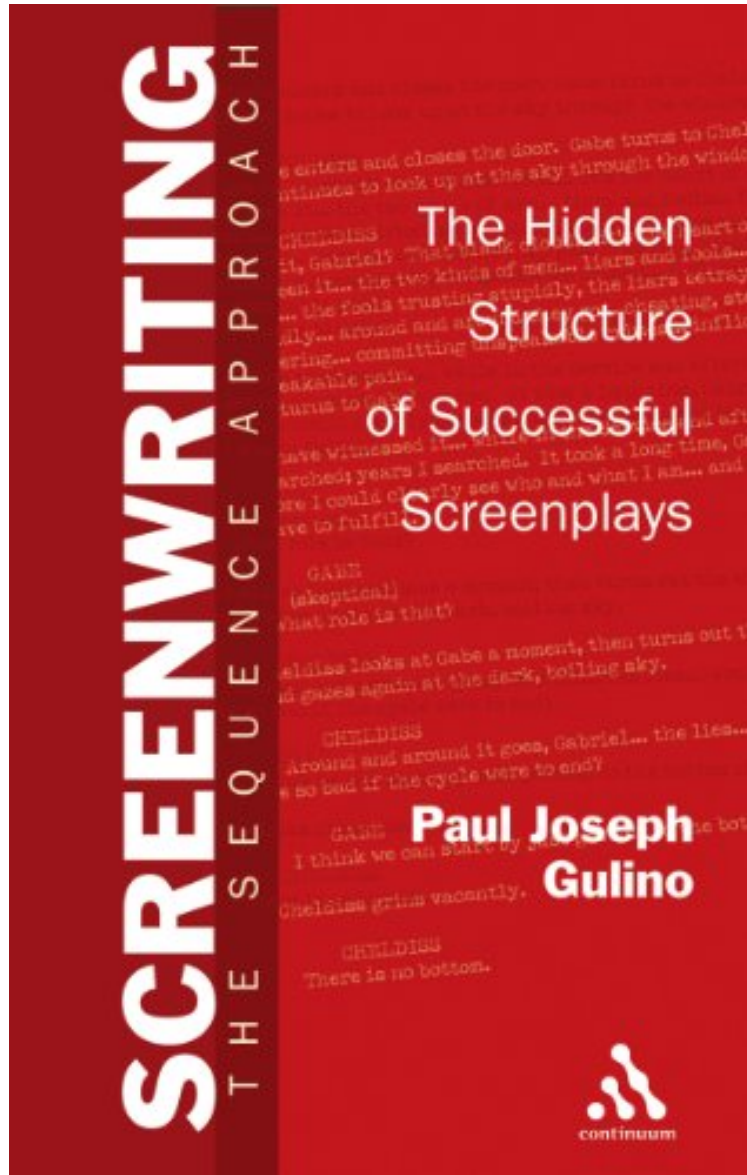


(Read ebook) Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach

Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach

Paul Gulino

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Paul Gulino : Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Helpful, but limitedBy Matt OssoGulino offers an approach that allows writers to break down their stories into more manageable sequences.I own dozens of books on screenwriting. Compared to other books on the trade, this book is meant for those who already have a basic understanding of

screenwriting. Gulino only touches on the basics before getting into the main focus of the book: The sequence approach to screenwriting. Before getting into the details of the sequences, Gulino gives us four tools to enhance story during the writing process and references these tools throughout. The issue I have with the book is that its core, the sequence approach, is explained in only four pages. This four-page overview left me wanting more, and seems to need a more detailed explanation of each specific sequence. The strength of the book is not in teaching the sequences, but in showing their application on several successful films. And that's what the majority of the book is about: analyzing these films and showing us how this approach applies to each. Overall, the book is more of a case study on the sequence approach, rather than a detailed "how to" teaching tool. That said, Gulino's work is still helpful for those trying to master the craft of screenwriting.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very practical help for anyone with a great story idea who's facing a blank page (or screen!) By Doug Williams Very helpful method for anyone working to learn this craft. Breaks 120-page screenplay into eight sequences of about 15 pages, each with a different but specific goal. These shorter sequences provide writers with greater focus, which improves clarity and direction. If each sequence is executed properly, all of them work together to build a powerful script. Obviously more to it, but this fundamental structure empowers and facilitates better writing.

34 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Provides a building block missing in most other books on screenwriting By Ars Gratia Artis Typically screenplays are divided into three acts. Paul Gulino goes beneath the 3 act structure to lay bare a critical building block for each act: the sequence. His insightful book discusses how a properly written sequence improves the audience experience of the story. Gulino focuses on how the movie unreels in the mind of the viewer. A sequence works dramatically when it hooks into the psychology of the audience to keep them involved in the story, wondering what's going to happen next. Gulino locates the origin of the dramatic sequence in the limitations of early movie making technology: movies started as one-reeler stories with a maximum play time of about 15 minutes. When films stories expanded beyond one-reelers, each reel still maintained the same narrative structure because the viewing experience -- and narrative flow -- was interrupted every time the projectionist had to swap reels. Each sequence/reel was designed to be a mini-story within a larger story to pique viewer interest so that they would wait in the dark for the reels to change to find out what happened next. The dramatic unity of the sequence was also necessary for serials shown in installments over the course of weeks. Stories were written so that the reels ended with a cliff hanger, a dramatic hook to make the viewers come back next week to find out what happened next. Even after technology made it possible for theaters to show a full-length film without interruption, the time frame and dramatic dynamics of the sequence has persisted. Why? Because, Gulino suggests, there are psychological factors at play in the viewing experience. "The notion of a feature film having eight parts [sequences] is, like all else in dramatic theory, tied to human physiology. The division of two hours into sequences of ten to fifteen minutes each also most likely speaks to the limits of human attention, i.e., without the variation in intensity that sequences provide, an audience may find itself fatigued or numbed rather than by what is on screen." After a brief discussion of four major dramatic techniques to build and sustain audience interest within a sequence Gulino lays out a paradigm of 8 sequences superimposed on the 3 conventional acts of a drama. The rest of the book consists of 11 chapters, each devoted to analyzing a particular film in the framework of the sequence paradigm. Salted among the chapters are sidebar discussions of various dramatic techniques and issues like exposition, character arc, motif, subplot, and reversals. This reader found Gulino's discussion of two films particularly insightful: "Lawrence of Arabia" and "The Fellowship of the Ring". Upon first glance, these films might seem to be counterexamples of the paradigm. Gulino demonstrates that despite their extended viewing length, such is not the case. The average time for the 16 sequences into which Gulino divides "Lawrence of Arabia" is about 13 1/2 minutes. The thirteen sequences for the "The Fellowship" average a little over 13 minutes. But in Gulino's judgement "Lawrence of Arabia" is an excellent example of a movie faithful to the dramatic dynamics of the sequence while "Fellowship of the Ring" is an example of a movie that fails. But, of course, "Fellowship of the Ring" was a commercial success. Go figure. Overall, I found this an insightful and stimulating book.

The great challenge in writing a feature-length screenplay is sustaining audience involvement from page one through 120. Screenwriting: The Sequence Approach expounds on an often-overlooked tool that can be key in solving this problem. A screenplay can be understood as being built of sequences of about fifteen pages each, and by focusing on solving the dramatic aspects of each of these sequences in detail, a writer can more easily conquer the challenges posed by the script as a whole. The sequence approach has its foundation in early Hollywood cinema (until the 1950s, most screenplays were formatted with sequences explicitly identified), and has been rediscovered and used effectively at such film schools as the University of Southern California, Columbia University and Chapman University. This book exposes a wide audience to the approach for the first time, introducing the concept then providing a sequence analysis of eleven significant feature films made between 1940 and 2000: *The Shop Around The Corner* / *Double Indemnity* / *Nights of Cabiria* / *North By Northwest* / *Lawrence of Arabia* / *The Graduate* / *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* / *Toy Story* / *Air Force One* / *Being John Malkovich* / *The Fellowship of the Ring*

"With a fresh take on the oft-mystifying subject of screenplay structure, Gulino breaks some new ground in what I like

to call 'screenwriteology'.the analyses are detailed, clear and insightful.In conclusion, if you're slaving for answers about structure, there's plenty to digest in The Sequence Approach. Bring you appetite, and Chef Gulino will make sure you don't go home with a hungry mind." Dave Trueman, Script, December 2004About the AuthorPaul Gulino is Assistant Professor of Screenwriting at Chapman University, USA.