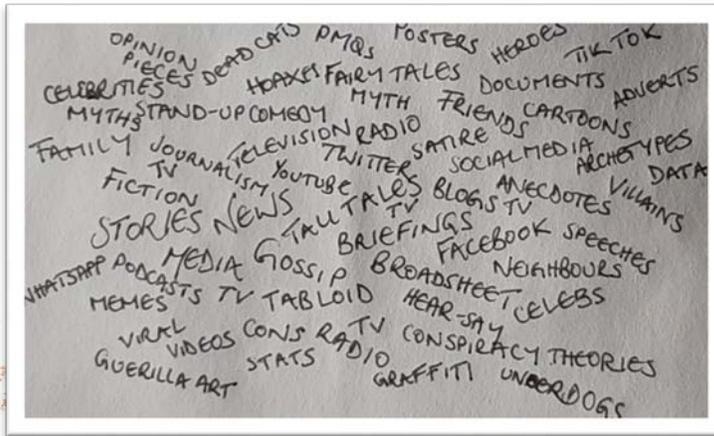
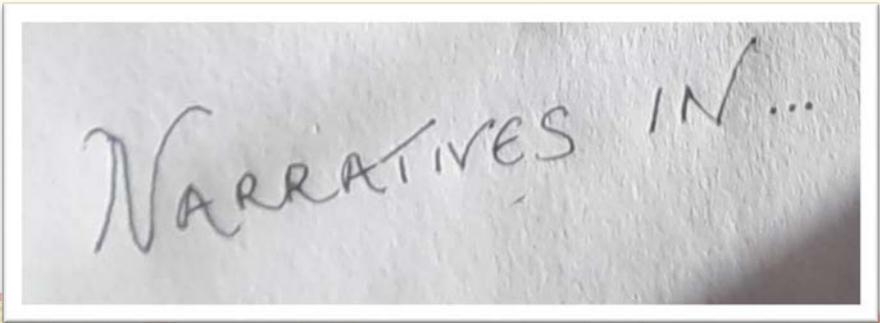


A simple guide

*How can you interpret the important narratives for you, and where do you find them?
We call these...*



Narratives are everywhere...

*And how do you construct your own strategic narratives in the most effective way?
We call these...*





FLiNT – Futures Literacy through Narrative

Who Are We?



Genevieve Liveley

Genevieve Liveley is Professor of Classics, RISC Fellow, and Turing Fellow at the University of Bristol. She is a narratologist with particular research interests in narratives and narrative theories (both ancient and modern), and their impact on futures thinking. She is the author of *Narratology* (OUP 2019) and has published a number of books and articles examining the stories that programme cultural and sociotechnical narratives about human interactions with new technology.



Will Slocombe

Will Slocombe is Senior Lecturer in English and Co-Director of the Olaf Stapledon Centre for Speculative Futures at the University of Liverpool. His research focuses on speculative and science fictions, particularly fictions of technology and representations of Artificial Intelligence. He is interested in how speculative futures narratives provide a repository of ready-made scenarios as well as how different narrative genres, modes, and forms can be used to enhance the communication of novel concepts.



Emily Spiers

Emily Spiers is Senior Lecturer in Creative Futures at the Institute for Social Futures at Lancaster University. Her work focuses on future-oriented, innovative trends in communicative and literary practices. She explores how futures are being envisaged, anticipated and made through art and literature – and how creative narratives can help articulate multiple possible futures in fields as diverse as defence, education and climate change.

Narrative

is a loose term and is used to describe a wide range of phenomena broadly related to the idea of story and communications.

Theorists simply define narrative as “somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purposes that something happened” (Phelan, 1996). This definition places emphasis on narrative as an action that seeks to accomplish some purpose

TAPO

This definition focuses on the **tellers** (who are they; what’s their authority, their motivations, etc); the **audiences** (who are they; why do they care or need to hear this story, etc); the **purpose** (what’s the intended audience reaction and action, etc); and the **occasions** (what’s the context; why is this story good or bad for this time and place, etc) – TAPO.

These narrative elements matter more than the story content. Most narratives look to the past, telling about something that has already happened, but these narratives can give signals (weak or strong) about the future and what may be about to happen. If an intention is to accomplish some future purpose or action then any narrative can also have a future focus.

The ability to use narrative to identify these signals (**‘narratives in’**) and to think about and plan for the future (**‘narratives out’**) is a core component of what is known as **Futures Literacy**.

NARRATIVES IN...

1.

HORIZON SCANNING

An anticipatory narrative system is constantly scanning for dominant, weak or emerging narratives across all of these sources...

OPINION PIECES DEAD CATS PMQS POSTERS HERDES TIKTOK
CELEBRITIES HOAXES FAIRY TALES DOCUMENTS ADVERTS
MYTHS STAND-UP COMEDY MYTH FRIENDS CARTOONS
FAMILY JOURNALISM TELEVISION RADIO SATIRE SOCIAL MEDIA ARCHETYPES
FICTION TV YOUTUBE TWITTER BLOGS ANECDOTES VILLAINS
STORIES NEWS TALK TALK TV BRIEFINGS FACEBOOK SPEECHES
WHATSAPP PODCASTS MEDIA GOSSIP BROADSHEET NEIGHBOURS
MEMES TV TABLOID HEAR-SAY CELEBS
VIRAL VIDEOS CONS RADIO CONSPIRACY THEORIES
GUERRILLA ART STATS RADIO GRAFFITI UNDERDOGS

*Archetypal narratives
always frame current affairs*

1. 'Overcoming the monster'
2. Tragedy
3. Quest
4. Revenge
5. Rebirth & Transformation

What to do with your 'narratives in'?

1. DECONSTRUCTION

Take the text apart to reveal its ambiguities or contradictions. This way, you will better understand the relationship between text, narrative and meaning

Bias? ...of author, group or source
agenda?

You do this by examining the following elements:

Cultural, geopolitical, social...

CONTEXT

SOURCE?
Genre?

Publication type...

SUBtext

What's being meant but not said?

TIMING?

Dead-cat narrative? or emerging? Dominant? Weak? Keep scanning...

frequency?

DURATION?

The strategic narrative ('narrative out') is a story that an organization tells about its purpose, intent and will to make change. This might involve the generation of a memorable tagline such as Nike's 'Just do it' and IBM's 'Building a smarter planet', and/or generating in the case of Starbucks a positional 'third space' between the office and home.

Understanding the shape of **Stories IN** can help the strategic shaping of **Stories OUT**. For maximum impact and influence (including upon future action) Stories OUT will align with the dominant characters, language, tropes, trends and plot types of Stories IN.

NARRATIVES OUT



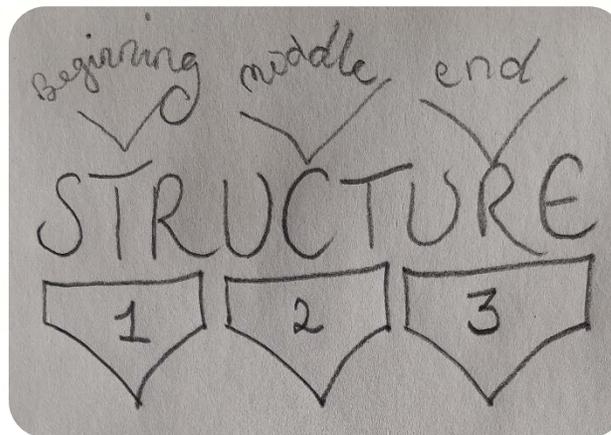
Choose the right...

medium

For your...

audience

The building blocks of your narrative...



Language?

Are you alienating your audience with jargon? Are you reinforcing unhelpful narratives inadvertently?

Imagery

Can you draw on images or metaphors that will make your narrative more meaningful?

NARRATIVES OUT



Characters will also help you activate...

Identification

And...

Empathy

In your audience

Can you introduce...

Characters?
(micro-narratives tell a big story)

EXPECTATIONS

Ask yourself what your expectations are for your narrative and in order not to disappoint these:

Stress-test

Stress-test your narrative with feedback from critical friends

timing?

Get the timing right for your narrative comms or you risk negative response

