

# MEDIA VS CONTENT



## MEDIA - REVIEW

- We know what Media is
  - How we make sense and interact with the world.
  - We use technologies such as writing, reading, paper, books, television, movies and the internet to share stories and to help us understand the world.
  - We described it as a way to save our memories in case they get lost.
- Media developed over time
  - From oral stories through writing, printing, television to the internet.
  - Each media allows for different ways for the content to be delivered.



## CONTENT - REVIEW

- We know what content is.
  - What the story is.
  - What the news is about.
  - Who is talking, and what they are talking about.
- Ex. The content of *The Prestige* is the rivalry between Angier and Borden.
  
- This is the stuff you usually write about in essays.
- If you know the content, you know the story.



## MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

- Marshall McLuhan believed that the Medium is the Message.
- The real story about humanity is not the content we are sharing, but the media we create to tell the story.
- We can learn more about ourselves if we examine the media and not the content.
- Content is really, just the same story over and over again.

## MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE?

- *Scott Pilgrim* (2010) is VERY different from *The Prestige* (2006) or *Mad Max Fury Road* (2015)
- What they are telling are just different parts of the human experience.
- They all use archetypes that we have explored. They all use a similar story structure, and they all tell different parts of the human experience.



## EXAMPLES!

- *Scott Pilgrim* (2010): Dealing with growth as an individual. Growth in order to have meaningful relationships.
- *The Prestige* (2006): The danger of rivalry. “Man’s reach exceeds their grasp.”
- *Mad Max Fury Road* (2015): What do you do if you are oppressed? Dealing with trauma. Hope in the face of utter despair.
- Are these new stories?



## NO STORY IS REALLY NEW

- The reality is, no story is really all that new.
- Billions of people lived, loved, hated, survived and hoped long before we were born.
- Countless stories of those experiences were told to others before we were born.
- Many, if not all, the stories we looked at in our class have been told in one way or another before.

## SO...WHAT DO WE DO?

- We study the stories for our time. We study *Scott Pilgrim* and not *Portrait of a Gentleman*. We study *The Prestige* instead of *The Count of Monte Cristo*.
- We explore the way they are told using different media, because the new media tells us more about who we are than the old media.
- McLuhan went one step further and suggested studying the effect of media on us, and what that means.
  - Why do we relate to movies now more than books that tell the same story?
  - Why did books do more for the previous generations and movies ever could?



## MARSHALL MCLUHAN

- McLuhan felt that nothing new could be learned by people studying the 'new' stories that were coming out.
- But if you understood the new technology, you could learn a lot.
- So he watched a lot of TV. He watched movies. He listened to the radio (it was still big back then) and he read new books.
- But he never cared for the story.



## WHAT ABOUT CONTENT!?

- Content is important
- Content is easy to access
- Content is interesting and intriguing material!

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- This is hard for us. All through our education, we have been told to understand the story. We dig deep into the meanings, the characters, the relationships, the symbolism.
  - English teachers drill this in our heads.
  - Marshall McLuhan felt that the stories are a starting point... but not where the true importance was.



## ADAPTATIONS

- Romeo and Juliet
  - Written by Shakespeare to be acted in front of an audience. Stage play.
  - Read by High School students from the 1900s (maybe even earlier) to the 2000s (sometimes even later).
  - Turned into many different films (Romeo + Juliet (1996), Romeo and Juliet (1968), Gnomeo and Juliet (2011), West Side Story (1961) plus many others).
- Same story, but... very different ways of being presented to the viewers.

# ADAPTATIONS

- *Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, Gone Girl, Blade Runner, Arrival, Scott Pilgrim, The Prestige.*
  - These were all books before they were films. Some are better than the books, some are not. Some are not as good because they tried to be like the book too much. Some are so far away from the book they have different titles.
- Remakes: *True Grit.* (Also *3:10 to Yuma, Seven Samurai* → *The Magnificent Seven.*)
- Any major non-Pixar Disney Movie.
- What makes them work, what makes them fail?



## EXAMINING EACH MEDIA

- What do you do when you interact with a particular media?
- We will explore a few to see.
  - Oral story
  - Play
  - Book
  - Film

# ORAL STORY

- Usually, a small group
- Memory based
  - May change based on time of year, day, the people being told, what emotions the storyteller wishes to bring forward
- Relies on the imagination of the reader and experience of the teller
- Bonding experience



# PLAY

- Visualize what is going on through actors
- Costumes, sets, props, sometimes music
- Imagination still required
- Generally, the same story – some ad lib (actors doing what they think is best based on what they see/feel –unscripted).
- See it with a group of people at the same time – shared experience



# BOOK

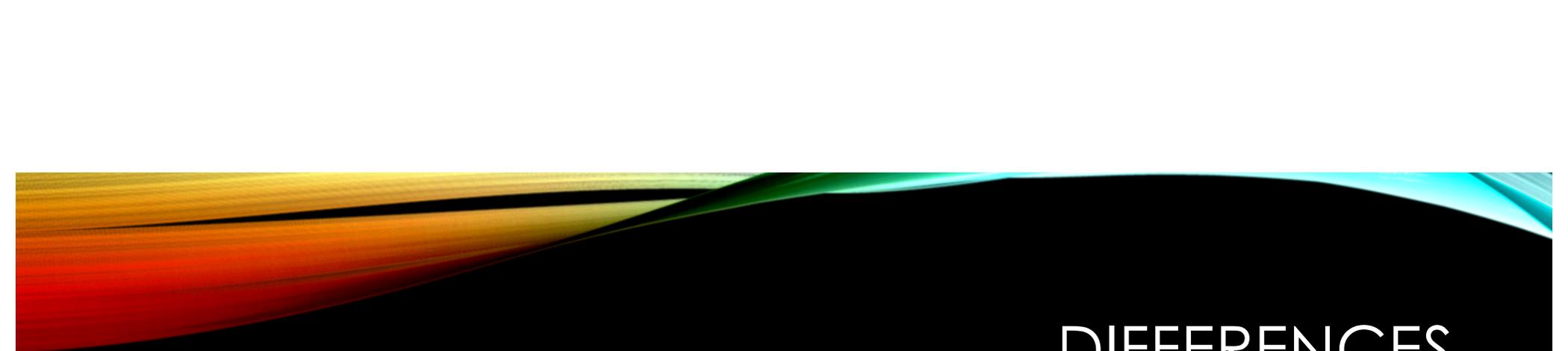


- Generally solitary
- Reader has control of speed, tempo, pauses, breaks.
- Reader can re-read parts, skip parts.
- Same story every time – inability to change based on reader or time.
- Relies on imagination based on what the writer describes.
- What is written is truth (canon).

# FILM



- Somewhat solo experience, although a shared experience because you watch at the same time
- Less imagination required
- Can manipulate what the viewer can see, feel and hear through words, visuals and edits
- Cannot pause
- Director can manipulate senses more – visually, audio, temporally
- Seen in a dark room



## DIFFERENCES

- Watching a movie at home is different than seeing it in the theatre, on a laptop, on your phone, outside...
  - Why?
- Reading a book is generally always going to be the same.
  - Why?
- Seeing a play is different every time you see it, but it will be the same story.
  - Why?
- Being told a story by an elder, storyteller, or sage will always be different.
  - Why?



## IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- How a story is told is different from what a story is telling.
  - Media is different than the content.
- How we interact with a particular media changes how we experience the story.
  - Reading *Harry Potter* is different than watching *Harry Potter*, even beyond the content that is/isn't in either media.



## WORKS CITED

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