Media Theorists - **Vladimir Propp**

Propp, like Todorov, was a structuralist, he wanted to understand the patterns that lay beneath narrative progression & character roles within a narrative.

He proposed that there were seven different character types which crop up regularly in stories:

1. The protagonist/hero (the character around whom the action revolves)
2. The antagonist/villain (opposes the hero)
3. The dispatcher/boss (send the hero on the quest)
4. The helper/sidekick (aids the hero)
5. The donor/fairy godmother (gives the hero advice or a useful object)
6. The princess/the girl (motivation & reward for the hero)
7. The false hero/the betrayer (often a helper who turns on the hero & is punished)

**It’s important to note that:**

- Not all character types will appear in all stories (especially music videos)
- Some characters make take on more than one role in the narrative.

**Propp’s Character Types in Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Hero</th>
<th>The Villain</th>
<th>The Helper(s)</th>
<th>The Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="The Hero" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="The Villain" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="The Helper(s)" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.jpg" alt="The Donor" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The False Hero</th>
<th>The Princess</th>
<th>The Dispatcher</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.jpg" alt="The False Hero" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.jpg" alt="The Princess" /></td>
<td><img src="image7.jpg" alt="The Dispatcher" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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**Representation & Character Types in a music video:**

A music video will use some of these **character types**, but given the problems with time and limited narrative space, these character need to be **represented** clearly and precisely otherwise the audience may have an **oppositional (aberrant) reading** of the text.

Consider the character codes that are used in a professional music video of your choice and consider:

- Which character types have been used?
- How the character is designed (encoded) in order to be read in that character role?
- Is the reading of the character open to interpretation?

Use this diagram & table to create some notes about how the character has been encoded **(character codes)** as a particular type:

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**Actions/ Behaviour**

- Representation through narrative
  - Their Character Type(s):
  - Events (What happens to the character)?

**Appearance**

- Attitude
  - Casting

- Body Language

- Demeanour

**Mannerisms**

- With whom?  
- How does it change?  

**Hair & Make Up**

- Character’s Journey
  - What are they like at the beginning?  
  - What have they learnt?  
  - What are they like at the end?