

# Chapter 3

## A Narrative Perspective

**T**he **narrative perspective** as a rhetorical method is attributed to Walter R. Fisher, a professor of communication at the University of Southern California. Essentially, the narrative perspective focuses on the innate nature of human beings to understand and interpret the world around us through storytelling. Fisher (1987) argues that human beings “experience and comprehend life as a series of ongoing narratives, as conflicts, characters, beginnings, middles, and ends” (p. 24). Essentially, he proposed a narrative perspective because he believes *rhetoric* is more than creating arguments supported with evidence, facts, and logic. Rather, a narrative story transcends and subsumes arguments as a place in which arguments are made. This *bigger picture* narrative, complete with plot, characters, and actions, ought to be examined as it influences us in how to believe and behave.

Fisher’s work is valuable for studying popular culture texts because it proposes a systematic means by which to analyze how rhetorical texts, including popular culture texts, function as narrative stories and what underlying messages are being conveyed in them. Simply put, critics seek to discover the *moral* of the *story* and the *good reasons* offered to support the *moral* as valid (Fisher, 1984, pp. 7–9).

### NARRATION

**Narration**, the “symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them,” is at the heart of the narrative

perspective (Fisher, 1987, p. 58). This concept of what can be considered rhetorical (i.e., influential, persuasive) represents a dramatic **paradigm** shift from what he calls the **rational-world paradigm**, which undergirds the neo-Aristotelian approach. A *paradigm* is simply a conceptual framework for understanding the world around us. The rational-world paradigm, then, is a framework that assumes people are rational beings who make decisions based on logical arguments, evidence, and reasoning. Conversely, Fisher's **narrative paradigm** is a conceptual framework that places *narration* at the core of all human communication.

## NARRATIVE RATIONALITY

All stories are not equally good. People evaluate the *narratives* we encounter by applying the standards of **narrative rationality** to them. *Narrative rationality* is the way we evaluate the worth of stories as “true.” The two standards of narrative rationality we apply to stories are coherence and fidelity.

### Coherence

**Coherence** is essentially the degree to which the story *hangs together*. In other words, how probable or believable does the story seem? Do the characters act consistently? Stories *hang together* when we're persuaded to believe that important details haven't been left out, the facts haven't been altered, and other possible interpretations have been accounted for. We often come to our conclusions by comparing the coherence of the story with other stories we've heard on a similar theme. Some critics, for example, argued that the TV program *Commander in Chief* didn't last because too many viewers couldn't conceive of a female president as plausible.

### Fidelity

**Fidelity** is the degree to which the values offered in a story *ring true* with what we regard as truthful and humane. In other words, the story strikes a *responsive chord*. A story has *fidelity* when it provides *good reasons* to accept its *moral*, which will ultimately guide our future actions. These *good reasons* emerge from the values embedded in the message, the relevance of those values to the decisions made, the consequences that result from adhering to or defying those values, and the degree to which those values conform to the worldview and values of the audience. Finally, Fisher argues that most people, when confronted with the “better part of themselves,” uphold the values of “truth, the good, beauty, health, wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, harmony, order, communion, friendship, and oneness with the Cosmos” (pp. 187–188). So, we judge fidelity based on the degree to which a story's *good reasons ring true* with these *ideal* values by which we *ought to* live.

Why conduct a narrative analysis of popular culture texts? Well, for one reason, each of us can't experience all of life first hand, so we learn from the stories told by others about how we *ought to* believe and behave. Popular culture texts help us make sense of the people, places, and events we may encounter in our lives (Riessman,

1993). We draw our conclusions about how to believe and behave based on the consequences of the actions employed by the characters. The positive or negative outcomes lead to the moral conveyed in the story. Unfortunately, some stories and their *morals* may not be grounded in the kinds of values we want to embody. For example, many people find the film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* to be pretty funny (myself included). From a narrative perspective, however, it sends messages that skipping school, as well as deceiving parents and defying authority figures such as teachers and principals, are not only *acceptable*, but *appropriate*. Hence, narrative analyses may also highlight these kinds of paradoxes, affording us the skills to be conscious consumers as opposed to naïve recipients of their persuasive arguments (Farrell, 1985; Johannesen, 1983).

## CONDUCTING A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

A narrative perspective is a useful tool for studying mediated popular culture texts such as TV programs and commercials, movies, comic strips, songs, and music videos. This approach can also reveal stories being told visually in print advertisements, magazine photographs, and even the visual images within TV programs, music videos, and movies (Jhally, 1995). The following paragraphs explain how to conduct a narrative criticism of popular culture texts by (1) selecting an appropriate text and (2) examining it using the tools of the narrative perspective.

### Step 1. Selecting an Appropriate Text

Appropriate texts that can be analyzed from a narrative perspective must fulfill four requirements. They must (1) offer at least two events, (2) be organized by time, (3) depict a relationship between earlier and later events, and (4) present a unified subject (story).

First, the text must offer at least two events to be considered a narrative. These can be an **active event** and/or a **stative event**. An *active event* expresses action of some sort. For example, in the print advertisement for Red Zone Body Spray (see Figure 3.1), the active event is a Friday night date at a party or dance club. The individuals appear to be dancing or at least partying. A *stative event* is an expression of a state or condition. Again, in the advertisement, the people appear to be having fun and enjoying themselves. In other words, their state or condition is happy/joyful. So, this advertisement meets the first requirement because it offers at least two events: action (partying) and state or condition (happy/joyful).

Second, the events in the text must be organized by time. That is, the text must offer a sequence of events. The events might be arranged chronologically or they might offer flashbacks and flash forwards, but they are somehow related *temporally* to each other. Again, the advertisement in Figure 3.1 meets this requirement because the caption superimposed over the characters says, “Sometimes Friday night doesn’t get started until Saturday morning.” As such, the reader understands the “story” is arranged by time—that is, Friday night and Saturday morning.

Third, there must be some element of causation or some sense of relationship between early and later events in the *story*. *Causation* may depict how some early

■ FIGURE 3.1 Red Zone Ad



event causes a later event. Sometimes, however, the earlier event is not depicted as causing the later event, but, rather, is depicted as having been necessary for the later event to occur. In the advertisement, Red Zone is implied as necessary for the fun Friday night that might not really get started until Saturday morning.

Fourth, the text must present its *story* as a unified subject. As such, the story has a beginning and an end that *makes sense*. The setting, the characters, and their actions must be connected in ways that together tell the *story*. In the advertisement, the setting (party event), the characters (“good looking” young adults), and their actions (having fun with each other) are all related as they lead viewers to believe that the ending (that their real fun might not even get started until Saturday morning) makes sense. Obviously, viewers who might want to find themselves in a similar situation would be wise to use Red Zone so as not to ruin their chances because of body odor. Now, if the setting was unappealing (such as sitting through a college classroom lecture), or the characters didn’t seem to *go together* (perhaps, for example, a young adult dancing with someone old enough to be a grandparent), or their actions implied that one or both were not enjoying themselves, the *story* would fail to meet this requirement of presenting itself as a unified subject.

**APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED . . .**

Consider an advertisement that you find compelling. Examine it based on these four requirements. How would you study it from a narrative perspective and why?

## Step 2. Examining the Text (Describe and Interpret)

You may recall from Chapter 1 that we examine a popular culture text via description, interpretation, and evaluation. When conducting your analysis from a narrative perspective, you use the elements of storytelling to examine the text via these three dimensions. You begin by describing the setting, characters, “narrator,” events, causal relations, temporal relations, and intended audience. You then interpret them in terms of the moral of the story, so to speak, and evaluate it as it might influence various audiences to whom it is directed.

### Describing the Setting

In terms of the *setting*, you simply describe where the action takes place. In the advertisement for Red Zone, the setting is at a party or a dance club. Sometimes there is more than one setting. If the Red Zone advertisement was a split screen also showing, for example, a scene from what may be one of the character’s apartments, you would note that as well. You examine the setting for coherence and fidelity to determine whether it serves as a *good reason* to accept the ultimate moral of the story as valid.

### Describing the Characters

In terms of *characters*, you describe their physical and mental traits, whether their physical or dispositional traits change over the course of the story, the actions they engage in, and whether their traits or actions are predictable (i.e., what we would expect based on preconceived social norms). *Predictable characters* are described in the narrative perspective as *flat* compared with *unpredictable characters* who are described as *round*. In the Red Zone advertisement, the physical traits of the characters are the following: a Caucasian male and female who appear to be middle class based on their attire and in their early 20s. Both are slender as well as able bodied both mentally and physically. Both appear to be dancing. Both are wearing T-shirts and jeans; however, the woman’s midriff shows. Because this is only one snapshot, there is no message communicated with regard to change over time. He is looking at her, and she is looking down. Because the characters seem to fit preconceived social norms of the dominant American culture (predictable), we would describe them as *flat* according to a narrative perspective. If, in contrast, the characters appeared to be from different socioeconomic groups, generations, ability/disability, and so on, they might be described as unpredictable (not what we’d expect based on the social norms of the dominant American culture) and, thus, *round*.

**APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED . . .**

Consider a favorite movie or TV program. Who are the main characters? Describe the physical and mental traits of each of them. Are the traits predictable? Which of the characters seem to be portrayed as ones viewers ought to admire or aspire to be like and not? Why?

**Describing the Narrator**

The story is sometimes communicated directly to the audience. In these cases, the audience witnesses the actions without added commentary. At other times, however, a *narrator* mediates the events and, as such, offers an interpretation of the events and characters for the audience as the audience observes them. The narrator may communicate orally or visually. In the Red Zone advertisement, the narrator communicates visually via the message placed directly on top of the picture: “Sometimes Friday night doesn’t get started until Saturday morning.” Essentially, the narrator tends to clarify what the audience might imply from a potentially ambiguous story.

**Describing the Events**

In terms of *events*, you look for both major events that cannot be left out of the story without destroying its meaning and minor events that are not necessarily crucial to the story, but add breadth and depth to it. Recall that you will consider both *active events* (expressing action) and *stative events* (expressing a state or condition). In the Red Zone advertisement, the major event is having a good time (stative event) at a Friday night party (active event), and the minor event is the added connotation that having a good time on Friday night is nothing compared with the real party that won’t start until Saturday morning. In this case, the major event being told is blatant, whereas the minor event is implied.

**Describing Causal Relations**

In terms of *causal relations*, you look for cause-and-effect relationships and whether the effects are caused by human action, by accident, or by forces of nature. Which causes and effects seem to dominate the story and how? In the Red Zone advertisement, a great time Friday night is nothing compared with the “party” that might not begin until Saturday morning. Moreover, wearing Red Zone contributes to the potential for the Saturday morning party to occur.

**APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED . . .**

Consider once again the TV program or movie you identified earlier. What major and minor events help tell the story? What cause-and-effect relationships can you identify? How do these events and causal relationships lead to believing certain behaviors are *normal* or not, *appropriate* or not, *desirable* or not?

## Describing Temporal Relations

In terms of *temporal relations*, you look at whether the order of events is *syntagmatic*, that is, one thing leads naturally to another, or *paradigmatic*, that is, flashbacks and flash forwards are used. The movie *Pulp Fiction* is a fine example of a paradigmatic story told with flashbacks and flash forwards. In addition, you might consider whether the story is being told in past, present, or future tense. Finally, you might consider the speed at which various parts of the story are told. That is, how much detail is provided about one event compared with other events? The Red Zone advertisement is syntagmatic and told in future tense. Viewers are shown a picture of the Friday night event and are led to believe what will probably occur as a result. Wearing Red Zone helps make it all possible.

## Describing the Intended Audience

Finally, you describe the *intended* or *target audience* for the story. What attitudes and values of the audience are presumed? The Red Zone advertisement came from *Maxim*, a magazine targeted to young men ages 18–30. The young, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied White couple in the advertisement assumes viewers will be males who embody or want to embody these same traits.

## Interpreting the Moral Conveyed

Next, you interpret what these elements mean. You start by determining what *moral* is being conveyed—that is, what it is telling us about how we *ought to* or *ought not to* believe or behave. You then point out which elements you described seem to be most important in terms of contributing to the ultimate moral and why. In other words, you show how they provide *good reasons* for accepting the moral as legitimate.

Remember that the moral may be positive or negative. Some examples of morals include “good triumphs over evil,” “there’s a silver lining to every cloud,” “perseverance will pay off in the end,” “it is important to look nice,” “teachers are out of touch with reality,” “college students abuse alcohol,” “politicians are corrupt,” “violence is appropriate,” “unmarried young adults engage in casual sex,” and “feminists are bitches.”

A moral of the Red Zone advertisement might to be related to the notion that “unmarried young adults engage in casual sex” and, perhaps, even that Red Zone can help make it happen. Granted, the viewer is not offered a clear definition of what is meant by “Saturday morning”; however, the characters (young, able-bodied, middle-class, White heterosexuals who are dancing/partying so that their bodies are touching and enjoying it), the ambiguity of the message conveyed by the narrator, the event (Friday night party), the causal suggestion (good Friday night date leads to the real party that won’t start until Saturday morning), the temporal relations (Friday night partying is clear and Saturday morning is suggested), and the intended audience (young heterosexual men ages 18–30) suggest that this is a moral being communicated.



**APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED . . .**

Consider again the TV program or movie you identified. Based on the characters who are portrayed, as well as the positive and negative consequences each experiences for their actions, what might be the *moral* of the story about how viewers are lead to believe or behave in our daily lives?

### Step 3. Evaluating Potential Implications of the Text

Finally, you evaluate the text as it might influence the various audiences to whom it is directed. In other words, what are the potential implications for individuals and groups who decide the moral is valid? What might they believe or how might they behave as a result? Who might be affected by these beliefs or behaviors and how? Your goal here is to reveal what the narrative is telling us about how we should live our lives. Is that good or bad? Why? Ultimately, you answer the question “So what?” based on what, how, and why we might choose to believe and behave if we accept the moral as valid. Obviously, no one advertisement, film, TV program, comic strip, or song can be causally linked to behaviors by individuals or groups of individuals; however, a proliferation of texts that espouse similar messages can eventually penetrate the beliefs and behaviors of individuals and groups. This bombardment of similar messages across texts targeted to a particular group, which can have a cumulative persuasive effect on receivers, is known as the **cultivation effect** (Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994).

That said, let us speculate about some of the potential implications of the Red Zone advertisement on what or how people might believe or behave, particularly if a similar message is communicated across texts targeted to them. If the young male reader of *Maxim* accepts the moral that “unmarried young adults engage in casual sex” as valid, then some potential implications might include perhaps believing that young women who date him, and others like him, and stay out until the wee hours of the morning are open to or even expect to have casual sex if they have a good time. Conversely, young women who party with him and others like him, have fun, and are not interested in casual sex are not the norm. Certainly, these ideas about *appropriate* behavior can influence how unmarried young men and women interact when partying. In fact, some young adults today do believe in what is referred to as “friends with benefits.” Taken to extremes, it could lead to an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, and so on. Likewise, older adults might presume that these kinds of behaviors are typical for young unmarried adults today. Negative stereotypes of the youth culture may falsely cloud their opinions about young people they meet, they work with, or even their own children.

**APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED . . .**

Consider the *moral* you identified from the TV program or movie you picked earlier. What might be some “so what” implications based on the audiences to whom it is primarily targeted?



## Sample Analyses

Before we move on, let's examine "Superman's Song" by the Crash Test Dummies and "Iron Man" by Black Sabbath from a narrative perspective. I've chosen these songs for two reasons. First, the lyrics of each song fulfill the four requirements of appropriate texts for a narrative analysis. That is, each one offers at least two events, is organized by time, depicts a relationship between earlier and later events, and presents a unified subject. Moreover, however, on the surface, both songs are about superheroes. Yet analyzing each of them from a narrative perspective will help us see the different moral that each song suggests and the *good reasons* the lyrics of each one provides for accepting the moral as valid. Let's start with "Superman's Song":

Tarzan wasn't a ladies' man  
 He'd just come along and scoop  
 'em up under his arm  
 Like that, quick as a cat in the jungle  
 But Clark Kent now there was a real  
 gent  
 He would not be caught sittin' around  
 in no  
 Junglescape, dumb as an ape doing  
 nothing  
 Superman never made any money  
 For saving the world from Solomon  
 Grundy  
 And sometimes I despair the world  
 will never see  
 Another man like him  
 Hey Bob, Supe had a straight job  
 Even though he could have smashed  
 through any bank

In the United States, he had the  
 strength, but he would not  
 Folks said his family were all dead  
 Their planet crumbled but Superman,  
 he forced himself  
 To carry on, forget Krypton, and keep  
 going  
 Tarzan was king of the jungle and  
 Lord over all the apes  
 But he could hardly string together  
 four words: "I Tarzan, You Jane."  
 Sometimes when Supe was stopping  
 crimes  
 I'll bet that he was tempted to just quit  
 and turn his back  
 On man, join Tarzan in the forest  
 But he stayed in the city, and kept on  
 changing clothes  
 In dirty old phonebooths till his work  
 was through  
 And nothing to do but go on home

If we apply a narrative analysis to "Superman's Song," we note first that the setting is in the city and in dirty old phone booths. We also see that the main characters are Superman, Tarzan, and Solomon Grundy. With regard to stative events, superman's condition is presented as a hero from beginning to end. He is described as a real gentleman who could have smashed through any bank but would not and who could have called it quits and turned his back on man but did not.

More depth is gradually added to his character so that, by the end, we admire him for his integrity to carry on and keep going to save man from the bad guys (such as Solomon Grundy). At the same time, Tarzan's character grows gradually less desirable. He starts out "quick as a cat," but is later described as "dumb as an ape," "doing nothing," who "could hardly string together four words: 'I Tarzan, You Jane.'" In terms of causal relations, Superman could have reason to turn his back on the world when his parents died and he had to leave Krypton, but he didn't. Even though he went through many hard experiences, he chose to keep going.

The intended audience of *Crash Test Dummies*—young adults—may learn the ultimate moral that "even when the going is tough and the conditions are undesirable, it is best to do whatever you can to help mankind." In other words, we should persevere and do our part to make the world a better place (like Superman), rather than just think about ourselves (like Tarzan). Positive implications might include a shift in our ideology from a somewhat self-centered orientation toward one of social engagement and service to the community. In addition, perhaps listeners will find courage to keep going in difficult or even crisis situations, or even when forced to deal with difficult people at work or at home. Again, no one text is likely to cause such implications; however, it might reinforce this value system in people who already believe in it. Likewise, if a similar moral is communicated across texts, the cultivation effect could occur.

Now, let's apply a narrative analysis to "Iron Man," by Black Sabbath. First, unlike "Superman's Song," the setting for "Iron Man" is not specified, so we might decide the setting is "everywhere and anywhere." The characters are Iron Man and mankind. We would likely describe Iron Man's character as mentally and physically heartless (unpredictable). We don't know whether he is "alive or dead" and wonder whether he has "lost his mind." We also learn the reason for Iron Man's condition is because he was "turned to steel in the great magnetic field." Interestingly, *mankind* as a character is depicted as heartless as well. They "turn their heads" and shun this *man* whom they now see as an appalling creature. Although Iron Man "once saved" these people (not unlike Superman in the previous example), now he kills the people he once saved. Why has Iron Man turned evil? Vengeance: "Nobody wants him" and "nobody helps him." Ultimately, these ungrateful people deserve what they have coming.

The moral of the story for a similar young adult audience in this case might be something like "violence is appropriate in certain situations, particularly when one is treated unfairly." Or, perhaps, "be kind to others or suffer the consequences." Iron Man was a good guy who could not help being "turned to steel." But, as a result, mankind turned their heads away from him. Why wouldn't he want revenge? So, although both Superman and Iron Man experienced injustice, Superman chose to "carry on" to help others, whereas Iron Man chose vengeance. What might potential implications be for target audiences? "Iron Man" is a heavy metal song targeting youth. It is possible that messages like this would serve to reinforce a sense of being justified for enacting violent behaviors when people ignore them, belittle them, don't appreciate them, or make them feel unwanted or unloved. It is possible that such messages, if they are pervasive enough, could serve as an anthem of sorts for violent acts that society would typically deem to be inappropriate.

I am Iron-Man! (faded voice at the beginning)

Has he lost his mind?

Can he see or is he blind?

Can he walk at all,

Or if he moves will he fall?

Is he alive or dead?

Has he thoughts within his head?

We'll just pass him there

Why should we even care?

He was turned to steel

In the great magnetic field

Where he travelled time

For the future of mankind

Nobody wants him

He just stares at the world

Planning his vengeance

That he will soon unfold

Now the time is here

For Iron Man to spread fear

Vengeance from the grave

Kills the people he once saved

Nobody wants him

They just turn their heads

Nobody helps him

Now he has his revenge

Heavy boots of lead

Fills his victims full of dread

Running as fast as they can

Iron Man lives again!

### QUESTIONING YOUR ETHICS . . .

If the messages in some music speak to and for youth and if the morals conveyed are negative, should such music be banned? Censored? If not, what should be done? Based on what you've learned here about the narrative paradigm, what constitutes a negative message and who gets to decide that? What is your role as a critical consumer of such messages and why?

In summary, let us remember that no one popular culture text, whether it is an advertisement, a song, a feature film, a TV program, or a comic strip, can be linked *causally* to a particular belief or behavior in society. Such texts, however, do espouse messages that can be positive or negative, and rhetorical critics are ultimately responsible not only for articulating what those messages are, but also the potential implications such messages could have on the way people believe and behave.

## Sample Published Essay



Visit the Web site that accompanies this book, [www.sagepub.com/sellnow](http://www.sagepub.com/sellnow), and read the article titled “Technology and Mythic Narrative: *The Matrix* as Technological Hero-Quest,” by Scott R. Stroud (2001), that appeared in the fall 2001 issue of *The Western Journal of Communication*. In it, Stroud uses the narrative perspective to examine the character Neo as a technological hero. He argues that the narrative theme is that of “solitary enlightenment” and the moral is that alienated heroes may necessarily destroy “disillusioned” human beings in the name of the greater goal of saving humanity.

As you read the paper, identify the *good reasons* set forth for accepting the moral as valid. Notice the major events Stroud describes as *separation*, *initiation*, and *return*. Also pay particular attention to the two distinct audiences identified by Stroud as the *alienated* and the *hackers* and how the *good reasons* are offered in ways that allow each group to identify with Neo as a hero or model figure. Finally, consider the potential implications set forth for *alienated* individuals who fear their value is being replaced by technology, as well as for the *hacker* individuals who are masters of technology but also recognize corporate abuse of technology as detrimental to democratic society. Why is the notion of *solitary enlightenment* disturbing in this case? As Stroud writes, this separation theme is most troubling because “the hero with whom the modern audience identifies” is an individual who does not see himself or herself as part of society, but somehow above it and “is also the individual who may destroy the community [in the name of enlightenment] in order to save it” (p. 439).

## Summary

This chapter outlined the guidelines by which to conduct a narrative analysis. More specifically, we talked about the general concepts that ground the narrative perspective as first detailed in 1984 by Walter R. Fisher and then embellished by other communication scholars. We discussed reasons for conducting a narrative analysis, in that the stories told in various texts can reinforce or call into question our moral reasons for believing and behaving in certain ways. As such, they help us decide what we believe and how we behave, as well as frame our understanding about why others might believe or behave in different ways.

We then detailed the process by which to select a text to examine via the narrative perspective based on four requirements. Essentially, the text must (1) offer at least two events, (2) be organized by time, (3) depict causation or necessary relationship between earlier and later events, and (4) present a unified subject.

From there, we discussed how to conduct a narrative analysis. First, you *describe* the setting, characters, narrator, events, causal relationships, temporal relationships, and target audience(s). Then, you *interpret* each of these elements as they function together as *good reasons* for accepting the *moral* ultimately conveyed as valid. Finally,

you *evaluate* the story in terms of potential implications of the message on how it may influence audiences to believe and/or behave.

## Challenge

Watch the 1997 Academy Award–winning movie *Life Is Beautiful*, directed by Roberto Benigni. The film is essentially a love story, but it is set in Italy during and throughout World War II. As such, it violates our expectations of a love story by placing it in this tragic setting. Moreover, the overarching *moral* conveyed is more than “love conquers all.” Rather, it speaks to universal audiences with its “moral” by which we all *ought to abide*. That moral is essentially that “a persistent will to succeed can overcome adversity.” As the setting, obstacles, and events grow ever more bleak, the protagonist refuses to succumb to the pressures of hopelessness and giving up. Examine the film using the criteria set forth in this chapter to understand the *good reasons* offered throughout the film that serve to support the moral as valid. Finally, evaluate the moral by answering the “so what” question in terms of potential implications it may have on various audiences.

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