

Types of Movies & Movie Genres

Two major types of movies:

- **Documentary**
- **Narrative**



Documentary Films

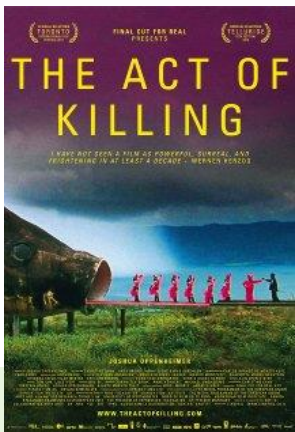
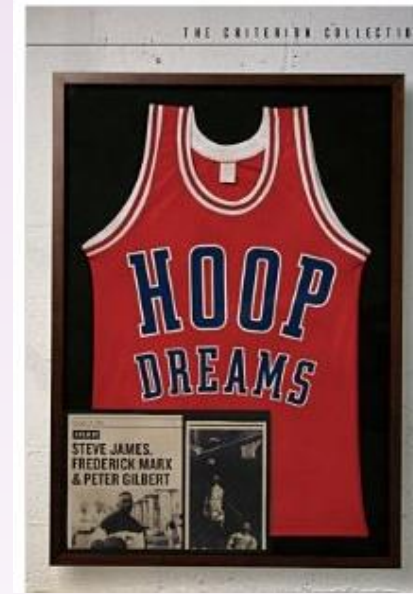
- The act of making a movie removes the possibility of a purely objective truth

“creative treatment of actual reality”

– defined 1926

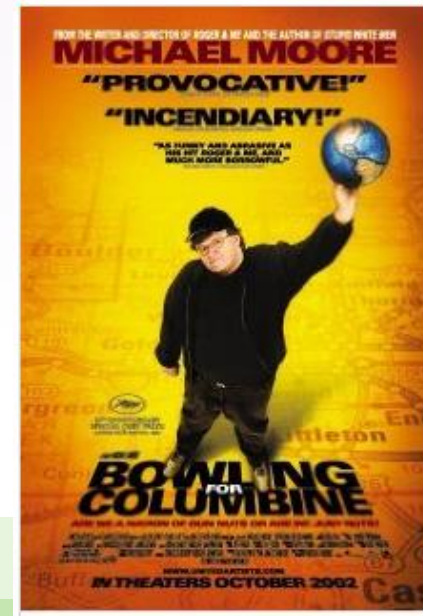
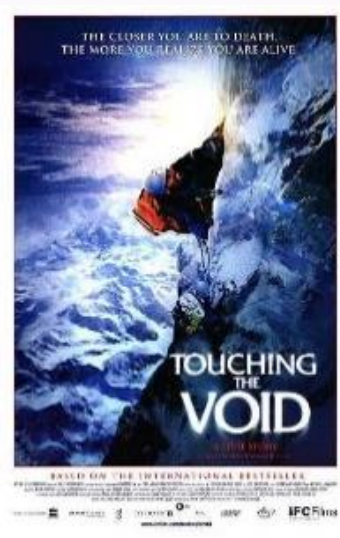
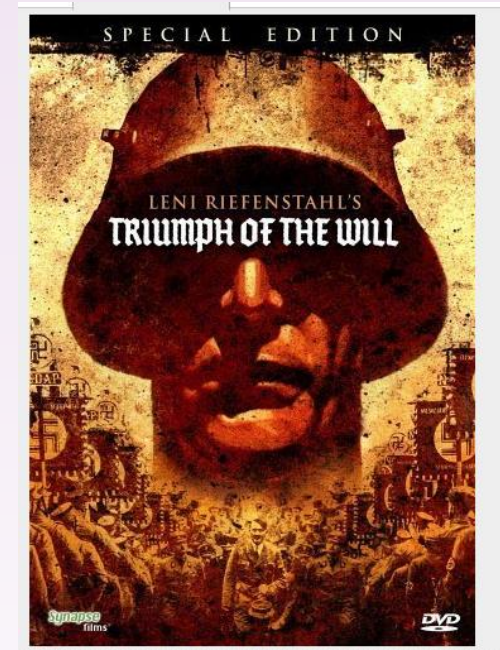
- Even documentary filmmakers who aim to avoid influencing the events they record still have a great deal of narrative influence

ie: camera as narrator and editing creating meaning



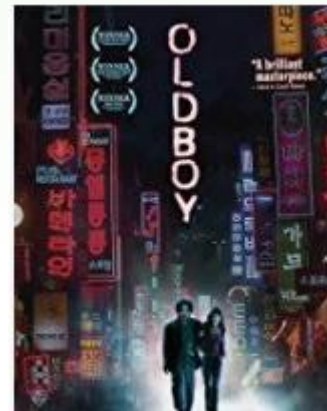
Documentary Genres

- Factual
 - *Hoop Dreams, Touching the Void*
- Instructional
- Persuasive
 - *An Inconvenient Truth, Bowling for Columbine*
- Propaganda
 - *Triumph of the Will*



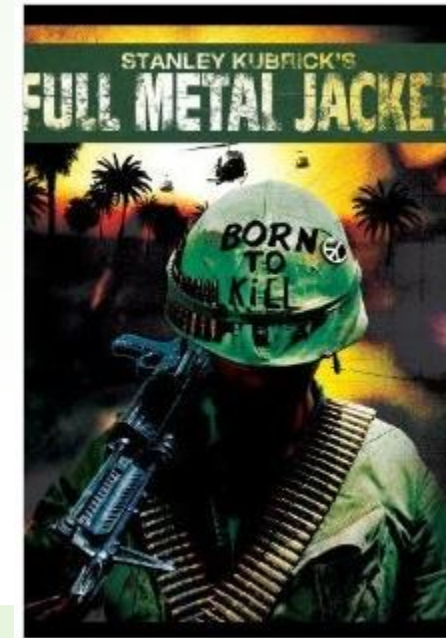
Narrative Films

- Mostly fiction, purpose is to engage & entertain
 - many genres/sub- genres [ex](#) [ex](#) [sub-genres](#)

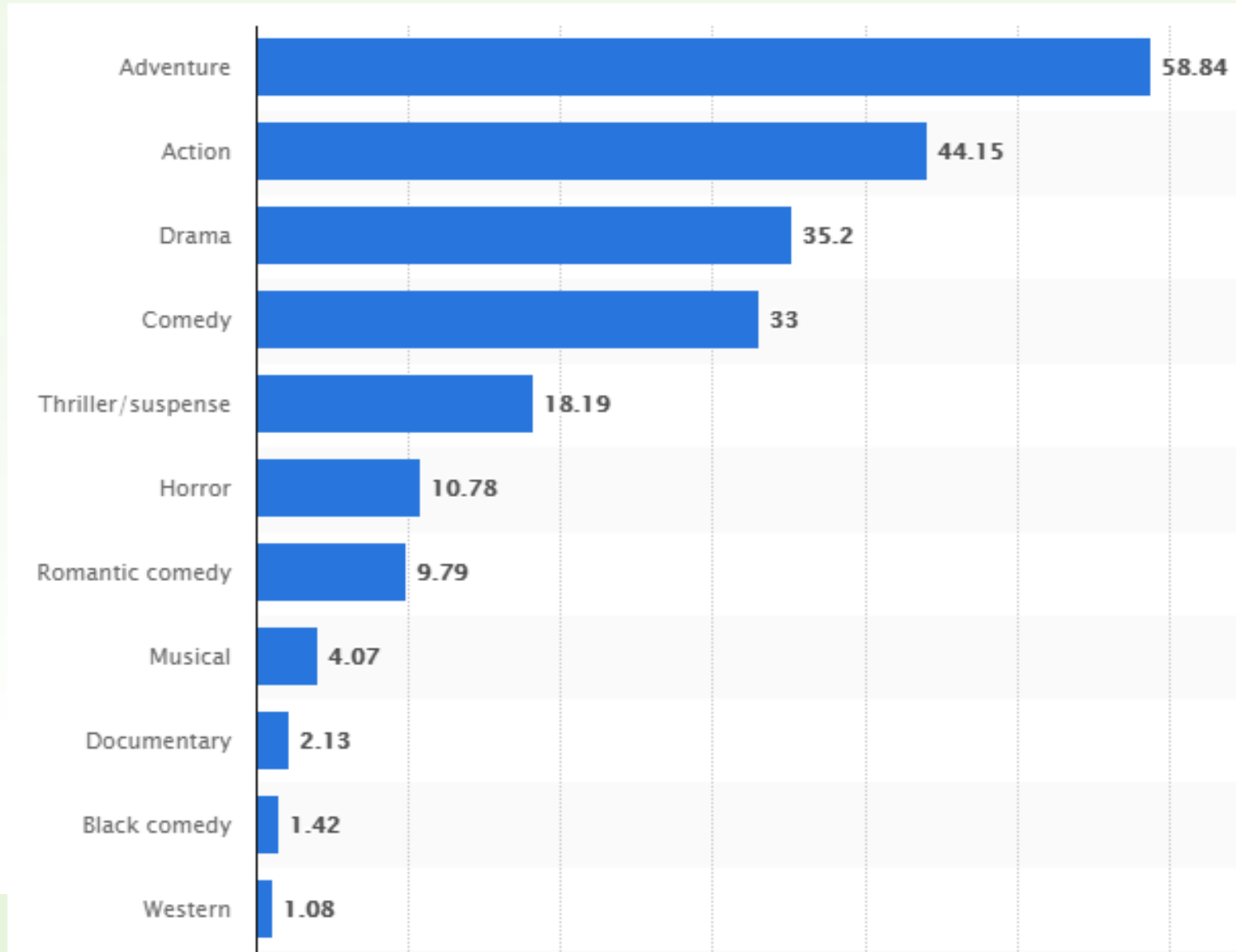


Narrative Film Genres

- Few movies are strictly one genre today
- Genre has a significant effect on how audiences choose the movies they go to/buy/rent
- Cultural conditions contribute to changes in genre
 - ie: a western made during WWII v. one made during the Vietnam War



Most popular movie genres in North America from 1995 to 2018,
by total box office revenue (in billion U.S. dollars)



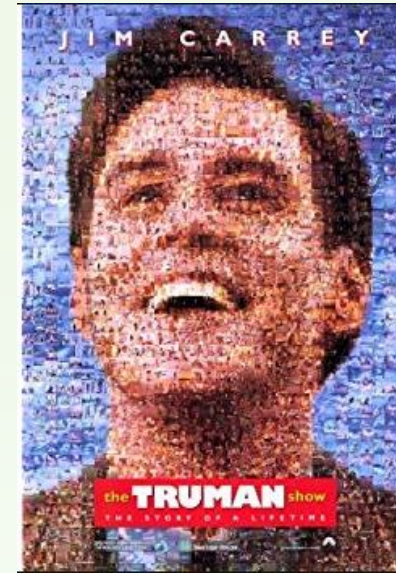
Genre Conventions

- **Narrative/Story Formulas**

- The structure of the story: what's the conflict/type of conflict? The plot.
- 'Narrative moments' help define genres
 - chase sequences, shootouts, romance...

- **Theme (or topic):** the unifying idea expressed through story and visuals

- ie: redemption, vengeance, innocence, rags to riches, coming of age, rites of passage...

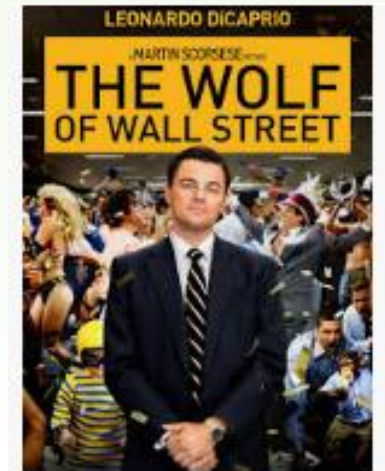
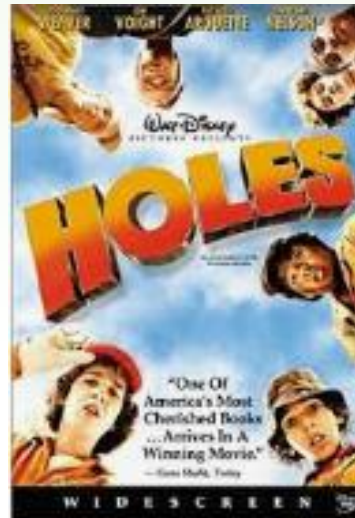
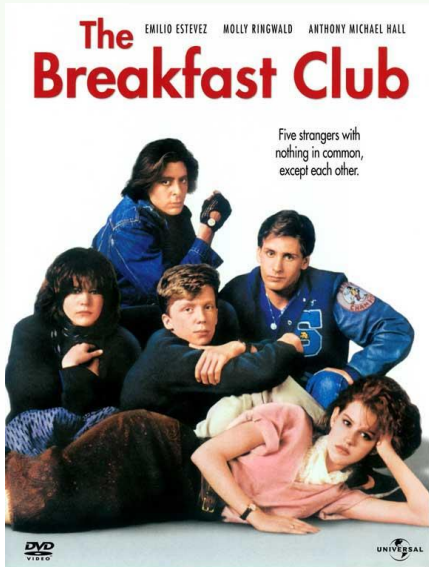
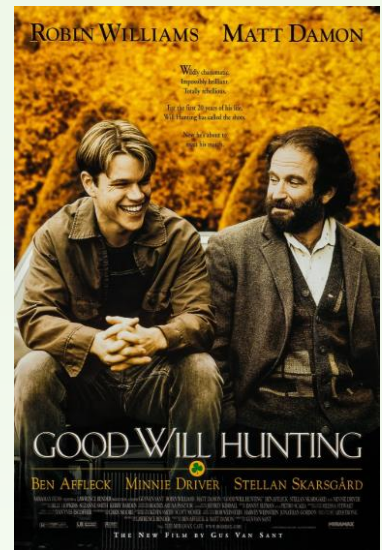


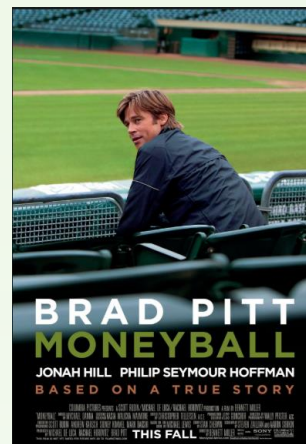
- **Character Types** (ex)

- genres become associated with different heroes and villains

- **Stars**

- actors factor into how a genre is classified, analyzed & received



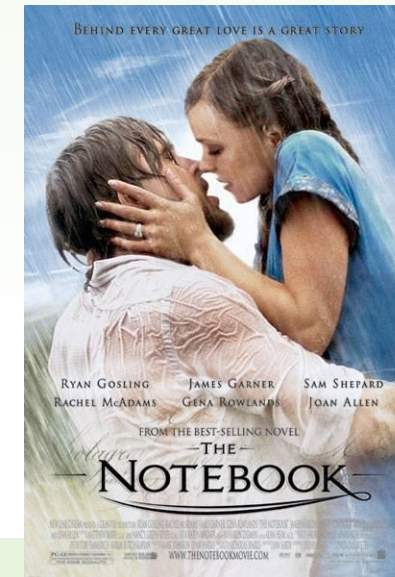


- **Setting:** where is the action or what is the environment?
- **Iconography:** identifiable key images or icons?
 - images or iconic elements are usually immediately recognizable (gangster films = machine gun) costumes, sound, and music can also be iconic features
- **Mood/Style:** certain elements of cinematic language that communicate tone and atmosphere
 - *iconography refers to actual objects/ sound in a film, style refers to how these are presented (camera angles, lighting, color, etc)*



- **Audience Response:**

- Every film has a “mode of address”, a particular way in which it speaks to target audience
 - horror films = to scare; action films = feel tense
 - Rom-coms, ‘chick flicks’



Significance?

- Economy of story telling
 - Meaning?
- Genres often reflect the attitudes and values of the society in which they are produced.
- Has a significant effect on how audiences choose the movies they go to/buy/rent
 - And people who finance movies often choose them by genre

Genre Conventions:

- **Narrative** structure of story; conflict/ type of conflict
- **Theme** topic, subject, idea
- **Character Types** stars; anticipated or against expectations
- **Setting** location/time period/ environment
- **Iconography** key images, icons (like costumes, sound, & music)
- **Mood/Style** cinematic language/ techniques that communicate tone & atmosphere
- **Audience Response** reaction; intended reaction

- [Scream](#), It Follows, Children of the Corn, [Ghost Ship](#), Jaws