

Monkey Business

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Animated musings from
Emmy-winning screenwriter...

...Jeffrey Scott

Lessons From the Trenches of HOLLYWOOD FORMULA FOR EXPLOSIVE WRITING UNCOVERED

I recently made a phenomenal discovery. Contrary to historians, Albert Einstein did not discover the secret to the A-bomb. After extensive research I have definitively proved that his earth-shaking formula, $E=mc^2$, has nothing whatsoever to do with atomic energy.

Let me explain.

Einstein's formula was long thought to translate to Energy equals Mass times the Constant (speed of light) squared, thus unlocking the explosiveness of the atom. Not! It actually translates to Entertainment = Manuscript times Classic story structure squared, and is the formula for explosive writing!

Despite skepticism from Steven Hawking, the evidence clearly supports this theory. For years, independent animation producers have erred in assuming that the constant of theatrical success was *pretty animation* when, in fact, since the days of Plato it has always been story structure. Einstein was perfectly aware of this, and enjoyed splitting infinitives more than atoms, penning such screenplays as his classic, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Manhattan Project*, and his Oscar-winning epic, *Gone With the Solar Wind*.

So if you're looking for a box office hit, and want to avoid a 50-megaton bomb, by all means hire the best animators your budget can afford. Just make sure you hire the best writer as well (PhD in nuclear physics optional).

Jeffrey's Latest Monkey Business

If you haven't noticed that everything today is going green you must be from Mars. But then again, if you were, you'd be a little *green* Martian.

Jeffrey's ghostwriter, Hunter N. Pecker (pictured above), is bigtime into green. Money, that is. So when Andy Heyward, CEO of A Squared Entertainment, asked Hunter to turn global supermodel Gisele Bündchen into an animated web series he jumped at the chance.

The Brazilian beauty (no, not Hunter, Gisele) will lend her voice to the starring role in *GiGi & the Green Team*, about an eco superhero who works as a supermodel by day and protector of the environment by night. The 3-5 minute webisodes will premiere on AOL in the fall. According to Hunter's agent, Swifty Le'Czar, the award-winning chimp received six-figures for the deal (none of which were as hot as Gisele's). *Ook! Ook!*

This month's excerpt from Jeffrey's highly acclaimed book

HOW TO WRITE FOR ANIMATION

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines dynamics as "the pattern of change or growth of an object or phenomenon." For our purposes let's slightly modify this definition to mean all of the separate patterns of change that are taking place in our story. We'll call this *story dynamics*.

All of the patterns of change in our story, such as our heroes' goals, the villains' goals, our characters' emotions, character relationships, their individual or group states of action or jeopardy, make up the story's dynamics. All of these dynamics have logical cause-and-effect consequences. To handle one incorrectly, or omit one, is to leave a hole in your story. A hole, in writing parlance, means that there is something illogical in the story.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to always keep track of all of the dynamics which are operating in your story!

Depending upon the complexity of the story, following all of the story dynamics can be quite a job. But it must be done. One of the best reasons to keep a story simple, especially if you're an inexperienced writer, is so that there are less of these dynamics going on, which makes the story easier to control.

You'll find the rest of this article in Chapter 5 of *How to Write Animation*

