



The Exposition Burden

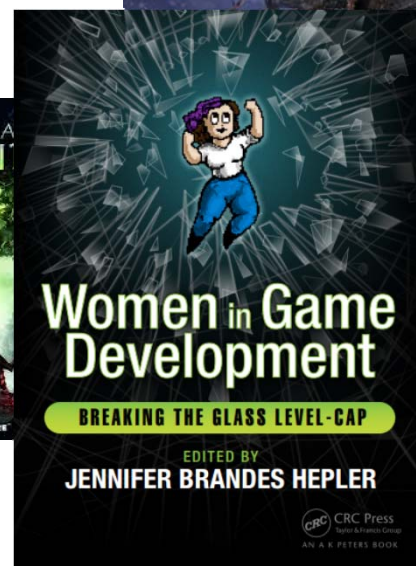
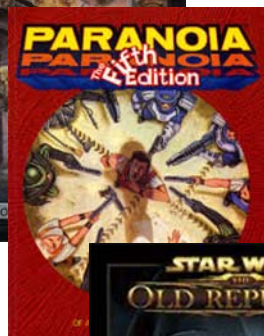
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Who am I?



A Big Change

Kognito



Why Have Dialogue in Games?

So why does so much game dialogue end up like this?



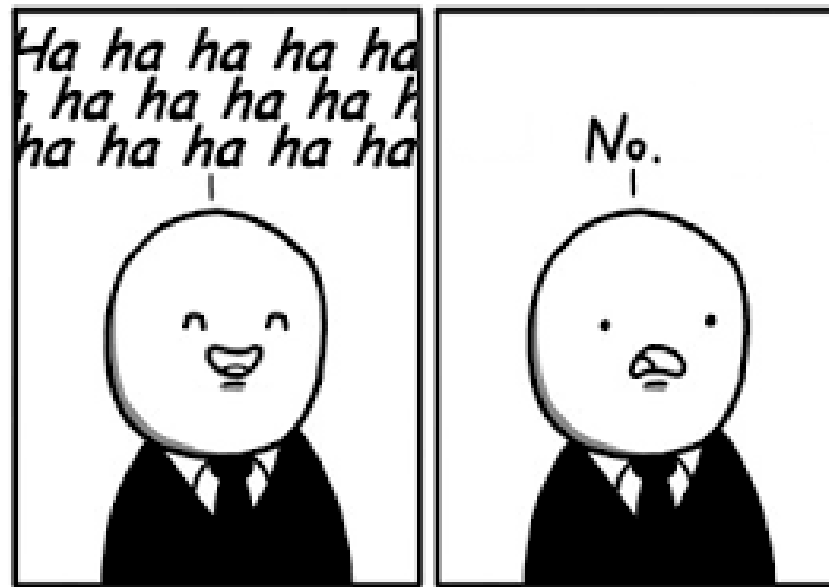
Let me tell you
about my people.
Our histories begin
in the age of stone...





Oh, and while you're defeating the evil empire, collect twenty orc skulls, 'kay?

So, let's throw it all out!



Then, how do we do better?

- Must
- Should
- Can
- Shouldn't



Let me tell you
about the
lifecycle of
dragons...

But... I have all this LORE!



But my plot is really complex...



4. The king
destroyed i
the goblins.



Bread Crumb Trails

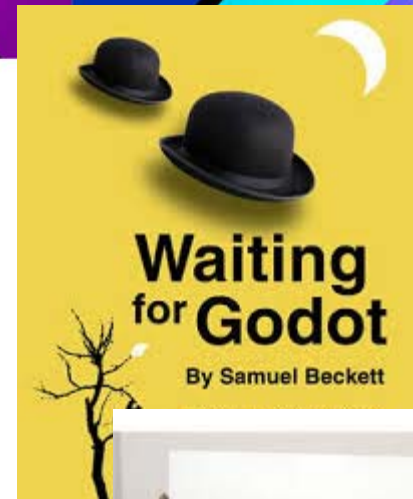
- What?
- Why?
- Where?
- How?



Exposition is the solution to a problem players are trying to solve.

Breadcrumb Pitfalls

- “Maybe the elves know something...”
- “Let me tell you a story...”
- “Here, follow this red herring...”



Show Don't Tell



The Best Exposition Is Characterization

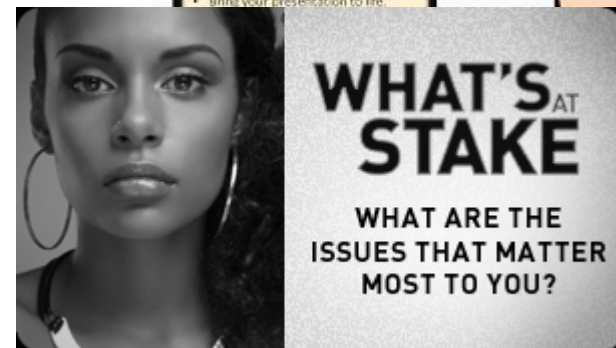
- Not just what happened but **how** affected them.



Writing By Character

- Speaking Style
- Stake in the Story

Person Speaking - Style 1



Speaking Style



It ain't fair. The lords
live in their castles.
And we starve and
die.



Just... don't do
anything to
jeopardize my
standing with the
barons.

Subtext and Analogies

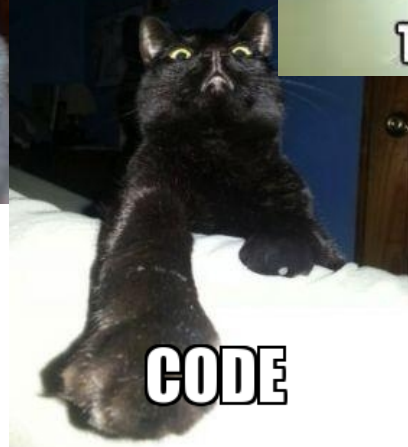


Stake in the Story



Want

Need
i need



Fear

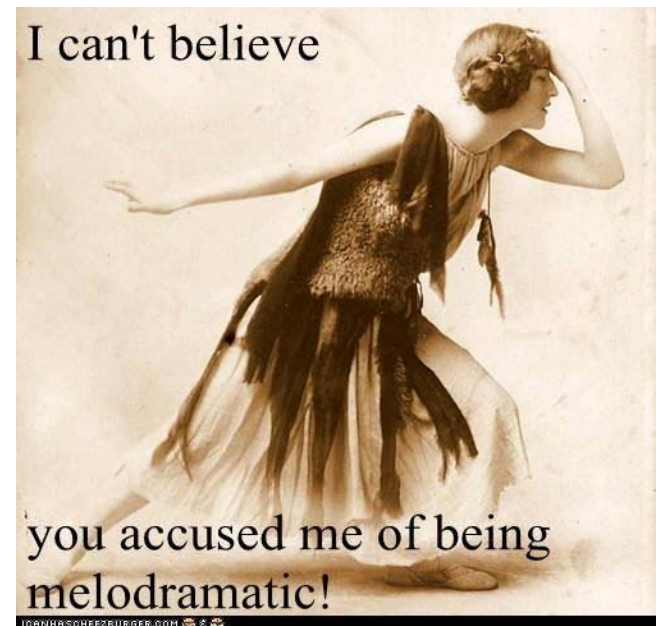


Gain



Lose

Emotion is the Spice of Life



Write Twice

What does the player need to know?

Why does the NPC think she's there?



Characterization Can Be Exposition Too

- Exposition is telling, even telling about character.
- Characterization is showing, even about world or plot.



For Example...

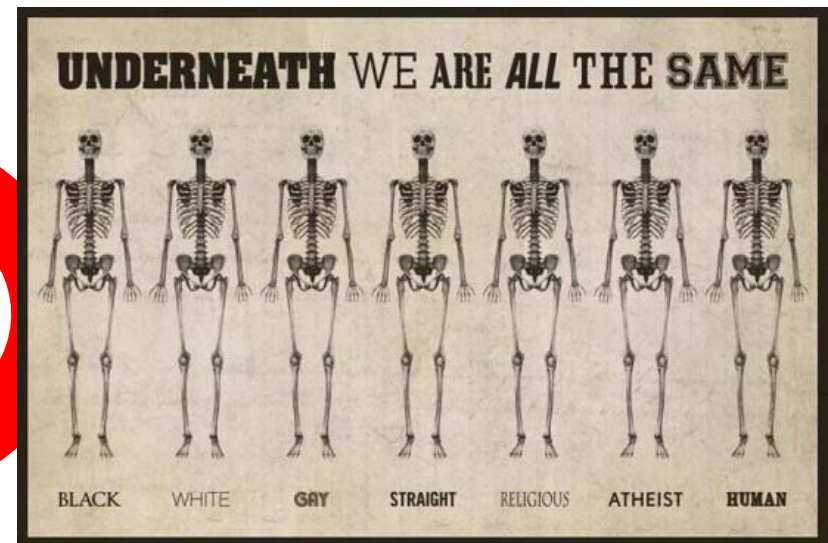


- Show
- Know
- Meet
- Ask

Stereotypes

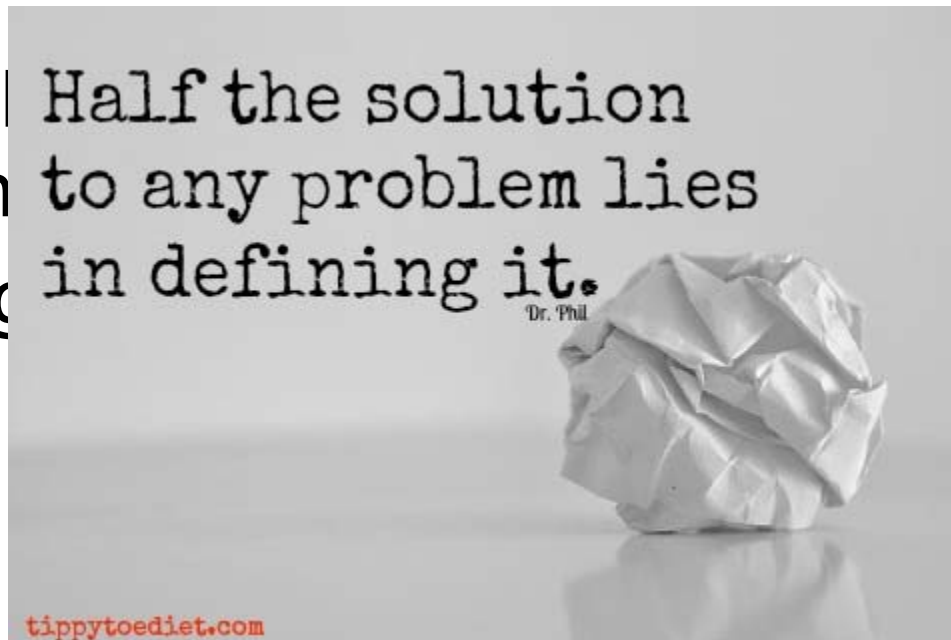


Write Humans



Conclusion

- Take the Half the solution to any problem lies in defining it.
- ...and c



interesting





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