

IFWA MEETING
Thursday, November 2, 2017, 7:00 PM
Sentry Box
MINUTES

Information Items:

New Members: Mark Watson - writes epic fantasy and thriller/modern fantasy - working on a video game with some partners in Ontario, Carl - new writer and wants to take a shot at this, Dale - a non-fiction writer - wants to see how science fiction has developed / Cathy - writes non-fiction - interested in writing in science fiction (Dale and Cathy are Susan Forest's family). Virginia O'Dine - currently OnSpec editor. Just launched Brilliant Fiction

| Time | Topic | Person |
|-------------|--|---|
| 7:00 PM | <p><u>Crits for November</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crit 1: Susan Lawson – first chapters of novel Crit by Michael Gillett and Chris Carolan • Crit 2: Chris Jessop – 1st chapter of Baroque novel Crit by Daniel Wright and Sandy Fitzpatrick | <p>Shannon Michael / Chris</p> <p>Daniel / Sandy</p> |
| | <p><u>Crits for December, 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crit 1: Philip Vernon - Short Story of Quiet, Psychological Horror Crit by Susan Forest & Jeff Campbell • Crit 2: Chris Carolan - Lovecraftian story with sea monsters Crit by Dave Worsick, Chris Jessop | Shannon |
| 8:00 PM | <p><u>Skills Session</u> Lise Brassard – Character Test Arc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the best way to write story? – Many writers love the character change arcs • However, intuitively, we know this is wrong – character change arcs don't explain James Bond movies • Most James Bond are flat arcs – the character does not change • So change arcs are not the only way to write a story • <u>Most</u> stories are flat arcs and can be just as compelling • One kind of flat arc is the Test Arc • Ask what change is happening? Main character? Social circle around character? Outside world? What is changing? • Levels of Change: Shallow - knowledge the character has, new skill, etc. • Deeper - where we get into more compelling change - belief that is wrong - that is preventing them from achieving their goal. • Crime and mystery novels - solving a problem - war and terrorism - something fundamentally wrong in the culture - some big wrong needs to be corrected - all external • Social Proof - circle of people around the character - | Lise Brassard |

| Time | Topic | Person |
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| | <p>Social Proof change is deceptive - lots of authors use it as reward - yes external change and everyone sees it. If primary change is Social Proof (rep, job, money, girl), if that is only change – that is the least compelling form of change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character is fundamentally changing or the world is fundamentally changing. • That does not say if character gets a new job, if that is change. Not a big deal. Not a fundamental change that is driving the story • Examples: Harry Potter, Inception, Eat, Pray, Love, Pixar’s Inside Out - these are all compelling stories that have main characters actually change • Compelling flat arc examples: Hunger Games - Capt America - world has changed, character did not. • Compare with Character Change Arcs - at beginning and end - fundamental change - fatal flaw arc - character has fatal flaw that is preventing them from living life - overcome their fatal flaw • Why Compelling? because - high stakes, personal, moral issue (hurting self and family). • Flat Arc - character does not change. Some trivial changes and social proof - but that is it • Test Arc character similar to change arc: high stakes, personal, moral issue. • Test Arc – Hunger Games - Katniss is pushed to the limit - her beliefs are tested. She is forced to confront where right or wrong are put to test • Act 2 - force that main character to confront their beliefs - over and over again to the breaking point - why am I doing this? Why fight and overcome injustice • Act 3 - The signal to reader that things are done - married etc. – external reward | |
| 8:30 PM | <p><u>Call for Agenda Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renee Bennett - announcement - Angry Robot Books has open call for novels - Nov 1 - Dec 31 - unagented novels - sci fi and fantasy - finished - no horror or humour - no thrillers, plays, novels only • Ed - NaNoWriMo - few IFWits doing it | Michael |
| 8:35 PM | <p><u>Braggs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed Wilson - finished “A Bard’s Tale” 119K words - looking for alpha readers • Sandy Fitzpatrick - story accepted into StarkLight - Wild Wicked and Sparkling - 3 ss pub this year • Renee - sent out query to agent and got request for partial in 24 hours - Shauna McCarthy | Michael |
| 8:40 PM | <p><u>Discuss / Decide</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Results – Sandy / Calvin – Require funds to file audit results - up to \$1000 for filing fees and | Michael |

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|---------|---|---------|
| | <p>NUANS check – Propose - Calvin / Ed Wilson seconds - No abstentions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Story Contest – A short discussion regarding Patreon – Calvin Jim – needs two or three others to help if move forward on Patreon • Enigma Front: Onward (See Submission Guidelines for IFWA Members only) – Chris Carolan | |
| 8:55 PM | <p><u>Announcements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New After-Meeting Pub: Since Mugs Pub now has a Bingo session Thursday nights that is not likely to end in the near future, we have decided to move to a different pub. This month, the after meeting pub is the Newcastle Pub: http://newcastlepub.ca/ Address: 2703 17th Avenue SW, Calgary Directions: Head west from the Sentry Box, go under Crowchild and turn west onto Bow Trail. Turn left off of Bow Trail on 26th Street and go straight a few blocks until you get to 17th Avenue. It will be on your right. • Book Launch: Join S. M. Beiko (aka, Samantha Beiko) at Owl's Nest Books on November 7th at 7pm for the Calgary edition launch of SCION OF THE FOX. This YA fantasy novel is the first in a series, published by ECW Press. It's hardbound, it's great, it's set in Canada, and it's already a McNally Robinson Bestseller. • It is a free event, kids are welcome (she has some colouring sheets, they were very popular this weekend at C4 Winnipeg Comic Con). Also, me (Clare C. Marshall) will be hosting! There will be a short reading, a Q&A, and a signing to follow. | Michael |

ENIGMA FRONT: ONWARD - CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Enigma Front: ONWARD. We're living in uncertain times. With Trumpism and North Korea dominating the headlines, unprecedented natural disasters and persistent grim economic forecasts, some stories of hope are something we could all use right now... and something the writers of IFWA can pull off without being too Pollyanna about it! We're looking for stories that turn a hopeful eye to the future (or at least the future of whatever world your story inhabits).

The anthology is open to all current members of IFWA in good standing.

Stories can be any speculative genre; SciFi (hard or soft), all varieties of fantasy, any of the ____punk genres, horror, cli-fi, NobleBright... even GrimDark, if you think you can put a hopeful slant on it. Ultimately, though, your story should contain some speculative element and the message of hope should be present, even if it is slight. We're aiming for a YA to Adult readership, so stories with excessive gore and explicit sex will not be a good fit.

Maximum length for stories is 6000 words.

We'll consider a small number of reprints, but we would rather publish new works from IFWA writers. As in the past, IFWITs can submit two pieces for consideration with responses being hold, request for revision, or rejection.

Hold: We reserve the right to accept, but this is not an acceptance. Decision reserved until all submissions have been reviewed at the end of the submission period.

Revision Request: We will give feedback to allow the author to rework the story with the objective of becoming a Hold.

Not for Us: The story doesn't work for us.

SUBMISSION PERIOD: December 1st to January 31st. For submissions received before January 15th we will do our best to reply within two weeks, with the final responses being sent by mid-February.

Please submit your MS in .doc, .docx, or .rtf in standard short story format:

<https://www.shunn.net/format/story.html>

SUBMIT TO: ExitZeroSF@gmail.com with the header "SUBMISSION: Title by Author Name"

PAYMENT: We will be running an Indiegogo campaign to raise funds for this project. Payment to the authors will be dependent on the success of the campaign, but we are hoping to pay each author \$40 to \$50 plus one print copy of the book upon publication.

First-publication rights are exclusive to the anthology for 3 months from date of publication, non-exclusive to the anthology ongoing afterwards.

We're looking for 15 to 21 stories, adding up to a total word count of at least 60,000 words. If we can't meet these requirements, the project will not go forward. Our goal is to have the book ready in time for When Words Collide 2018.

Now... ONWARD!

Character Test Arc

Character Test Arcs

Common Sense Isn't...

Your character must change during the story. And, every other story is a waste of time.

But what about James Bond?

Every story *is* about change... but that doesn't mean your character has to change, only that you need some change to drive your narrative arc.

Flat arcs are possibly the most popular story arcs there are.

Compelling and realistic character change is hard. Flat arcs are easier to write.

A Character Test Arc (one type of flat arc) can be just as compelling as a change arc.

► Lise Brassard

Lise.Brassard@gmail.com

Where is your story changing?

Character Change

- Knowledge
- Skills
- False or Limiting Beliefs
- Behaviour
- Addiction

Social Proof

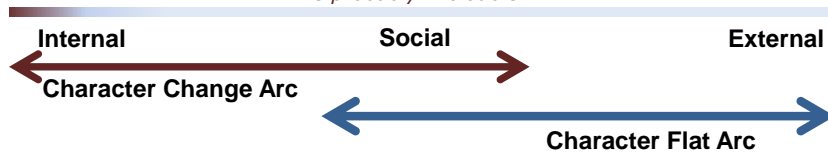
- Reputation
- Job
- Money
- Relationships

Mostly used to reward character or social change

Societal & World Change

- Crime
- Politics
- War
- Terrorism
- Laws and social justice
- Social customs

If your story's primary change locus is here... your story is probably in trouble



► Lise Brassard

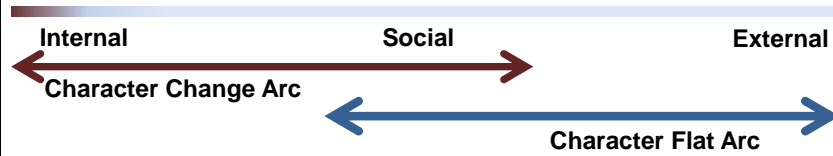
Character Test Arc

Recent Examples

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Harry Potter (+) | Hunger Games (+) |
| Inception (+/-) | MCU: Captain America (+) |
| MCU: Iron Man (+/-) | (most) James Bond (+) |
| Eat, Pray, Love (+) | Jack Reacher (+) |
| Pixar's Inside Out (+) | Dunkirk (+) |

Most stories only deal with social proof... most aren't blockbusters or bestsellers

You DON'T need character change to tell a compelling story



► Lise Brassard

Types of Character Change Arcs

The character must change (+/-) for the story to qualify as a character change arc.

The Fatal Flaw arc goes further. Your MC has one (or more) fatal flaws that prevents them from achieving happiness. The story *forces* the MC to confront their fatal flaw. If they overcome it, it's a positive change arc. If they can't it's a negative/tragic change arc.

What makes the Fatal Flaw arc so compelling?

- **High stakes** MC must overcome fatal flaw to be happy
- **Personal** The MC's fatal flaw is deeply personal
- **Moral issue** The MC is hurting themselves or others

Recommended: Re-watch Pixar's Inside Out. This is a fantastic and super clear example of a fatal flaw arc.

► Lise Brassard

Character Test Arc

Flat Character Arcs

The Flat Arc character *doesn't change*. Your MC is the same person before the story starts and after the story ends. (Usually with some additional social proof.) Instead, your MC *changes the world*.

Common Wisdom says most flat arc stories will be boring. Many are... but some are compelling.

What makes a Flat Character Story compelling?

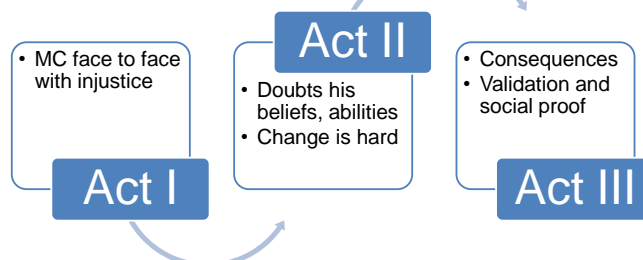
- **High stakes**
- **Personal**
- **Moral issue**

The Test Arc is a compelling type of flat character arc.

► Lise Brassard

Test Arc

The Test Arc pits your MC's truth against the world (which believes differently). The MC struggles and may experience doubt, but by the end of the story his belief in his truth is affirmed and the world (or his little corner of it) changes.



Recommended: Hunger Games. A good example of a Test Arc with a lot of social proof, which is by design, meaningless.

► Lise Brassard