

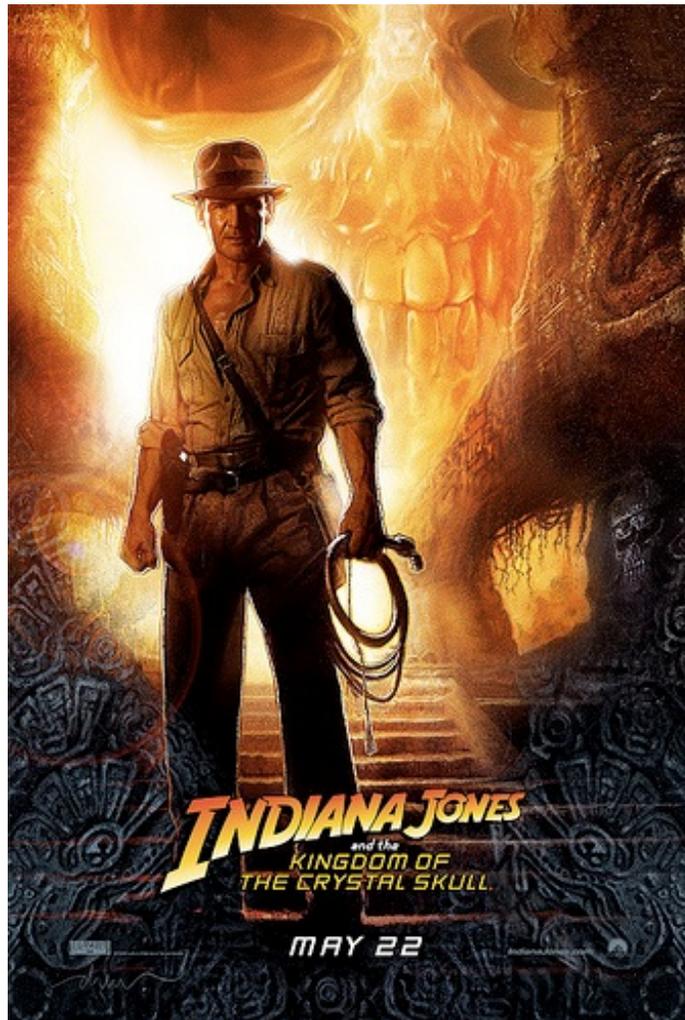
12 Best Character Archetypes For Film: Part 2

blogs.psychcentral.com/hollywood-therapy/2015/04/12-best-character-archetypes-for-film-part-2

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April 7, 2015

In Part 1 we introduced the first three Archetypes, The Everyman, The Innocent and The Hero. These are powerful character types that have been part of storytelling for all time. Continuing with Jung's archetypes;



4. The Explorer, otherwise called the seeker, the wanderer, the individualist, or the pilgrim.

The Explorer archetype is often seen on a quest, in search of something, a way home, important knowledge, a key to happiness or a "better way."

The Explorer doesn't stay in his lane, or follow rules or conventions if he finds them inconvenient. He acts intuitively, strikes out boldly, and maintains his originality while changing the world.

He appears to be constantly searching – for a treasure, a place, or self-discovery. To The Explorer, it's all about not missing out on life.

His greatest qualities involve his journey toward self-fulfillment and living an authentic life.

At times, however, The Explorer can be too independent, almost to the point of self-sacrifice. They may isolate from others.

While liberating the world, he runs the risk of never settling down, or starting a family, and could easily miss out on a more serene type of fulfillment.

Captain Kirk, played by William Shatner, and more recently by Chris Pine, in *Star Trek*, is a classic example of The Explorer. After all, Kirk's mission is "to boldly go where no man has gone before."

While travelling at Warp Speed, through various corners of the universe, Kirk often learns great lessons for members of all planetary cultures.

Captain Willard (played by Martin Sheen in *Apocalypse Now!*), went up-river, and directly into the Heart of Darkness (in this case, Vietnam) to find and assassinate the presumed insane Colonel Kurtz – played by Marlon Brando.

What he found in his journey was a truth about the nature of war, and humanity, and that the "horrors," he witnessed, were inevitable, and even necessary in an a war like the Vietnam War.

Other examples of The Explorer;

Julia Roberts as Erin in *Erin Brockovich*

Sigourney Weaver as Ellen Ripley in *Alien*.

Harrison Ford as Indian Jones in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

5. The Caregiver, also thought of as the guardian, the saint, the parent, the helper, the altruist, or the supporter.

The Caregiver generally shows qualities of compassion, generosity and protectiveness. It's often part of his or her motivation to look after those who can't protect themselves.

He or she views helping or rescuing others as their highest calling. The Caregiver is by their nature, nurturing, and is often a female character.

Doctors, psychotherapists, nurses, and angels often fall into this category. They take in strays, lend a helping hand, and seek out those in need.

The Caregiver seems happiest when they are making a difference in someone else's life.

They are almost by definition, people-pleasers, and as such – have been known to take on too much responsibility for others which can wear them down or burn them out.

They are vulnerable to those who would seek to exploit their generosity. The Caretaker often takes better care of his or her ward than they take care of their own selves.

A great example of a truly self-sacrificing Caregiver is Oskar Schindler, as played by Liam Neeson in *Schindler's List*. He risked his life every time he helped a Jew escape from Germany.

In *It's A Wonderful Life*, George Bailey's guardian Angel, Clarence Oldbody, watches over him when he is most depressed, and wishes he weren't even born.

Clarence shows Bailey what life would have been like for the others in his town, if he weren't born. He learns the town could hardly get along without him.

In *The Equalizer*, Denzel Washington has left the CIA, but uses his near James Bond-like spy skills to defend innocent victims of sex trafficking.

Other examples of The Caretaker;

Sandra Bullock as Leigh Anne Tuohy in *The Blindside*.

Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch in *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

Rene Zellweger as Dorothy Boyd in *Jerry Maguire*.

6. The Rebel, also known as the revolutionary, the misfit, the outlaw or the wild man.

The outlaws and rebels in film are outrageous, outspoken, and radical in their approaches to attacking and solving problems in life. They have new, radical ways of thinking about and addressing issues.

They may hold counter-cultural ideas, they may profess innovative solutions, but they sincerely believe in their way of approaching change.

They are all about creating a better world, and if it involves invoking a new approach, or a different way of thinking about a solution, even if it's controversial, they will push ahead if they feel they're in the right.

They are generally respectful of others' thinking, opinions, and others' solutions, yet they push their own creative, innovative approaches through, diplomatically, to find radical ideas that work best.

Sometimes, however, they are not that respectful, or diplomatic and appear reckless, adopting dangerous methods for change, and leave collateral damage in their wake.

Consider Hunter Thompson, (played by Johnny Depp) in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. He and his Samoan lawyer, Dr. Gonzo, speed through the desert high on cocaine, poppers and LSD, wreaking havoc, frightening tourists, and breaking laws randomly.

Consider Clyde Barrow, (played by Warren Beatty), leading the Barrow Gang, with Bonnie Parker, who robs banks and helps out the working stiffs during the Great Depression.

In a extremely violent and bloody version of “the Robin Hood” archetype, the Barrow Gang’s journey wreaked havoc across depression-era America, as Barrow stood up to the banks and lent a hand to the destitute and unemployed.

Other examples of The Rebel;

James Dean as Jim Stark in *Rebel Without a Cause*

Arnold Swartzenegger in *The Terminator*

Tom Cruise as Maverick in *Top Gun*.

For further information on how to use Archetypes in your screenplay, or to ask about careers in writing. [click here](#).

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Site last updated: 29 Oct 2018

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