

“how narrative shapes perceptions of others and the world”

(address question)

Among other things, composers such as Lawson compose narratives in order to shape perceptions of others and the world. They use narrative techniques, such as setting, character, plot, theme as well as other English literary devices as a tool to do this. In my response I will look at this in regards to Lawson’s short stories, “The Drover’s Wife” and “In a Dry Season” and Groening’s animated TV series Futurama, but in particular the episode “Anthology of Interest II”.

In both of Lawson’s stories he represents the world that he lives in and the people that live in that world. The world is represented by setting and the people by character. The other two main components of narrative, plot and theme are used to provide structure, a backbone or support for the exploration of setting and character. Without plot and theme, setting and character could not be effectively portrayed. Lawson portrays the Australian bush of the late 1800’s. It should firstly be mentioned that Lawson’s context when growing up in the bush and when composing the stories has had a strong influence of the aspect of the bush and it’s people that he represents. This can be shown by the comparison of Paterson’s writings, which were of the same bush and the same people at the same time, yet there are distinct differences that each of the two composers focus on. We cannot say that one is more accurate than the other as they are both accurate, it is just that they each focus on a different aspect and a different social class which is brought about due to their differing contexts.

As mentioned, Lawson uses setting to shape perceptions of the world of the Australian bush in the late 1800’s. The main technique that is used to supplement the setting is imagery. The imagery creates the setting which in turn creates atmosphere that influences the responder’s view of the world, thus shaping perceptions of the world. The isolation of the world is shown in “The Drover’s Wife” by images such as “nineteen miles from nowhere”, “bush all around” and partly from the plot when the drover’s wife goes on Sunday walks and never meets anyone and the harshness of the bush is shown by images such the dirt floor and also by the negative overtone in the descriptions such as “waterless creek”, “nothing to relieve the eye” and “stunted, rotten native apple trees”. Imagery has also been used extensively in “In a Dry Season” as it has no real complication and the plot is quite loose hence the rich imagery and representation of characters has compensated for this. The mood and tone along with the second person perspective voice, for example “draw a line...” engage the reader and helps put them in the picture in order to give them a clearer image of the world that Lawson is portraying.

Along with shaping perceptions of the world, Lawson also shapes perceptions of others. That is, he represents the people of his time in his stories mainly through the use of characterisation. In “The Drover’s Wife”, this is done by the portrayal of the drover’s wife and the life that surrounds her. She is nameless which makes her symbolic of all women in the bush. Also her limited social life is made known to the audience by reference to the Sunday walks, the “Young Ladies Journal” as well as the use of flashbacks to illuminate her past before and after marriage. This shows how one person’s life can drastically change in the world of Lawson. Another technique used by Lawson that gives us an insight into the people of the world that he portrays is phonetic language. This is used to inform the responder of the way that people spoke. Without it this meaning could not be portrayed through written text. This technique is used along with colloquialism and imitation of country dialect together they convey meaning such as in “If yer wer bit” and “D’yer” as spoken by the son in “The

Drover's Wife". Interesting characters such as the shearers, the larrikin, the sundowners and the bush liar in "In a Dry Season" also convey the people of Lawson's world to the responder.

In my related text, the episode "Anthology of Interest II" from the TV series *Futurama*, the composer Groening uses narrative to also shape perceptions of others and the world. Although Groening and Lawson have differing contexts, both convey meaning through alternate forms and mediums and shape perceptions of different people and different worlds, they both do the same thing and they both do it through the use of narrative conventions.

Groening represents everyday people, and robots, of 30th century New York. This episode is of particular relevance as not only does it have reference to 30th century New York but in doing so it makes comments on today world. The world of tomorrow is used to highlight and lampoon issues of today. Many techniques that Groening employs to do this are narrative techniques, however these narrative techniques are only the backbone. In particular humour, parody and satire are used to shape perceptions of others and the world in a way that amuses the responder, thus engaging them more. Examples of the use of parody include the strong use of allusions to "The Wizard of Oz" and also to the video games "Pac-Man", "Donkey Kong", "Space Invaders" and "Super Mario Bros." These are all alluded to in satirical ways which, in their own way, allow us to shape perceptions of different people and their worlds.

As you can see from the comparison of Lawson's and Groening's texts, even though they are from different times and places they still use the narrative conventions to effectively convey meaning and effectively shape perceptions of others and the world.

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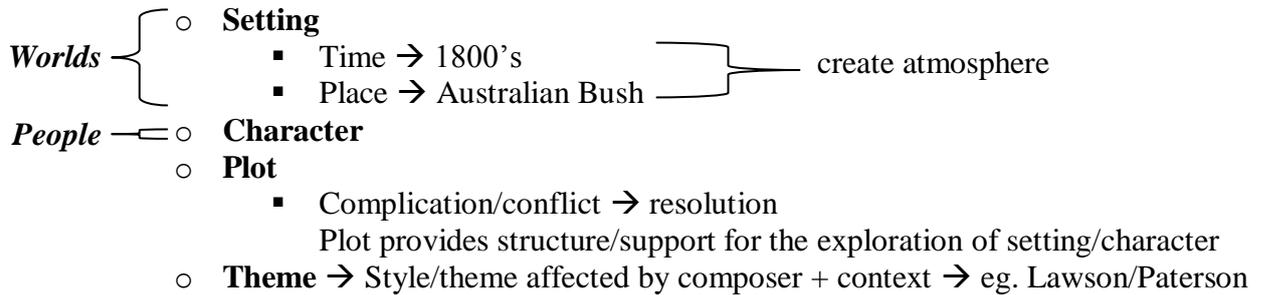
(address question)

One of the main purposes that composers write narratives is to **shape perceptions of others and the world**. Two composers that do this which I will closely analyse are Lawson, in particular in “The Drover’s Wife” and “In a Dry Season” and Groening in the TV series, Futurama, in particular the episode “Anthology of Interest 2”.

“THE DROVER’S WIFE” / “IN A DRY SEASON”:

How → Techniques → Narrative Conventions:

Lawson uses the narrative conventions of setting, character, plot and theme and their sub elements to shape perceptions of others and the world.



	<i>People</i>	<i>World</i>
	Represented by the portrayal of <i>characters</i> .	<i>Setting</i> /Descriptions of bush.
DROVERS WIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drover’s Wife (<i>nameless</i>=symbolic) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Affluent past > Sunday walks, <i>reference</i> to <i>Young Ladies’ Journal</i>, the magazine echoes her former life. ○ Use of <i>flashbacks</i> to illuminate her past, before and after marriage ▪ Swagman ▪ Technique of phonetic language used to inform responder of colloquialism/imitation of country dialect of the people e.g. son in DW, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “If yer wer bit” ○ “D’yer” also shows that he is uneducated. 	Technique → IMAGERY <u>Drovers Wife</u> Isolation → “nineteen miles from nowhere” “bush all around” Sunday walks never meet anyone harshness → “dirt floor” negative overtones eg. property adjoins a “waterless creek”, “nothing to relieve the eye”, “stunted, rotten native apple trees” potential danger of world shown through the snake which is symbolic of evil and represents all evil that she has to fight to survive.
DRY SEASON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shearers ▪ Larrikin ▪ Sundowners ▪ Bush liar 	<u>Dry Season</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Superlative descriptions of the towns along the train line. They are all the same. ▪ 2nd person perspective > engages reader. “Draw a line...” ▪ Mood + tone add to create meaning ▪ No real complication/loose plot. Yet this is compensated by the rich imagery + characterisation which shapes the meaning > i.e. portrayal of world

FUTURAMA: “ANTHOLOGY OF INTEREST 2”:

Shares same purpose as Lawson's stories, to **shape perceptions of others and the world**. However the world and people that are represented by Groening are different to that of Lawson. Also as the form of the two texts differs the how the composers do this differ also.

This episode is of particular relevance as not only does Groening provide a representation of the city New York in the 30th century, but also this is presented alongside a representation of the current world of Groening, that being New York in the 20th century.

Techniques:

- HUMOR (alike “The Loaded Dog”)
- SITCOM (situation comedy)
- PARODY (is a conscious imitation of another work usually for a satiric purpose)
- SATIRE

Does this by the strong use of **allusions**

○ *Films:*

- Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory
- The Wizard of Oz

○ *Video Games:*

- Super Mario Bros., Space Invaders, Pac-Man, Donkey Kong,

PURPOSE

- The world of tomorrow is used to highlight and lampoon issues of today and to parody the science fiction genre.

CONCLUSION:

As you can see from the comparison of Lawson's and Groening's texts, even though they are from different times and places they still use the same narrative conventions to effectively convey meaning.

“Three stories unfold when Professor Farnsworth fine-tunes his "What If" machine: Bender discovers how different he would be if he were human, Fry learns what life would be like if it resembled a video game and Leela wonders what would happen if she found her true home....and crash lands on Planet Ozz on this episode.”

“It is a Sitcom.

The world of tomorrow is used to highlight and lampoon issues of today and to parody the science fiction genre.

styles of humour,

cluding self-deprecation, black comedy, off-color humor, slapstick, and surreal humor, its primary source of comedy was its satirical depiction of everyday life in the future, and its parodical comparisons of which to the present.”

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Narrative Techniques:

- Setting → perceptions of world → Aust bush, late 1800's → context → comparison to Paterson →
- Character → perceptions of others
- Plot >
- Theme > provide structure/backbone for setting + character

Imagery creates the setting, which creates atmosphere, which shapes our perceptions of the world.

Isolation > “nineteen miles from nowhere”, “bush all around”, Sunday walks

Harshness > dirt floor, negative overtone in the descriptions “waterless creek”, “nothing to relieve the eye” and “stunted, rotten native apple trees”.

second person perspective voice “draw a line...”

characterisation > shapes perceptions of others.

drover's wife > limited social life > Sunday walks, “Young Ladies Journal”, flashbacks to illuminate her past

phonetic language > colloquialism, imitation of country dialect > “If yer wer bit”, “D'yer” shearers, the larrikin, the sundowners and the bush liar

“Anthology of Interest II” > alternate forms and mediums > shape perceptions of people and worlds > narrative conventions

humour, parody and satire

allusions to “The Wizard of Oz” “Pac-Man”, “Donkey Kong”, “Space Invaders” and “Super Mario Bros.”