

- **1. NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM**

- 2. Narrative

- **A. as a chain of events in a cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space**

- 1. *Causality

- a) Which led to which

- 2. *Time/temporal relationship

- a) Which happen before which, when did this happen

- 3: Space

- a) Where did this happen

- **B. Other formal principles that can govern the film**

- 1. Parallelism

- a) Two narratives presented in alternation; unable to connect causally but able to draw parallels
- b) Compare and contrast
- c) Allow films to become richer and more complex than if it concentrated on one protagonist

- **3. Story vs Plot**

- **A. Diegetic**

- 1. Assumed to exist in the world that the film depicts

- **B. Plot**

- 1. Everything visibly and audibly present in the film presented
- 2. Plot explicitly presents certain story events, common to both story and plot
- 3. Plot can also go beyond story by presenting nondiegetic images (e.g. credits, cutaway images) and sounds extraneous to story world, but which may affect our understanding

- **C. Story**

- 1. Story goes beyond plot by suggesting diegetic events we will never witness, but inferred by viewers

- **4. Cause and effect**

- **A. Agents of cause and effects**

- 1. Characters
 - a) Traits are designed to play causal role in narrative
- 2. Natural occurrences/disasters
 - a) May serve as catalyst or preconditions for action,
 - b) But human desires and goals usually follow once the situation is set up

- **B. Audience seek causal motivation**

- 1. Actively seek to connect events by means of causal and effect
- 2. e.g. detective story

- a) Murder committed (effect), detective seek cause and reveal them at the end
- 3. Causal motivation often involves 'planting' of information in advance of a scene
- **C. Withholding of effects prompt suspense and uncertainty**
 - 1. But most disruptive when withheld at end of film (i.e. open ending)
- **5. Time**
 - **A. Viewers construct story time based on what plot presents**
 - 1. Viewers put events in chronological *order* and assign them *duration* and *frequency*
 - **B. Temporal order**
 - 1. Putting flashbacks and flashforwards back into temporal order
 - 2. e.g. Citizen Kane
 - a) Presented out of chronological order: Kane's death before his youth
 - **C. Temporal duration**
 - 1. Screen duration (120 minutes) < Plot duration (e.g. 60 years of Kane's life) < Story duration (e.g. 70 years of Kane's life)
 - 2. Screen duration almost always compresses story time
 - a) But can be used to expand story duration by stretching it longer than story time, giving it emphasis
 - **D. Temporal frequency**
 - 1. An event usually presented only once in plot
 - 2. But it may appear more than once to
 - a) give it emphasis
 - b) to allow us to witness same event in different ways
 - (1) e.g. *Pulp Fiction* opening and ending sequences
 - (2) e.g. *The Usual Suspects*
- **6. Space**
 - **A. Where action takes place**
 - **B. Can also be inferred**
 - **C. Offscreen and onscreen space**
 - 1. * See cinematography
 - **D. *See also mis-en-scene**
- **7. Opening, Closing and Patterns of Development**
 - **A. Opening**
 - 1. Exposition
 - a) as the portion of the plot that sets out important story events and character traits in the opening
 - 2. Raises expectations by setting up a specific range of possible causes for and effects of what we see
 - 3. First quarter of film often referred to as 'setup'

- **B. Patterns of development**

- 1. encourage the spectator to form long-term expectations, which can be
 - a) delayed,
 - b) cheated, or
 - c) gratified
- 2. e.g. In *Wizard of Oz*, viewers see Dorothy's every action as furthering/delaying progress towards goal (of going home) once the desire to go home is comprehended
- 3. Goal-oriented plot
 - a) Character takes steps to achieve a desired object or state of affairs
 - b) e.g. searches, investigation (seek not object, but information)
- 4. Time as plot pattern
 - a) Flashbacks showing how events lead to present situation
 - (1) e.g. *The Usual Suspects*
- 5. Space as plot pattern
 - a) Usually happens when action is confined to single locale

- **C. Closing**

- 1. Narrative typically resolve its causal issues by bringing the development to a high point (climax)
- 2. Climax focuses possible outcomes so narrowly, thus serves to settle causal issues in film
 - a) Lifts viewers to high degree of tension/suspense
 - b) Viewer knows few ways action can develop, thus hope for specific outcome
 - c) Formal resolution coincides with an emotional satisfaction
- 3. But films can be intentionally anti-climatic
 - a) Open ending leaves viewers uncertain about final consequences of the story events
 - b) Encourages viewers to imagine what might happen next, or what other ways their expectations can be fulfilled

- **8. Narrative**

- **A. The plot's way of distributing story information in order to achieve specific effect,**

- 1. often using *range* and *depth* of story presented

- **B. Range of story information**

- 1. Unrestricted/omniscient narration
 - a) Knowing, seeing, hearing more than any/all of the characters can
- 2. Restricted narration
 - a) Don't see/hear anything more than what the protagonist can
 - b) Learning story information solely through one character
 - c) Can create curiosity and surprise

- d) Important to mystery film
- 3. Not dichotomous but a continuum; range as a matter of degree
- **C. Depth of story information**
 - 1. Objective narration
 - a) Presenting character as third-person
 - b) Effective way of withholding information
 - c) esp. important in detective story
 - (1) When the detective's reasoning are concealed from viewers until closing
 - 2. Subjective narration
 - a) Presenting character from first-person standpoint
 - b) e.g. optical point-of-view shots, flashbacks, inner commentary, fantasies
 - (1) Flashbacks are sometimes presented in objective standpoint
 - c) Allows identification with character, prediction of later actions
- **D. Narration**
 - 1. Use of a narrator, purportedly telling us the story
 - 2. Character narrator vs noncharacter narrator
 - a) Character narrator
 - (1) Narration as belonging to a character in film
 - b) Noncharacter narrator
 - (1) Common in documentaries
 - (2) Never learn who the anonymous voice belongs
 - 3. Can be highly subjective, objective or omniscient

• 9. Classical Hollywood Cinema

- **A. Individual characters as primary causal agents**
 - 1. Natural or societal causes may server as catalyst or preconditions,
 - 2. But narrative invariably centres on intra-psychological causes: decisions, choices and character traits
- **B. Desire as motivating force of narrative**
 - 1. Development of narrative involves process of achieving that goal
- **C. Counter-force: opposition that creates conflict**
 - 1. To prevent character from quickly achieving goal
- **D. Cause and effect imply change**
 - 1. Character's desire for something different from the way it is at the beginning of narrative
 - 2. Thus characters and their traits, particularly desire, strong source of cause and effect
- **E. Time is subordinated to cause-effect chain**

- 1. Omission of significant durations to show only events of causal importance
- 2. Chronology reordered to present cause-effect chain most strikingly
- **F. Strong tendency for "objective" narration**
- **G. Fairly unrestricted narration**
 - 1. Portion of films offer access to things the character does not see, hear or know
 - 2. Only overridden in genres dependent on mystery
- **H. Strong degree of closure at the closing**
 - 1. Leaving few loose ends unresolved
 - 2. Seek to complete causal chains with final effect

• 10. MISE-EN-SCENE

- **A. The director's control over what appears in the film frame**
 - 1. Setting
 - 2. Costume & make-up
 - 3. Lighting
 - 4. Staging
 - a) Movement
 - b) Acting

• 11. Setting

- **A. Can overwhelm actors or be reduced to zero (e.g. dark void)**
- **B. Location**
 - 1. Existing location
 - 2. Constructed set
 - a) Highly controllable
- **C. Authenticity**
 - 1. Emphasised by some, not by others
 - 2. e.g. using waste paper from actual office on the set
- **D. Props**
 - 1. Object in the setting that has a function within the ongoing action
 - 2. e.g. shower curtain shielding victim in *Psycho*
- **E. Colour**

• 12. COSTUME & MAKE-UP

• 13. Costume

- **A. Authenticity vs stylised**
 - 1. Authenticity
 - a) DeNiro's underwear in *The Untouchables*

- 2. Stylised
 - a) Calling attention to their purely graphic qualities
- **B. Relation with location**
 - 1. Can emphasise human figures by using neutral background and bright costumes
 - 2. e.g. stark white clothing and location in *THX 1138*
- **C. Motivic and causal roles**
 - 1. e.g. sunglasses as a shield from the world
 - 2. Can also act as clues in narrative, e.g. sweater in *Speed*
- **D. Can become a prop**
 - 1. e.g. Rose's diamond pendant as both a treasure and romantic link to Jack in *Titanic*
- **E. To progress the narrative**

• 14. Makeup

- **A. Makeup to enhance characteristic**
 - 1. Can also have no make-up
 - a) e.g. Passion of Joan of Arc, instead uses close-ups and tiny facial changes
- **B. Changing actors to look like their historical personages**
- **C. Prosthetics**
 - 1. Important in creating character traits or motivating plot action in some films
 - a) e.g. Burton's *Edward Scissorshand*
 - 2. Driven by popularity of horror and science-fiction genres
- **D. Facial composite effects**

• 15. Lighting

- **A. Four features**
 - 1. Quality
 - a) Intensity of illumination
 - b) Hard: clearly defined shadows, hard edges, crisp textures, sharp edges
 - c) Soft: diffused illumination
 - 2. Direction
 - a) Frontal
 - (1) Illuminates shadow, but flat-looking
 - b) Side/crosslight
 - c) Backlighting
 - (1) Creates silhouettes when it is the only source of light
 - (2) Can be combined with frontal sources of light to create illuminated contour (edge/rim lighting)
 - d) Underlighting

- (1) Distorts features, often used for dramatic horror effects
- (2) Or just a realistic light source, e.g. fireplace
- e) Top lighting
 - (1) Glamour: bring out cheekbones
 - (2) Or just another diegetic light source, e.g. hanging lamp
- 3. Source
- 4. Colour
 - a) Can suggest type of light source
 - (1) e.g. orange tint to suggest candlelight
- **B. Three-point lighting system**
 - 1. Key light
 - a) Diagonally from the front
 - b) Closer to figure/brighter than field
 - 2. Fill light
 - a) A position near the camera
 - b) Softens shadow by key light
 - 3. Back light
 - a) Behind and above the figure
 - b) Helps separate figure from background, gives shape and volume
 - 4. Suitable for **high-key lighting**
 - a) Overall lighting design with low contrast between brighter and darker areas
 - b) Soft light quality, use of fill and backlighting making shadow areas fairly transparent
 - c) vs. **low-key illumination**
 - (1) Creates stronger contrasts, deeper and darker shadow
 - (2) Using hard lighting, with fill light lessened or eliminated
- **C. Background/set lighting**
 - 1. Fill the setting
- **D. ----**
- **E. Selective visibility**
 - 1. Creates suspense, draw attention to certain action and not others
- **F. Revelation of form**
 - 1. Can embellish or dramatise any object
- **G. Establish time and space**
 - 1. When and where

- **H. Mood and atmosphere**
- **I. Composition**
 - 1. Can emphasise which parts are more important
- **16. Staging: Movement & Acting**
 - **A. Moving of actors in the frame, including non-human**
 - 1. Monsters and robots can be given expressions and gestures through *stop-action/stop-motion*
 - a) Frame-by-frame sequence of a posed miniature
 - **B. Actor's performance**
 - 1. Visual elements: Appearance, gestures, facial expressions
 - 2. Sound elements: Voice, effects
 - **C. Notion of realism**
 - 1. Affected by changing views due to passage of time
 - 2. Not all films strive to be realistic; should not evaluate 'unrealistic' film as 'bad'
 - 3. Need to determine overall factors, such as narrative causality and genre conventions
 - 4. Acting styles as along two dimensions
 - a) Individualised or stylised
 - **D. Stanislavsky and 'Method' (?)**
 - 1. 'system': try to identify with character through deep analysis of his/her character's motivation
 - 2. 'method': recalling emotions and experiences from own life to identify with character
- **17. MIS-EN-SCENE IN SPACE AND TIME**
 - **A. Spatial and temporal factors in mis-en-scene**
 - 1. guide expectations, and
 - 2. hence shape our viewing of the image
 - **B. Spatial factors guide what we look at**
 - **C. Temporal factors guide when we look at them**
- **18. Shape/spatial**
 - **A. Guides or attention across the screen,**
 - 1. shaping our sense of the space that is represented,
 - 2. and emphasising certain parts of it
 - **B. Arrangement of mis-en-scene creates screen space**
 - 1. two-dimensional composition: organisation of shapes, textures, and patterns of light and dark
 - 2. three-dimensional composition: giving cues for audience to infer three-dimensionality
 - **C. Vision attuned to changes**
 - 1. Movement
 - a) Tend to notice any motion in a relatively static shot, but

- b) also the static/still amidst movement
- 2. Colour contrast
 - a) Brighter colour against subdued background attract
 - b) Lightness value being equal, warmer colours attract while cooler colours are less prominent
 - c) "Limited palette," the use of a few noncontrasting colours, allows viewer to make finer distinctions of intensity in the composition
- 3. Compositional balance
 - a) Extent to which areas of screen space have equally distributed masses and points of interests
 - b) Assumed that spectators concentrate on upper half of frame
 - (1) (probably because that's where actors faces usually are)
 - (2) Thus upper half needs less "filling up" than lower half
 - c) Also need to balance left and right halves, using
 - (1) Bilateral symmetry (perfect symmetry), or
 - (2) Near-perfect symmetry
 - i) e.g. centering frame on human body and minimise distracting elements on both sides
 - (3) Unbalance, so as to emphasise
- 4. Variations in size
 - a) Tend to notice the larger shapes before discriminating the smaller ones
- **D. Depth Cues**
 - 1. Factors that help to create sense of space by suggesting *volume* and several distinct *planes*
 - a) Developed from experience of space in real world and conventions of space in arts
 - (1) Need to combine depth cues with knowledge of real world to discern volume and planes in filmic space
 - b) Largely provided by lighting, setting, costumes and staging
 - c) ----
 - d) *Volume* defined by shape, shading and movement
 - (1) Movement
 - i) One of the most important depth cues
 - ii) Strongly suggests both planes and volumes
 - iii) Movement can reveal new views which suggest roundness
 - (2) Shading
 - i) Shadows can be *cast* or *attached* (shading)
 - (a) *Attached shadow* occurs when light fails to illuminate part of an object because of its shape or surface features

- (b) *Cast shadow* is the the shadow projected onto an object due to the blocking of light by another object
- ii) Attached shadows (shading) on faces provide modelling effect by suggesting curves and recesses on actors' features
- (3) Shape
 - i) Recognisable shapes from experience in real world helps to suggest volume
- e) *Planes* as layers of space occupied by persons or objects, described according to distance from camera, defined by ...
 - (1) Overlap of edges
 - i) As the most basic depth cue
 - ii) Shapes that overlap and block vision of a background plane appear closer to us
 - (2) Lighting
 - i) Edge-lighting accentuates overlap of planes by emphasising the contour of objects, distinguishing it sharply from background
 - (3) Colour contrast
 - i) Warm and saturated colours come forward
 - ii) Cool and pale colours recede, typically used for background planes
 - (4) Cast shadows
 - i) Cast shadow helps to distinguish one plane from another
 - (5) Movement
 - i) e.g. cigarette smoke in foreground
 - (6) Aerial perspective
 - i) Hazing of more distant planes
 - ii) Assumed sharper outlines, clearer textures and purer colours belonging to foreground elements
 - iii) Caused by shallow depth of field?
 - (7) Dimensionality
 - i) Size diminution
 - (a) Figures and objects farther away from us are seen to get proportionally smaller;
 - (b) the smaller the figure appears, the farther away we believe it to be
 - ii) Linear perspective
 - (a) Parallels lines converge at a distant vanishing point
 - (b) Derive much from properties of camera lens (see cinematography)
- 2. Shallow-space vs deep-space composition
 - a) Shallow
 - (1) *Mise-en-scene* suggests little depth

- (2) Closest and most distant planes seem only slightly separated
- b) Deep
 - (1) Significant distance seems to separate planes
 - (2) e.g. large foreground but small background
- c) Can be manipulated to make space appear deeper or shallower than it really is
 - (1) e.g. Using telephoto lens to make actor in foreground blend into billboard in background

• 19. Time/temporal

• A. Rhythm of the shot

- 1. Beat or pulse, a pace
- 2. Movement on screen can have distinctive visual beat
 - a) e.g. flashing of sign and steady rocking of ship
- 3. Can also have a marked pace
 - a) e.g. acceleration of car

• B. A very short shot forces viewers to take in the image all at once

- 1. But in most shots viewers get an initial overall impression that creates formal expectations

• C. Shot emphasising movement becomes more "time-bound"

- 1. Glance directed from place to place by
 - a) various speeds,
 - b) directions,
 - c) rhythms of movement

• D. Frontality as a means to guide viewer's attention over time

- 1. All other things being equal, viewer expects more story information will come from character's face than back
- 2. Attention is diverted to most frontally positioned characters, even if they are most distant
 - a) Used in deep-space composition to guide viewer's attention between planes

• 20. GUIDE TO XIANING A FORMAL ANALYSIS

• A. Narrative directs attention to (major) character

- 1. If the person is a major character, attention is always directed to them than a stranger

• B. Is the character *moving* or *speaking*?

- 1. Movement and sound demand viewers attention
- 2. What is the expression or gesture of the character?
- 3. Is there character's face turned towards viewers? (frontality)

• C. How does the *setting* (background) work with the character?

- 1. Are there leading lines to character?
- 2. Is there compositional balance?

- **D. How does the *costume* fit into the setting and character?**
 - 1. Does it accentuate a certain part of the character?
 - 2. Does it help to bring out the character from the background?
- **E. How does the *light* work?**
 - 1. What are the different types of light used here? What is the intensity of them?
 - 2. Does it give strong depth cues by shading the face?
- **F. How many planes are there?**
 - 1. How deep or shallow is this composition?
 - 2. What depth cues help to separate the planes?
 - a) e.g. size diminution and cast shadow establish basic foreground/background relations
- **G. How is the composition balanced?**
 - 1. How is the composition divided? Horizontally or vertically?
 - a) How is the viewer expected to look at the scene?
 - b) e.g. up-and-down or to-and-fro?
 - 2. Placement of character
 - a) Upper half of the screen space more prominent than lower half
 - b) e.g. is the person framed in middle or off-centre?
 - 3. e.g. person positioned off-centre but turned to face vacant space
- **H. How is our attention guided in this composition?**
 - 1. Any leading lines, shapes and lights and darks to channel attention?

• 21. CINEMATOGRAPHY

- **A. Influenced by three aspects:**
 - 1. photographic aspects,
 - 2. framing, and
 - 3. duration of shot

• 22. PHOTOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

• 23. Tonality: brightness and colour contrast

- **A. Influenced by**
 - 1. Exposure
 - a) Over or underexposure
 - b) Use of filters
 - (1) Can be applied during shooting or printing
 - c) Flashing process
 - (1) Exposing film to light before shooting/processing
 - (2) Producing a lower contrast shot

- 2. Film stock
 - a) High/low contrast stock
 - (1) High contrast: bright highlights, stark black, narrow range of grey in between
 - (2) Low contrast: wide range of greys with no true white or black areas
 - b) Fast (high sensitivity to light) vs slow (low sensitivity to light)
 - (1) Fast stock usually produce contrasty look; slow stock low in contrast
- 3. Developing techniques
 - a) Tinting or toning
 - (1) Tint: light areas pick up colour, dark area remains black and grey
 - (2) Tone: dark areas pick up colour, light area remains white/faintly coloured
 - b) Hand colouring
 - (1) Frame-by-frame colouring of black and white pictures

• 24. Speed of motion

- **A. Projection rate vs shooting rate**
 - 1. Projection rate: Rate at which film is projected; not within filmmaker's control
 - 2. Shooting rate: Rate at which film is shot at; usually 24
- **B. Shot**
 - 1. Slower than 24 frames
 - a) Accelerated motion when projected
 - (1) e.g. koyaanisqatsi
 - 2. Faster than 24 frames
 - a) Slow motion when projected
 - (1) e.g. explosions in Die Hard shot at 100 fps
- **C. Can be adjusted in post**
 - 1. *Skip frames* results in acceleration
 - 2. *Stretched printing* (repeating a frame more than once) results in slow motion
 - a) Different effect from shooting > 24 frames/s, since frame is repeated
- **D. Can also used for freeze-framing**

• 25. Perspective Relations

- **A. Lens focal length**
 - 1. Short = Wide
 - a) Exaggerate depth
 - b) Distort image laterally
 - (1) Especially lines near the edges
 - c) Greater depth of field

- 2. Medium = Normal
 - a) Characterised by lack of perspective distortion
 - b) Horizontal and vertical lines rendered as straight and perpendicular
 - c) Foreground and background neither stretched nor squashed
- 3. Long = Telephoto
 - a) Flattens space along camera axis
 - b) Cues for depth and volume reduced
 - c) Affects subject movement (takes longer time to cover what seems like short distance)
 - d) Can be used to surprise
 - (1) e.g. make danger seem closer than it is
 - e) Shallower depth of field
- 4. Zoom lens
- **B. Depth of field and focus**
 - 1. DOF: range of distances before the lens where images can be photographed in sharp focus
 - 2. Selective focus
 - a) Opting to focus a single plane while keeping others blurred
 - 3. Deep focus
 - a) Keeping most/all planes in focus
 - b) Achieved by:
 - (1) Short focal length lens
 - (2) Small aperture
 - i) Fast film (> sensitive to light)
 - ii) Intense lighting (to compensate for small iris)
 - 4. Racking/pulling focus: refocusing during filming
- **C. Special Effects**
 - 1. Glass shot: shooting through painted glass
 - 2. Superimposition: laying one image atop another
 - a) in camera (double exposure)
 - b) via lab printing
 - c) process/composite
 - (1) Projection
 - i) Front/rear projection
 - (a) Rear projection: actors act in front of a projected footage of the setting
 - (b) Front projection: using two-way mirror angled to project setting onto high reflectance screen

- (2) Matte
 - i) Joining 2 strips of film via lab work

• 26. FRAMING

• 27. Dimensions and shape

- **A. Aspect ratio: frame width to frame height**
- **B. Widescreen can be achieved via**
 - 1. Hard matte: Shot full frame, masked during projection
 - 2. Anamorphic process:
 - a) Wide image squeezed horizontally by special lens to fit frame during filming, and
 - b) 'unsqueeze' by another lens during projection
- **C. Widescreen composition**
 - 1. Emphasise horizontal composition (i.e. framing elements along horizontal axis)
 - 2. Initially used to highlight scenes and settings
 - 3. Later used to create foreground-background areas in confined setting (by splitting them into the left and right portion of the widescreen composition)
 - 4. Placing subject slightly/sharply off-centre can draw attention to an area of the composition
 - 5. Multiple points of interest can be directed via controls of mis-en-scene
 - a) e.g. who is speaking (sound), who is facing us (frontality)
- **D. Breaking out of the rectangular frame**
 - 1. Placing masks over camera/printers' lens
 - a) e.g. circular masks
- **E. Multiple-frame imagery**
 - 1. Having 2 or more different images appear within the larger frame,
 - a) each having its own frame dimensions and shape
 - 2. e.g. telephone conversation
 - 3. Gives viewers god-like omniscient, an unrestricted range of knowledge

• 28. Definition of onscreen and offscreen space

- **A. Frame makes image finite**
- **B. 6 zones of offscreen space**
 - 1. space beyond 4 edges of the frame
 - 2. space behind the set
 - 3. space behind or near the camera
- **C. Techniques to imply presence of things in offscreen zones**
 - 1. Use of offscreen sound
 - 2. Direct looks & gestures of actors at these spaces

- 3. Protrude elements partly into frame
 - a) e.g. Christine's hand when hitchhiking in *Taiping*

• 29. Angle, height, level, distance

• A. Angle usually defined as

- 1. High, straight-on or low

• B. Height is partly related to angle, but

- 1. a shot can be straight-on but still low-angle
 - a) e.g. placing the camera level on the floor

• C. Level as degree to which frame is level

- 1. Determined by whether lines within frame are parallel/perpendicular to the frame boundaries
- 2. Unlevel shot is termed as *canted framing*
- 3. Canted shot of a routine scene can distinguish it from the rest of the scenes

• D. Distance to mis-en-scene determines shot sizes

- 1. Can establish or re-establish settings or character position
- 2. Background dominates in
 - a) *Extra Long Shots*: Figures barely visible
 - b) *Long Shots*: Figure more prominent than XLS
- 3. Subject dominate in
 - a) *Medium shot*: Framed from knee-up
 - b) *Medium close-up*: Framed from chest-up
 - c) *Close-up*: Showing just a small object (e.g. hands, head)
 - d) *Extreme close-up*: Singles out a portion of the face, isolates details and magnifies the minute
 - e) ----
 - f) Gestures and expression become more visible as shot size become closer

• E. Size of object is important in determining size

- 1. e.g. a shot showing only the head is not a close-up if it's not big enough (i.e. filling the frame)

• F. Not feasible to assign absolute meanings to each aspect of framing

- 1. e.g. low-angle shots does not always mean looming power (e.g. Kane in his deserted campaign HQ)
- 2. Need to examine them in context of the film
- 3: Other functions of framing
 - a) Serve as unifying motifs
 - (1) e.g. extreme close-ups in *Passion of Joan Arc*
 - b) Beyond narrative function
 - (1) Intrinsic interest of framing

- i) e.g. close-ups can bring out textures and details otherwise ignored

• 30. Mobile framing: movement in relation to mis-en-scene

• A. Movement of the frame during the shot

- 1. Pan: rotation of camera horizontally along vertical axis without displacing itself
- 2. Tilt: rotation of camera vertically along horizontal axis without displacing itself
- 3. Tracking/dolly/trucking: camera changes position and by travelling in a direction along the ground
 - a) Arcing: tracking along a curved path
- 4. Crane: camera moves above level ground, rising or descending, usually on a mechanical arm or even an helicopter or airplane

• B. Increase information about the space of the image

- 1. e.g. new objects and figures are usually revealed

• C. Tracking/crane shots provide provide continually changing perspective

• D. Arcing makes object look more solid and three-dimensional

• E. Handheld movement

- 1. When bumpy and jiggling image is preferred to smoother camera movements
- 2. Popularised with cinema-verite in 1950s
- 3. Lend an air of authenticity
- 4. Often used to create a subjective point of view

• F. Genuine camera movement vs zoom/laboratory mobile framing

• 1. Genuine camera movement

- a) Creates a sense of movement through the space
- b) Created with pan, tilt, tracking, crane or handheld
- c) Static objects in different planes pass one another at different rates
- d) Changes angle, aspect and position of objects

• 2. Zoom/laboratory mobile framing

- a) Magnification and demagnification of space
- b) Changes in focal length during zooming can change depth cues
 - (1) i.e. depth of field changes when focal length changes, affecting sense of depth

• G. Functions of mobile framing

• 1. Spatial

- a) Reframing
 - (1) e.g. putting onscreen space offscreen when tracking-in
 - (2) eg. changing of angle in a crane shot
- b) Following (on a moving subject)
 - (1) Keeping our attention fasten on a subject

- c) Special effects
 - (1) e.g. Vertigo's track-out, zoom-in and rack focus to convey dizziness
- 2. Temporal
 - a) Duration of movement
 - (1) e.g. slow & gradual movement can help to build up suspense
 - b) Rhythmic
 - (1) Lens can zoom/tilt to music
- 3. Creating Patterns
 - a) Creating specific motifs within film
 - (1) e.g. forward and penetrating movement in *Citizen Kane* as a drive towards unravelling a secret

• 31. DURATION

• 32. The Long Take

- **A. Forces the viewer to dwell on certain message**
- **B. To parallel and contrast among scenes**
 - 1. By mixing longer takes and shorter takes
- **C. Camera and figure movements demarcate the take into smaller units**
 - 1. Usually demarcated by cuts of short scenes
- **D. Can build expectation and create suspense**
 - 1. e.g. knowledge of an imminent bomb explosion will keep viewer constantly waiting for the moment during the long take
- **E. Often shot in Medium-shot or Long-shot**
 - 1. Viewers to search for point of interest
 - 2. But can be guided through control of mis-en-scene
 - a) Thus, more emphasis on mis-en-scene control is needed in long takes

• 33. EDITING

- **A. Editing as co-ordination of one shot with the next**
 - 1. Building relations from shot to shot
- **B. Strongly shapes viewers' experiences, even if they're unaware of it**
- **C. Different means of joining shots**
 - 1. Instantaneous changes from one shot to another
 - a) Cut
 - (1) Presents marked and abrupt shifts not other possible without editing
 - 2. Gradual interruptions
 - a) Fade-out
 - b) Fade-in

- c) Dissolve: brief superimposition of two scenes
- d) Wipe: replacing one shot with another by means of a boundary line moving across the screen

- **D. Scripts and storyboards help plan cuts in editing**

- **34. DIMENSIONS OF FILM EDITING**

- **A. Graphic, rhythmic, spatial and temporal relations**

- 1. Graphic and rhythmic relationships present throughout all films
- 2. But spatial and temporal relationships may be inapplicable to abstract films

- **35. Graphic Relations**

- **A. Editing together any two shots permits the interaction, through similarity and difference, of the *purely pictorial* qualities of those two shots, using:**

- 1. Four aspects of mis-en-scene
 - a) i.e. lighting, setting, costume, and behaviour of figure in space and time
- 2. Cinematographic qualities
 - a) photography, framing, camera mobility
- 3. Independent of shot's relation to time and space of story

- **B. Every shot provides possibilities for purely graphic editing, every cut creates some sort of graphic relationship between two shots**

- **C. Graphic configurations that can be matched**

- 1. Brightness, line and shape, volumes and depths, movement and stasis (of camera or of figures), colour, posing and framing of figures etc.

- **D. Smooth continuity vs abrupt contrast**

- **1. Linking by similarities: *graphic match***

- a) Used at transitional moments, e.g. bone to spacecraft in *2001: A Space Odyssey*
- b) Precise graphic matching relatively rare, but editors usually strive to:
 - (1) keep centre of interest roughly constant across the cut,
 - (2) maintain overall lighting level,
 - (3) avoid strong colour clashes from shot to shot

- **2. Discontinuous editing**

- a) Mildly discontinuous
 - (1) e.g. shot/reverse-shot cutting
 - i) But balanced by filling space left empty in previous shot
 - ii) Vertical of person's face (e.g. above the horizon)
- b) Conflicting
 - (1) Movement conflict with countermovement and with stillness
 - i) e.g. Hitchcock's *Birds*

- (a) Direction of flames movement vs direction of Melanie's stares
- (b) Movement of camera and flames vs status of Melanie

• 36. Rhythmic Relations

- **A. Length of shot in relation to one another**
- **B. Can accentuate or deaccentuate a moment**
 - 1. Accentuate
 - a) e.g. cutting frames of pure white after an attack to suggest violent impact
 - 2. Deaccentuate
 - a) e.g. adding several seconds after an act to allow audience reaction to die down before continuing
 - b) (? - sounds like the example in accentuation, but well, it's all about your xianing skills!)
- **C. Editing rhythm emerge when several shot lengths form a discernible pattern**
 - 1. Steady, metrical beat: all shots approximately same length
 - 2. Gradually slowing tempo: steadily lengthening shot lengths
 - 3. Accelerating tempo: successively shorter shots
 - 4. By controlling editing rhythm, filmmaker controls amount of time viewers have to grasp and reflect on what they see
 - a) e.g. rapid editing impels viewers' perception to move at a faster and faster pace
- **D. Editing rhythm can be subordinated to internal rhythm of the dialogue and movement of images**
 - 1. Pattern of shot length also dependent on internal rhythms of the film, e.g. dialogue, rather than on creating an editing tempo
 - 2. *See temporal aspects of mis-en-scene

• 37. Spatial Relations

- **A. Relate any two points in space by:**
- **B. Establishing spatial wholes**
 - 1. Can start with shot that establishes spatial whole followed by parts of this space
 - a) i.e. LS -> CU
 - 2. Or construct a whole space out of component parts
 - a) i.e. CU + CU + CU
 - b) *Kuleshov effect*
 - (1) any series of shots that in the absence of an establishing shot prompts the viewer to infer a spatial whole on the basis of seeing only portions in the space
- **C. Emphasising action taking place in separate places**
 - 1. Crosscutting or parallel editing
 - a) Cutting from one location to another

- **D. Leaving spatial relations ambiguous, creating spatial discontinuities**

- 1. e.g. *Passion of Joan of Arc*
 - a) Know priests and Joan are in same room,
 - b) but close-ups and neutral background provide no orientation,
 - (1) how far apart, or who is beside whom

- **38. Temporal Relations**

- **A. Editing reinforces manipulation of story time**

- 1. Recall plot time can cue spectator to construct story time:
 - a) Order, duration and frequency
 - b) *See Narrative as Formal System

- **B. Order**

- 1. Temporal succession can be manipulated by reordering chronological sequences
- 2. e.g. flashbacks

- **C. Duration**

- 1. Elliptical vs expansion editing
 - a) *Elliptical* editing presents action in a way that consumes less time on screen than in story, through
 - (1) Optical Punctuation shot change
 - i) Using device signals such as dissolve, wipe or fade
 - ii) Signals some time has been omitted
 - (2) Empty frames
 - i) Clean exit of a frame followed by clean entrance of new frame
 - ii) Empty frames on either side cover the elided time
 - (3) Cutaway
 - i) A shot or event elsewhere inserted midway into action, that will not last as long as elided action
 - ii) e.g. man climbing, follow by woman elsewhere, back to man halfway through his ascent
 - b) *Expansion* prolongs an action by stretching it out past its story duration
 - (1) Overlapping editing
 - i) e.g. overlapping the phase of a single action across two or more cuts

- **D. Frequency**

- 1. Repetition of a shot
 - a) Differs from overlapping editing, which overlaps a phase of action

- **39. CONTINUITY EDITING**

- **A. The dominant editing style throughout Western film history**

- 1. Arranging shots to tell a story coherently and clearly, ensuring narrative continuity

- **B. Basic purpose to create a smooth flow from shot to shot**

- **C. Features of continuity editing:**
- **D. Graphic qualities**
 - 1. Kept roughly continuous
 - 2. Figures are balanced and symmetrically deployed in frame
 - 3. Overall lighting tonality remains constant
 - 4. Action occupies central zone of screen
- **E. Rhythm**
 - 1. Dependent on camera distance of the shot
 - a) Long shots left on screen longer than medium shots, which are in turn left longer than close-ups
 - b) Spectator needs more time to take in shots with more details
- **F. ***But continuity is presented chiefly through handling of space and time***
- **G. Space**
 - 1. Spatial continuity constructed along axis of action, centre line, or the 180° line
 - a) Any action assumed to take place along a discernible, predictable line
 - 2. Following the 180° system
 - a) Ensures that relative positions in the frame remain consistent, through
 - (1) Consistent eyelines
 - (2) Consistent screen direction (movement of character)
 - b) Delineates space clearly, establish relations of characters to one another and to surroundings
 - 3. Use of shot/reverse-shot pattern
 - a) Cutting back and forth opposite end of the axis of action, usually showing three-quarters view of a subject
 - b) Technique enables filmmaker to channel attention at precise moments (e.g. when to look at who/what), compared with having a conversation played out in profile MS view
 - (1) Thus study the expression and gesture in more detail
 - c) Does not need to use eyeline match
 - 4. Use of eyeline match
 - a) Directional quality of the eyeline creates strong spatial continuity
 - b) Helps stabilise space even when object being looked at is offscreen
 - 5. Establishment-breakdown-reestablishment as most common pattern of spatial editing
 - a) Use of establishing shot delineates overall space of a setting
 - b) Breakdown of scene space using shot-reverse shot
 - c) Reestablish positions and orientation with another overall view of setting
 - 6. Match on action
 - a) Carrying a movement across the break between two shots

- (1) i.e. begin action in one shot, and cut to another to continue the movement
- 7. 180° lines can be reestablished by
 - a) by showing another establishing shot before breaking down scenes
 - b) tracking the camera across the line
 - c) moving characters around the set
 - d) cutaway to another character offscreen, and having him move up to main action
 - e) using one shot on the line itself as a transition
- 8. Cheat cut
 - a) Allowing primacy of narrative flow to cover slight mismatch of positions of characters or objects
- 9. Crosscutting
 - a) Gives an unrestricted knowledge of causal, temporal, or spatial information by
 - (1) alternating shots from one line of action in one place with
 - (2) shots of other events in other places
 - b) Creates spatial discontinuity, but binds the action together by creating sense of cause and effect and temporal simultaneity
 - c) Functions
 - (1) Builds up suspense, and encourage formation of expectations
 - (2) Create parallels
 - (3) Providing unrestricted knowledge
- **H. Temporal**
 - 1. Presented in chronological *order*, with flashbacks being the most common violation
 - 2. One-for-one *frequency*, presenting only once in the plot for what happens in the story
 - 3. Story *duration* seldom expanded; usually in complete continuity (plot time = story time) or elided (plot time < story time)
 - a) Complete continuity exemplified with
 - (1) absence of ellipses in story action
 - (2) diegetic sound overlapping the cuts
 - (3) matching on action
 - b) Temporal ellipsis exemplified with
 - (1) optical punctuations
 - i) dissolves for brief passage of time, fade for much longer one in Hollywood standard
 - ii) but contemporary filmmakers may just use a cut for such transition, e.g. cut in *2001* that eliminates million of years of story time
 - (2) empty frames
 - (3) cutaway

- (4) + **montage sequence**

- i) brief portions of a process, informative titles (e.g. "Singapore"), stereotyped images (e.g. Great Wall of China), newsreel footage, newspaper headlines, etc.
- ii) joined swiftly by dissolves and music to compress lengthy actions into few moments

- 4. ---

- 5. Match on action can confirm both spatial and temporal continuity

- a) If an action carries across cut, space and time are assumed to be continuous from shot to shot

- **40. Discontinuity Editing**

- **A. Two notable devices of discontinuity:**

- **B. Jump cuts**

- 1. When two shots of same subject, not sufficiently different in camera distance and angle, are cut together, resulting in a 'jump' on the screen

- 2. Avoided with

- a) Shot/reverse-shot

- b) 30° rule: each camera position varied by at least 30° from previous one

- 3. Disorients the viewers

- **C. Nondiegetic insert**

- 1. Cuts from the scene to a metaphorical or symbolic shot not part of space and time of narrative

- 2. Often construct a running, often ironic, commentary on the action, prompting the spectator to search for implicit meanings