi, *Lord of the Rings* for high-fantasy, and now, *Game of Thrones* for fantasy. These series revolutionised the genres it stemmed from and provoked other creators to challenge existing tropes but, ironically, also become conventional with enough iterations.

Being inspired by another, probably more successful work doesn’t always warrant a “copycat” label but being compared to the most acclaimed work in that genre is inevitable. A studio can’t really copyright a genre. *The Witcher* might seem very similar to *Game of Thrones* but the two are not the same. The same can be said for the other two examples if you look at the plots. Yes, some aspects can be similar but that doesn’t make them identical. There is no shame for studios to jump on a trend that’s highly lucrative but it isn’t always a guaranteed success. *Star Wars* still defines the Sci-Fi industry today, *LotR* is still a fantasy powerhouse, and unfortunately, we cannot undo the impact *Twilight* had on teen romances. As with real children, these films’ predecessors aren’t replicas of their fathers or mothers. They’re their own movies that make them different. Whether they are better or worse depends on the metric you’re using to determine that. You could say that they’re “less creative” but nothing is really original. Someone’s ideas came from another idea and that idea from another and another and another. Most stories aren’t new but the way we tell them is different and that’s all that really matters. That’s

what I think anyway. Feel free to formulate your own :-)
~Jutin

- **Novelizations of movies are generally seen as lowbrow entertainment—the authors hired to write them are rarely well-regarded. No one remembers the book version of [Back to the Future](#). But movies based on novels have the potential for greatness—from *Gone with the Wind* to *Jojo Rabbit*. Television series can achieve great popularity drawing from source material—from *Riverdale*, inspired by long-running *Archie* comics, to Tom Clancy’s *Jack Ryan*, which utilizes characters from a series of popular novels but not exact plotlines. Discuss with your team: why is this relationship asymmetrical? What would it take to give novelizations the same level of prestige and cultural impact as film adaptations?**
 - To put it generally, the majority don’t like reading as much as watching a TV show or movie. The visual and auditory representation of atmosphere, plot, and character is more engaging than the written medium where you’d otherwise have to fill in the blanks with your imagination. Cinema is now the prime medium to tell new stories and popularise existing ones with film adaptations; great storytellers no longer write books but make movies in the modern world.

For books to be as revered as film, we’d have to nurture a culture where we can hype literature to the same degree as a film or at least warrant the same response as a film trailer when presented with a book advertisement. Why read *Caging Skies* when you can watch *Jojo Rabbit* which has the same plot AND *Scarlet Johansen*, *Rebel Wilson*, and the director of *Thor: Ragnarok*, *Taika Waititi*. (Side note: great comedy director. *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* is a good balance of humour and feel-good feelings. *What We Do in the Shadows* is a hilarious mockumentary. I never knew you could enjoy what is supposed to be a documentary but learn nothing!) Why read multiple books with *Jack Ryan* when you can just watch one TV show produced by *Carlton Cuse* and *Michael Bay*? Why even read comics when you can watch hot 20-year olds play teenagers in Netflix’ *Riverdale*? The point is, it’s easier to sell film and TV to modern audiences than books or comics.

We’d also need to be a society that collectively found reading as a joyful leisure activity with family and friends rather than a chore. Yes, there are people who enjoy reading books but society labels them as “nerds”, “bookworms”, or even “boring”. While if you regularly watched movies as a recreational activity, you’re a normal person. Our society has an entirely different sentiment for reading than they do to TV and film.

Finally, we’d also need to find a way to reward writers accordingly for their work to incentivise more writers. The film industry is significantly more lucrative than working in literature. Unless you make the next YA hit, it’s hard to get paid well. In 2018, high-budget film directors were paid \$19,143 at the lowest. Harper Lee, the author of *How to Kill a Mockingbird*, earned \$9,249 per day in the first six months of royalties; that’s 1.6 million. For high-budget films, shooting lasts 2–6 months and even if we assume that a

high-budget film paid their director the 2018 minimum for only 2 months of work (I'm excluding post and pre-production work here for simplicity), a director can still earn 1.1 million.

~Jutin

- **Had the Harry Potter series continued in film form, it would have relied on the same actors; had there been an eighth novel, readers could have imagined Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson (or anyone they wanted) in their mind's eyes. Casting a play, however, meant finding new faces for these iconic roles. This would have been a challenge under any circumstances, but the choice of a black actress to play Hermione sparked controversy among those who believed she surely had to be white—and [arguments](#) about whether she could have been black in the books all along. Discuss with your team: when continuing a story, do its creators have a responsibility to keep characters—and plot elements—as consistent as possible from one installment to the next?**
 - The significance of maintaining consistent character and plot elements depends entirely on how impactful those elements are to the central theme of a piece of work. For example in 1989 the West End decided to open Broadway's "Miss Saigon" —a heartbreaking drama about the Vietnam War— to London audiences but in this adaptation, the character named the Engineer, a Eurasian pimp in Vietnam, was played by a British actor, Jonathan Pryce. This became a cause of concern with many because the Engineer is very visually and characteristically Asian so, Pryce had to wear eye prosthetics and makeup to make him look more of the ethnicity he was representing—the production had Pryce in Yellowface. In instances like these where race is essential to the storytelling, it is best to keep the casting choice and the race of the character those actors playing consistent and the same.

In the case of Harry Potter, Hermione Granger's race or skin colour play little to no importance in the book series or film and the only "racial" distinction Rowling makes about Hermione is that she is a Muggle-born, a witch with non-magic parents. Skin colour is of little gravity to the character's character that a director can take creative liberties to add to the adaptation as a whole. Some can even argue that Hermione being a person of colour makes more thematic sense considering how she is from a looked-down-upon background. She is not a pure-blood — she is, if you could say, mixed race. When Harry Potter was translated from book to movie, changes had to have been made to make it more coherent for film and less convoluted. The same can also be said when the series was translated from film to stage; It is not always expected that a director or studio completely replicate the original source material because it isn't always possible for the medium it's being translated to or simply, the executive alterations are necessary or wanted to add to the adaptation. Who would want to essentially watch something "new" but with a plot you've already seen, lines you've already heard, and characters you're already familiar with? Adaptation just doesn't aim to mirror the original work but to recreate and transform it into something worth experiencing again.

~Jutin

- Rather than risk accusations that they are “[retconning](#)” diversity into an existing storyline, many reboots and sequels have started fresh with new characters. In 1994 the Next Karate kid was a girl; in 2010 he was African-American. Between 1984 and 2016 the Ghostbusters transitioned from all men to all women; in 2018 the latest sequel to Ocean’s Eleven reduced its number of titular scoundrels by 3—and the number of men among them by 11. Even the new Star Wars trilogy featured a [consciously](#) (and [controversially](#)) diverse cast of heroes. Work with your team to explore how audiences have responded to reworkings of stories to accommodate new social sensibilities, and discuss with your team: is a dedicated fandom a barrier to progress, or an opportunity to expand awareness of important issues?

- Xavier here, let’s look at the mentioned films and try and figure out what the audience reactions were to each of these reboots/sequels. Firstly, we have The Next Karate Kid, the fourth film in the Karate Kid franchise. Within this film, the main character is Julie Pierce, a teenager who’s currently having anger issues. The main reason that this film was disliked by critics wasn’t because it had a female character as one of the leads, it was due to the fact that it felt incredibly forced. The third Karate Kid film had already had the closure that the series needed, and this fourth film felt unnecessary, particularly because the first three films had all focussed on the same character (Daniel LaRusso) and this character couldn’t be seen in the newest film.

The 2010 remake of The Karate Kid was moderately successful in terms of reviews in comparison and put a new spin on the original by setting it in modern-day China, whilst also swapping out Karate for Kung Fu (likely driven by Jackie Chan’s involvement in the film). The main character and the Karate Kid, Dre Parker, is African-American, and though he received criticism within the film, once again it wasn’t due to his race. Instead, the criticism he received was due to his age, as many felt that a 12-year-old was too young to be the Karate Kid. However, others also praised his performance, saying it was very nuanced for a 12-year-old.

Ghostbusters is likely the most controversial of the remakes on this list. The remake replaced the previously all-male cast with an all-female one, and as soon as the trailer was released on Youtube, it quickly became one of the most disliked videos on the website. The main issue was that the fanbase of the film who had enjoyed the original Ghostbusters felt that the film wasn’t funny and ignored the original canon that Ghostbusters set up, resulting in it not feeling like a true Ghostbusters film, as well as the fact that there was no logical reason why the four ghostbusters in this movie were women. The issue didn’t come from the fact that they were women, it just felt like they had only chosen women to play the ghostbusters because it would result in better reception by the left.

Similarly, Ocean’s Eight was a film that replaced it’s previously all-male cast with an all-female one. However, this one made more sense, as it was set in the same universe

and led by the sister of Danny Ocean (who was the main character of the original trilogy), Debbie Ocean. In fact, though there were negative reviews, which cast-members attributed to the dominance of male film reviewers, the film was considered a decent heist film and a proper part of the Ocean's Universe.

Finally, we come to Star Wars, in particular, the newest series (Episode VII, Episode VIII, Rogue One, Episode IX). This series had the most diverse cast of characters yet, and what made it feel so successful was the fact that almost all of these characters didn't feel like they had to be female or African-American or part of a marginalised group to work. They were all good characters that made sense within the Star Wars Universe and definitely provided good representation without forcing it into the face of consumers who had grown up with Star Wars. There definitely were some stumbles, however, such as Rose Tico, who's mentioned in the above article. Rose has incredibly limited screen time and only seems to be in the film for two reasons. Firstly, to convey the message against animal abuse whilst on the Vegas planet, as well as a message against the elite of the galaxy (and therefore the elite and incredibly wealthy within our own society), and second to act as a, frankly rather bad, love interest for Finn. Of course, people have also said that she was put into the film to increase Asian American representation, but there are no facts surrounding this.

Each of these dedicated fandoms that these films had provided stumbling blocks to the reboot's/sequel's success, but the reason for it isn't because they hated the new films. Often, they felt like representation and positive messages were put into the film simply because they could, going against the spirit of the original films. Of course, there would be some people who were sexist or racist and despised the films no matter what, but the majority of people felt that the representation was just shoe-horned into the films. Representation in films is something which is truly crucial, and when done right will be celebrated by fans. It just so happens that the films mentioned in the Scholar's Cup curriculum this year didn't do quite so well.

- **Sometimes, existing works are rebooted to promote an even more specific moral or political vision of the world. Consider “[The New Gulliver](#)”, arguably the first-ever full-length animated film, in which a Soviet filmmaker reimaged the world of “Gulliver's Travels” to advance a communist agenda. Discuss with your team: when is it acceptable to change old stories for ideological reasons? What old stories do you think your country would want to adapt for its own political ends today?**
 - Ideally, we would never adapt old stories due to an ideological difference, due to the fact that it's a preserved part of history and even if we disagree with the ideologies demonstrated within it, it remains a piece of historical media. The main (and really only) reason that I can see a film wishing to change is if the profit would drastically decrease due to the depiction of a certain idea that is considered taboo within our current society, such as the story being pro-slavery. Though some may preserve this to remain as close as possible to the original spirit of the films, no matter how misguided it may be, in an

attempt to maintain the historical integrity of the film, most will change the film if there would be widespread outcry within their society at the ideas that it portrays. My country (Xavier here btw, NZ) is actually a rather moderate one, and I can't see it adapting a story for political means, as normally the nations that would do so would be ones which are more politically extreme.

- **“The New Gulliver” took a classic story from prose to animation. Even if it stays within the same medium, a reboot or sequel need not be the same format as the original. Director Judd Apatow’s hourlong coming-of-age drama Freaks and Geeks led to a sort-of-sequel—a 30-minute comedy about college life, titled Undeclared, which starred some of the same actors in vaguely similar roles. Going in the other direction, director Morgan Cooper released this [fictitious trailer](#) for an imaginary reboot of the 1990s comedy “Fresh Prince of Bel Air” as a darker 21st century drama. Discuss with your team: should we consider a mock trailer—a preview of something that doesn’t exist—a film on its own merits? Could mock trailers also be made for entirely new nonexistent series?**

- Firstly, the Fresh Prince of Bel Air mock trailer is absolutely amazing! When trailers are made to as high a standard as that, so high that I’d believe it was an actual movie if I just randomly stumbled across a trailer, then I would definitely believe it should be considered a film! Already, we see a rising trend in short films (generally 6 - 10 mins), and really a trailer is just an even shorter film. The cinematography, acting and music within it would definitely take skill, and so I see no reason why we should not consider it to be a short film.

The idea of making mock trailers for new nonexistent series I believe would be completely fine, and could work very well for aspiring young filmmakers. It allows them to practice cinematography, film scoring, acting but without having to write long scripts. This can allow them to get right to the root of what they need to work on when they are first starting out. The main thing that they need to do is explicitly state that this is not going to be developed into a full-length film (at least at this time) and will instead be just a trailer, so as to not confuse people into thinking it is an actual film.
~Xav

- **This sort of fiction about fiction seems to be growing in popularity. Consider [High School Musical: The Musical: The Series](#), which recently concluded its first season. Is it a sequel to the original film, a reboot, or something else entirely? Discuss with your team: what factors may be making this sort of self-aware storytelling more common? Certainly, the idea of fiction within fiction isn’t new. In Hamlet, Shakespeare had his characters perform a play—about what was happening in Hamlet. Is anything different today?**
- High School Musical: The Musical: The Series is not a sequel to the original High School Musical series. A sequel implies a continuation of the source material and its world. The High School Musical: The Musical: The Series is within our reality where High School Musical is nothing but fiction. Gabriella and Troy are movie characters and weren’t actually students of the high school the series is taking place in.

HSM: The Musical: The Series is a mockumentary that follows a series of enthusiastic theatre kids who are a part of their high school's rendition of HSM. The takes place in the fictional school of East High, where the movie was supposedly filmed. It's a teen drama around Nini, the student who plays Gabriella, Ricky, who plays Troy and is Nini's ex-boyfriend, and E.J., Nini's current boyfriend who plays Chad. The TV show isn't actually about HSM in and of itself but more about the inter-personal lives of the students. Unlike the movie, the TV show heavily shows the process of making the play rather than the status quo which was the underlying theme of the film. Strangely enough, the TV show portrays this high school with very little to no social hierarchy. The jocks, the nerds, the theatre kids all get along well and there isn't a wall between each archetype. The characters are also less cookie-cutter than your typical Disney ensemble.

In today's society, we're very aware of the status quo and the adverse effects of generalising children into separate groups. As a collective community, we've learnt that we're all in this together so there's no point in labelling complex individuals with, essentially, stereotypes. More and more media are now increasingly aware of how their characters can fit into a stereotypical mould and avoid it. This gives an opportunity for writers and producers to incorporate gags and nods to the tropes they're trying to divert in their works. Audiences get bored when something is too predictable and too generic. When creators show the viewers that they're aware of a trope, it entertains and makes people go "Hahaha! They too know that that plot point has been overused to death!!" Breaking the fourth wall seems to be the easiest way to do this as seen with films like *Deadpool* which was a huge hit with movie-goers. Self-aware art seems to be gaining a lot of traction in the media today and that's most likely because viewers are sick of seeing the same things over and over again. Entertainment is more ubiquitous and easily accessible than it has ever been and at some point, everyone picks up on trends, patterns, and tropes. Back in the days of *Hamlet*, watching plays was a luxury but in the modern world, watching a movie is a normal leisure activity.

~Jutin

- **Most of Shakespeare's plays, including *Hamlet*, would have had to be censored to receive a PG rating in Singapore—as far back as Victorian-era England, prickly parents hesitated to read them aloud to their children. In the early 1800s, the British doctor Thomas Bowdler edited out all the “undesirable” content and published a new family-friendly collection. This season, we hoped to include the film [Steve Jobs](#) in our outlines, but many schools would have objected to its use of adult language (to which scholars are never otherwise exposed). Had there been a so-called “Bowdlerized” version, we could have linked to that instead. Discuss with your team: does Bowdlerization allow important works to find a broader audience—or is it an unacceptable desecration?**
 - This idea of Bowdlerisation is rather divisive to me. On one hand, it allows younger individuals to read texts that they wouldn't be able to read otherwise due to parental restrictions, but it also changes the original intent of the author and changes their writing. Personally, I would say that the best thing to do would be to either ask the

author to Bowdlerise the book themselves or get permission from them before you do. If they refuse to allow you to bowdlerise the book, then they obviously believe that the adult language (or whatever may be deemed inappropriate) is important enough that it should remain within the text as a whole.

~Xav

- While redacting or replacing indecent words in works to make it more appropriate for the youth and more palatable to their parents isn't new, I'm surprised that there's actually a term for it! As Xavier said, asking for permission to edit an author's work would help keep the work's integrity as a whole but that doesn't always ensure its tone, feel, and message. Some works just shouldn't be and/or can't be censored because the content in question is central to the plot or character. For example, *A Clockwork Orange*. The experiences shown define the main character and his whole character arc. Censoring it would make the story incoherent. In addition to that, informal, crude, and raw words, when employed properly and moderately, are able to give texture and quality to works that wouldn't be achieved otherwise. In cases like these, giving a higher age rating is more appropriate and should be preferred to maintain artistic integrity.

~Jut

- **When people revisit books from the past, they may discover not just language but also assumptions about society that are no longer acceptable. Sometimes, publishers release [new editions](#) that address these concerns—as seen here with [Doctor Doolittle](#) and [the Hardy Boys](#), where new editions tried to mask lingering racism and other problems in the text. Discuss with your team: does this kind of editing offer new life for old works, or does it undermine their authors—and does it matter if the author was involved with the changes? Are there classics from your own country that you might consider updating? Should old films, too, be edited to reflect more progressive values?**

- I personally don't believe in changing the original works to fit modern beliefs because those art pieces were a product of their time and serve as a testament to the culture and society at the time. Changing them would only erase the significance and sweep society's previous mistakes under the rug. Yes, those works aren't politically correct or appropriate anymore but that's fine. It was made for an outdated audience and we now know better. We learn from those mistakes and move forward by making new work that is more representative and more inclusive of minorities and people of colour. Those who come from oppressed backgrounds long for representation in the art and entertainment they see and correcting old works will not do that desire justice. Whether or not the original author was involved is irrelevant because it's better to just leave those works alone and move forward. If a piece of work wants to gain a new audience, a remake or sequel would be better instead of covering up what the original did—doing so doesn't breathe new life to the work and leave only a poor taste in people's mouth. When Disney cut out racist scenes in *Fantasia*, people didn't forget about them. Many still remember them today but that doesn't prove Disney racist. New works that are progressive tell the audience that past transgressions were considered and learnt from. In terms of renewing or remaking films (in general), you'll know more about that as you reach the end of this

guide. It all boils down to JuSt. DoN't. As with writing, showing that you've learnt from previous mistakes is better (and more practical in film) rather than re-editing them to be progressive.

P.s. This is just one opinion out of many. Feel free to challenge my thoughts anytime.
~Jut

- **Such edits do happen. In the original release of Star Wars, Han Solo shoots and kills an alien bounty hunter at a bar. The alien (charmingly named Greedo) is saying ominous things but poses no immediate threat. For a later re-release, George Lucas, apparently troubled that Han Solo had come across as a cold-blooded killer, [edited the scene](#) to have Greedo abruptly shoot first—turning Han's shooting him back into a moment of self-defense. He has continued to tinker with the sequence since. Discuss with your team: which version of this scene is more legitimate? How much (and for how long) should a storyteller be able to change his or her story after it has already been told? Is there a difference between correcting a mistake and making an improvement?**
 - Xavier here once again. Han Solo is considered to be a criminal within Star Wars but by fans of the series he's thought of as a criminal with a "heart of gold," someone who does things for their own benefit but also does the right thing in a situation which demands a moral decision. However, in this scene where we are first introduced to Han, he's having a conversation with the alien Greedo. The scene of course results in Han shooting Greedo, at least in the original version. After the film was released, George Lucas, the director of the original Star Wars trilogy, decided that he wanted to edit it, and changed it so that Greedo shot first. Of course, this seemingly insignificant change sparked massive controversy in the Star Wars fandom, leading to the phrase "Han Shot First." More recently, the film has once again been edited, with it now having Han and Greedo shooting at the same time. The most legitimate version of the scene depends on your belief, what the director believes is right or the original. Personally, I think that the Han Shot First scene is the most legitimate because it was the original and likely portrayed Lucas' original intentions. I think the fact that the change to the story was noticeable and met with outrage shows how little a storyteller can change a story after it's been released, as it would have to be either very minor or agreed upon within the fandom for the change to be accepted. The other thing which makes it so controversial is the fact the change occurred roughly 20 years after the release of the original film! This amount of time the scene had been in the film had cemented the moment in fans' memories as Han shooting first. There's definitely a difference between fixing a mistake and making an improvement. To the fans, this felt like it was simply making an unnecessary improvement, but to Lucas, it was fixing up a mistake that had annoyed him.
- **Sometimes a story is changed in the brief window between its completion and its release to the public. When audiences first saw the previews of Paramount's live-action film based on the popular 1990s video game Sonic the Hedgehog, they [responded so negatively](#) to Sonic's new, more realistic look that director Jeff Fowler literally went back to the drawing board. Changing him into something more cartoonish delayed the film a year and**

cost millions of dollars. Discuss with your team: when (if ever) is it appropriate for a studio to make changes to a film—or an author to a story—based on audience feedback?

- Before films are released to the general public, there are usually test screenings with a few people to see if the product is suitable to the eyes of many. Supposedly, glaring errors and issues in a film should be identified in this process and if the problems remain persistent, the movie wouldn't be shown in theatres. Sometimes, films don't even need test screenings for studios to figure out that their latest film will be an utter train wreck. This was the case for Sonic the Hedgehog. After the trailer's release, it exponentially became clear that it was going to be a box-office failure. Even long-term fans wouldn't watch a disturbingly realistic Sonic! They had to completely redesign and reanimate the film which required animators to work even harder to accommodate the overhaul in time for the new deadline. In an industry where unpaid overtime is a perpetual issue, this begs the question, should producers change their art to fit audience responses?

As with most things, it's not as simple as a yes or a no. Studios are required to at least NOT lose money with their production so if they released the new Sonic movie without any edits, they would've been met with financial backlash. On the other hand, the monetary cost and general time it takes to make corrections to a film can be so extreme that sometimes the costs don't justify the change.

Take, for example, Cats, the 2019 movie adaptation of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical Cats. In its release, the film was very poorly received by the majority and it had glaring animation errors that made viewing experience even more uncanny, creepy, and unsettling. I actually saw the film with Elise and there were very long scenes where you could see the actor's hands when it should've been furred, some collars clipped into the actor's necks, and the faces kept floating and it looked like the faces weren't even a part of the head. These errors are put into perspective when you find out the director of the film, Tom Hooper, admitted at the world premiere that he had only finished the final touches and fur animation details 36 hours earlier. That same day, Universal Studios announced that theatres would be able to download a fixed version of the film in two days time and hard drive copies will also be provided in four days time for theatres without access to the download — an action never done before for a fully released film.

As previously talked about, Justice League also had major changes after Warner Brothers looked at how viewers reacted to Zach Snyder's Man of Steel and Batman v Superman and compared them to the successes of Marvel films. Justice League tried to mimic the more lighthearted tones of Marvel using Snyder's comparatively darker work with the help of the guy who directed The Avengers and it didn't entirely work out.

In conclusion, studios have a right and responsibility to change things based on audience response but there's a cost-benefit analysis involved to justify major overhauls.

~Jutin

- **That audience could even be an entire country. In the original 1984 Red Dawn, the Soviet Union invades the United States. For the remake 30 years later, the filmmakers switched out the defunct Soviets for new antagonists—the Chinese. China disapproved. To forestall a crisis, the producers altered the film using CGI so that the invaders appeared North Korean instead. Discuss with your team: are there any issues with storytellers changing their work to satisfy large global markets? Would you view the situation differently if the story had been filmed with North Korean antagonists in the first place? Would it be better to set stories in fantasy worlds to minimize potential offense to people in the real world?**
 - Though there is definitely an issue surrounding storytellers having to alter their stories for different markets (often due to the high censorship in nations such as China), there really isn't much of a way to get around it unless studios and directors refuse to edit their creative visions, even though they know they will receive less profit. The main issue comes from the fact that you are removing part of the story, whether that be a key part of the story or not, and that results in a different impact on the audience.

The above situation would definitely be different if the story had been filmed with North Korean antagonists instead, mainly because it wouldn't feel like they are only changing it due to the fact that they don't want their citizens to see their nation as a villain rather than a hero, and would instead feel like they were changing it to make an ally seem less like a villain. Not a drastic improvement, but an improvement nonetheless.

Unfortunately, the idea of setting stories in a fantasy world to minimise offence wouldn't catch on, as people like having some similarity to their society to watch very often (despite the fact that fantasy is awesome). We will also have the issue that the government will claim this villain or that villain is "representative" of them when it's just a villain.

~Xav

- **Comments from Jut:** Fun fact: even Marvel censors or even add things in its movies for China! Doctor Strange whitewashed the Tibetan monk because China has beef with them. In China, Ironman is saved by Chinese surgeons in Iron Man 3. Captain America uses a Vivo phone from China instead of the American iPhone in Civil War. Point is, China only wants their people to see a very positive portrayal and brand of itself and is willing to cut out anything that doesn't. The Chinese market is so lucrative that 1/4th of Aquaman's profits were from China alone. I know that isn't Marvel but Aquaman grossed around 1 billion in box-office revenue. It's just not Marvel that China benefits but other studios as well. Hollywood is essentially for making money and if altering content by removing or adding elements to please the censoring overlords, it will be done.
- **Different nations can end up with their own versions of the same films and television series. The Colombian telenovela Yo Soy Betty, La Fea inspired [remakes around the world](#); Korea had its own [designated survivor](#); director Marc Webb is now adapting the Japanese anime film Your Name into a live-action film [set \(controversially\) in the United](#)**

States. Discuss with your team: what other works would lend themselves to being remade in different countries? Is localization a worthwhile artistic pursuit, or should people be encouraged to watch original productions—even if it means using subtitles?

- HmMmMmMMM. This is a whole can of worms that I love talking about but more in the context of foreign horror films. Localisation seems to only serve one purpose in the film and TV industry: to gain a more local audience (Duh-doy). When Yo Soy Betty, La Fea, Designated Survivor, or Your Name were/are being adapted in the context of the culture it's being renewed for, it's to encourage movie-goers to watch the remake. General viewers long for something original and new but not so different that it puts them off. Films and TV in different cultures can be so drastically different that what one culture might find entertaining, another find extremely dull or bizarre. The general American audience might respond negatively if they get shown a very local Your Name or Yo Soy Betty, La Fea and Korean audiences could be uninterested if their local networks started showing a very American show. It all boils down to the fact that people like art that they can relate to and understand because they feel confused or intimidated otherwise. If a person says they like watching foreign films, they seem ostentatious or pretentious. Because of sentiments like these, it often makes sense why studios remake things in the context of their audience's culture.

Cue all of the problems. Artistic integrity and/or nuance can't easily be translated by another director in another culture. Let mE rEpeat ARtiStic inTEGRiTy anD/oR NuANce CAn'T bE RepLIcAted EASilY. How you might ask? Let's look at some yUmmy foreign horror films because I haven't seen the Yo Soy Betty, La Fea or the other two remakes.

- **Subject 1:** Quarantine based on Spain's Rec
Rec is a masterful faux-documentary horror film about a series of people trapped in a building with a disease that makes people rabid and extremely violent. The film builds suspense and dread very well. It's very well acted, the film doesn't show too much which makes you empathise with the character's situation more (even if you don't understand the language), and it's actually scary and doesn't use cheap jump scare tricks to make it so! On the other hand, Quarantine, the American remake of Rec, is just a stale replica. It didn't understand how the choice of making the camera hand-held was supposed to make the film look more raw and realistic. Quarantine 'refined' and packed the lighting and cinematography so generically that all the frightening visual atmosphere that was established by the original is gone. Not to mention how they butchered the characters as well. They become cookie-cutter and the actors don't show the complexity of the fear and worry felt of being in their situation. The victims in Rec are supposed to mimic real people so that the viewing experience is even more engaging and captivating. Quarantine had none of that.
- **Subject 2:** Oldboy 2013 based on the Korean Old Boy
Ok, you could argue that maybe that Quarantine was just a cash grab, why don't you look at a film that people actually cared about. Here's a film that was more

internationally acclaimed than Rec. They even hired Samuel L. Jackson for it! Watch as it's also butchered with a more American twist to it (They renamed Oh Dae-su to Joe Doucett). TLDR; the remake misunderstood all the character motivations and it heavily made the delivery of the film less impactful, less nuanced, and overall more hard to watch. The original is really gut-churning and I can't really detail it here or in any WSC context for that matter but all you've got to know is that the delivery was heavily misinformed and the director misinterpreted why some scenes were filmed the way they were or why some characters did what they did.

- **Subject 3:** The Grudge 2020 based on the Japanese film of the same name. Now it takes place in America instead of Japan! Apparently the ghosts followed people there from Japan? It's terribly written and it's predictable and generic. Not great. The ghosts in the original all had unique auditory cues that unconsciously told the viewer to be scared and to signal that something was off. This remake just ignored that and have non-distinct zombie-looking ghosts? Also, it had your basic jump-scare formula that made it boring.
- My stance on this matter boils down to JUST WATCH THE ORIGINAL WITH SUBTITLES. No, it's not the same as reading a book. Yes, it is better. Yes, it's worth it. Now that I'm done ranting about niche interests, let's talk about anime! Lots of anime get American live-action remakes and it doesn't really fair well because the writing doesn't make sense in an American context (See: Death Note). Your Name will probably be the same as it follows very Japanese teenagers in a very Japanese setting.
~Jutin

Interlude III: Mistakes and Forgiveness (Xavier)

- [My Apology](#) | Abe Ape
 - This slam poetry, written by Abe Ape, a Sudanese refugee who sought refuge in Australia, is an apology to the native Aboriginal people for everything that has occurred to them and how they are still ignored. He brings up relevant points such as how at the start of keynote speakers within Australia, they often begin with "acknowledging the traditional owners of this land" but hardly ever do acknowledge the impacts that they have had, whilst also not going out and searching for the stories and the history of the tribes. Ape also says that he himself is at fault for not doing these things and that he is similar to Captain Cook and everyone who colonised Australia, in that he came here without the permission of the Aboriginal owners of the land. Finally, he addresses how this Aboriginal culture is celebrated, but only on the national holiday of Australia Day, whilst Aboriginal people are still disadvantaged and suffer. The apology feels genuine and as if it comes from a place where Ape truly wishes to gain forgiveness whilst also raising the importance of these issues.
- [for eons](#) | Isobel O'Hara
 - Even after "The Octopus" and "Min Nong" were in the curriculum last year, WSC has somehow found an even shorter poem for us to study! "for eons" is only five words

long, being “I ignored reality for eons.” What makes this poem so special is that it’s a blackout poem, where you take a page of text and blackout words using a vivid, resulting in only a few remaining. This particular page of text that was blacked out was a statement from Richard Dreyfuss, an American actor, regarding claims of sexual assault at the height of the #MeToo movement. The poem, therefore, tries to convey that this apology ignores the reality of the situation, and therefore isn’t a true apology.

- [Finale](#) | **Pablo Neruda**

- This touching poem by Pablo Neruda (who I am sure has been within the WSC curriculum before) touches upon the final moments before death and the reactions that we have to it. The man narrating the poem is inside a hospital, and seems to be truly suffering, as we can see through phrases such as “bleeding true blood.” However, unlike most poems regarding death, this one ends on a positive note, with the narrator saying “it was beautiful to live when you lived.” Who this “you” is, we do not know, but it shows that even though death is an eventual finality, we look back on our lives and all of the wonderful things that occurred.

- [One Art](#) | **Elizabeth Bishop**

- Another author who seems to always turn up in the WSC Curriculum, Bishop’s poem deals with the act of losing things. The poem mainly focuses on the phrase “the art of losing isn’t hard to master,” and that it’s ok to lose door keys, to move houses, to move cities and lose what was previously there. Though this loss that we can experience may look awful and like “disaster”, in the end, it doesn’t drastically affect us, and there is always a way in which we can move forward, into a (re)new(ed) chapter of our lives.

- [Whereas \(Excerpt\)](#) | **Layli Long Soldier**

- This powerful text, which almost feels like a cross between a slam poem and a short story, addresses the insincere apologies and lack of information surrounding the Native American tribes that live on reservations within the United States. The narrator of the poem, likely Soldier herself, gets put into awkward situations surrounding the inadequate apology that was given, whilst others believe it was good that there was “at least an apology.” She also deals with people believing that the reserves are places without schools or stores, and how Native American’s are constantly referred to as “them” rather than being acknowledged. This is also particularly offensive due to the fact that every single Native American tribe follows a different culture, and so to lump them together is like lumping together all of Africa as “the same.” The repetition of the word whereas throughout the poem makes it particularly impactful, as it feels like a continual consideration that is going on within Soldier’s mind.

- [We Lived Happily During the War](#) | **Ilya Kaminsky**

- This poem asks for forgiveness to be given to America by someone who isn’t even American himself. Ilya Kaminsky was born in Soviet Ukraine but was granted political asylum within the United States (along with his family) as a teenager. We Live Happily During the War perfectly depicts the lives of many within the United States, where they protested against these wars that were going on, but it didn’t affect them, and they still remained in “the country of money” and lived happily during the war. The line breaks in

this poem are beautiful, and this poem is one of the most impactful in the whole curriculum. If you are going to read one poem out of the curriculum, read this one. Hopefully, those who live in these war-torn nations caused by international conflict will accept the apology that has been provided here.

Concluding Questions (Jutin and Xavier)

- It's only a matter of time before Baby Yoda shows up amongst the roller coasters at Disney's [Galaxy's Edge](#), while those who prefer wizards to Skywalkers can pop by Hagrid's hut at Universal Studios' Wizarding World. Explore the emergence of immersive theme parks in which fans can interact with their favorite narratives. How different is Galaxy's Edge from the motion simulator ride "Star Tours" in the 1980s? In what ways are these experiences similar to stories in more traditional media, and what challenges do they present to the idea of what is and isn't "[canon](#)"? What other stories would be well-suited to adaptation into immersive theme parks? Is there a reason these parks tend to favor fantasy and science fiction for their source material?
 - Galaxy's Edge is an entirely new section of the Disneyworld and Disneyland California theme parks that is an immersive Star Wars experience, meaning that the guests within the park are also part of the story. Whilst there, fans can interact with individuals who are playing Star Wars characters who live on that particular planet (Bantu) and are also able to experience walking around the Millennium Falcon! Star Tours was a ride within the Disneyland California theme park and involved you being part of a Star Wars story. Within it, you were on a trip to an Endor Moon when suddenly, you're caught by the tractor beam of a Star Destroyer (mainly due to the bumbling pilot droid of the spacecraft). The main difference between Star Tours and Galaxy's Edge is the interactivity. Whilst with Star Tours, you were immersed within this set story, in Galaxy's Edge you can truly talk and interact with the "aliens" from Bantu.

The closest form of media to Star Tours is rather obvious, being very much a film that you are experiencing. However, the lack of specific script within Galaxy's Edge makes it more like a long-form improv, where there is an overarching plot but space to improvise within it.

The issue of canon is definitely one that should be discussed, and the above article conveys that the guests will definitely play a part within the canon of the Galaxy's Edge story, in a similar way that background extras within Star Wars play a part. Day to day, the guests visiting the park may change, but the role that they play will always remain rather constant.

Personally, I believe that the reason that the theme parks favour science-fiction and fantasy settings are it allows a sense of escape, and truly makes you feel like you're somewhere else. If there was a theme park that simulated New York, it wouldn't quite be

as exciting as going to a simulated Hagrid's Hut, as you could simply go visit New York whilst this is the only place in the world where you can go to Hagrid's Hut.

- **Comments from Jut:** Not to mention the target audience for theme parks is in a comparatively younger age bracket (but that doesn't stop many adults who are children at heart from going every year of course) which help make the fantasy and sci-fi elements more popular to theme park-goers.
- **Do writers have a responsibility [to finish the stories](#) they set out to tell—or is it up to them to decide whether they will ever publish a promised sequel or conclusion? When a series is canceled, do its producers owe fans some sort of closure on dangling story elements?**
 - Finishing a story is difficult, and there are many different reasons why an author may decide not to finish a story. However, the above article asks what will happen if George R. R. Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" series isn't completed before his death. Though this scenario is incredibly morbid, it is certainly a possibility and would devastate many fans of the books, as Martin has said that he would not have someone else finish the series for him. Writers do not have a responsibility to finish a story arc, but it is a societal expectation that they will. The lack of satisfaction that we, and often they, feel when a character does not finish their journey is something that ideally, we should avoid. However, we can see by Martin's reactions that when an author is pressured to finish a series, they can reach a tipping point. Cancelled series do not require full closure on all story elements, but it would be nice to have some. I would bring up the example of Doctor Who, which stopped production after the 7th Doctor (Sylvester McCoy) completed his 3rd series in 1989. There were still many plot threads about the Doctor that hadn't been resolved, and when the show was revived in 2005, many of these plot threads returned, as well as many new ones. I feel that a good producer will ensure that most story elements are complete at the end of a season, resulting in there being less impact if the show is then taken off of the air.
- **Put on your creative hat. Which of the short stories and poems selected above would be best adapted into a film? Which one leaves you wanting a sequel?**
 - None of the poems really made me feel like they should be adapted into a film or have a sequel, but two short stories within the curriculum definitely feel like they could either be adapted into a film or have a sequel. Firstly, the premise of The Sliced-Crosswise Only-On Tuesday World, where each person only lives on one day of the week and remains in stasis for another sounds like the perfect thing to be adapted into a film (or possibly even a sci-fi TV show!). I can see interesting impacts coming about from living in this world, and there would be many plotlines that writers could follow. There's also one short story that I would definitely want a sequel for, being Sanctuary. This short story ends at such a great cliffhanger, that it makes me desperate for a sequel. I'll let you guys find out what the cliffhanger is yourselves.
- **No one knows for sure who wrote it, but this [description of several major Western religions](#) depends on audiences to understand the language of sequels. When did these terms and concepts become common enough that people could use them in jokes for the**

broader public? Could you apply the same terminology to political regimes, military campaigns, and product launches?

- The three terms that are used here which could be considered the “technical words” are ‘sequel,’ ‘fanfiction’ and ‘canon.’ Using very reputable sources (Collins Dictionary) which have previously quantified the usage of these words over time, we can actually figure out when this joke would have been understood by the general public! By 1805, ‘sequel’ was in relatively high usage, whilst the word ‘canon’ was used pretty regularly throughout history, from 1560 onwards (though likely this was in other forms, such as a musical canon). Finally, we come to the word ‘fanfiction.’ The term originated in 1939 and was used in a derogatory manner towards ‘crude and amateur’ sci-fi fiction, though the term was popularised in the 1960s by the Star Trek community. Therefore, these concepts would likely be common enough by the 1970s – 1980s for this joke to be understood.

The terminology is applicable to all parts of the world, as everything continues on as if sequels are being created. Let’s try and relate it to the above suggestions. Political regimes can be very much related to sequels; democracies generally listen to the fans more when deciding on a sequel whilst within a monarchy, the fans don’t get any say in what gets written. I can’t think of how to relate the terminology to military campaigns and product launches, but I’m sure that some of you kind scholars will be able to!

- **These days, reboots of film franchises (like those of comic books) are generally accepted as normal; they happen all the time, and thus you have a lot of actors walking around who have played Spiderman. Why do you think existing novels are rarely (if ever) rebooted by new authors?**

- Replicating someone's writing style is harder than one might think at first glance. Rewriting a whole novel based on an author’s style and intent is not only difficult but redundant because audiences can just read the original. How many times can you tell the same story in writing in comparison to cinema. Films get renewed because the original is old, needs an update, and/or is made to fit a new audience. Books aren’t like that; they’re timeless. A Brave New World, Animal Farm, or Harry Potter doesn’t need to change how it tells its story. Other than when language transforms over time, there is very little to no reason to remake an entire book’s content, unlike when a film’s practical effects don’t age well. Books made a hundred or even more years ago are still enjoyed and relevant today. Yes, reading is less popular but that doesn’t make the impacts of literature less apparent and long-lasting. Although, with the exponential preference for film, the idea that good writers and storytellers are now working in Hollywood rather than becoming published authors is something to think about.

~Jut

- **Are prequels less likely to succeed than sequels? If so, why do people keep writing and producing them?**

- To answer this question, let's look at a prequel that is significantly eclipsed by the original: The Hobbit. When people think of J.R.R. Tolkien’s work, the widely successful

Lord of the Rings pop in mind. LotR defined an entire genre, a generation, and even an entirely, maybe non-existing country (sorry, not sorry, Xavier). When making prequels, creators have to keep in mind that everything that happened in the first film didn't happen. All that character development and growth are undone. Which is why, most of the time, when prequels are made, they're to show more of the world the characters are from before the protagonists that we initially get introduced to in the original came to be. Yes, Bilbo Baggins in The Hobbit and LotR but the Bilbo that we see in The Hobbit is very different from the one we saw in LotR. We also see a different story with different development arcs. The same goes for the Star Wars prequels. We follow young Anakin instead of young Luke, yet we also see Anakin in the non-prequels but as Darth Vader. All prequels essentially fulfil the role of fleshing out the world that viewers enjoyed experiencing. The Hobbit had very very very big shoes to fill when it was publicised. It wasn't going to be as good as LotR and it isn't. Is this the case for all prequels? Not always. It's just that when the first was so good, comparisons and living up to the prequel's processor can be difficult.

- **Updates:** WSC added an article to this question and it critique's J.K. Rowling's choice to breath new "life" into the Harry Potter series by creating the Fantastic Beasts: Crimes of Grindelwald prequels. This film will follow four others which will hopefully quench fan's thirst to experience the wizarding world of Harry Potter for another bunch of films. The article explores the idea that many authors who create new content for their acclaimed works tend to lessen the value of the series with the direction they take in the more recent installations. The article compares Fantastic Beasts with The X-Files where the creator supposedly ruined the TV show in the 11th season by being too creatively controlling with the series because he believed that he was the only person who knew where the story should justifiably go. It is also paralleled with George Lucas' choice to make the Star Wars Prequels which weren't critically acclaimed like the 11th season of The X-Files. Fantastic Beasts wasn't a complete flop but it didn't meet the projected box-office response Warner Bros. expected with the release of the film. Nevertheless, critics don't believe that J.K. Rowling will be able to replicate the magic that was Harry Potter franchise with Fantastic Beasts

This begs the question, should original authors not write prequels? As with everything, it depends. I don't personally think that authors should be barred from creating prequels or sequels; it is their own world and intellectual property so they can create whatever cannon as they please. But, it is also important to realise that creators aren't endless tubs of creativity and imagination. They don't always know what's best for a series. When new content for a beloved series is created, authors can either go overboard with what new ideas in order to divert expectations and risk angering the fanbase or they create something underwhelming. It's hard to find a middle ground. When works become so popular and loved, it essentially becomes its own living thing driven by the fanbase. Authors have to watch out for audience expectations when renewing their works and it can feel like treading on thin ice. Even if authors know which direction they want to take

their stories in, it won't please everyone who has their own ideas of what the world is like and should be. At the end of the day, authors have the right to tell their character's stories and the world they inhabit but, due to human error and limitations, they can't always replicate the phenomenon or response they initially invoked with their work and/or please everyone's expectations with their new installations. The easiest to go about this would probably be discussing story ideas with a group of people who understands the original author's vision of the work while still having autonomy to share their own thoughts on story elements. One of the many things WSC teaches us is that it's always better to do something with a group of people than going about obstacles by yourself. Having a back-and-forth exchange of ideas helps not only in debate but writing as well. The WSC essay writing section is collaborative for a reason.

~Jut

- **Is each World Scholar's Cup season a sequel to the previous one? If so, what challenges does that present for its producers and for its participants? Could you imagine one designed as a prequel—or a sidequel?**

- I see each season as a sequel to the last because it continues and carries the Scholar's Cup canon forward. The 2019 season had nods to 2018's obsession with "Havana" and was very aware of how strange it all looks like to the outsider. Previous scholars also show up each season and grow as individuals and as a community together. Many of the staff members were scholars like us from Chauncey, Logan, Dylan, to Tyus. Each season, regional round, globals or ToC is different yet the same in spirit; It's a sequel. This obviously brings the problem of being original and authentic each season. 2019 didn't have a Havana 2.0 so it strangely latched on to thanking chairs?????? I'm still confused on how that came to be and I'm looking forward to seeing what 2020 has in store (I think it'd potted plants from what I saw in the pictures on the FB group). Each new season seems to only get better and it makes us wonder, "How will the staff make the next season even more engaging?" So far, in 2020, they've opted to make the curriculum revolve around our world and what's relevant to the youth. Climate change, video games, movies, etc. The season's only started and I'm looking forward to what the next season has in store.

In terms of side-sequels, maybe we can have a WSC spinoff with STEM for all those non-SocSci scholars who want maths in the curriculum for some ungodly reason. Maybe even a prequel with champion scholars from previous seasons; a battle royal of sorts where we take scholars like Sara Swea, Tyus Sheriff, and Chauncey Lo and put them in an arena so they can fight to the death in all four WSC events. That'd be p entertaining if I say so myself. Jkjk maybe a fancy debate showcase would be good? A WSC prequel would be weird lol.

~Jut

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