

# Somewhere Only We Go



*Claire Taetz*

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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## A LETTER FROM THE WRITER

"Accident," "false reality," and "coma" were the three words that popped into my mind while trying to fall asleep one night after asking myself, "What would my first feature-length screenplay be about?" I didn't know what to do with these random words, but I started to see an extremely blurry mirage that had the potential to emanate into fruition. Finally, my mind could rest, and I fell asleep.

The initial process of this screenplay occurred over eight months. The first four months were dedicated to researching the writing process. During this time, I began to see characters come to life. David Corbett, the author of *The Art of Character*, encourages writers to "create characters that exist outside of the script." With this quote as my driving force, I formed characters with depth that the audience can become attached to, starting with giving each character a name with a different meaning. I mapped out the characters' connections to one another, their personalities, and their motives. To round out this research process, I crafted an annotated bibliography from the 30 books I accumulated from Professor Richard Allen, my beloved mentor, through the research phase. When I took a step back, I realized how much new knowledge was embedded into my brain; it was like I sat down with 30 respected and established industry professionals who told me the secrets to writing.

On December 21, 2021, I began typing the first words of my screenplay. I was full of wonder and could feel butterflies in my stomach from the excitement within. However, there was a challenge. Unfortunately, during my second semester, I endured 19 credit hours, which included seven ongoing projects. The stress led me to some really low lows, but as I persevered, I was led to some really high highs...the moments where Richard and I hollered, "That's it!" or "We did it!" or "Brilliant!" My script was no longer a bunch of text...it was coming to life.

On April 24, 2022, the first draft was completed. And on October 25, 2023, my final draft was no longer a draft but a script ready to be born into Hollywood. The script now resides in the hands of a couple of impressive key players in the film industry. I could not be more thankful for the TCU Film, Television, and Digital Media Department and the opportunities that have been presented through it. Because of Professor Richard Allen and the Bob Schieffer College of Communication, I am a better writer with each day anew.

So, my message to you: life is intricate and full of meaning, yet sometimes we create a false reality instead of looking closely to ascertain what is true. I encourage you to look past the text to find the deeper meaning that is within the story, that is within humanity.

Now, let's go somewhere together... *Somewhere Only We Go*.

*SCRIPT HAS BEEN REDACTED BELOW FOR LEGAL PURPOSES.*

If you are an industry professional interested in this project, please reach out to [clairekendalltaetz@gmail.com](mailto:clairekendalltaetz@gmail.com).

Claire Kendall Taetz  
Texas Christian University Class of 2022  
Bob Schieffer College of Communication  
The Film, Television, and Digital Media  
Strategic Communication  
John V. Roach Honors College

Logline: Nearing high school graduation, Ashlynn MacGregor and her friends venture out on the town. A tragic event occurs, and Ashlynn is presented with a new reality...and the question is not whether can she accept it, but how she will accept it. With a suspicion that unravels into an accusation, Ashlynn is determined to prove that there is something more sinister going on. Somewhere she goes takes us on a journey where we all go, through the eyes of one frightened but dauntless woman on the brink of insanity.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Balcerzak, Scott. *Beyond Method: Stella Adler and the Male Actor*. Wayne State University Press, 2018.

Balcerzak analyzes how acting theory and performance choices are used within a film. The focus on Stella Adler's teachings describes the psychological engagement of an actor during a performance. Balcerzak explains how Adler's teaching about technique, scriptwriting, and character-building reflects more of the writer than the performer. Actor performance is more than a personal expression; actor performance is social engagement.

Because Balcerzak emphasizes that an actor can only take dialogue so far, that is, of course, without improvisation, the major theme of the book is that audience-engaging writing that draws from real influences writes the most realistic characters. With this in mind, I have been observing the people around me and taking note of conversations to consider when writing my characters. I want the audience to be drawn to the realism of the character even though Ashlynn's coma state is not reality.

Baron, Cynthia, and Sharon Marie Carnicke. *Reframing Screen Performance*. University of Michigan Press, 2008.

Baron and Carnicke address the challenges that arise during the editing process of filmmaking. The two requirements for film acting are the realization of film acting being the most important part of the film and the realization that film acting is similar and equal to stage acting. The book is sectioned into three parts, all of which offer a well-rounded rubric that encourages successful performances. Baron and Carnicke stress the importance of evaluation of actors' performance, which is traditionally based on realistic or unrealistic, appropriate or inappropriate, and subtle or over the top.

Baron and Carnicke evaluate with the actor's expression and visual analysis of the performance in mind. Instead of becoming critical regarding word choice, passion, and key points, the authors encourage actors to think beyond the script and engage with reality. This book has given me the inspiration to write characters' dialogue more realistically than theatrically and to "show" through dialogue, not "tell."

Buonomano, Dean. *Your Brain Is A Time Machine*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Time, senses, patterns in time, neural dynamics, spatialization, and consciousness are some of the larger topics that Dean Buonomano discusses. In doing so, Buonomano argues that time, although it is used in many ways as a noun, is more subjective than most humans give it credit. Buonomano examines whether the future is preordained by the past and its patterns or open to shaping by new events that are not as formulaic. By the end of the book, Buonomano settles with the conflicting ideas that the universe is one in which only the now is real or the now is arbitrary, which creates an arbitrary future. Whether time is defined by nature or the mind, Buonomano believes humanity should live transcendentalistically to create a future that will become a *now*.

Because Buonomano dissects the chronology of time of a memory in which the mind was under stress, he points out that the mind creates a “slow motion” sensation where the mind slows down time, also known as “Chronostasis.” Even though the mind seems to slow down in a crisis due to adrenaline, it does not give the person more time to react with complexity, unless the person is already trained in a skill. In fact, the person tends to freeze or flee in what feels like a never-ending scenario due to stress. Because the feeling of time is altered with high-stress scenarios, Ashlynn will feel like her stressful life is equated to one month, where in reality, six months have passed with time.

Cardullo, Bert. *Playing to the Camera: Film Actors Discuss Their Craft*. Yale University Press, 1999.

Cardullo focuses on Hollywood's most famous historical actors and includes testimonials to invite readers into the actor's personal experiences, artistic development, and inner challenges. The actors included dates back to the silent era, which allows for the reader to understand the holistic development of the film industry from past to present. The four-part novel provides the reader with thought-provoking anecdotes about the emergence of film.

Because the book lays out facts and does not persuade towards one school of thought, Cardullo gives the reader freedom to curate an opinion regarding contradicting topics within the industry. Some common difficulties mentioned are stage versus screen performance, the artistic side of actors, and how performers undergo demanding technical emotion. With this freedom in mind, I want to make sure that my script has room for interpretation and side choosing. I think of the *Twilight* movie saga campaigns and how audience engagement propelled the fandom, as fans could choose to either be team Jacob or Edward.

Cline, Ernest. *Ready Player One*. Century, 2020.

Cline's *Ready Player One* is a futuristic book that warns readers of the dangers of distancing from humanity in a physical sense. In the novel, the main character has his life in reality, one which is bleak and full of despair, and his life in virtual reality, one full of mystery and danger. Cline uses different tones in his writing to signify the differences between the two worlds.

Because Cline is also a screenwriter, he is able to write a movie in the minds of his readers. Reading this book has helped me in my scriptwriting process, as I have learned the importance of tone in writing. When I switch between the two worlds, it will be obvious in the film, but I also want it to be conveyed through the writing. Although my story is not futuristic, it does have that peculiar element that makes readers question, "Could this really happen?"



Cook, Martin. *Write to TV: Out of Your Head and Onto the Screen*. Taylor & Francis, 2014.

As everyone has a unique perspective on life that has been cultivated through various forms of nature and nurture, Martin advises writers to let the voice “pop” out of the head, instead of creating stories that have already been told. Martin also mentions that writers write best when they are comfortable with the material. Therefore, a writer should not write a comedy if the person watches drama and does not have comedic timing in their conversations with the people in their life. In doing so, writers often create strong scripts that producers are more willing to read instead of glancing at them and saying, “I have seen this before.”

Because I gravitate toward psychological thrillers and dramas, writing my script will be in my comfort zone in regard to the material. Martin has encouraged me to not write what I think other people want to hear but what I feel is to write for the characters. There will always be people who are not a fan, so it is best to write the script according to my own emotions, while still applying proper writing style and conventions. When writing my script, I will write with emotion rather than just trying to “fill a page.” After I feel like my script is where it needs to be, I can endure the pitching and buying process, as I will have confidence in my script.

Corbett, David. *The Art of Character Creating Memorable Characters for Fiction, Film, and TV*. Penguin Books, 2013.

Through dissecting successful techniques of character development, Corbett creates a guide that helps writers develop memorable, multi-faceted characters that drive screenplays. Corbett encourages screenwriters to leave their comfort zone by pulling inspiration for characters from real-life stories, the unconscious, art, music, nature, real characteristics and habits of people, and composite, archetype characters. One applicable step Corbett provides for screenwriters is the idea of keeping a dream journal for inspiration.

Because Corbett provides exercises to develop characters, I can build my characters in a way that will set them up to be well-developed and multi-faceted rather than creating rigid, static characters. Corbett argues that characters change during development and to not confine characters to a single desire but let the character's desires stem from new desires, other characters, and impactful events; Corbett's techniques will guide me to create characters that are well-rounded in his eyes. Because the main narrative plays on dreams, even though the alternate reality is inside the mind of Ashlynn during her coma, I want to write ideas I have in dreams down on a piece of paper. In fact, the premise of this screenplay appeared in my head as I was falling asleep one night.

Dick, Benard F. *Anatomy of Film*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010.

In this book, Dick provides in-depth analyses of narrative film structure, graphics and sound, film, space, mise-en-scène, color, lighting, visual effects, film genres, film subtext, film directors, film and literature, film analysis, and film theory criticism. With rich examples from the past and in-depth coverage on the foundation of film and its styles, Dick's work serves as a tool for all careers in the film industry. Specifically, his chapter, "Film and Literature," dissects literary techniques such as point-of-view narration and omniscient narration through dialogue and camera work.

Upon reading the "Point of View" section, I decided that I want the main narrative of the story to have a first-person point of view where the "I" is not Ashlynn narrating, but the "I" is the subjective sound through her dreams/hallucinations inside of the coma, as only Ashlynn experiences these events. Because she is the only one experiencing these events, as well as the audience in her shoes, Ashlynn's mental health spirals, and the audience relates as frustration, confusion, and tension build between the characters.

Egri, Lajos. *The Art of Dramatic Writing: Its Basis in the Creative Interpretation of Human Motives*. Must Have Books, 2019.

*The Art of Dramatic Writing* expounds upon the importance for a play to have a central thesis. Egri emphasizes that the entirety of the play should allow for a certain conflict to develop the thesis rather than allowing a thesis to develop a conflict. Egri furthers his stance by explaining that the screenwriter has to know where you are going to choose pathways for the characters.

During my writing process, I will write the conflicts of my screenplay first, which includes writing the responses of the characters. I will allow my film to be developed by conflict, while the thesis of my film will write the rest of my screenplay. Egri has inspired me to be more specific in my character's choices and work backward. When writing the beats out in my screenplay, I started with the third act to determine the events leading up to it in acts one and two.

Else, G. F. *Aristotle Poetics*. University Of Michigan, 1994.

Aristotle writes the relative importance of creating tragedy based on actions rather than characters themselves. He argues that a tragedy cannot exist without a plot, but it can exist without characters, thus proving that the actions of the characters speak louder than their words. He goes on to prove that the six elements of a tragedy include: plot, characters, verbal expression, thought, visual adornment, and song composition. With each of these components, he expresses that an imitation of life can then be felt by the audience; the writing partnered with the visual components comprises a tragedy.

Aristotle makes it a point that the writer should not merely write to tell the audience what has happened, rather, the writer should write about the possibilities of what could happen according to the rule of probability or necessity. He argues that tragic events in a story should show up unexpectedly but should still have logic and not a one-in-a-million probability. With this principle in mind, I will make sure that the consequences of Ashlynn's breaks will be explored and hinted at before some of them actually happen (i.e., the breakup with her friends).

Esper, William, and Damon DiMarco. *The Actor's Art and Craft: William Esper Teaches the Meisner Technique*. Anchor Books, 2008.

William Esper, internationally recognized for his work on the Meisner technique in acting, gives readers a fly-on-the-wall look into his teachings of the technique. His famous training program teaches actors how to detach from the script and pull emotion from instinct. He emphasizes that actors must act truthfully under imaginary circumstances; actors can take on different characters, but their instincts must be universally relatable and true of that character.

Esper's book is one that I have read a couple of times, as I was accepted into his training program. Knowing the specific details of the program and the approaches behind the Meisner technique, this book has shaped my performance as an actor. With this in mind, I can play out the characters in my mind and write dialogue that sounds natural to the character, but also universal. My goal for writing the characters' dialogue is not to have them speak just to speak but to speak from motivation and instinct.

Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 2005.

Syd Field's non-fiction guide *The Foundations of Screenwriting* outlines a paradigm to which successful screenplays adhere. The three paradigm divisions include setup, confrontation, and resolution, all of which have a distinct role designed for success. The setup is 20-30 pages where the context holds up the content in place. The confrontation is a time in which the main character continuously runs into obstacles that prohibit the character from achieving the character's dramatic need.

Because my screenplay is fiction, I will use Field's fiction guide of setup, confrontation, and resolution to initially engage the audience, keep the audience engaged, and leave the audience with no further plot questions, but questions regarding the subject matter. Although my screenplay may take a more fractured, narrative structure approach, the three paradigm divisions by Fields can still be implemented, in any order, to give a comprehensive story that is both engaging and universally relatable. I look forward to writing the confrontation of Ashlynn where her desire to figure out her hallucinations is shut down by her love interest, Genji.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

Freud argues that every dream is a fulfillment of a wish, even distressing dreams. He discusses that unfulfilled wishes in nightmares are often wishes that the waking mind would find distasteful, so the real meanings are disguised. Freud suggests that interpreting dreams gives new forms to the dormant content of dreams by presenting four primary methods: dream- condensation, dream-displacement, regard for representability, and secondary-revision.

Although not all coma patients experience dreams during their vegetative state, many do dream, and in some cases, patients can dream about what they hear in their physical environment. Ashlynn will be dreaming in her coma, as the main narrative takes place in her mind, but more specifically, the main narrative will be somewhat influenced by what Ashlynn hears in her physical environment. However, not everything that Ashlynn hears in her environment will appear appropriately in her dream. For example, in real life, Genji will come to visit Ashlynn a plethora of times, but in her dream, Genji becomes more distant. Maybe it is because Ashlynn is trying to let go of Genji.



Garfield, David. *A Player's Place*. Macmillan Publishing CO., INC., 1980.

Garfield gives an in-depth analysis of the Actors Studio that includes its birth, rich history, and impact on the film industry up through the 1980s. Lee Strasberg's insight on acting is also interwoven through the book; Strasberg describes the process of emotions an actor feels. He believes that a performer must have a "double-conscious" to act and observe simultaneously; an actor with a "double-conscious" is free yet wills to the freedom. When an actor is present in the story and observes to respond with real emotion, the characters come to life.

With the book's breakdown of the art of acting, I was simultaneously thinking about my script. My script is not in the production stage, so, unfortunately, there is not the "one" to play each character yet. However, the reading of this book inspired me to reach out to a few of my acting friends to ask them if they will act out some scenes as I write the script this winter. Having the dialogue read aloud will allow me to see the characters come to life and tailor accordingly.

Howe, Marie. *What the Living Do: Poems*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.

Marie Howe, an American poet, writes a collection of poetry *What the Living Do: Poems* that encapsulates the different emotions and life experiences that humanity shares universally. Most of her poems revolve around dark material, but the depressing poems of grief are not written in despair, rather these poems celebrate life in all its facets. Specifically, her poem “The Grave” tells a story of a young woman mourning the loss of her family members with her living family members, as they lie on top of the graves like twin beds.

Howe’s writing is exquisite. She can communicate dark material and surface raw emotions by using a gentle tone and powerful language. Her juxtaposition of gentle tone and powerful language has helped me write my dark script in a way that is not melodramatic, but still refreshing. At the end of the script, Genji will read a letter of departure to Ashlynn and I want his style of writing to be like Howe’s writing.

Kipen, David. *The Schreiber Theory: A Radical Rewrite of American Film History*. Melville House Publishing, 2007.

David Kipen, an established author and film expert, breaks down the Schreiber theory which entails that the screenwriter is actually the principal author of a film, not the director. In coining the Schreiber theory that counteracts the auteur theory, Kipen provides intricate details that shed light on the power of screenwriters.

Because Kipen provides detailed writing testimonies of screenwriters of successful movies, he proves that the heart of a good film is its writing; even the best director cannot make bad writing an enjoyable film for audiences of any kind. Kipen's thoughts and expertise have rounded my writing style by reminding me that the audience is a lot smarter than many tend to believe. Therefore, when writing my screenplay, I will write dialogue that "shows" rather than "tells." For example, there will be hints of Ashlynn being in a coma, but it will not be blatantly clear until the end of the story.

Laureys, Steven, et al., editors. *The Neurology of Consciousness*. Academic Press, 2009.

Laureys et al. share complex information and the intricacies of the conscious and subconscious mind. The textbook covers the basics of neurology, waking, sleep and anesthesia, severe brain related conditions, seizures, splits, neglect, and assorted disorders. Under each of these broad categories lies an in-depth analysis of many phenomena, including comatose brains and dreaming. At one point, it is mentioned that waking consciousness is like watching a news broadcast where the camera bounces around at random in reaction to environmental events.

However, in dreaming, a top-down approach is taken where the subconscious follows a narrative of an imaginative director. Because dreams are described as being more visual than the waking conscious (internal generation of a world-analog), due to the lack of competition with external visual stimulation, my script has the freedom to be abstract while still following a consistent narrative. The conscious mind rationalizes, whereas the unconscious mind accepts events as they are and moves forward. Because of this finding, Ashlynn's life can be one where she cannot rationalize what is going on, thus why Royce has to tell her that she is "dead."

Lucas, George, and Francis Ford Coppola. *George Lucas's Blockbusting: A Decade-by-Decade Survey of Timeless Movies Including Untold Secrets of Their Financial and Cultural Success*. Edited by Alex Ben Block and Lucy Autrey Wilson, ITBooks, 2010.

George Lucas gives a comprehensive list of what he believes to be the best 300 featured films of all time that provide unique perspectives on the film-making industry. Lucas examines each film in accordance with the cultural and financial factors of the year and decade of each film. Lucas addresses how creative methods of storytelling can follow the classic narrative structure. For example, *The Sixth Sense*, created in 1999, explores subliminal hints to a deeper plot of the film that provokes viewers to watch a second time.

During the main narrative in *The Sixth Sense*, the film never “cheats” by blatantly telling the audience that the main narrative is one of an alternate reality, but it gives hints through soundtracks and certain phenomena that the character experiences. However, what makes *The Sixth Sense* so engaging and mind-twisting is the implication of a plot twist at the climax that challenges the viewers’ previous assumptions. Just like *The Sixth Sense* drops hints and has a climax that challenges previous assumptions of the audience, so will my script, as the climax of the film will be Roya telling Ashlynn that they are dead and Ashlynn accepting the fact that she is in a coma on life support, about to be unplugged.

McKee, Robert. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and The Principles of Screenwriting*. Harper Collins Publishers, 1997.

By drawing on the importance of form and not formula in scriptwriting, McKee helps writers cultivate a script from emotion, rather than just intelligence. He gives examples of scriptwriting fails where writers would write from start to end. Instead of writing scenes in chronological order, or writing scenes while following a specific formula, McKee suggests that writers spend the first 2/3rds of the writing process on drafting with stacks of three-by-five cards to create a step-outline.

McKee's step-outline process includes writing an outline where each notecard has a sentence about the actions and how it turns. Following the completion of this process, McKee suggests that the writer sits down with different types of people to pitch the story instead of having them read an entire script, which often overwhelms and doesn't allow for specific advice from others. As the writer says in the ten-minute pitch, the writer should watch the eyes, breath, and emotions of the person listening. I will use this method by surveying the emotions and reactions of the different people I pitch my story to.

Morgan, Barbara, and Maya Perez, editors. *On Story: Screenwriters and Filmmakers on Their Iconic Films*. University of Texas Press, 2016.

Barbara Morgan, cofounder of Austin Film Festival, provides interviews with influential screenwriters and filmmakers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The interviews include discussion on the creation of characters, the development of heroes and antiheroes, writing for television versus film, discoveries in production, and more. Each conversation provides unique perspectives that give insight into creating stories that resonate with audiences of all demographics.

In an interview with Callie Khouri, Khouri encourages writers to pick up inspiration from strangers, as those little moments will pop up for characters during screenwriting sessions. She mentions that she asks herself a question about a stranger and watches them, for example in line at a coffee shop, and then searches for little clues that hint at the personality and motives of a person. With this exercise in mind, I am going to write down or make mental notes of public occurrences that I can use for character development. Because my characters are college aged and I am on a college campus, I have convenient inspiration around me.

Norman, Marc. *What Happens Next: A History of American Screenwriting*. Aurum, 2008.

Marc Norman elaborates on the broken and segregated screenwriting community in Hollywood. He emphasizes how technology introduction in 2005 required screenwriters to reinvent themselves to keep up with the ever-changing needs of the audience. He also mentions that “niche” films are not as niche as one may think, rather the film is still playing on universal appeals.

Because Generation Z is the next influential generation and is my target demographic in my film, I will take Norman’s ideas into account to create a story that will constantly satisfy Gen Z’s need for constant stimulation for retention and attention. With the internet being two clicks away, I have the privilege and ability to research comas more in depth from a social level, not just through a medical lens. Because of Norman’s advice, I will watch medical testimonies of those who were in comas. Even though my psychological thriller is not for the faint of heart, it can still appeal through the different levels that each character brings, including the love of Genji and Ashlynn.



Pinker, Steven. *The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature*. Penguin Books, 2008.

Pinker dives into the complexity of the English language and the rules that are associated with it. Pinker explains that real world tragedies explain human communication; words can be used as ammunition to hurt and embarrass people. He also reveals that emotions and thoughts reveal true mental status and underlying tension between parties. Language reveals true human nature and by understanding words, we can understand what is lying beneath the surface.

Pinker's insight on the power words has helped me brainstorm the way in which I want each character to communicate. Communication has the power to exhibit human emotion, maturity, and intellect. When writing each character, I will make sure to give each character a way of communicating that is special to the character, making the characters and their communication more intricate.

Rouse, Matthew H. *Neuroanatomy for Speech Language Pathology and Audiology*. Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2020.

Rouse provides incredible detail and depth of the brain's genetic makeup and functions. Specifically, he provides great insight into assessing cognitive function with comatose patients using the Glasgow Coma Scale and the Rancho Level of Cognitive Functioning (RLCF). When a patient enters into a coma, whether that is medically induced or caused by an injury, the patient is only in a coma for a few days to a couple weeks. If the patient's health progresses, then the patient will either regain consciousness or progress to a vegetative state where the patient does not need a ventilator. However, if the patient's health decreases, the patient's level of consciousness will eventually diminish to brain death, at which point the patient will be taken off the ventilator with the family's consent.

Because I want my film to be both medically accurate and abstract, knowing medical protocols and methods surrounding comatose patients is imperative to writing a story that is medically sound, both practically and ethically. With this information, I learned that it is possible for Ashlynn to be in a coma from a severe head injury, stay in the coma for a short time period, and then have a decline in consciousness until she is brain dead, in which the doctor would need the parents' consent to remove her from a ventilator.

Scorsese, Martin. *Scorsese on Scorsese*. Edited by Ian Christie and David Thompson, Faber and Faber, 1989.

Scorsese writes this book to provide readers with a creative insight into his creative processes behind his films. Scorsese draws upon his personal life experiences, from childhood to adulthood, to write his scripts. He tells stories of his experiences to show how he pulls from them to create in-depth films. Some of his films came from what may seem like minuscule life events, when in reality, these small encounters serve as the creative inspiration.

Scorsese makes it a point for writers to draw from all life events, meaning that writers should constantly be observing, actively listening, and engaging in the life around them. As I write my script, I am going to write small sections at one time, then take a break for a few days, and then continue writing. In doing this, I am allowing the life around me to continuously shape my screenplay.

Scott, Kevin Conroy. *Screenwriters' Masterclass: Screenwriters Talk About Their Greatest Movies*. Newmarket Press, 2006.

Kevin Conroy Scott cultivates questions about the screenwriting process from his own experience in writing to ask successful, industry professionals. In sharing insight into what works and does not work in the process, Scott gives readers clarity and aims to answer questions that some may not have the opportunity to ask. One of the interviewees expresses that questioning ideas is normal, but instead of immediately shutting them down, one should sleep on it.

Because Scott asks numerous influential screenwriters numerous questions, some of the questions overlap, but the advice given does not look the same. When writing my screenplay, I will take in advice from these selected sources, but I will also allow myself to create my own methodology. One person suggested writing at a coffee shop and then writing in the comfort of a home. I think writing in a coffee shop is helpful in people watching and being in a lively atmosphere. I also love the opportunity to create my own atmosphere in my home where distractions are usually kept at bay.

Smiley, Sam. *Playwriting: The Structure of Action*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971.

Smiley communicates to readers the art of playwriting through examples and information revolving around various topics, including art and creativity, the process of playwriting, structures of storytelling, character development, and the melody of human speech. With creative insight, Smiley explains that creativity is an indefinable quality that is rare and made up of intellect, talent, and compulsion. He argues that writers need to not only pull from intelligence, but also the capability in seeing likeness in humanity while writing with a universal feeling.

Because Smiley recommends that writers pull from intelligence through research, he also suggests that writers learn to write with structure so that creativity can have a backbone that allows the surface to communicate something unique. For example, every human has a spine, but the DNA within each human is unique. Writers need structure and structure does not inhibit creativity. Specifically, Smiley argues that writers create characters with a backbone of instinct, emotion, and sentiment, as characters are agents of structured action. In my script, I will develop characters with motives that are rooted in the instincts, emotions, and sentiments that I give them by consistently jotting down ideas after I have real-life human interactions with the life around me.

Springer, Claudia, and Julie R. Levinson. *Acting*. Rutgers University Press, 2015.

Springer and Levison evaluate film acting from its origination in 1895, including vaudeville performers, wild west actors, and sports stars. Springer then transitions into six eras: the silent screen, classical Hollywood, postwar Hollywood, the auteur renaissance, the New Hollywood, and the modern entertainment marketplace. They stress the similarity and flawless transition of acting across the different periods. They argue that film acting is shaped by critical technique, artistic symbolism, and social elements at the time of each film.

However, Springer and Levison also mention that the American film industry has been evolving over many years but acting remains a distinct representation of present-day influences. With this school of thought in mind, I have tried to incorporate present-day influences into my script's outline. I am looking forward to writing dialogue that actors can one day bring to life, as I have the advantage of writing in the language of my friends because I am a part of Generation Z.

Thompson, Emma, et al. *The Sense and Sensibility Screenplay & Diaries*. Newmarket Press, 1996.

Academy award winning writer and actress, Emma Thompson encapsulates Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* novel in a screenplay through her exquisite writing. Keeping Austen's original themes from the novel, Thompson keeps the characters of Marianne and her mother sincere romantics while writing other characters as emotionless; in further developing these characters with dialogue, Thompson drives Austen's key theme of socially accepted behavior.

To see Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* come to life through screenwriting, Thompson has demonstrated the importance of writing from an established character, rather than writing with no structure. When writing my script, I will also create healthy, balanced contrasts between characters to exemplify the reality of the human experience. For example, Genii is a gentle and loyal character (for the most part), while Ashlynn is devoured by her anxiety, causing her to be sporadic and inconsistent.

Thompson, Kristen. *Storytelling in the New Hollywood: Understanding Classical Narrative Technique*. Harvard University Press, 1999.

In providing examples of cultural shifts in America with the shift from Old Hollywood and New Hollywood, Thompson proves that New Hollywood is less conventional in that audiences no longer seek the expected, but rather seek to be thrown off. She explains that the motivations of writers should be to give audiences a story that will tell stories that gratify quickly, even if it is a slow film, and have characters with realistic, clear psychological traits. She also makes note that the climax in a film does not have to be obvious. Sometimes, climaxes in films can be subtle, as the majority of the film might be intense, so the climax can shine by being calm.

When writing the climax of my story, I want the audience to say, “Wow, I did not realize she was in a coma, and I actually still love her and Genji.” However, I suspect that there will be some keen minds that will have their suspicions, so for them, I still hope they feel that wave of emotion of not wanting to let go of reality. While many films have resolutions that make the audience feel good, my aim is to have the audience feel uncomfortable, which will allow them to feel relieved in their own life, no matter the circumstances that are present.



Vogler, Christopher, and Michele Montez. *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. Michael Wiese Productions, 2020.

In the book “The Writer’s Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers” readers observe Vogler’s techniques in creating a hero archetype undergoes both an internal and external crisis. Vogler conveys that archetypes developed within a play are best created through imagery and consistent patterns which illustrates the intricacies needed for screenwriting. The most common and useful archetypes of a hero that Vogler expounds upon include: the mentor, the higher self, the threshold guardian, the herald, the shapeshifter, the shadow, the ally, and the trickster. The hero’s journey in a three-act structure looks like a hero in the ordinary world, an inciting incident, a refusal of the call, the hero meeting with the mentor, the hero crossing the threshold, tests, allies and enemies, the approach, the central ordeal (midpoint, death, and rebirth), the reward, the road back, the resurrection, and the return with the elixir.

Because well-developed characters are created through consistent patterns and descriptive dialogue, according to Vogler, I will use his insight to outline patterns of characters. I want to create multiple motives for each character that will decide how the character will respond to events in the story. Specifically, Vogler mentions the idea of an “anti-hero,” a hero that is an outlaw or villain from the point of view of society. The anti-hero can either be a character who has a wounded quality, such as cynicism, or a tragic hero who is not admirable with actions that cause chaos. In my screenplay, the anti-hero, Ashlynn, is a tragic hero as her spiraling mental health in the alternate reality is enough to push everyone away from her.