Glossary and Topical Index

What follows are definitions of useful terms for discussing narrative. Terms in **bold face** are the terms that are essential and that have been emphasized in this book. Other terms (in *italics*) have been included because they have either proven their use or been used so often that they are now unavoidable in the discussion of narrative. This glossary also serves as a topical index for the book.

Act:
An <u>event</u> caused by a <u>character</u> (as opposed to a <u>happening</u>). See <u>event</u>.

Action:
The action is the sequence of <u>events</u> in a <u>story</u>. *An* action is used synonymously with an <u>act</u>. See <u>act</u>, <u>event</u>. 27, 32, 38, 64–67, 127, 136–139, 167–169

Adaptation:
The transmutation of a <u>narrative</u>, often from one medium to another as, for example, the film versions of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* or Shakespeare's *Henry V*. An adaptation is a form of <u>interpretation.</u> See <u>adaptive reading</u>. 118–135

Adaptive reading:
In this book, I identify adaptive reading as one of three fundamental modes of <u>interpretation</u> (see also <u>intentional</u> and <u>symptomatic</u> readings). Adaptive readings are loose interpretations of a narrative, freed from concerns for <u>overreading</u> or <u>underreading</u>. 112–115

Agency:
The capacity of an <u>entity</u> to cause <u>events</u> (that is, to engage in <u>acts</u>). Hence, an <u>agent</u> is an entity that exercizes this capacity. Bremond proposed "patient" for those without agency, but in English the term can be confusing and is rarely used. See <u>entity, character</u>. 137

Agon or **conflict**:
Most narratives are driven by a conflict. In Greek tragedy, the word for the conflict, or contest, is the "agon." From that word come the terms pro*tagonist* and ant*agonist*. 61, 179–180, 183–199, 201–215, 220

Analepsis:
Flashback (retroversion [Bal], retrospection [Prince]). The introduction of material that happens earlier in the <u>story</u>. The opposite of <u>prolepsis</u>. Coined by Genette, both terms are now widely used in the field of narrative study. See <u>prolepsis</u>. 173, 202

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Antagonist: The opponent of the <u>protagonist</u>. He or she is commonly the enemy of the hero. See <u>agon</u>, <u>protagonist</u>. 185

Author: A real person who creates a text. Some say that if the <u>narrator</u> is not a <u>character</u> in the narrative, the <u>author</u> should be assumed to be the narrator. Most still feel the author is not to be confused with the <u>narrator</u> but rather the narrator should be considered a device fashioned by the author for the purpose of narration. See <u>narrator</u>, <u>implied</u> author. 46, 74–75, 90–92, 108–112, 115, 118–120, 144–149

Authorial intention: The <u>author</u>'s intended meanings or effects. The concept of authorial intention took a beating in the twentieth century on a variety of grounds. It has been argued that authorial intention is indeterminable; that the idea of an author essentializes and presumes to fix an identity that is indeterminate and fluid; and that seeking authorial intention encourages the idea of a single privileged meaning for a narrative even though narratives of any length are necessarily plural in their meanings. But don't count this concept out. We seem strongly inclined, despite all arguments, to read for authorial intention. Witness, for example, how authors continue to be praised or blamed for the meanings and effects readers attribute to them. See <u>implied author</u>, <u>intentional reading</u>. 90–103, 108–110

Autobiography: A <u>narrative</u> about the <u>author</u>, purporting implicitly or explicitly to be true in the sense of nonfictional. Autobiographies come in many forms, even in <u>third-person narration</u>, as in *The Education of Henry Adams*. Autobiography is one of many porous concepts in <u>narratology</u>, since the field of autobiography abounds in narratives that seem to fall in a generic no-man's land between autobiography and fiction, as in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*. Serge Dubrowski introduced the term "autofiction" to describe his novel *Fils* (1977). A disputable term, it has gained limited currency in the years since then. See <u>fiction</u>, <u>narrator</u>, <u>narration</u>. 59–60, 74, 87–88, 144–149, 151–154, 165

Backstory: The <u>event</u> or events that have led to the characters' present situation. The backstory can be revealed in a long <u>analepsis,</u> or piecemeal in a series of analepses, or only in part, or not at all and left as a mystery.

Beginning and *end*:	Though the meanings of these concepts would seem to be obvious, their functions can be both complex and crucial. Sometimes the end can relate to a <u>narrative</u> the way a clinching point does to an argument. Bear in mind, too, that neither the beginning nor the end of the <u>narrative discourse</u> necessarily corresponds to the beginning or end of the <u>story</u>. Epic narratives, for example, traditionally begin in the middle of the <u>story</u> (*in medias res*). See <u>closure</u>. 16, 29–31, 62–63
Branching narrative:	See <u>forking-path plots</u>.
Central intelligence:	See <u>focalization</u>.
Character:	Human or humanlike <u>entity</u> in narrative fiction; not commonly referred to as such in nonfiction (where the human entities are understood more as real persons than as characters). Sometimes the broader terms "agent" or "actor/actant" are used for character, but it is best to reserve these terms for subcategories of character. Some would reserve the term "character" exclusively for entities involved in the <u>action</u> that have <u>agency</u>. Characters include any quasi-volitional entities like animals, robots, extraterrestrials, and animated things. E. M. Forster distinguished between "flat" and "round" characters. The former can be "summed up in a single phrase" and usually have no existence outside of a single dominating quality. Round characters cannot be summed up in the same way and are not predictable. In this sense, they have depth. See <u>entity</u>. 19, 57, 122–124, 136–150
Character and noncharacter narration:	See <u>narration</u>, <u>first-person narration</u>, <u>diegesis</u>
Chronicle:	The sequential presentation of successive historical events. Not yet a <u>narrative</u>, but material out of which history, according to Hayden White, can be <u>emplotted</u> as a narrative conveying the How and the Why of historical events. Without emplotment, history is just "one damn thing after another" (Max Plowman, 1932), that is, a chronicle. 161
Chronotope:	Bakhtin's bi-dimensional term for the complex ways in which time and space inextricably "thicken" as a narrative progresses. A chronotope is also used to refer to the time-space of a cultural/historical epoch. 168, 170, 172–174, 221n5
Closure:	When a <u>narrative</u> ends in such a way as to satisfy the expectations and/or answer the questions that it has raised, it is said to close, or to have closure. Notice that there is a distinction here between "expectations" and

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"questions." By expectations are meant kinds of action or event that the narrative leads us to expect (the gun introduced in Chapter One that must go off in Chapter Three). *King Lear*, for example, satisfies the expectations that are aroused early on when we perceive that its narrative pattern is tragedy. We expect among other things that Lear will die, and he does. But major questions are raised over the course of the play that for many viewers are not answered by the conclusion. So, for many, *King Lear* has tragic closure (giving satisfaction at the "level of expectations") but not closure of understanding (giving satisfaction at the "level of questions"). See beginning and end. 61–72, 73–74, 92–95, 163, 214–224

Constituent and supplementary events: Also referred to as "bound" and "free" motifs (Tomashevsky), kernels and satellites (Chatman), and nuclei and catalyzers (Barthes), these concepts distinguish two fundamental kinds of events in narrative. Constituent events are essential to the forward movement of the story (Barthes also called them "cardinal functions"); they are not all necessarily "turning points," but at the least they are essential to the chain of events that make up the story. Supplementary events are not necessary to the story; they seem to be extra. The distinction between constituent and supplementary events is often helpful because it reminds us to ask the question: Why has this supplementary event been included in this narrative? Since it is not necessary to advance the story, why did the implied author see fit to include it? Like many of our distinctions, however, this one is not always obvious – one reader's constituent event may be another's supplementary event. 22–24, 37, 57–58, 66, 100, 103, 122, 147, 186, 190, 198

Crux: A critical point, often a gap, in a fictional narrative where there is an insufficiency of cues, or where cues are sufficiently ambiguous, to create a major disagreement in the intentional interpretation of the narrative. Whether or not Heathcliff killed Hindley Earnshaw in *Wuthering Heights* is such a crux because how we might fill the gap determines whether we see Heathcliff as capable of murder. See intentional interpretation. 98–100

Defamiliarization: "Making strange," a rough translation of Viktor Shklovsky's *Ostranenie*, the quality that he and the Russian Formalists promoted as the primary function of art. 42

Deixis: Refers to certain words (*deictics*) that locate a person or event in space or time relative to the speaker: e.g., now, here, then, that, this, you, I, she. Deictics have no

meaning except when used in a particular context. "*Now I* remember, *you* gave *it* to *me yesterday.*

Diegesis: (1): Strictly speaking, this is the telling of a <u>story</u>. It goes back to Plato's distinction between two ways of presenting a story: as <u>mimesis</u> (acted) or as diegesis (told). (2): Genette adapted "the diegesis" to mean the world created by the narration (now often called the <u>storyworld</u>), which in turn generated a host of related terms distinguishing narrators and levels of narration as they stand in relation to the diegesis. Thus, a narrator who belongs to that world and has participated in the events he or she narrates, like Jake Barnes in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, is a **homodiegetic** narrator. A narrator who has not participated in the events he or she narrates, like Chaucer's Wife of Bath, is a **heterodiegetic** narrator. But as she and the other story-telling pilgrims are themselves <u>characters</u> in a storyworld, that of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, they are **intradiegetic heterodiegetic** narrators, while the narrator who narrates the entire work is an **extradiegetic heterodiegetic** narrator – unless one identifies Sir Topas, one of the pilgrims, as Chaucer, in which case the work is narrated by an **extradiegetic homodiegetic** narrator. However precise and comprehensive Genette's distinctions may be, their polysyllabic unfamiliarity can put a drag on the reading experience. One might therefore prefer to use James Phelan's more congenial distinction between <u>character narrators</u> and <u>noncharacter narrators</u> (Phelan 2005). See <u>storyworld</u>, <u>narration</u>, <u>narrator</u>. See <u>mimesis</u>. 81, 172

Direct discourse: The direct expression of a character's speech or thought, either "untagged" or "tagged" (set off from the narration by quotation marks and other tags like "he said," "she thought"): "It was a hot day. Elspeth wondered to herself: 'What on earth am I doing lugging stones on a day like this?'" Also called *direct style*. See <u>indirect discourse</u>, <u>free indirect discourse</u>, and <u>interior monologue</u>. 57, 75, 83–84

Discordant narrator: See <u>unreliable narrator</u>. 83, 90

Discourse: See <u>narrative discourse</u>.

Disnarrated: Gerald Prince's word for "terms, phrases, and passages that consider what did not or does not take place" (Prince, 1988). Not to be confused with <u>shadow stories</u>, which are stories that may or may not have taken place, in fiction or nonfiction, but are referred to only vaguely and in part. A slippery device, a shadow story can be used to frighten (as in horror stories) or persuade (as in debate) or for other rhetorical effects.

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Distance:	Used in two main senses: 1) the narrator's distance (emotionally, intellectually, or in other ways) from the characters and the action (the degree of his or her personal investment in the story) and 2) the distance between the narrator's moral, emotional, or intellectual sensibilities and those of the implied author. A narrator's distance (in *both* senses) affects the extent to which we trust the information we get from the narrator and assess its moral and emotional coloring. See unreliable narrator. 80–81
Dominant:	Roman Jacobson described the dominant as "the focusing component of a work of art" that invites us to read it as, say, narrative. Reduce the prominence of plot and increase the expression of feeling and, at a certain point the dominant of narrative gives way to that of lyric, which in turn determines how we read the work and what we should expect in it. 14, 35, 226n2
Electronic narrative:	Now used primarily to refer to narrative forms that take advantage of computer and on-line technology to achieve effects unique to these media. These include, notably, hypertext narrative and role-playing games. See hypertext narrative, role-playing game. 33–36
Embedded narrative:	Commonly, a "story within a story," or a narrative nested in a framing narrative. Ryan and Palmer have encouraged expanding the meaning of narrative embedding to include all those micronarratives that characters imagine in the ordinary course of their thinking or conversation. See frame and framing narrative. 29–31, 57, 174 , 177, 188, 227n9
Emplotment:	See plot. 18, 59, 161
End:	See beginning and end. 16, 62–65, 67–68, 70–71, 103, 138, 216–220
Entity:	Also referred to as "existents" or "actors and actants," entities comprise one of the two basic components of a story, the other being the events or action. In fiction, humanlike entities capable of agency are referred to as characters; in nonfiction, they are referred to, generally, as persons. But we can also tell stories of insentient objects incapable of action on their own – of a planet, for example, and how it was struck out of its course by an immense asteroid. It would be an error to refer to such entities as characters, particularly if scientific objectivity is at a premium. See character. 18–19, 33, 78, 85
Eponymous character:	A character in a narrative bearing his or her name in the title. 138

Ergodic:	A mathematical term applied by Espen Aarseth to a quasi-narrative situation common in role-playing games in which players, within the constraints of a hidden multi-path narrative structure, freely determine what happens. See role-playing game. 39
Event:	The fundamental unit of the action. Also called an "incident," an event can be an act (a kick or a kiss), or a happening when no character is causally involved (a bolt of lightning). Events come in a great range of impact and import (they are "scalable"). For some theorists (maybe most) a narrative event must result in a change of state (Prince, Schmid, Hühn, Baroni and Ravaz). See constituent and supplementary events. 4–5,12–25, 33–34, 36–40, 47–52, 57–58, 80–81, 100, 132, 138–139, 145, 171, 198, 201, 232n12, 233n5
Experientiality:	Term introduced by Fludernik, and further developed by Herman, as the basic element of narrative in opposition to, among others, event-based definitions of narrative. Experientiality is not simply an event but the reaction to event as processed in memory. Narrative or, more exactly, narrativity, is "mediated human experientiality" (Fludernik, 1996, p. 36). See event. 25
Extradiegetic narration:	See diegesis. 81, 87–88, 180
Fabula and *sjuzet*:	See story. 17–18
Fiction:	Madeup, as opposed to factual. As a noun it refers to the whole range of made-up narratives that stand opposed to "nonfictional" genres of narrative like history, biography, autobiography, reportage, etc. Nonfiction is "falsifiable," fiction is not. See fictionality. 26, 40, 124, 151–166, 175
Fictionality:	The condition that governs the reading of a text as fiction; more broadly, "intentionally signaled invention in communication" (Nielsen, Zetterberg Gjerlevsen). See fiction. 154, 164
First-person narration:	Conventionally, narration by a character who plays a role in the story narrated, as opposed to third-person narration that is used by one who doesn't. When the narrator is also the subject or protagonist of the story there are in a way two selves involved: the narrating self and the narrated or experiencing self. Note that there are many examples of third-person narration used by narrators, who are not characters in the story but who will at times refer to themselves in the "first person" – sometimes at length (the narrative persona of Henry Fielding, for example, in *Tom Jones*). These are not usually considered "first-person" narrators because

they tell the story in the third person. For this reason, Gérard Genette found greater utility in the distinction between <u>homodiegetic</u> and <u>heterodiegetic</u> narration. Genette made further sub and supra distinctions within this distinction, all bearing the same Greek root (e.g., intradiegetic, extradiegetic). Readers may find James Phelan's distinction between <u>character narrators</u> and <u>noncharacter narrators</u> sufficiently precise and a lot more user-friendly than Genette's (Phelan2005). See <u>narration</u>, <u>narrator</u>, <u>diegesis</u>. 76–78, 178, 197

Flat and round characters: See <u>character</u>. 139–140

Focalization: The vantage from which, or eyes through which, we "*see*" <u>events</u> in the <u>narrative</u>. This is yet another coinage by Genette, who distinguished between "external focalization," when we see <u>characters</u> from the outside, and "internal focalization," when we see through the eyes and mind of a character. In English and North American criticism, the phrase <u>point of view</u> has been used for this concept, or something quite close to it, but point of view is more general and often includes the concept of <u>voice</u>. "Focalization" may be more polysyllabic, but it is more exact. Usually the <u>narrator</u> is our focalizer, but it is important to keep in mind that focalizing is not necessarily achieved through a single consistent narrative consciousness. Focalization can change, sometimes frequently, over the course of a <u>narrative</u>, and sometimes from sentence to sentence, as it can, for example, in intermixed passages of <u>third-person narration</u> and <u>free indirect discourse</u>. Sometimes a novelist will rely on a single character as a focalizer. Henry James called such a figure a *reflector* or *central intelligence*. In James's *The Ambassadors*, Lambert Strether serves this function. In this study, I present focalization and <u>voice</u> as companion concepts. Both frequently convey a sensibility, the one by which we "see," the other by which we "hear." See <u>point of view</u>, <u>voice</u>, <u>zero focalization</u>. 75, 79–80, 128–131, 161, 163

Forking-path plots: David Bordwell's term, taken from Borges' "Garden of forking paths," to refer to <u>narratives</u> in which two or more incompatible plot lines cohabit in the same <u>diegetic</u> level, e.g., Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, in which Scrooge is granted an alternative outcome to his life. More recently some films have had three or more paths, starting from the same point in their narratives, e.g., *Blind Chance* (1981), *Groundhog Day* (1993), *Run, Lola, Run* (1999). Sometimes referred to as branching narratives. See <u>metalepsis</u>, <u>hypertext narrative.</u> 174–176, 179, 181

Forum theatre: Theatrical production in which the audience, starting with a sketch, co-develops its narrative possibilities. 39

Frame and **framing narrative**: The term "frame" is used in so many ways in discussions of narrative that it is important to define how you are using it. It can refer to the way a shot is framed in a film or, more broadly, the way a scene is framed in a play or novel. It can refer to the templates, or frames, in our mind that we bring to a narrative and that are elicited and perhaps manipulated by the text or that impose their own constructions on it. **A framing narrative** refers to any preliminary and/or concluding material in a narrative that frames an embedded narrative. See embedded narrative. 29–31, 32, 43–44, 57, 85, 177, 179, 188

Free direct discourse: Untagged direct discourse: "It was a hot day. What on earth am I doing lugging stones on a day like this?" In the first sentence, we hear the voice of the narrator; in the second, we hear the voice of a character, unmediated by the voice of the narrator. Also called *free direct style*. See direct discourse, indirect discourse, free indirect discourse, interior monologue. 84

Free indirect discourse: Third-person narration in which a character's thoughts or expressions are presented in the character's voice while maintaining third-person narration. The discourse, moreover, is not set off by quotation marks or the usual tags like "he thought" or "she said": "It was a hot day. What on earth was she doing lugging stones on a day like this?" Here, the second sentence is marked by Elspeth's intonations, but it is cast in the third person and in the past tense, neither of which she would use, were she speaking or thinking about this question. Note that the narrator of the containing text may be narrating primarily in the firstperson, but here the narration, briefly or at length, is about Elspeth, and therefore in the thirdperson. Grammatically, the difference between *free direct* and *free indirect* is exemplified in the difference between "what am I doing" (free direct) and "what was she doing" (free indirect). Also called *free indirect style*. See direct discourse, free direct discourse, indirect discourse, interior monologue. 76, 83–84, 155–156

Gaps: The inevitable voids, large or small, in any narrative that the reader is called upon to fill from his or her experience or imagination. In the intentional interpretation of fictional narrative, this process is limited to what is consistent with the text and its cues. In historical and other forms of *nonfiction* narrative, it is possible to fill gaps through further research. See crux, gutter. 96–100, 107, 127–130, 139, 140, 162, 163, 191, 203

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Genre: A recurrent literary form. There are narrative and non-narrative genres. The novel, the epic, the short story, the ballad are all examples of narrative genres. Genres can be highly specialized. The Bildungsroman, for example, tells the story of its hero's coming of age. It is a genre that fits within the larger genre of the novel. Sometimes, genres can be so discrete and specialized that scholars use the term "sub-genre" to describe them. 2, 13, 55–56, 64, 67, 161

Gutter: The space between frames in a cartoon comic sequence. The gutter is a form of narrative gap that is built into the medium of the comic strip. It is the space in which the reader imagines events unfolding in time. See gaps. 128–129

Happening: One of the two kinds of event in a narrative. Unlike actions, happenings occur without the specific agency of a character. See event.

Heterodiegetic narration: See diegesis, narration, voice. 81, 87, 88, 176

Homodiegetic narration: See diegesis, narration, voice. 81, 87, 88, 176–177

Hypertext narrative: A multi-path narrative often conveyed in electronic media (on CD or on-line) that capitalizes on hypertext capability to permit (or require) the reader to switch attention instantly to other lexia – texts or graphics, which may be different segments of a single narrative or segments of a forking-path narrative with different outcomes or different narratives altogether. Hypertext narrative has a number of earlier hard copy multi-path antecents such as Julio Cortázar's 155-chapter novel *Hopscotch*, in which readers are invited to read from chapter 1 to 56, or by hopscotching their own course through all 155 chapters. See forking-path narrative, electronic narrative, role-playing games. 33–36

Ideology: A structure of ideas and values, at once reflecting and determining the power relations of social classes. An ideology is so deeply imbedded in a person or a society that it is taken for the natural order of things. Rhetorical narratology is often focused on bringing to light the ideology that imbues a narrative. See masterplot, symptomatic reading. 163

Implied author: Neither the real author nor the narrator, the implied author is the idea of the author constructed by the reader as she or he reads the narrative. In an intentional reading, the implied author is that sensibility and moral

intelligence that the reader gradually constructs to infer the intended meanings and effects of the narrative. The implied author might as easily (and with greater justice) be called the "inferred author." Since it was first introduced by Wayne Booth (1961), the concept has been controversial, some arguing that there is no need for it. See distance, implied reading, narrator, unreliable narrator. 82–83, 90–93, 96, 103–104, 108–112, 114–116

Implied reader (implied audience):   As the implied author should be kept distinct from the actual author, so the implied reader should be kept distinct from the actual reader. The implied reader is not necessarily you or I but the reader we infer to be an intended recipient of the narrative. Some argue that the implied reader is the reader the implied author writes for. See narratee.

Indirect discourse: Speech or thinking (indirect thought) of a character rendered in the narrator's own words: "It was a hot day. Elspeth asked herself why she should be lugging stones on a day such as this." Other terms for indirect *thought* are "thought report" (Palmer) and "psycho-narration" (Cohn). See direct discourse, free indirect discourse, interior monologue. 75–76, 155

Intentional reading: An interpretation that seeks to understand a text in terms of the intended meanings of its implied author. This meaning of intention is not to be confused with the different and broader use of the term in philosophy. See authorial intention, implied author, symptomatic reading, adaptive reading. 108–111, 113, 141

Interactive narrative: See hypertext narrative, role-playing games.

Interior monologue: Any mode of direct discourse used to convey the thinking and feeling of a character without the usual grammatical tags (e.g., quotation marks or the phrases "he thought" or "she thought"). "Interior monologue" is sometimes used interchangeably with the phrase "stream of consciousness." William James introduced the latter to describe *how* thinking and feeling occur, so my preference is to use the former for the actual conveyance of that stream of thinking/feeling. See direct discourse, indirect discourse, free direct discourse, free indirect discourse. 76, 84–85, 155

Intermediality: Adaptation across media; combining two or more media in a single work (plurimediality) or having an existence in no single text but dispersed in multiple versions across media (transmediality). 133

Interpretation:	The act of expressing in one's own way the meanings – ideas, values, feelings – communicated by a text. Interpretation can take several forms. Commonly it is found in critical writing. But the production of a play is often referred to as an "interpretation" of the play, and even a narrative can be an interpretation of a story that has been told before. A common synonym for interpretation is "reading." In this book, I distinguish three kinds of interpretation: see adaptation, crux, gaps, intentional readings, symptomatic readings, and adaptive readings. 24, 29–30, 46, 67–68, 73–74, 83, 85–86, 89–117, 149, 182, 207–212, 215–221
Intertextuality:	The condition of all texts, including narratives, as comprised of preexisting texts. Intertextuality can be distinguished from "allusion" and "imitation" as an inevitable, rather than a necessarily selective, condition of texts. It assumes that we can only express ourselves through words and forms that are already available to us. In this view, the work of even the most original artists draws throughout from the work of predecessors. The power of such work must lie in the way it recontextualizes the multitude of bits that have been cannibalized in this way. 107–108, 119
Intradiegetic narration:	See diegesis. 81, 87
Kernels and satellites:	See constituent and supplementary events. 22
Leitmotif:	See motif.
Lexia:	Roland Barthes in *S/Z* called lexia the "units of meaning" in a text, "blocks of signification" which amount to anywhere from a few words to several sentences. The term has since been adapted in discourse on electronic narrative to refer to passages of varying length triggered by hypertext linking. See hypertext narrative. 34–36
Master narrative:	A more encompassing term than masterplot, a master narrative (loosely derived from Lyotard's *grand récit*) is the vision of history that inflects the thought, art, and discourse of a culture – as, for example, the Enlightenment master narrative of a continual progress of knowledge, reason, and liberty. In Lyotard's view, our postmodern era is marked by the absence of any master narrative. See masterplot. 53
Masterplot:	Recurrent skeletal stories, belonging to cultures and individuals that play a powerful role in questions of identity, values, ideology, and the understanding of life. Masterplots can also exert an influence on the way we take in new information, causing us to overread or

underread narratives in an often-unconscious effort to bring them into conformity with a masterplot. As masterplots, by their nature, recur in many different narrative versions, it is at least a technical mistake to employ the common term "master narrative" for this concept. See ideology, normalizing, plot, master narrative. 52–59, 64, 95, 101, 133, 144–146, 161, 191–197, 203, 205

Medium: The vehicle conveying a narrative – written language, film, oil paint, fabric, lithe bodies moving silently on a stage. Some of these media would be considered unfit for narrative by the first set of scholars referred to in the definition of narrative below. See adaptation, electronic narrative, intermediality. 34, 43, 85, 118–134, 140

Melodrama: Sensational narratives deploying flat characters who are either very good or very bad and who often speak in overwrought language. Originally used to describe plays, the term is frequently used in a derogatory way to describe such narratives in other media as well. 61, 139

Metalepsis: A violation of narrative levels, usually in which the diegesis, or storyworld, is invaded by an entity or entities from another narrative level or even from outside the narrative altogether, as for example when an extradiegetic narrator enters the action, or a "spectator" leaps on stage and becomes a part of the action, or the "author" appears and starts quarrelling with one of the characters. An extreme example of metalepsis is Christine Brook-Rose's *Thru* in which narrators and characters invent each other. See forking-path plots. 176–180, 182

Metanarrative: Like metafiction (Scholes, Alter), metanarrative is narrative that implicitly or explicitly refers to itself, usually in passages within a longer text. Also termed self-reflexive narrative. See reflexivity. 59

Mimesis: The imitation of an action by performance. According to Plato, mimesis is one of the two major ways to convey a narrative, the other being diegesis or the representation of an action by telling. By this distinction, plays are mimetic, epic poems are diegetic. Aristotle (Plato's student) used the term "mimesis" as simply the imitation of an action and included in it both modes of narrative representation. See diegesis. 127

Montage: Literally, in French, "assembly." The art of editing film by connecting disparate shots one after another. 127–128, 130

Motif:

A discrete thing, image, or phrase that is repeated in a narrative. Theme, by contrast, is a more generalized or abstract concept that is suggested by, among other things, motifs. A coin can be a motif, greed is a theme. A leitmotif, originally derived from Wagner's device of associating a musical motif with a character or idea, is at times used interchangeably with motif. See repetition, theme. 101, 105, 139–140

Narratee:

Prince's coinage for a narrator's audience within a narrative. The men on the deck of the Nellie are Marlowe's narratees in *Heart of Darkness*. The narratee is not to be confused with the reader, real or implied.

Narration:

The *telling* of a story or part of a story. Sometimes used indistinguishably from narrative, narration as it is used here is a subset of verbal narrative, referring to the activity of a narrator. Stanzel (1984) introduced the concept of non-verbal narration, which film theorists especially (Branigan, Bordwell, Chatman) have extended and applied to film. See diegesis, first-person narration, third-person narration, omniscient narration, narrator, voice, free indirect discourse. 41, 68–88, 92, 131, 176–178

Narrative:

In its broadest definition, the representation of an event or series of events. Some scholars have argued that there cannot be a narrative without someone to tell it (a narrator), but this view would exclude most drama and film, which, though they present stories, usually do so without a narrator. Narratives consist of two main components: the story and the narrative discourse.

Narrative discourse:

The story as narrated – that is, the story as rendered in a narrative. Some narratologists use the term plot for this concept, but this can be confusing because in English we commonly use "plot" and "story" interchangeably. Note that the distinction between "story" and "story as narrated" can be taken to imply that stories exist independently of narrative presentation – in other words, the same story can be narrated in more than one way. See narrative, plot, story. 14–21, 23, 33–35, 41–42, 90–92, 160–161, 222

Narrativehood:

See narrativity.

Narrativity:

A disputed term, sometimes used in a formal sense to mean the degree to which a narrative has the set of qualities that distinguish it from nonnarrative. In this book, it is used to mean the degree to which a text generates the impression that it is telling a story. Some would put the emphasis on the quality of the story or how well it is told, but then narrativity would be an

even more subjective concept, your idea of a good story being different from mine. Narratives that do not induce the feeling that one is being told a story are narratives without narrativity. Prince coined the term "narrativehood" to refer to the bare minimum required for a narrative to be recognized as a narrative. There are no degrees of narrativehood. See experientiality. 24–27, 48, 50, 52, 154

Narratology: Coined by Tzvetan Todorov in 1969, narratology is the descriptive field devoted to the systematic study of narrative. Though it was originally conceived as a sub-field of the structuralist study of literature, narratology has grown and continues to grow well beyond its origins in both scope and diversity of method. For this reason, scholars increasingly prefer the more inclusive term "narrative theory." Many of the terms in this glossary come from the work of narratologists. 209

Narrator: One who tells a story. The narrator of a fictional narrative is not to be confused with the author or the implied author, though in some cases it is hard to distinguish their views from those of the implied author. The narrator is best seen as a tool, devised by the author, to narrate the story. Thus, there are many unreliable narrators who can't possibly be confused with the author. Some hard-line narratologists would argue that the distinction between the narrator and the author should hold for all forms of narrative, including nonfiction forms like history and even autobiography. At the least, this position raises interesting philosophical questions involving the relation of voice, character, and identity (whose voice is this you are reading now? Is it my voice or is it the voice of a character-like entity I created to present these ideas – a mask that I wear in print, my persona?). See narration, author, diegesis, distance, Free indirect discourse, first-person narration, third-person narration, implied author, metalepsis, narrative, unreliable narrator. 57, 74–88, 90–91, 97, 99–104, 113, 122, 131, 155, 168–178, 188

Naturalizing: Culler's term for the operation by which readers or viewers impose familiarity on a narrative, usually by overreading or underreading. Fludernik has adapted the term to mean the process by which new narrative forms that are at first strange (i.e., interior monologue) acquire an aura of naturalness through repeated use. See normalizing. 50

Normalizing: The power of narrative form, and particularly of masterplots, to convey a sense of reality or truth. See naturalizing. 50–52

Omniscient narration:	Narration by a narrator assumed to know everything connected with the story narrated. Though it is widely used, this is a troublesome term that is finally more confusing than helpful. There are, it is true, narrators who can be assumed to know everything and who are thus omniscient (literally "all-knowing"). Sternberg divides these into the "omnicommunicative" (e.g. Trollope), who give readers everything they need to know, and the "suppressive" (e.g., Fielding), who strategically withhold information. (Sternberg, 260ff). But if narrators can be omniscient, narration *itself* is never omniscient. All narration is riddled with blind spots – gaps – which we must fill from our limited knowledge. See gaps, third-person narration, zero focalization. 79, 131
Overreading and **underreading**:	The activities of importing into a text material that is not signified within it (overreading) or of neglecting material that is signified within it (underreading). Both would appear to be inevitable to some degree. Reducing them to a minimum is the object of an intentional reading. See adaptive reading, naturalizing. 95–97, 100–101, 104, 127, 140
Paratext:	Genette's term for material outside the narrative that is in some way connected to it. Paratexts can be physically attached to the narrative vehicle ("peritexts"): prefaces, tables of contents, titles, blurbs on the jacket, illustrations. They can also be separated from the vehicle but nonetheless connected by association ("epitexts"): comments by the author, reviews, other works by the author. Paratexts have the capacity to inflect the way we interpret a narrative, sometimes powerfully. Genette did not include plays and movies in his discussion, but here, too, we can see paratextual material in the form of playbills, previews, marquees, public disclaimers, production scandals, notoriety of the actors. 31–32, 43, 112, 154, 189
Performative:	A term widely and diversely used in a variety of fields (linguistics, philosophy, dramatic art, feminist theory). In this book, the term refers not to what a narrative is or is about, but to what it does – how it functions in the world, intentionally or unintentionally. 147–149
Peripeteia:	Greek term for the protagonist's reversal of fortune. 26
Persona:	Literally "mask," persona is used commonly to refer to the personality constructed by an author to narrate a story or even to speak in his or her name. See first-person narration. See narration, narrator. 79

Perspective:	See point of view. 130, 161
Plot:	A vexed term. Commonly in English plot is used to mean story, and in narrative theory it can be used to indicate the sequence of events, which is close. Another (generally European) tradition equates plot with the order in which the story-events are (re)arranged in the narrative discourse. Plot has also been used to mean the chain of *causally* connected events in a story. But if it is used in this way, then the common phrase "episodic plot" would be a contradiction in terms, since in this context "episodic" usually means "causally *dis*connected" events. Close to this usage is the idea of emplotment, which Ricoeur describes as "the operation that draws a configuration out of a simple succession" (I, 65). Hayden White frequently used this term to describe what a historian inevitably does when she gives form to a succession of events. Finally, plot is often used in the sense of story-type (revenge plot, marriage plot). The term masterplot draws on this last usage. See forking-path plots, narrative discourse. 15, 17–18, 28, 36–39, 42, 53, 80, 137–138, 162–208, 227n9
Point:	What makes a narrative succeed as a narrative worth telling. It answers the question: Why did you tell me this, what's the point? Points can range from the interesting to the arresting. The punch-line of a joke is an emphatic point. Without it, the joke falls flat. But in longer, more complex narratives there can be a series of subtle or dramatic points that keep us reading. See tellability. 26
Point of view:	The perspective or vantage point from which the reader observes what happens. In practice, point of view has often proved inadequate to capture the full range of how the reader visually, cognitively, and emotionally takes in the events and characters of literary or oral narrative. I recommend using the term focalization for that complex of vantage point or perspective (both perceptual and conceptual), and any accompanying feeling, or sensibility that constitutes our *visual* purchase on the narrative, even if it may fluctuate from moment to moment. And I recommend the use of the term voice for the same complex as it is achieved through the narrative voice that we hear. See focalization, zero focalization, voice. 16, 75, 79, 86, 130
Prolepsis:	Flashforward (anticipation [Bal, Prince]). The introduction into the narrative of material that comes later in the story. The opposite of analepsis. See analepsis, temporal structure.

Protagonist:	In an <u>agon</u>, the hero (though not necessarily a "good guy"). Opposed by an <u>antagonist</u> (who is not necessarily a "bad guy"). See <u>agon</u>, <u>antagonist</u>. 142
Psycho-narration:	See <u>indirect discourse</u>.
Récit:	In common French usage, <u>narrative</u> or <u>story</u>. In French narratology, récit is used for <u>narrative discourse</u> or <u>plot</u>, as opposed to "histoire" (*story*). See <u>narrative discourse</u>, <u>story</u>.
Reflector:	See <u>focalization</u>.
Reflexivity/reflexive narrative:	A reflexive or self-reflexive (or self-conscious) <u>narrative</u>, or passage within a narrative. By either formal or thematic means, the text calls attention to itself as constructed art. Reflexivity is a condition that can be found most often in fictional narrative, though it crops up in nonfictional narrative as well. See <u>metanarrative</u>. 180, 189
Repetition:	The recurrence in <u>narrative</u> of images, ideas, situations, kinds of <u>characters</u>. Repetition is one of the surest signs of the <u>meaningful</u>. If you are stuck trying to interpret a text, one good question to ask yourself is: What is repeated in this narrative? <u>Theme</u> and <u>motif</u> are terms commonly used for kinds of repetition in narrative. See <u>theme</u>, <u>motif</u>, <u>temporal structure</u>. 101–105, 112, 211–212.
Retardation:	The slowing down of the <u>narrative discourse</u>. Often, but not always, a way of increasing <u>suspense</u>. See <u>temporal structure</u>. 122
Role-playing game (RPG):	A hybrid of narrative and gaming, RPGs are available in both table-top and computer versions. Players, through their avatars, explore a <u>storyworld</u> with degrees of freedom ranging from the constraint of a pre-determined multi-path narrative (more often found in computer RPGs) to collaborative <u>ergodic</u> improvisation (more often found in table-top RPGs). See <u>ergodic</u>, <u>electronic narrative</u>. 36–39, 109
Second-person narration:	<u>Narration</u> in the second person ("You were lugging stones on a very hot day. You asked yourself why you were doing this"). A comparatively rare grammatical choice for narration, it has been used increasingly in fiction and even <u>autobiography</u>. Its effects are a source of considerable critical dispute. 76–77, 87–88
Setting:	All those elements serving as background in a <u>narrative</u>'s <u>storyworld</u>. 19, 58, 226n7
Shadow story:	See <u>disnarrated</u>. 190–192
Sjuzet:	See <u>story</u>. 17–18, 27
Stereotype:	See <u>type</u>. 55–60

Story:
With narrative discourse, one of the two fundamental components of narrative. Conveyed through the narrative discourse, a story is a chronological sequence of events involving entities. Slightly adapting Chatman, we can identify two kinds of events in a story, acts and happenings. Entities are also of two basic kinds: characters, who can engage in acts, and non-sentient entities, who cannot. Story should not be confused with narrative discourse, which is the *way* a story is told. A story is bound by the laws of time; it goes in one direction, starting at the beginning, moving through the middle, and arriving at the end (though whether a story must have a clear beginning and end is disputable). Narrative discourse does not have to follow this order. The distinction between story and narrative discourse was first anticipated early in the twentieth century by Russian structuralists. The terms they used for this distinction – *fabula* (for story) and *sjuzet* (for the order of events in the narrative discourse) – are still widely employed in the discourse on narrative. See narrative, narrative discourse. 14–27

Storyworld:
The diegesis or world in which the story takes place. Normally, as a narrative progresses our sense of the storyworld grows richer and more complex. See diegesis, metalepsis. 12, 19, 134, 172–174, 176–177

Stream of consciousness:
See interior monologue. 84–85

Supplementary events:
See constituent and supplementary events, event. 22–24, 57–58, 102–103

Suspense:
Uncertainty (together with the desire to diminish it) about what will happen in the story. Suspense can vary from mild to acute, but it is possible to argue that suspense is always present to some degree in those narratives that keep us from closing the book or walking out of the theater. Much of the art of narrative lies in resolving our suspense with some degree of surprise. See retardation. 25–26, 48, 63–65, 71, 167, 200, 214

Symptomatic reading:
Decoding a text as symptomatic of the author's unconscious or unacknowledged state of mind or ideology. Generally opposed to intentional reading. See ideology, intentional reading, adaptive reading. 110–117, 149

Tellability: Material out of which a successful narrative can be made is *tellable*. A key ingredient of this material is a point or succession of points that would make a narrative worth telling. As the terms arise from William Labov's work on conversational narratives among inner-city youths, "narratable" and "narratability" would be more inclusive, and perhaps less confusing, terms. See point. 38, 147

Temporal structure: How the time of the narrative discourse relates to the time of the story. According to Genette, there are three major ways in which the time of the narrative discourse can depart from that of the story: by **order** (rearranging the order in which events of the story are revealed to us, e.g., by prolepsis or analepsis), by **duration (**expanding or contracting the time devoted to individual events, e.g., by retardation), by **repetition** (revisiting, sometimes repeatedly, moments or episodes in the story).

Text: Used broadly in much, though not all, narrative theory to mean the physical embodiment of the narrative, as book, short story, performed play or script, film or film script, and so on. Texts, of course, are thought of in common discourse as things composed of words. The broader meaning of the term invoked here rests on the idea that, regardless of the vehicle, narratives are always "read" in the sense that we grasp them through a process of decipherment. Without some understanding of the symbolic code in which the narrative is told, we cannot know what happened.

Theme: A subject (issue, question) that recurs in a narrative through implicit or explicit reference. With motif, theme is one of the two commonest forms of narrative repetition. Where motifs are concrete, themes are abstract. See motif, repetition. 101–103

Third-person narration: Conventionally, narrative in which the narrator is not a character in the story, and the characters, accordingly, are referred to in the third person ("He did this"; "She says that"). Often, and misleadingly, referred to as omniscient narration. Like first-person narration, the term is not a satisfactory generic classification since third-person narrators can refer to themselves in the first person, and first-person narratives almost invariably abound in stretches of third-person narration. For the grammatical person of the narration, Genette substituted the cleaner distinction between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration. See diegesis, narration, first-person narration, focalization, voice, zero focalization. 76–79, 81, 84–85

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