

**‘Society Creates its own  
Monsters’**

**Frankenstein**

**v**

**The Handmaid’s Tale**

# Narratology

Tzvetan Todorov wanted to analyse the structural properties of narratives and develop a general theory that could be applied to all stories. He called this new approach narratology, or science of the narrative.<sup>1</sup>

He described how stories should begin with a stable situation, but this routine is disturbed by some force which results in a state of imbalance. Characters then have to search for a new equilibrium. This three-part structure is summarised in the following diagram.

Equilibrium

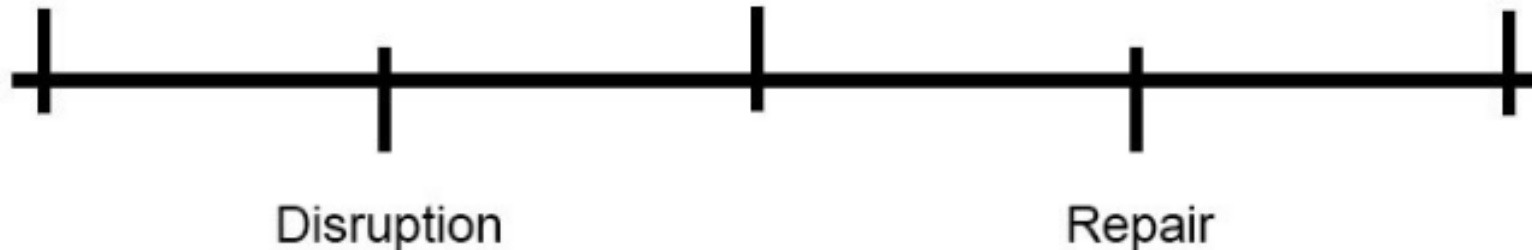
balance / routine

Disequilibrium

recognition of the disruption

New Equilibrium

a new order is established



‘Novels are narratives, and narrative, whatever its medium – words, film, strip cartoon – holds the interest of an audience by raising questions in their minds, and delaying the answers. **The questions are broadly of two kinds, having to do with causality (e.g. whodunit?) and temporality (e.g. what will happen next?)’.**



Beginnings...first pages only...

All the questions!

# **'Society Creates its own Monsters'**

**What 'Monsters' were in  
people's minds when these  
books were being written?**

# **'Society Creates its own Monsters'**

**1984: the erosion of women's right in  
the US**

**1818: The Enlightenment's scientific  
advances**

# 'Society Creates its own Monsters'



**What are our monsters?**



# Your transition work: please complete by our first lesson back in Y12

**Read your prose texts through for the first time. Use York Notes or Spark Notes to support your reading if you need it – these are challenging texts (in a good way!).**

**Secondly, read the latter part of *The Handmaid's Tale*, chapter 13 (from 'I sink down into my body...' to the end of the chapter 'this is the worst'), and either plan or plan and write an essay response to this question:**

***How does Atwood create tension in this section? As with all your literature essay, you can think about all the language/ structure/ narrative/ characterisation choices Atwood makes here.***



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**Read – as much as you can, as often  
as you can**