NARRATIVE AND MEDIA:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LITERARY AND DIGITAL FORMS

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In this study, differences between literary and digital storytelling are identified as a context for the issues explored within this thesis. I argue both the strengths and weaknesses of both the written and digital narratives. It is difficult to apply the same standards to two exceptionally different genres, but it is the truest way to compare and contrast the two. I will examine a few of the studies that have already been done that are similar and some of the assertions they have concluded.
Chapter One:
Storytelling-- Past and Present
How Storytelling Touches Us All

In this chapter, differences between literary and digital storytelling are identified as a context for the issues explored within this thesis. Literary narrative is simply defined as classic written works of literature, usually canonized, as dictated by the established literary community. Digital narrative, or digital storytelling, is simply defined as a video (in this case internet-driven, social-mediated) account of digital media. Toward that end, this chapter also examines a few of the standards that might be employed when assessing the narrative power and cohesiveness of literary and digital stories. With comparison as a controlling vehicle, one of the primary goals of this analysis emerges: By comparing the standards of narrative used in classical literature, it is expected that unique characteristics and the relative worth of the digital narrative can emerge.

Storytelling: Digital Entrance into Society

Though storytelling’s roots are thousands of years old, the introduction of digital storytelling into this
The forum is still relatively new. However, it has probably not yet reached its height. Though hard for many to believe with the ubiquity of websites like YouTube and Hulu, digital storytelling has only just begun to explore the vast ocean of possibility. This thesis deals with only a small portion of both the mediums and videos available. Performance art and social commentary are other mediums through which digital media is finding a new home and a new following. YouTube, one of the most popular websites for users to upload their personal video adaptations, contains many different forms of digital media. Although YouTube tends to be a breeding ground for performance art there still was room for typical digital narratives. The best way to test the staying power and uniqueness of this new form is to compare it with one of the oldest.

Like many new genres, there are both proponents and detractors. Though there are critics, many seem to welcome the growing popularity of digital media. When the traditional literary model of one author communicating with one reader is employed as the scheme for describing the narrative experience, the model itself seems restrictive. The interaction between the author and reader is more complex that the traditional literary model suggests. It is
a one sided tale, with all assumptions and inferences being made by one reader at a time. Though written narratives can establish community and feedback via fan and book clubs, there is a certain lack of immediacy in establishing the interactivity.

However, digital storytelling offers a unique experience that is different than one to be had by an individual reader. Digital storytelling truly involves the person viewing the story. Whereas a reader may only have a once-a-week book club with whom to share his thoughts, the viewer of a digital narrative can immediately share his insights, ask questions, and interact with other viewers within minutes of watching the story unfold. It creates an entirely different definition to the word “community.”

Hundreds of thousands of videos are shared every day, and it is because something in that video struck a chord with the viewer and, he immediately wanted to share it. Digital media engages the viewer on a level mostly unexplored by the written narrative. It is powerful and is reaching entirely new audiences. A recent study shows that children as young as four are “comfortable” on the computer (Zaharov-Reutt, 2008). Though the four year olds are not
the average YouTube user, the demographics for digital media certainly skew lower than those reading classic written narratives. Most four year old children cannot read, but are well versed in using a computer and mouse (Zaharov-Reutt, 2008). With many parents looking for “pacifiers” for a few quiet minutes of their own, it is natural for them to turn to the computer as an easy outlet of entertainment (Sweeney, 2009). Digital storytelling has brought the narrative as a genre to an entire subset of users who would have perhaps been turned off to the written word. Though film and cinema have also bridged this gap, they too limit the immediate community interaction that viral video provides. Though one may discuss a video with those they viewed it with, or in a message board, few will provide over 50,000 comments within a few weeks of release. However, one would be remiss to not acknowledge the path paved for internet-based digital media by the film industry. Importantly, cinema inspired many of the now famous internet personalities to try their own hand at film making.

The Tests Used to Judge Both Styles of Narratives:

As with any hypothesis, it is initially appropriate to identify the objective standards by which both literary and
digital narratives are to be judged. In his book *Technique of Drama*, German literary critic Freytag (1868) proposed a method of analyzing plots based loosely on Aristotle’s concept of *unity of action*. Using a pyramid metaphor, [See Appendix A] Freytag’s theory soon became not only accepted within the literary community, but used as a standard by which many narratives would be judged. In short Freytag put forth a triangle-shaped skeleton on which narratives could be hung. Narrative, he felt, would begin with an Exposition or background to the story, Rising Action – which would be steps taken, perhaps seemingly insignificant at the time, toward the crux of the story; the Climax, or turning point in the story, the Falling Action – in which conflicts begin to be resolved, and the Dénouement – the neat completion of all of the loose ends. Freytag’s analysis provides the framework for the first litmus test employed here for characterizing and evaluating both literary and digital narratives.

Beyond Freytag’s criteria, a second standard for distinguishing, characterizing, and evaluating literary and digital forms has been suggested by Harold Bloom, a modern literary author, critic, and scholar. Bloom has proposed that three questions be used, a set of questions that are identified and explored in chapter 3 of this analysis.
Whereas Freytag’s analysis charts narrative events in an almost mathematical way, Bloom’s questions explore the response of those reading or viewing a work. Both are equally important in our analysis.

Conclusion: What is to Come

In the chapters that follow I am striving to show both the strengths and weaknesses of both the written and digital narratives. It is difficult to apply the same standards to two exceptionally different genres, but it is the truest way to compare and contrast the two. In the following chapter we will examine a few of the studies that have already been done and some of the assertions they have concluded. In Chapter 3, the three literary narratives will be presented and measured against the tests previously laid out, and Chapter 4 will assess the three chosen digital narratives and their results. Finally, Chapter 5 will study who is utilizing the new digital mediums, and what that means for its future. To better understand what this study aims to do, other similar studies should be examined and our purpose defined; as well as an examination of what has changed within our culture to allow such a digital explosion to occur.
Chapter 2:

An Objective Comparison of Narrative: Is It Ever Possible?

While critical conceptions of the narrative form are readily available, distinctions between literary and digital narrative forms have yet to receive the attention they warrant in the published literature dealing with narrative. Indeed one of the major claims of this thesis is that there is a gap in the research of the “history” of these narratives. If unique features of digital narratives are to be understood, the extended attention devoted to literary narratives can constitute a powerful foundation for understanding the current form of the digital narrative and to understand how it has developed and the strengths and weaknesses of the digital form of narrative.

This chapter states that though many facets of digital narratives have been examined, there are still gaps in these studies. The initial part of this chapter examines the published literature regarding narrative, focusing on what has been done already and the importance of gaps that
currently exist within published literature. Part two of this chapter examines the role of meaning in narrative and the debate of its importance. The third part of this chapter analyzes the tests chosen and weigh their worth and objectivity. In the conclusion of this chapter, we identify the items needed to provide a user-friendly place for digital narrative to flourish.

**Literary Analysis of Narrative**

This unit is organized into three major subunits. First, the analysis of written analyses is examined, noting that the focus of these analyses precludes a comprehensive analysis of digital narratives. Second, some of the analyses—predominantly by Ryan—making distinctions among types of narratives are examined. Third and finally, particularly important relevant articles dealing with distinctions between literary and digital narratives are examined. We begin then, by considering literary conceptions of the narrative form.

**Literary Conceptions of Narrative**

The written narrative has long been subjected to formal literary criticism. Of the host of volumes generated by literary critics Charles Bressler’s (1994) book, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice* is the gold standard of literary criticism. To understand
Bresseler’s book let us look at his own definition of Literary Criticism. In the first chapter of his book, he has argued that, “Literary criticism is a disciplined activity that attempts to study, analyze, interpret, and evaluate a work of art” (Bressler, 1994, p. 9). This definition provides an apt foundation for examining the specific methods Bressler examines. Bressler puts forth a sampling of literary work and subjects it to different forms of accepted criticism. After studying one form of criticism, such as Reader Response in which the reader’s thoughts and insights are the highest valued, he has submitted a short work of literature to which the criticism may be applied. Often, he will refer the reader to a previous work and invite them to apply a different form of criticism such as Deconstruction or New Criticism to the same work. Bressler shows the ultimate subjectivity of those involved in reviewing the work.

He does not, as we have intended to do, provide objective tests by which a given narrative may be weighed, but rather summaries of the ideologies of literary critics. He has argued that certain questions should be asked of the philosophical and descriptive natures of the text, but those questions are within a certain subcategory of worldview. For instance, in expounding on the tenets of
New Criticism he has insisted that the New Critics held that meaning could be extracted from the meaning of a work based upon its structure, and a critic need not only use the reactions of diverse audiences to a work.

Bressler explores all of the major accepted forms of modern literary criticism, and though his basic tenets are the same in regard to the basis of literary theory, Bressler ultimately focuses, not on the structural features of the development of a narrative work, but on the ideology and political perspective of different groups of literacy critics, such as New Critics, Feminists, Marxist, and so forth, rather than the progression and order of the narratives themselves. He deals only in passing with narrative structure apart from how it could be interpreted using a given Literary Theory. In this context, Bressler does not refer to Freytag’s pyramid or any similar plot analysis structure which is the main principle of the analysis I have chosen to explore.

Hans Bertens (2001), in his book, Literary Theory The Basics, makes an excellent point about Deconstructionist Theory that gives pause to the undercurrent of my analysis. He mentions that Deconstructionists have taken literary theory to a point that it appeared that nothing certain could be said about a text. It is interesting that the
fashions in literary theory which followed tend to focus upon on a single topic - race, class, sexuality, colonialism, or gender, and erect a series of abstract generalizations upon it. Bertens focuses much on the cultural aspect of the narrative and the worldviews of those interacting with it. Any bias, even unknown, in the reader’s psyche will have a large impact on what he brings to and walks away with from the text. His crux seems to be to convince a given reader or “critic” of his own bias bring brought to the text. This is true of digital media as well, though Bertens doesn’t focus on this. Digital media, simply by being the medium that it is, would also invite a viewer’s bias. He too does not address Freytag’s pyramidal structure and how a reader with a given bias may alter it; or how a reader, perhaps of a given race, may answer Bloom’s questions quite differently. The existence of reader/viewer bias is a fascinating one, but it has only a little to do with what this analysis strives to accomplish. Bertens doesn’t address the issue of longevity of narratives, be they written or digital. We are striving to deduce if the digital narrative has enough in common with its written predecessors to truly stand the test of time and hallow a place of its own in the narrative/storytelling timeline. Bertens doesn’t address permanence.
Distinguish Media within the Literary Tradition

Marie Laure-Ryan, in her 2001 book, *Narrative as Virtual Reality*, devotes large amounts of chapter space to the study of every genre of narrative. With a large focus on digital/virtual narrative, she leaves no stone unturned in her analysis of the modern story. She states in Chapter 8 that there are two fundamentally different conceptions of narrativity:

1) Those who build their ideas from complex literary texts and to whom narrative is a form of representation that varies with period and culture.

2) Those who study “simple stories” to whom narrative is a timeless and universal cognitive model by which we make sense of existence and human action.

Ryan reminds us in chapter one the word virtual is by no means intrinsically connected to the world of electronics, although it has come to be associated almost exclusively with computers within the last two decades. She points out that many feel virtual reality is a new and radical concept when in fact it has been present for infinitely longer. Words, she points out, *language* is the tool that has been at our disposal and without which, and even the most cutting edge of technologies would be mute. Ryan demonstrates that the virtual reality generated by
words on a page has not only been present for much longer than the virtual reality environments of the silicon age, but that it is also vastly superior to them. She embarks in Chapter 2 (and throughout her work) on a journey through the world of interactivity for digital experiences or narratives with which she can compare the written word.

Ryan has additionally argued that there are many foundational differences between written and virtual narrative. By allowing hypertext into the equation, there is a boundless availability of interactive possibilities. Literary narrative usually follows a fairly logical, linear pattern. “In a linear text the more we read the more we know about the textual world, the more we can anticipate developments—and the more pleasantly surprised we are when the outcome dodges our perceptions” (p. 259). Ryan questions if hypertext is truly the telling of a story or the dismantling of a narrative. “Hypertext authors conceived the strange new gift of interactivity as a way to free the novel, even more radically than postmodern works of the print variety had done, from patterns of signification inherited from the nineteenth century” (p. 265).

The hypotheses put forward in this book are as likely to mystify as they are to enlighten, as Ryan’s explorations
of the virtual are often somewhat subjective. Some readers are likely to be confused by the "Participatory Interactivity", while others will delight in its display of narrative architecture next to children's games and erotic scenarios. The sheer breadth and scope of Ryan's knowledge is staggering no doubt. That Ryan succeeds in bringing forth the very phenomenon she sets out to explore is clearly her greatest achievement. However, though an unquestionably thorough study, she does not spend more than a short amount of time examining the evaluation of “worth” between written and digital narrative.

Beyond Ryan’s 2001 volume, she also returns to the question of how narrative forms can be distinguished in a volume of collected essays she published in 2004. In this volume, she suggests how the narrative form shifts and changes as it moves from one medium to another. Hence, for Ryan, the kind of story that dominates face-to-face storytelling differs from the development of a story in photography, film, television, and digital communication systems.

Marie-Laure Ryan (2004) also wrote and gathered multiple essays on similar topics of the migration, evolution, and meaning of digital (and other) media in her book: Narrative Across Media: The Languages of
Storytelling. Ryan makes many insightful assertions in her essay Will new Media Produce New Narratives? She puts forth four different schools of thought about the relationship of narrative and digital media. 1) Those who feel digital narrative will reconfigure the narrative experience by using the readers as co-authors. 2) Those who hold that digital media is a new medium through which classic narrative will be revived. 3) Those that see narrative as a vehicle to gaming – the forthcoming narrative breakthrough. 4) Those that see digital narrative as a fragmentation of true narrative.

Ryan makes an excellent point about the interaction between reader, author, and character in literary narrative:

“If we derive aesthetic pleasure from the tragic fate of Anna Karenina, Hamlet, or Madame Bovary, if we cry for them and fully enjoy our tears... it is because our participation in the plot is a compromise between the first-person and the third-person perspective” (347).

It is one thing to read about this life, it would be an entirely different thing to live it. Ryan’s point is that some narratives are most fully enjoyed in their original form, as opposed to a type of Virtual Reality narrative brought to life.
Ryan spends extensive time examining narrative as it relates to, or could co-exist with computer-generative or computer-based interactions. Showing the relationship of computer-based games like The Sims, SimCity, and Babyz among others to their roots in historical narrative. Ryan’s research focuses heavily on the interactivity of the user with the narrative, and makes astute and groundbreaking assertions.

Though our topics are somewhat similar, the crux is very different. My purpose has little to do with any other type of narrative aside from user-generated narrative on the internet. In contrast, my effort is to isolate a single objective standard for both written and digital narrative. Can we use the same tests for both genres and elicit fair and objective results? Do those results even matter if the popularity outweighs the potential shortcomings? Are the two genres even similar enough to compare? All of these questions were not probed in the above publications. I will attempt to come to objective conclusions to all of them.

Shifting Media, Shifting Paradigms, and the growing Utility of Narrative as a Metaphor by W. Lance Haynes. Haynes begins his article by bringing to light the lack of attention that has been given to the practical application
of narrative. Innis (1972) was the first to theorize the importance of human thought and expression. With a student of Innis, McLuhan (1964, 1967) prompted legendary cryptic and probing contributions that along with Innis’s ideas are still both very much alive today. In this context, Haynes turned to Chesebro’s earlier work in 1989, and Haynes has argued that Chesebro has compared and contrasted storytelling and focuses on the differences brought on by mediation. Chesebro’s essay works in three parts: First, a review of the influences of writing-based cognitions may bind progress in rhetorical practice in theory into knots that the new media and a growing understanding that the orality slowly undo; Second, in examination of how some media in one sense or another could be considered media transcendent; Third, reflections of the nature of media shift.

Haynes states his argument by saying, “To say that the tradition of classical rhetoric invoke from orality is to risk over-simplifications. Classic rhetoric is by no means the rhetoric of oral cultures. It is the rhetoric of a writing based cognition that had been brewing for ten thousand years.” Haynes goes on to argue that writing based consciousness currently offers no good way to appraise its
oral ancestors nor will it serve us well in scrutinizing the new electronic media.

Naming is in some sense an abstraction. This style of telling a story took hundreds of years to take shape. A cave wall may have shown pictures of hunters hunting and killing their prey, but to the community the pictures may have told a much more complex story about the hunt. Haynes uses this example of the cave wall to point out just how simple the story looks, however it is far more complicated than the naked eye can see. There is no valid way to measure just how complex the story might be and classify or categorize it is unfair.

Haynes says, “to say that the mind has little use for abstraction is to claim that oral folk conceptualize in some irrational or nonlinear fashion. It is to observe simply that, without writing, experience is only representable as itself. Oral thought can be only about experience because, without writing, there is only experience for thought to be about.” Haynes goes on to say our culture is just beginning to show signs of a new tension between literary and electronic media.

Haynes continues, “the electronic media presents their messages in transient fashion. The permanence or fixity which writing bestows on messages dissolves as quickly in
electronic transmission as in speech and hearing. Messages are experienced phenomenally in video, in much the same fashion that we experience life itself despite the differing contexts of life and its video simulation, the rhetoric process is similar.”

Haynes’s essay adds value to the findings of traditional media compared to “new media” and its difficulties of being classified. The tests utilized cannot be the only means used to help identify quality narrative. These tests are repeatedly used and seem to repeatedly fail. Chesebro will continue along this vein with his insights on focus and medium.

In “Text, Narration, and Media,” Chesebro (1989) began this analysis by discussing the name change of *Literature in Performance* to *Text and Performance*. He states the name change might signal a critical shift in the scope of the publication. Walter J Ong has argued that the word “text” shifts attention from orality to literature. A shift in name would suggest the focus of the journal will change and begin to examine other topics such as pretext, textuality, visual texts and intextuality.

Chesebro goes on to suggest that the nature of the story telling experience changes dramatically depending upon the type of medium that is utilized to tell the story.
“As the medium of communication employed to tell the story changes, the essential nature of the story experience changes.

According to Chesebro every communication medium possesses its own grammar, rhetoric, and ethical principles. From one medium to another each set is displayed differently and measured differently. TV could be measured by one frame or shot that being the foundation and then you have the scene (series of scenes in one local) and sequence (series of scenes). Moreover as the shot moves through the series this too becomes an area of study. Print is basically just the word. Print essentially categorizes and requires audiences to conceive something particular. Chesebro chose these two mediums to show a sharp contrast as there two mediums have little in common.

Chesebro goes on to make an important point, “overall, without exaggeration, it seems appropriate to note that the type of media system employed defines what is perceived, how information is processed, the mode of inferences derived from external stimuli, the social patterns of interaction which unify and divide, ultimately creating different spheres of cultural and moral frames of reference.” The way the medium is transferred to recipient via media system does more than provide a substrate just
for digesting, media systems; transform ideas, and introduce new ways to consume media which in turn introduces new sensory and temporal-spatial relationships within. A media system cannot be discounted as the media would have no way to be displayed without it.

Chesbro categorizes media systems into three different categories; oral, literate, or electronic. Here are a few examples for each category:

Oral – Traditional in every culture but very limited. Limited by your group and limited by your memory.

Literacy – Shifts to arrangement and style. The printed narratives are stories from the past and are preserved on paper.

Electronic – Can combine all the above and can reach larger masses of audiences and can invoke response from multiple cultures and millions of people.

In conclusion Chesbro reminds us that the communicative experience is totally dependent on the medium that it uses. Which aligns nicely with my argument that using these different mediums even to tell the same story is very difficult to rate and many issues still remain. There are many ways in which media systems affect people in multiple different ways and depending on how they are interpreted will determine how they are classified.
Contemporary Articles Address Digital Shift

Xiaomei Cai (2001) in his essay “Is the Computer a Functional Alternative to Traditional Media” has argued that computers contribute to the displacement affect of how people spend their time with “new media.” He cites the examples of how people significantly reduced the amount of time they spent listening to the radio once television became common in the average household. Cai spends much of his essay writing about how this change has affected people and what impact it had has on traditional media. Cai seeks to address the question of, “Is the computer truly a functional alternative to other traditional media?”

In the time displacement studies, Cai specifically points out the clear evolution that has happened from when radio was at its peak in 1948, to its near demise by 1958 due to the advent of the television. Movie going attendance also saw decreased numbers. The impact of television on newspapers, magazines, and book reading has been less clear.

However, the computer has had clear affects on how much time people have spent reading newspapers or speaking on the telephone (Himmelweit, et al 1958). This led to the Functional Equivalence Principle first proposed by Himmelweit and her colleagues based on their television
studies stating if a new medium is perceived as being able to satisfy the same needs as the old medium, the old medium will potentially be replaced. The same discussions have taken place in regard to computers’ displacement effect on the television.

Cai goes on to complete a study by further evaluating the theory by measuring time spent by subjects on normal activities while removing, separately, the television and computer to see what impact it has on the media for which some have suggested has been replaced or at least significantly reduced. The expectation of the study was to prove that if you remove one of the items from the participant’s life, that the other media would increase in usage.

The outcome of the study proved to be confusing as it was expected that traditional media would increase when computer use was given up. However, there was little increase in the amount of time participants spent with traditional media. This outcome adds credit to the idea that nothing can replace the rich digital experience including traditional forms of narrative. When the television was removed an increase was noticed in the amount of time participants spent with traditional media and the theory was proven.
Cai does a good job in this study of identifying what we all recognize as shifts in traditional media habits. However his study could have produced better results had he pooled a larger group of participants without the caveats. This study shows a few similarities to my analysis of which the one that is most noteworthy is the idea that nothing can replace the digital experience.

Jonathan Steuer (1992) in his essay “Defining Virtual Reality: Dimensions Determining Telepresence” has argued that virtual reality has been presented in the popular press as a medium much like the television or telephone. However from the standpoint of communication researchers and others find this standard definition wrong on many levels. Steuver has argued, “It fails to provide a conceptual framework from which to make regulatory decisions, fails to provide an aesthetic from which to create media products, and fails to provide a method for consumers to rely on their previous experiences with other media understanding the nature of virtual reality.”

Steuver has argued that the key to define virtual reality in terms of human experience is in terms of presence. Presence is closely related to the phenomenon of distal attribution or externalization, which refer to referencing of our
perceptions to an external space beyond the limits of the sensory organs themselves. (Gibson, 1966)

Steuver goes on to maintain that when perception is completely controlled by a communication technology such as a virtual reality or one could assume anything digital that the user is forced to perceive or digest two separate environments. Users of multiple types of traditional and non-traditional communication tools have concluded that while reading a letter from a friend or talking to them over the phone they feel a sense of presence in both environments. The same is true for users of digital technology such as bulletin boards and video games. These findings help to justify how the term virtual reality can be examined in relation to other traditional media outlets as another tool that provides us with the traditional feel of presence.

Another tool to help determine presence is vividness. Vividness means the representational richness of a mediated environment as defined by its formal features; that is, the way in which an environment presents information to the senses. Vividness can be measured by two important variables; sensory breadth (the ability to present information across the different senses) and sensory depth
(the measurement of how deeply the sensory channels are affected). Using this measure Steuver has argued that traditional media such as TV, print, telephone and film are low in regard to breadth as they only touch two channels: sight and sound. Many video games today allow users to see and hear what they are doing through multiple channels, feel what they are doing through certain vibrations provided through a steering wheel or special chair and in some cases smell what is going on through air being piped out of the video game.

Vividness is typically described by the quality of an image measured by its depth. A telephone is set-up to just carry the most necessary sounds in order for one to understand what the person on the other line is saying. Therefore the telephone would be ranked very low in regard to vividness. In contrast the audio which was designed to transfer recorded music is capable of transferring much higher quality audio. The audio’s vividness would be graded higher to that of the phone do to the depth of its encoding. The same example can be given for TV as it is shot in a lower resolution as compared to film. New technologies continue to push this envelope.

Steuver also uses interactivity defined as how much a user can be involved or participate in the media.
Interactivity is of great concern to researchers as a measurement tool. One could combine the first two measurement tools Steuver uses in his study into just interactivity. However the reason the other two forms of measurement are needed is because interactivity doesn’t define how the medium can be experienced therefore media like the newspapers and books could be eliminated.

Steuver classifies three ways to measure interactivity through: speed (rate input can be assimilated), range (number of possibilities of actions), and mapping (ability of a system to map its controls to changes in different environments). Speed of interaction, or response time, is one important characteristic of an interactive media system (Shneiderman, 1992). The telephone is again a medium that allows you to map with whom you speak (one to one or conference) and you have real-time interaction via voice. Other media systems such as TV shows or movies allow no interaction at all as of the time of his writing this study. The range of interactivity is determined by the number of attributes in an environment that one is able to manipulate.

Stueer concludes as media technologies continue to improve all will enhance the sense of telepresence across virtual realities.
Steuer’s methods to measure virtual realities ran into the same struggles I experienced in my studies. By looking at the traditional characteristics of a narrative is simply not that useful in defining a sense of presence within a virtual reality or a digital narrative. Hence, while Steuer isolates some of the dimensions that create a sense of presence within a virtual reality and also suggests the way in which virtual realities are created, he slights the ways in which developments within a virtual reality can be considered to function as a narrative.

Standards for Comparing Types of Narratives

Sooner or later a litmus test must be applied to all of the content people are sharing. Anyone who wants to write can start a blog, anyone who wants to create can create a website just as anyone can post a video on YouTube, buy which narratives, written and digital, will stand the test of time. Which videos will our children recognize? Should we expect this newly created content, like its predecessor, will both educate its audience and push the envelope on this genre? Palfrey and Gasser (2008, p.7) state in their book Born Digital, “The choices that we are making now will govern how our children and grandchildren live their lives in many important ways: how they shape their identities... how to create, understand, and
shape the information... how they learn and innovate.” The content needs to be evaluated as objectively as possible to determine this. User-driven narrative is in a unique place to both reach a broader audience and create a viable user-centered community. This place has only been attainable within the last few years. As will be expounded upon later, the YouTube culture and the digital narrative as a whole could only flourish with the advent of three things:

1) Digital video recording technology (Digital Video Camera) that is both reasonably priced and easy to use.

2) A computer to capture the video and software that is both reasonably priced and easily to use.

3) The internet and a place to easily upload your video.

Since these three things are usually found in the average home, the age of Digital Media is truly beginning to flourish. The majority of YouTube users are not professional videographers, but rather an “average Joe” with a desire to connect and share with the digital community. Many of these “average Joes” have no idea they
are playing a part in the digital revolution that is helping to define what a narrative is today.

Conclusion

While there is no question there have already been masterful studies done and published on digital narratives’ place and continual evolution, I hope to explore ground only lightly tread before. By examining the building blocks of literary narratives, we will enlarge our field of vision to see if digital media will become “canonized” as its literary predecessors have. We will struggle with the question of meaning as it relates to worth, and attempt to juxtapose the two genres and explore what each offers the other.
CHAPTER 3:

Literary and Digital Narrative:

A Method for the Madness

This chapter outlines the methods by which two narrative genres can be compared. The method predominantly falls within the school of critical analyses, with its primary focus on the criteria and procedures used to identify the characteristics of and standards for comparing narrative genres. Specifically Freytag’s pyramid and Bloom’s questions are employed to compare and contrast the written and digital narrative; we are attempting to use the same standards to judge both genres. In this chapter, three narratives of three different literary genres will be measured against the criteria we have put forth. This will give us a sampling of written narrative, and show us if literature upholds the standards its critics put forth. While each genre ultimately is judged by standards unique to it, in order to compare them against each other, we must use the same criteria to judge. Quantitatively, we are judging the “meaningfulness” of a narrative. While
subjectivity cannot ever be totally put aside, adhering to these two tests will hopefully keep the subjectivity to a minimum.

However, it begs the question: Should digital narratives be expected and required to meet the same standards as literature in order to have worth? It is a question that is not answered easily and compounded by another question: Does literary narrative meet its own standards? These are both questions that we will seek to answer in this chapter and the final two chapters of this thesis.

In this chapter we will be tying together both the methods used for measurement as well as the outcomes of each. Though unorthodox to expound on both the measurements and outcomes in tandem, in this particular medium it is necessary. To delay the outcomes would be confusing as I am constantly drawing comparisons between many of the narratives. To be as clear as possible I have chosen to expound on both of them within this chapter.

How Literary Narrative is Judged

When a video is uploaded to YouTube, it can get easily lost in the myriad other videos, or it can be seen by over two million viewers within one week. There’s no other medium that can come close to that kind of mass outreach.
It can take a novel weeks to even reach the best-seller list, let alone top it. Some videos are so popular, their “stars” are invited on talk shows, given Facebook groups, or commercial contracts. Will the present generation remember “Charlie Bit Me” the way many of us remember “Where’s the beef?” Or will the popularity of YouTube be its own downfall? Only time will tell. In the literary community, there is a standard question of “How is a true classic determined?” the answer is commonly agreed on as its ability to stand the test of time.

An American Classic: To Kill a Mockingbird

When Harper Lee wrote To Kill a Mockingbird in 1960, she herself expected, “a quick and merciful death at the hands of the critics” (Lacher, 2005). In contrast, To Kill a Mockingbird was an immediate bestseller, and Lee became a Pulitzer Prize winner less than a year later. Selling over 30 million copies, it is valued both as much for its simplicity as its ability to evoke pathos from readers (Harper Collins, 2009). Though filled with humor and wit easily recognizable by many, its topics of racism, oppression, and injustice are handled with such grace it never feels preachy or depressing. Johnson (1991, p.16) has argued, “a recent study of best-sellers found that, between 1895 and 1975, To Kill a Mockingbird was the seventh best-
selling book in the United States, and the third best-selling novel.” Not at all bad considering the novel wasn’t published until mid-1960. (A mere 15 years before the ending year of Johnson’s study.) In 1991, a survey of lifetime reading habits conducted by the Book-of-the-Month Club and the Library of Congress found that “among the books mentioned by its 5,000 respondents, Harper Lee’s TKM was second only to the Bible in being ‘most often cited as making a difference’ in people’s lives’” (Johnson, 1991, p.13). But can this beloved novel still compete in an era whose general attention span can barely endure to the end of a podcast? Lee herself states, in a letter to Oprah Winfrey, “In an abundant society where people have laptops, cell phones, iPods and minds like empty rooms, I still plod along with books” (Lee, 2006, p.8). One of the many reasons To Kill a Mockingbird has received such widespread acclaim, is that it has followed many of the accepted literary forms for a narrative work. For as long as narratives have been written, they have been framed on a similar skeleton known as dramatic structure devised by Gustav Freytag. Most narratives can be divided into 5 parts or “acts.”

Explanation of Freytag’s Pyramid – Test One

The Exposition – This provides the background information needed to properly understand the story, such
as the protagonist, the antagonist, the basic conflict, and the setting. The exposition ends with the inciting moment, which is the incident that without there would be no story. The inciting moment sets the remainder of the story in motion beginning with the second “act”, the rising action. The Rising Action - Herein the basic conflict is complicated by the introduction of related secondary conflicts, including various obstacles that frustrate the protagonist’s attempt to reach his goal. Secondary conflicts can include adversaries or events of lesser importance than the story’s antagonist, who may work with the antagonist or separately, by and for themselves.

The Climax - Usually a turning point, which marks a change, for the better or the worse, in the protagonist’s affairs. (If the story is a comedy, things will have gone badly for the protagonist up to this point; now, the tide, so to speak, will turn, and things will begin to go well for him or her. If the story is a tragedy, the opposite state of affairs will ensue, with things going from good to bad for the protagonist.)

The Falling Action- During the falling action, the conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist unravels, with the protagonist winning or losing against
the antagonist. The falling action might contain a moment of final suspense, during which the final outcome of the conflict is in doubt.

The Denouement - The comedy ends with a dénouement (a conclusion) in which the protagonist is better off than at the story’s outset. The tragedy ends with a catastrophe in which the protagonist is worse off than at the beginning of the narrative.

To Kill a Mockingbird - Applying Freytag’s Pyramid

When Freytag’s pyramid is applied to To Kill a Mockingbird the tenets of dramatic structure appear to be vividly and precisely followed.

Exposition: Introduction of the Time Period (Great Depression)

Genealogy and Background of the Finch Family

Given the true beginning of the story “It began the summer Dill came to us, when Dill first gave us the idea of making Boo Radley come out.”

Rising Action: Dill Arrives

Children become more interested in Boo Radley

Boo initiates contact
Atticus accepts Tom Robinson as a client. “Simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one’s mine, I guess.”

**Climax:** Tom Robison is found guilty despite Atticus’s ironclad defense. “I peeked at Jem: his hands were white from gripping the balcony rail, and his shoulders jerked as if each ‘guilty’ was a separate stab between them.”

**Falling Action:** Tom Robinson is shot

Mr. Ewell assaults the children

Boo saves the children’s lives by killing Mr. Ewell

The Sheriff decides to cover up for Boo “I never heard tell that it’s against the law for a citizen to do his utmost to prevent a crime from being committed, which is exactly what he did.”

**Dénouement:** Scout sees things from Boo’s perspective as she walks him home after he saves her life. “Neighbors bring food with death, and flowers with sickness, and other things in-between. Boo was our neighbor. He gave us two soap dolls, a broken watch and chain, a pair of good-luck pennies, and our lives. But neighbors give in return. We never put back into the tree what we had taken out of it. We had given him nothing, and it made me sad.”

Harold Bloom – Biography and Recognition

Why is his view worth more than others?

Harold Bloom was born in 1930 and was educated at Cornell and Yale Universities. He has written more than 20 books and edited or written the introductions for more than
One of his best-known works, The Anxiety of Influence, postulates a titanic Oedipal struggle in which great writers interpret and revolt against their literary fathers, a theme developed in A Map of Misreading, Poetry and Repression, and Agon.

Bloom has also written studies of many individual authors, such as Shelley, Blake, Yeats, Wallace Stevens, and Shakespeare. His wide-ranging literary concerns are represented in The Western Canon, in which Bloom analyzes the works of 26 great masters; in How to Read and Why, in which he presents a manual for literary enjoyment and enlightenment; and in Genius, in which he explores the accomplishments of 100 great writers. In addition to many academic and literary honors, Bloom was awarded a 1985 MacArthur fellowship. He is considered a scholar and genius among all of his peers, and sets the modern standard of literary criticism. Bloom’s “three criteria” take the form of three critical questions to be asked of any narrative work:

1. Does the work give meaning or order to the human experience?
2. Does the work explore a cultural value?
3. Does the work demand an emotional response?
Applying Bloom’s Three Criteria to *To Kill a Mockingbird*

There is no question that *To Kill a Mockingbird* falls into the category of “narrative.” But the novel is also considered a “classic” and, as such, has held up under strong inspection and critique. Harold Bloom set forth three criteria that are a requirement in order for a work to be considered a narrative.

Question one, *Does the work give meaning or order to the human experience?* -- addresses the work’s ability to remind the reader of his own purpose. It’s a tall order for any novel to give meaning to human life; however, *Mockingbird* answers this question with numerous examples. The best being when Atticus gives young Scout, age six, some sage and adult advice. “If you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it” (Lee, 1960, p. 24). This is a lesson that teaches Scout one of the most irrefutable human truths - not to judge others until you
have all of the facts. The lesson is not lost on Scout evidenced in the last few paragraphs of the book as she walks Boo Radley home. “Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them. Just standing on the Radley porch was enough” (Lee, 1960,p.279).

Bloom’s second question—Does the work explore a cultural value? --is perhaps a little more subjective given the reader’s personal culture. However, it would be hard to argue against cultural exploration in this narrative. The crux of the book is the unthinkable idea of a white girl being attracted to a black man, and a black man feeling sorry for a white girl. During the time period in which Mockingbird was set, the social mores didn’t allow for departure from the status quo. Atticus states in his closing argument to the jury, “She did something that in our society is unspeakable: she kissed a black man” (Lee, 1960, p.204). Not only does this remind the reader of an era not all that far behind them, but it serves to remind him of the need for and importance of cultural shifts. Bloom’s question doesn’t ask the narrative to necessarily resolve the cultural value, merely to explore it.
Bloom’s third question, *Does the work demand an emotional response?* -- is probably the easiest to address in any narrative. “Emotion” is a broad and subjective term, and nearly every form of every narrative could be described as “emotional” by a given reader. However, some narratives make the textual search for meaning much easier. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is one of these. Various facets of the novel evoke different emotions. From the humor of Scout’s asking her Uncle to pass the “damn ham” to the agony of defeat the children feel when Atticus loses Tom Robinson’s case. A good novel will address at least one major human emotion. A timeless novel will address nearly all of them.

**Narrative Two – The Lady or the Tiger**

Though most narratives follow Freytag’s pyramid in every tenet, there have been successful departures. A short story by Frank Stockton entitled “The Lady or the Tiger” leaves nearly half of the pyramid to the imagination of the reader. In the story, the King of an ancient land utilized an unusual form of administering justice for offenders in his kingdom. The offender would be placed in an arena in which his only way out would be to go through one of two
doors. Behind one door was a beautiful woman hand-picked by the king and behind the other was a fierce tiger. The offender was then asked to pick one of the doors, without knowing what was behind it. If he picked the door with the woman behind it, then he was declared innocent but was also required to marry the woman, regardless of previous marital status. If he picked the door with the tiger behind it, though, then he was deemed guilty and the tiger would rip him to pieces.

One day the king found that his daughter, the princess, had taken a lover far beneath her station. The king could not allow this and so he threw the offender in prison and set a date for his trial in the arena. On the day of his trial the suitor looked to the princess for some indication of which door to pick. The princess, did, in fact, know which door concealed the woman and which one the tiger, but was faced with a conundrum. If she indicated the door with the tiger, then the man she loved would be killed on the spot; however, if she indicated the door with the lady, her lover would be forced to marry another woman and even though he would be alive she would never be with him.
again. Finally she does indicate a door, which the suitor then opens.

At this point a question is posed to the reader, "And so I leave it with all of you: Which came out of the opened door - the lady or the tiger?" The question is not answered, and is left as a thought experiment regarding human nature.

The Lady or the Tiger - Freytag’s pyramid and Bloom’s questions

Following Freytag’s pyramid, this short narrative ends exactly at the climax. According so, this would render the story ineffective at reaching its audience. However, it more likely has the entirely opposite effect. In fact, Stockton was often quoted as saying that he was hounded nearly all of his life for the answer to the question with which he ended his short story. Stockton’s short story also answers Blooms three questions.

“The Lady or the Tiger” gives meaning to the human experience easily. The most universal feeling regardless of race, class, language or culture is love. It
the theme of most great works of literature in some way, shape, or form. The gardener’s willingness to risk everything to pursue the person he loves is certainly something with which most readers can relate on some level.

“The Lady or the Tiger” explores a cultural value very different than any within our own milieu. The idea that: 1) such an important decision could be left to chance with no real order to the justice system or 2) a potentially innocent person could endure an unfair and gruesome death would not be tolerated in much of the Western world. However, being outside of our culture and potentially even our realm of understanding makes it that much more enticing. It perhaps makes the reader question the order of our own justice system and its potential flaws.

“The Lady or the Tiger” demands an emotional response different from the typical short story. Because of Stockton’s ending the tale at the moment the reader is most invested, it became that much more memorable. One must assume the emotion felt by most readers would be frustration or curiosity. Though Harper Lee and Frank
Stockton certainly used different methods, both narratives follow the tenets of Freytag’s Pyramid and Bloom’s Narrative Questions.

**Narrative Three – “Breath”**

However, the last literary example, Samuel Beckett’s “Breath”, varies greatly from the first two narratives. Samuel Beckett was an Irish writer, dramatist, and poet. Beckett's work offers a bleak outlook on human culture and both formally and philosophically became increasingly minimalist as his literary career progressed. Beckett is considered by many to be one of the last modernists; as an inspiration to many later writers, he is sometimes considered one of the first post-modernists. He is also considered one of the key writers in the "Theatre of the Absurd".

Whereas traditional theatre attempts to create a photographic representation of “life as we see it”, the Theatre of the Absurd aims to create a ritual-like, mythological, archetypal, allegorical vision, closely related to the world of dreams. The focal point of these dreams is often man's fundamental bewilderment and
confusion, stemming from the fact that he has no answers to the basic existential questions: Why we are alive, Why we have to die, and Why there is injustice and suffering.

Ionesco defined the absurdist everyman as “Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots . . . lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless” (Ionesco, 1988). The Theatre of the Absurd, in a sense, attempts to reestablish man’s communion with the universe.

Dr. Jan Culik (2001) writes, “Absurd Theatre can be seen as an attempt to restore the importance of myth and ritual to our age, by making man aware of the ultimate realities of his condition, by instilling in him again the lost sense of cosmic wonder and primeval anguish. The Absurd Theatre hopes to achieve this by shocking man out of an existence that has become trite, mechanical and complacent. It is felt that there is mystical experience in confronting the limits of human condition”

Beckett, being a postmodern/Theater of the Absurd author, provides an even greater variant to the established literary narrative. The entire text of the drama follows:
CURTAIN

1. Faint light on stage littered with miscellaneous rubbish. Hold about five seconds.
2. Faint brief cry and immediately inspiration and slow increase of light together reaching maximum together in about ten seconds. Silence and hold for about five seconds.

3. Expiration and slow decrease of light together reaching minimum together (light as in 1) in about ten seconds and immediately cry as before. Silence and hold about five seconds.

CURTAIN

RUBBISH
No verticals, all scattered and lying.

CRY
Instant of recorded vagitus[a birth cry] BracketsMine. Important that two cries be identical, switching on and off strictly synchronized light and breath.

BREATH
Amplified recording.

MAXIMUM LIGHT
Not bright. If 0 = dark and 10 = bright, light should move from about 3 to 6 and back.

Even for Beckett, whose later plays were often extremely short, Breath is an unusually terse work. Its length can be estimated from Beckett's detailed instructions in the script to be about 25 seconds. That the play is controversial should be no surprise. Beckett's
austere, tragi-comic works are notorious for dividing critical opinion and for flouting the theatrical conventions of time, plot and character.

Beckett’s Narrative/Dramatic History

When his now famous "Waiting for Godot" was first staged nearly 50 years ago, critics ridiculed the story of two tramps who do nothing but hang out together and bicker. The characters of the play are strange caricatures who have difficulty communicating the simplest of concepts to one another as they bide their time awaiting the arrival of Godot. The language they use is often ludicrous, and following the cyclical pattern, the play seems to end in precisely the same condition it began, with no real change having occurred. In fact, it is sometimes referred to as the play where nothing happens. Its detractors count this a fatal flaw and often turn red in the face commenting on its inadequacies. It is mere gibberish, they cry, eyes nearly bulging out of their head—a prank on the audience disguised as a play. The plays supporters, on the other hand, describe it is an accurate parable on the human condition in which “the more things change, the more they are the same.” Change, they argue, is only an illusion
It went on to achieve international fame and has been translated into several languages. It is regularly featured in critics’ lists of plays of the century.

Unlike *Mockingbird* and “The Lady or the Tiger”, Beckett’s dramas challenge even the most open minds of literary narrative. Can something be a narrative that has a complete absence of dialogue or in which “nothing happens”? Let us apply the two litmus tests to “Breath” that we have applied to the previous narratives.

**Breath – Freytag’s Pyramid**

Utilizing Freytag’s Pyramid one could possibly argue the following:

- **Exposition** – Trash littered about the stage
- **Rising Action** – Beginning of brief cry
- **Climax** – Height of brief cry along with strong lighting
- **Falling Action** – Expiration of brief cry and light
- **Dénouement** – Silence

“Breathe” – Bloom’s questions

Bloom’s three questions pose a harder challenge. However, in keeping with the philosophies of the “Theater of the Absurd” I have made the following conclusions: In looking at the play, one can argue that the
very essence of Beckett’s work is to question the entire meaning of human experience. *What is the point of our existence when it is merely a “breath” in light of the Universe, and all we do is leave rubbish in our wake?*

As far as exploration of a cultural value – what is more universal than the struggle for meaning? Authors have been grappling with this topic for thousands of years. Walt Whitman (1855) writes, “O me! O life! Of the questions of these recurring, of the endless trains of the faithless, of cities filled with the foolish... what good amid these, O me, O life?” (Whitman, 1855). The same themes are found in narratives across the world from the *I Ching* to *Notes from the Underground*. Beckett’s message, though wordless, is still effectively communicated.

**Conclusion**

The three works analyzed in this chapter were selected, because they represent such diverse literary styles within the narrative genre. Some of my choices have met and exceeded the tests put forth, others have left them unfinished or perhaps been stretched for a possible fit. The benefit these works have, is that they have all already been recognized for their *worth*. In a sense, they have already met enough criteria across many disciplines to be
rendered “classic.” This is highly advantageous for the literary narrative, but will leave the digital narrative at a disadvantage.
Chapter 4:
Digital Media and the Digital Narrative:
The YouTube Generation and their Contribution to
Digital Narrative

This chapter will provide an overview of Digital storytelling, as well as the history and impact of one of the crowning jewels of digital media: YouTube. Just as three literary examples were examined in the previous chapter, three digital examples will be examined using the same criteria.

The History of Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling is the practice of combing narrative with digital content, including images, sounds, and video, to create a story with a strong emotional component. Many things fall into this category from a highly refined movie with special audio and visual effects to a set of slides or PowerPoint with narration to communicate a basic digital story. Digital Storytelling, as well as other forms of recorded media also highly engages the audience, as the medium requires extra thought on the part of the narrator to effectively get his point across. Just as literary narratives were examined in the previous
chapter, this chapter examines three popular YouTube videos, and uses the same tests to adjudicate. Other videos will be examined as well, though not as in-depth, to illustrate the effects of digital media on digital storytelling. The two are obviously not mutually exclusive as digital storytelling must consist of digital media, but all digital media is not a digital story. There are videos of both genres, digital media and digital storytelling, examined in this chapter.

Unlike cinematic productions, most digital stories are individual events. New, more user friendly video editing software has helped those with little to no technical background create digital stories. With as little as a recording device and a microphone, and a few software programs - the mass of men can begin the digital narrative process.

Most narratives begin with a story or “script.” After this step, a typical narrative begins the revision process. Digital Storytelling however, then assembles different kinds of rich media to support the scripted idea and emotions. This convergence may include music, audio effects, or video to name a few. Typically a digital story is somewhat shorter than a Cinematic type feature. But
digital storytelling still holds to its roots of oral storytelling – entertainment and knowledge transfer. Though expressed differently, it is still promoting the sharing of stories – on which people, and communities, can build or strengthen their identities, pass on traditions, and construct new ideas.

As much of the new technology does, many are skeptical of the digital storytelling format of the new technology. However, especially in educational settings, it is growing into a valuable component of learning. It can provide what other mediums lack, including an effective integration of technology with learning and an emotional connection to that content. As more people embrace digital storytelling, the tide will shift toward injecting digital stories with stronger, even more thoroughly developed narratives. Digital storytelling should be seen as a potential bridge between disciplines, rather than a superfluity in some.

Creating and watching digital stories has the potential to increase the information literacy of a wide range of people. Moreover, digital stories are a “natural fit” for the modern portfolio, allowing the user not only to select representative facets from their academic careers
but also to create compelling resources that demonstrate learning and growth. As technology changes, so does the users adaptation of it. Kelly (2008) has argued:

After all, this is how authors work. We dip into a finite set of established words, called a dictionary, and reassemble these found words into articles, novels, and poems that no one has ever seen before. The joy is recombining them. What we do now with words, we’ll soon do with images.

What this user-friendly technology has allowed is a broader definition of narrative. In a society whose greatest pride is its esoteric values, critics are seldom willing to risk claiming something isn’t what the author says it is. With both this thought and the preceding chapter in mind, we will use the same two “controls” that we used to judge literary narrative. It has become apparent that these controls are not infallible, yet they still reveal much about the history and future of storytelling.

The History of YouTube

YouTube was created by three former PayPal employees who shot a video at a dinner party and found it hard to share with others. YouTube began as an angel funded
technology startup (similar to Venture Capitalists, but they invest their own money), with help including a $11.5 million investment by Sequoia Capital between November 2005 and April 2006. YouTube's early headquarters were situated above a pizzeria and Japanese restaurant in San Mateo, California. The domain name www.youtube.com was activated on February 15, 2005, and the website was developed over the subsequent months. The first YouTube video was entitled Me at the zoo, and shows founder Jawed Karim at San Diego Zoo. The video was uploaded on April 23, 2005, and can still be viewed on the site (Wikipedia, YouTube, 2009).

YouTube offered the public a beta test of the site in May 2005, six months before the official launch in November 2005. The site grew rapidly, and in July 2006 the company announced that more than 65,000 new videos were being uploaded every day, and that the site was receiving 100 million video views per day. According to data published by market research company ComScore, YouTube is the dominant provider of online video in the United States, with a market share of around 43 percent and more than five billion videos viewed in January 2009 (Becker, 2009). It is estimated that 13 hours of new videos are uploaded to the
site every minute, and that in 2007 YouTube consumed as much bandwidth as the entire Internet in 2000 (Carter, 2008). Before the launch of YouTube in 2005, there were few simple methods available for ordinary computer users who wanted to post videos online. With its extreme ease of use, YouTube made it possible for anyone who could use a computer to post a video that millions of people could watch within a few minutes. The wide range of topics covered by YouTube has turned video sharing into one of the most important parts of Internet culture. In 2006, Time featured a YouTube screen with a foil mirror as its annual 'Person of the Year', featuring the site's originators along with several content creators. YouTube had achieved international fame and was about to achieve the American Dream.

YouTube’s worth revealed

In October 2006, Google Inc. announced that it had acquired YouTube for 1.65 billion in Google stock, and the deal was finalized in November. To put that number in perspective, is what Target paid for 257 Mervyns Department Stores and four distribution centers in 13 states, and only a small amount more than WPP Group paid for the Grey Global
Group advertising Network with over 10,000 employees in 83 countries generating 1.3 billion in revenue (Garfield, 2008). YouTube proved its place in our modern culture with last summer’s CNN YouTube debates. The Democratic and Republican candidates both fielded questions from “real” people, giving the feeling, at least, of a little less political rhetoric. It is one thing to tell Anderson Cooper your plans for healthcare, but quite another to a breast cancer survivor. This format also engaged a younger audience, as many of those posing questions used cartoons, puppets, or props to help make their point.

YouTube Videos Soar in Popularity

According to Richard MacManus (2007) of ReadWriteWeb, the most popular video of all time on YouTube is “Evolution of Dance” (Macmanus, 2007) It was added to YouTube on April 06, 2006 and has since gone on to attract over 111 Million views. It's had over 60,000 comments, the first of which was: "That was freaking AWESOME! Thanks for sharing!!" The comments for this video are still going strong today - the latest 10 comments have all come in the last 60 minutes, as of writing. Plus it's been favorited over 250,000 times (making it the number 1 Top “Favorited”
The star of the video is Judson Laipply, a comedian/motivational speaker from Ohio. The video shows him dancing a six-minute routine encompassing thirty-two songs spanning more than fifty years of music and dance. In many ways this is a typical YouTube video - a funny, goofy, short and clever video, in this case uploaded by and starring a professional comedian. One would be hard pressed to try and find any type of storyline or theme to this video. Could one song, or dance genre be considered the Exposition, and another the climax? Even the most open minded of digital storytellers would have a hard time answering that question - and their answers would likely be very different. Bloom’s questions too would be hard to answer.

Bloom’s questions - Evolution of Dance

Does the work give meaning or order to the human experience? As previously stated, there is no arguable theme for this video. To give “meaning or order” one must strip away the tangential to the core of the work. However, the beauty of this video is the utter lack of core element. Bloom’s second question, Does the work explore a cultural value? is perhaps more easily answered. Many cultures express themselves through music and dance, and enjoy
reminiscing previous “fads.” The term “value” strictly defined is akin to a “moral belief.” Evolution of Dance doesn’t address any type of value or value system, but it could be argued that the humor enjoyed by both the original audience and the millions of viewers, give it cultural relevance. Leading into Bloom’s last question, Does the work demand an emotional response? This is the easiest question for Evolution of Dance to answer. There is no doubt that nearly every person who would view this video would find it humorous. Many of the greatest narratives written used comedy as a form of dramatic response. Evolution of Dance can confidently be given a one out of three in Bloom’s theory. But does this fact negate its obvious popularity? Does this, and the inability to be graphed on Freytag’s Pyramid, exclude it from the genre of narrative – be it written or digital? I am forced to conclude that, by the use of these objective standards, it does not meet the necessary requirements to be called a true narrative. Though I, like 55 million of my peers, may find this video both humorous and entertaining, the video fails the litmus tests to which I have stated I would abide.
Various videos on YouTube have Mass Appeal

The lion-share of videos on YouTube seem to be in the same vein as “Revolution of Dance.” Videos made by amateurs and professionals alike reaching out to a new and diverse audience. A video seeing its height of popularity presently is a video by comedian Ann Renfroe called “Momsense.” She attempts to put everything said by a mother to her children in a given 24 hour period, into a three minute song.

“Answer the phone. Get off the phone. Don’t sit so close. Turn it down. No texting at the table. Stop crying or I’ll give you something real to cry about. And tomorrow we will do this all again, because a mom’s work never ends” being a few of the highlights of her original piece. Over 4 million views in the first month prompted diaper giant Luvs to offer her a lucrative contract using portions of the song in their commercials. Interestingly, her sequel “Dadsense” received even more views. After a nearly three minute introduction to the song – mentioning many fathers who felt left out by the “Mom song” she shares her version written especially for Dads. The song however, is significantly shorter saying only, “Ask your mom. Ask your Mom. Ask your mom. Ta-da!” A month later, proving that imitation is the
most sincere form of flattery (and popularity), in true
YouTube fashion, a response was made to “Mom song” by user
Vvanpetten called the “Kid’s Response.” “There’s my cell
phone, it’s a text, I’ll have to BRB. LOL, CU later, take
me to the mall. Wait one second I have to take this call. I
hear breathing mom, is that you on my call? While you’re
here though, can I have money for the mall?” Though these
would be nearly impossible to chart on Freytag’s pyramid,
certainly a common narrative theme is appealing to foibles
and stereotypes. There is certainly no question about these
videos’ appeal.

The British pop group “OK Go” unknowingly vaulted
themselves to the top of the Billboard charts when they
posted their music video “Here it Goes Again” to YouTube.
The video is an elaborate performance of the band on
treadmills in a single continuous take. The video debuted
in July of 2006, and as of writing has been viewed over 45
million times making it the eleventh most viewed video on
YouTube. It is the seventh most “Favorited.” It received an
award from YouTube in 2006 recognizing it as the “Most
Creative Video” and also won a 2007 Grammy Award for “Best
Short Form Music Video.” This video alone is responsible
for many viewers’ only exposure to the group and their music. It was able to reach an audience via a digital outlet that would be impossible anywhere else. Upon watching the video, one can easily see the reasons a viewer is drawn to it. Other videos, however, are a little harder to understand upon first sight.

Charlie the Unicorn - Synopsis

Another hugely popular YouTube video is “Charlie the Unicorn.” In this video, a pink unicorn and a blue unicorn badger a white unicorn named Charlie into going to a location known as Candy Mountain. On the way to Candy Mountain, the pink and blue unicorn get guidance from the magical Leopluradon - a dinosaur that speaks an unidentifiable language that Charlie can't understand. After getting directions from the Leopluradon, the pink and blue unicorns lead Charlie to a bridge, which is "like covered in splinters." After crossing the bridge, Charlie and the other two unicorns arrive at Candy Mountain. Although the pink and blue unicorns beg Charlie to go inside the Candy Mountain cave, he refuses to enter. The two unicorns then get help from the letters C, A, N, D, and Y. Letter Y serenades Charlie with a song about Candy Mountain, while the other four letters dance along to the
catchy tune. When the song ends, the dancing letters spontaneously combust. Charlie was persuaded by the dancing letters and his annoying pink and blue friends to go inside the Candy Mountain cave. While entering the cave, Charlie's friends give him a smug goodbye, and he suddenly becomes concerned. Just as he tries to back out, the cave entrance closes. Charlie struggles to find his way in the dark as he starts hearing footsteps. Some fighting sound effects are heard, and in the next scene, Charlie wakes up in the meadow with a huge, bleeding gash across his lower abdomen. He finally realizes what his friends were up to.

Charlie The Unicorn (posted on YouTube by user/creator SecretAgentBob) is the twenty-eighth most watched video of all time, and the seventh most watched in the "Comedy" category. It is also the fifteenth most "favorited" video on YouTube. The video was created, animated and voiced by Jason Steele of Filmcow.com. As of writing it has over 34 million views. There is no question that Charlie the Unicorn has become a cult classic. You can buy "Charlie" merchandise, join over 30 "Charlie" Facebook groups, and even upload his picture as an icon for your computer.
However, popularity doesn’t necessarily mean value. Let us apply the first of our narrative litmus tests.

Charlie the Unicorn: Applying Freytag’s Pyramid

**Exposition** - The Blue and Pink Unicorns try to convince Charlie to go to Candy Mountain. “It will be an adventure. We’re going on an adventure!” “It’s a land of sweets and joy, and joyness!”

**Rising Action** - The unicorns meet the Leoplurodon

The unicorns cross the Magical Bridge

“It’s just over this magical bridge of Hope and Wonder!”

**Climax** -

The Unicorns arrive at Candy Mountain

“Well what do you know, there actually is a Candy Mountain.”

**Falling Action** - The Candy Mountain song

Charlie agrees to go inside the cave

“I’ll go inside the freaking Candy Cave. This had better be good!”

**Dénouement** -

Charlie wakes up without a kidney

“Aw, they took my freaking kidney!”
Charlie the Unicorn is so popular in fact, that it launched the creator, Jason Steele, to immediate fame and prompted him to create a sequel “Charlie the Unicorn 2: Charlie visits the Banana King.” As of writing, the sequel has nearly 12 million views. Though certainly different than the Pyramid of To Kill a Mockingbird, “Charlie the Unicorn” easily conforms to the requirements of Freytag’s definition of narrative.

Charlie the Unicorn – Bloom’s Three Questions

*Does the work give meaning or order to the human experience?* After multiple view of this video I was hard pressed to find meaning or order to any of it. However, I felt the same way upon my first read of Beckett’s “Breath.” Thinking along the same existential lines, one could argue that the entire video is a picture of futility. Like Beckett’s “Godot” it’s the absurdity of the voyage to Candy Mountain, the talking Leopluradon, and the naïveté of the Blue and Pink Unicorn that appeal to today’s generation. If Beckett’s work showed us anything, it’s that the lack of “meaning” is entirely acceptable as narrative and as entertainment.
Does the work explore a cultural value? After examining this question from many viewpoints, including a post-modern, absurdist view, I was still unable to find or assign any type of cultural value/more to “Charlie the Unicorn.” After much internet research, no evidence was found to support a cultural value found in this work.

Does the work demand an emotional response? Like the videos cited before, “Charlie the Unicorn” certainly provides entertainment and humor to those who view it. We’ve established humor to be both a viable emotion and used by many literary forerunners to the digital genre.

A liberal view would award “Charlie the Unicorn” two out of three positive answers to Bloom’s questions for narratives. Coupled with its clear assimilation of Freytag’s Pyramid, it provides the strongest case of meeting the objective standards provided. Using these objectives alone, “Charlie the Unicorn” qualifies as a viable narrative.

One World – Synopsis

The last video we will examine is a video called “One World.” Posted by user MadV, a contributor who silently performs magic tricks while wearing a Guy Fawkes mask, put
up a short cryptic video. He held his hand to the camera, showing that he’d written on his palm: “One Word.” Then he urged viewers to respond. “This is an invitation, to make a stand, to make a statement, to make a difference. Join in. Be part of something. Post your response now.” The video was only 41 seconds long, but it caught people’s imagination. Within a few days hundreds of YouTube users had posted videos displaying their own scrawled messages. “Don’t Quit!” “Tread Gently” “Think” “Carpe Diem” and “Hold Me” to name a few. The One World campaign also influenced a new website www.Handmessages.com, where members of the public are invited to continue posting messages written on their hands, though it is unclear to what extent MadV himself is involved with this website.

Soon there were over 2,000 replies, making it the most responded to video in YouTube’s history. MadV then stitched many of them together to create one long, voiceless and powerful montage. All of these people across the globe convey something incredibly evocative while remaining completely mute.

Thompson (2008), has argued:
“What exactly is this? It isn’t quite a documentary; it isn’t exactly a conversation or a commentary either. And it would have been inconceivable before the Internet and cheap webcams – prohibitively expensive and difficult to pull off.”

Like “Revolution of Dance”, “One World” is impossible to graph on Freytag’s Pyramid. No one message is given more importance than another, and each viewer may assign a different “climax” to the montage depending upon their given backgrounds.

One World - Bloom’s Three Questions

Does the work give meaning or order to the human experience? This answer is an unequivocal yes. Most replies written in the response were different, but even those that were exactly the same or similar still showed the user’s unique interpretation of their response. Also, the users of the video are reminded of the humanness or “sameness” of all across the globe. Though different in every other way, humans at their core want many of the same (usually simple) things.

Does the work explore a cultural value? Were we to plot Bloom’s questions on a Venn Diagram, the answers would
overlap consistently. Similar to the answer to the first of Bloom’s questions, though each culture can have different sets of values, there seems to be some universality in the search for one wish for all of the other humans in the world. It is only when one is connected to one’s core, that one is connected to others. MadV’s challenge of “One World” forces those wanting to respond to look to their core, to address their utmost center values to find one word or short phrase to encapsulate their worldview.

Does the work demand an emotional response? This is, perhaps, the easiest of Bloom’s questions to answer in this instance. Just as with Lee’s “Mockingbird”, the emotions the viewer feels while watching the video run the gambit. From sadness to elation, from poignant to amusing – the viewer is reminded that many other people across the globe have the same concerns and struggles as they do. In fact, Atticus’s words to Scout seem to resound clearly. “You never really understand a person until you walk around in his skin…” (Lee, 1960, p.11).

Although we were unable to graph “One World” on Freytag’s pyramid I argue that it holds its “own” according to Bloom’s questions. “One World” is also a great example of not only the potential for diversity in a narrative but
the potential for adding interactive diversity to a narrative which would tend to be much harder for a traditional narrative. “One World” as a “new” digital narrative was the idea of just one person for which never “bared fruit” until its viewers decided to add to the work. Without its viewer’s interactions this work would not have had much impact and perhaps we wouldn’t be talking about it today.

Conclusion

Digital storytelling is no doubt different than its literary counterparts, but I did not find the results any more varied than the results of the literary narratives. Some of the digital narratives were inapplicable to the tests chosen, but this also held true with the former examples. If anything, this showed us the subjectivity of the tests themselves and the many variables of this study, as will be expounded in the upcoming chapters. What we have seen proven is the extreme sense of community and contribution of those involved with the digital narrative. So much so that even the viewing numbers listed here will have risen drastically by the time this paper is submitted. Only a digital medium could vary so much within such a short period of time.
Chapter 5:

Objective and Subjective Issues
Is Any Test Truly Reliable in this Medium?

This chapter provides an overview of the substance of the analysis guiding this study. This chapter first identifies the major conclusions that can be derived from the analysis contained in this thesis. In addition, this chapter provides an assessment of limitations of this analyses as well as recommendations for how some of these limitations might be overcome in subsequent studies.

Major Substantive Conclusions
Derived from this Analysis

Unlike “hard science”, social science is a little more forgiving in its hypothesis conclusions. Hard science must arrive at a black and white/yes or no conclusion or the study itself may be considered ineffective. Though some of the narratives (both written and digital) failed our tests, does that render them useless?

I don’t feel it does. When literary narrative first crossed from purely didactic to the addition of entertainment, the same question was asked. Each genre is going to push the envelope of the previous. Society as an organism is constantly changing and growing, and for narratives not to keep the pace puts it at risk for total
loss. As was mentioned in a previous chapter, Samuel Beckett’s plays were at first considered preposterous. Now they’re studied and produced across the world. (Including at Ball State’s University Theatre – March 1-5, 2009)

Harper Lee fully expected her novel to be slaughtered by the first readers. No one, not even the authors, have a true idea of how their work will be perceived; just as Jason Steele probably had no premonition of the following “Charlie the Unicorn” would inspire.

Who is participating in the digital medium?

A recent study by Accenture of 1,600 Americans found that thirty-eight percent of respondents wanted to create or have created and shared some content online (Garfield, 2008). This helps us understand the cult following of “Charlie the Unicorn” and “Momsense.” It has been said that if you put a million monkeys at a million typewriters, eventually you will get the complete works of Shakespeare. Apparently, if you give a few million humans a few million cameras and a million computers – you get YouTube.

We must remember that until very recently, 99% of all video entertainment content was produced by Hollywood. This simply is not, and will never be – the case again. We have more content coming from professional studios overseas that
is shifting the market and with the advent of viral videos everyday people are helping with that shift as well. Everywhere we look we see screens – pumping gas, in an airplane, and on our ubiquitous cell phones. The presence of these screens has raised the demand for short – immediately gratuitous films. Therefore, only increasing the appeal of sites like YouTube. Kelly says, “We are now in the middle of a second Gutenberg shift – from book fluency to screen fluency, from literacy to visuality” (Kelly, 2008)

Is digital media doomed to be eventually replaced?

Many thought the book would go the way of the dinosaur with the advent of the moving picture. Movies gave people the narratives they desired without as much work. Kelly(2008) has argued:

The overthrow of the book would have happened long ago but for the great user asymmetry inherent in all media. It is easier to read a book than to write one; easier to listen to a song than to compose one; easier to attend a play than to produce one.

But, as was aforementioned, this is simply not going to remain the case with digital media and storytelling.
Viewers have moved from their positions of passivity to one of activity. People feel empowered when they are able to contribute to a site by creating a video or by at least posting a comment. They also feel a sense of community when they contribute and most people enjoy that feeling of being involved. Contributing to digital media — whether by shooting and uploading videos or by participating in feedback — people are craving not only the content, but the community created by sharing of digital media. A community that is simply not attainable with the written narrative.

Narrative is an elusive term to quantify. Spanning so many genres, it is difficult to compare one to another. However, using our two standards — Freytag’s pyramid and Bloom’s questions — allows us to be as objective as possible in a subjective medium. Critics more educated than I could spend hours discussing the worth of To Kill a Mockingbird, “Breath”, or “Charlie the Unicorn” and not come to an agreed upon conclusion. However, I have seen through this research that many literary narratives do not meet these two sets of standards, and yet are still considered classic works of literature. They are studied across the globe, made into major motion pictures, and have earned a place in the literary cannon. I don’t believe
anyone would question the worth, relativity, or value of a narrative such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*; however as early as we are into the exploration of digital media it is difficult to surmise which viral videos may pass by the wayside, and which may be studied in college courses in twenty years.

My commitment to the use of “objective” standards has changed somewhat throughout this process. I have a hard time dismissing a digital story such as “One World” when it has such a large and obvious impact on so many. MadV’s project demanded an immediate and poignant response—a response not so different than that which Mockingbird would evoke. This is an important facet that I believe simply cannot be ignored.

Digital media promotes a community atmosphere.

Also, there is something to be said for the “Art for Art’s Sake” school of thought. The community that digital storytelling and sharing has provided has not been seen within the literary community— the closest aspect being a book club. Digital narrative provides instantaneous and massive appeal. It welcomes criticism and adoration both, with many fiercely defending their school of thought. A video that is “merely” entertaining, with no other lesson
to be learned provides, if nothing else, a quick escape
from the dredge of daily pressures; another thing not
easily achieved by the written word.

Limitations of this Study

All of this being said, this study was not without its
limitations. To establish a truer feel for written and
digital narratives, a wider net must be cast. I am a firm
believer in the power of numbers as it pertains to sampling
or conducting a survey. Although I did my fair share of
research on YouTube I certainly cherry picked which videos
had the largest following and demanded the most attention—
which of course is no different in the classical pieces of
literature I chose to examine. One needs to start at the
top in order to justify additional resource to prove or
disprove my theory. There are millions of videos on YouTube
spanning every genre of every narrative possible. As such,
there are hundred of thousands of books considered
classics, and to truly compare and contrast these — one
would need to examine a far greater sampling. Though it may
seem a magnanimous undertaking, it would not require an
unmanageable amount of either literary or digital
narrative. Expanding the study to even 50 videos and
literary works of varying genres would make a significant
impact in the results rendered. It goes without saying that the greater the amount of works considered the more likely a potential trend could emerge.

Another limitation is the tests themselves. Though both Freytag’s pyramid and Bloom’s questions provided an excellent set of objective standards by which we could judge the chosen narratives, a different set of standards would have yielded different results. Had I chosen to use Bentham’s hedonistic calculus, we would have established worth not only in an entirely different way, but would have also arrived at entirely different conclusions. Had I assessed strictly by popularity, (though this would be hard to fairly compare across these two genres), the results again would have been widely different. The two sets of tests I chose, came from the literary community which immediately lends a bias toward the literary narratives. In that vein, different works of literature (and digital narrative) would also have yielded different results. There is no perfect set of standards by which to judge these six works, and that in itself limits the scope of the study. These two tests were chosen because: 1) Freytag’s pyramid is considered the skeleton on which narratives hang. Though it is not impervious to growth or change of modern storytelling, it provides a basic framework from which
modifications or adjustments may be made. There must be a starting point in every assessment, and Freytag’s pyramid is still the most ubiquitous form in written narrative.

2) Harold Bloom is perhaps one of the foremost knowledgeable critics alive today. His assessments and insights are never unresearched or unfounded. A reader or viewer should have certain expectations of what he is taking in, even if it is “merely” entertainment. However, using any standard still cannot alleviate the personal bias brought to the table by any famous critic, or teenage viewer. It is this limitation to which there will never be a true remedy.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of the research was that even with our objective standards, each person brings with them their own bias. Bressler (1994,p.4) has argued, How we arrive at meaning in fiction is in part determined by our past experiences. Consciously or unconsciously, we have developed a mind-set or framework concerning our expectations when reading a novel, a short story, a poem, or any other type of literature.

Try as I might, my personal taste surely colors my interpretation of all of the narratives. Hard Science usually demands a conclusive answer to the questions posed,
but “narrative” itself is a subjective idea. Freytag, Bloom, and any given reader or viewer will bring with him a bias that simply cannot be avoided.

There is no easy remedy for this particular challenge, but if there were – it would kill the nature of the study. The beauty of narrative, much like art in general, whatever form it takes, is that it is interpreted differently by different people. To lose that, would be to lose the very steam that drives the narrative engine.

Not all of the content formulated within digital communication systems can be classified as “storytelling.” As I have shown with my inability to graph certain digital videos on Freytag’s pyramid, not all digital media is meant to be narrative in content. Composing a narrative is a time-consuming process, whether done on paper or through video. Uploading a video of your cat sleeping however, takes little to no work, yet can inspire a massive response. It is unlikely that digital storytelling will ever replace or challenge the massive appeal of digital communication. However, even as a sub-genre, its increasing place, such as Charlie the Unicorn’s 34 million views on YouTube, cannot be ignored. Modern viewers are more open to varied types of communication, and this is digital storytelling’s moment to shine.
Digital storytelling relies on participation and user involvement to drive it forward. One of the reasons digital communication has exploded in the past decade is that the viewers are so willing to participate in it. Being involved in digital media - be it storytelling or some other sub-genre, allows an immediate and meaningful connection to others. It will rarely if ever adhere to standards set by another medium that drastically differs in its interactions with its participant. This doesn’t render one medium more valid than the other as each has many similar things to offer and certainly unique facets in themselves.

What has been learned? What is the value of the studies done?

This study has shown me that no set of standards can be applied as a “one size fits all” litmus test of value. Though Freytag’s pyramid and Bloom’s questions are valued insights from the literary community, even works agreed upon by critics to be among the best ever written, have failed portions of it. Adjudicating a narrative’s worth by submitting it to a battery of tests, is to rob it of its aesthetics. This is true of all forms of art. Many composers, artists, dancers, and playwrights were told their work was unacceptable or worthless. A signed Picasso
is worth 40 million dollars, but an unsigned one is worth nothing. Society wants that which is worth something—most prefer to be told what is worth something and why and that is enough. Digital media turns that thinking on its head.

Whenever a new medium emerges, we tend to use it like older ones. “Early TV broadcasts consisted of guys sitting around reading radio scripts because nobody had realized yet that TV could tell stories differently” (Thompson, 2008). Much of digital content still mimics television and film—it is a breakout like MadV who is using the viral video phenomenon to its full potential.

Conclusion

Digital media and Digital narrative are poised for explosion with the present generation. We’ve established that incredibly young children are utilizing the internet and their parents are most well-versed computer literature generation alive. Digital media will only get bigger, more people will contribute to the medium, and the sheer volume of digital content will most likely became the main source of entertainment and educational consumption. Like any new idea, it is subject to over-analysis that will do little but drain it of its inherent beauty. Digital storytelling is not simply a way to connect with others, but a way to
connect with ourselves. It does sacrifice a sense of completion, but it suggest that all human communication is a process, a process of discovery and extension of who and how we express ourselves. Digital storytelling provides an important extension of the formats and possibilities of what makes human beings social and symbolic users who can extend themselves and their own systems with technology.

Works Cited


Freytag’s Pyramid

Exposition

Rising Action

Climax

Falling Action

Denouement
To Kill a Mockingbird - Lee

Scout views all of the events from Boo's perspective.

Tom Robinson found guilty.

Sheriff covers for Boo.

Mr. Ewell assaulits the children.

Tom Robinson is shot.

Boo kills Mr. Ewell.

Atticus accepts Tom as a client.

Boo initiates contact.

Dill arrives.

Making Boo Radley come out.

Introduction to time period.

Background of Finch Family.

Appendix B.
The Lady or the Tiger - Frank Stockton

King has odd sense of justice
Gardener falls in love w/princess
Princess indicates which door to open
Princess finds out the secret of the doors
King finds out about the gardener being in love with the princess
Gardener tells King
King sentences the gardener
King finds out about the princess being in love with the gardener
Princess finds out the secret of the doors
Princess indicates which door to open
King sentences the gardener
Trash littered on the stage

Expiration of cry/light

Height of brief cry/intense lighting

Breath - Beckett

Appendix D
Charlie the Unicorn

Charlie awakes without a kidney.

Unicorns arrive at Candy Mountain.

Candy Mountain song/celebration.

Charlie agrees to go inside cave.

Unicorns cross magic bridge.

Unicorns meet Leopluropodon.

Blue and Pink unicorns convince Charlie to go to Candy Mountain.

Appendix E
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**Popularities**

- **Bloom**
- **Freytags Triangle**
- **Popularity**
- **Protag/Anttag**
- **Medium**

**Written/Digital/Appendix F**