Narrative Technique in New Anthology Television

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1. New Anthology Television
Anthology television

Standalone episodes

Separate narrative arcs

New characters
High Maintenance

- Ben Sinclair as “The Guy”
  - marijuana delivery person
  - delivers to clients in each episode
  - New York City

- web series created by Katja Blichfield & Ben Sinclair
  - Picked up by Vimeo (2012)
  - Adapted for HBO (2016)
  - 25 episodes in 3 seasons
  - Renewed for 4th season (2019)
Written & directed by Joe Swanberg (mumblecore legend)

- Netflix (2016)
- 3rd & final season (May 2019)

- comedy-drama
- relationships, technology, culture
- Chicago
The Romanoffs

created by Matthew Weiner (*Mad Men*)

- Amazon Video (2018)
- eight episodes, no Season 2 (yet?)
- drama
- Characters who believe themselves to be descendants of Russian royal family
- Paris, New York City, Mexico City, London, Vienna
2. Themes & Techniques
Cinematic Choices

- Experimental (*High Maintenance*)
- Mumblecore, improvisational, collaborative (*Easy*)
- Technical expertise, production aesthetic (*The Romanoffs*)
The anthology format allows writers (and more writers) to showcase more different perspectives and to engage in storytelling from multiple viewpoints/standpoints.
“Reinventing authenticity begins with creating an image to connect an aesthetic view of origins and a social view of new beginnings.

(Zukin, 2009)
Audience Entryways

- space & place
- mobility
Establishing Resonant Audience Entryways Through Space and Place
Establishing Resonant Audience Entryways Through Mobility
3. New Anthology as the Anti-Binge Television
Why do viewers binge?

- **Engagement** (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015)
  - feel more engaged when binging
  - feel more engaged with characters
  - able to follow intricate storylines
anthology television: fostering engagement

- artful cinematic choices
- authenticity
  - identity
  - diversity
- audience entryways
  - Resonance
  - Space & place
  - Mobility
engagement without (as much) urge to binge
Future Directions

- viewer engagement data
- cognitive mapping (and hegemonic interventions)
Thanks!