# COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY

**Eva Alfonso**
eva.alfonso.kimball@gmail.com
Guest Lecturer in Screenwriting
Fundamentals
School of Communication
University of Navarra. Spain.

**Marta Frago**
mfrago@unav.es
Senior Lecturer in Screenwriting
Fundamentals and Film
Adaptations.
School of Communication.
University of Navarra. Spain.

## The adventure screenplay in William Goldman: the playful and the ironic in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride*

## Abstract

**William Goldman is a North American novelist and screenwriter with more than fifty years in his professional career. This article aims to identify Goldman's  personal writing traits by focusing on *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride*, which can be considered the most comprehensive and complete of all his screenplays. Apart from their differences, both scripts reveal the influence of the adventure narrative on William Goldman's work and reflect the writer's interest in ironically revising some of the conventions of film genre.**

## Keywords
**William Goldman, screenwriting, authorship, adventure, irony, film genre.**

## 1. Introduction

William Goldman (Chicago, 1931) was one of the most productive writers in the Hollywood film industry from the 60s to the 90s. His screenplays, more than twenty in all, are characterized by honoring and sometimes ironically revising popular film genres, such as film noir (*Harper*, Jack Smight, 1966), war films (*A Bridge Too Far*, Richard Attenborough, 1977), thrillers (*Marathon Man*, John Schlesinger, 1976), horror films (*Misery*, Rob Reiner, 1990) or westerns (*Maverick*, Richard Donner, 1994). However, apart from the use of each genre convention, most of his screenplays involve adventure stories, as shown in some basic elements of their narrative pattern. This can be found in the two most personal screenplays of his career which were greatly acclaimed by film audiences and critics: the western *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (George Roy Hill, 1969) and the adventure/fantasy *The Princess Bride* (Rob Reiner, 1987).

This article analyzes both works, seemingly far apart, in order to reveal Goldman´s personal vision as a writer: a postmodern escapist attitude that runs throughout his filmography and that is projected, in these two screenplays, through a very distinct recourse to the adventure narrative pattern. Therefore, this article takes an artistic perspective: the scripts will be essentially considered as a product William Goldman's creative interests, and his complete works will act as

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic
in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

background, leaving aside auteur debates and its critical controversies (Price, 2010: 1-23). The methodology used is that of narrative analysis, both in a qualitative and interpretative sense. Consequently, this article will first focus on basic elements of the story (structure, characters and conflict) and, secondly, it will discuss other components of discourse and style, as genre conventions and ironic expressive qualities. Finally, these elements will be related to the world-view revealed in William Goldman's whole work.

William Goldman's work has not been studied in a detailed and comprehensive way until recently (Alfonso, 2008; Andersen, 1979), so his extensive production constitutes the fundamental bibliography in this research. Also, certain aspects of his production have been analyzed through the lens of screenwriting and literary theorists, especially those who have studied the adventure genre.

## 2. Script Background and Audience Reception

The script that would make Goldman one of the most acclaimed writers in Hollywood had its origins in the late fifties, when Goldman found the story of two train robbers called Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, who committed several robberies of Union Pacific trains in Wyoming in the early twentieth century. Later, they fled to Bolivia to escape their pursuers –hired by the owner of the Union Pacific Railroad– and it is believed they were shot dead by the Bolivian army (Pearl, 1961: 50-61). Based on the limited data available, Goldman wrote a very personal script on his own initiative, fascinated by the aura of romance and adventure that surrounded this story with a tragic ending: "For me it was always their story. These two guys, travelling together for years and decades over countries and continents finally going down, wildly outnumbered, in Bolivia. (...) I was moved when I first read about them, always will be" (Goldman, 1995a: 2).

As would become common in Goldman's writing career, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* was a script that defied classification and it baffled many studio analysts at that time. Despite being set in the Wild West, it was not a classic western. It combined action with comedy, featured a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, and its characters behaved like urban youngsters of the time; a transformation of the genre that Thomas Schatz (1981: 58) later considered as the results of two factors, the evolution of film expression and the progressive change of American society. The script was well promoted by Goldman´s agent, E. Ziegler, and the film *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* was released in 1969, directed by George Roy Hill and starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford. It was not only an immediate commercial success, but also one of the most acclaimed films of the decade[1].

This work was hailed as the film that heralded the beginning of a new film genre known as buddie movies, a genre linked both to action and comedy, featuring the friendship between two males as the major element of the film, extolling the virtues of male comradeship and relegating male-female relationships to a subsidiary position (Konigsberg, 1998: 41). *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* also occupies a very prominent place in the collection of films that paved the way for new approaches to the western genre during the sixties (Hart, 1969: 510). This so-called *New Western* –also defined as *dirty western* or *outlaws' western* (Beale, 1972: 24-30)– featured the transformation of the evil outlaw into an appealing protagonist, as in *Rio Bravo* (Howard Hawks, 1959), *The Magnificent Seven* (John Sturges, 1960), *El dorado* (Howard Hawks, 1966) or *The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1969). Due to its attention to aesthetics and its sense of fatalism, the film has also been considered as

---

[1] After an unusually competitive bidding process, the script was bought by Fox Studios. Goldman received $400,000 for the rights to the screenplay, an exorbitant amount in those days. This deal marked the beginning of a new stage in Hollywood filmmaking history in which film scripts would account for a major portion of filmmaking budgets (Brady, 1981: 85).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic
in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

belonging to the so-called *New Hollywood*, a stream of films that sought to innovate previous filmmaking, supposedly in response to a young, progressive audience (Cook, 1981: 874). So, this film is commonly associated with other films pertaining to various genres such as *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967), *Easy Rider* (Dennis Hoper, 1969), *The Graduate* (Mike Nichols, 1967) and *Midnight Cowboy* (John Schlesinger, 1969).

Many critics considered *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* a parody of the western genre, in much the same way that the novel *The Princess Bride*, published in 1973, was considered a parody of fairy tales and the adventure genre when it premiered in 1987. However, Goldman has repeatedly stated that he never wanted to write a parody, just a fairy tale for his daughters (Gehring, 1999: 83).

Following the success of *The Princess Bride*, Fox Studios purchased the novel's rights for half a million dollars and commissioned an adapted screenplay from Goldman. Richard Lester was one of the directors who were considered for the film, but some layoffs at Fox left the project on stand-by. Goldman subsequently bought the novel's rights back from the studio with his own money. "I think they were suspicious that I had a deal or some plan. I didn't. I just didn't want some idiot destroying what I had come to realize was the best thing I would ever write" (Goldman, 2000: 26).

The script of *The Princess Bride*, based on Goldman's original novel published in 1973, was released as a movie fourteen years later, in 1987, only when Goldman found a director devoted to the novel, in order to avoid losing artistic control over one of his most cherished works. It was Rob Reiner who finally earned Goldman's trust, giving rise to an endearing film that was well received at the box office and had a long run at the home video market, thus occupying a special place in the childhood memories of successive generations.

As *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *The Princess Bride* also had an incisive influence on its film genre. Its gentle irony made it one of the first films that offered a double reading –one for adults, one for kids–, ushering in a trend that in recent years has developed in many PG films, such as in Dreamworks' *Shrek* trilogy (2001-2007). With a then-unknown Robin Wright in the role of the princess, Cary Elwes as Westley and Mandy Patinkin as Íñigo Montoya, Rob Reiner stressed the irony in Goldman's script by casting late-night television stars in secondary roles –*Saturday Night Live*'s Billy Crystal and Christopher Guest, *Beyond the Fringe*'s Peter Cook and *Not the Nine O'Clock News'* Mel Smith– thus combining the romantic atmosphere of the story with a biting wink to adults (Rose, 1988: 42).

## 3. Two Adventure Screenplays: Plot beyond Film Genre

Both *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride* belong to the classical Hollywood narrative system: the screenplays have a formal unity, they have a beginning, a middle and a conclusion; they follow a sequential logic of cause and effect; characters are active and transparent, endings are closed; etc.[2] But, apart from belonging to this Aristotelian narrative tradition, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride* seem to have, at first glance, very few common features. They belong to different genres (western and romantic adventure), and they describe two opposing dramatic actions (an escape towards death with a tragic ending, and a lover's ransom with a happy ending). However, these screenplays have a fundamental common element in their narrative structure: they are both deeply rooted in the tradition of adventure fiction and narratively constructed as adventure plots.

---

[2] This is the Hollywood´s narrative style taught by the most prestigious screenwriting manuals, as in Seger, 2010, and McKee, 1999. The historical roots of this system are described in Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, 1985 (174-193) and Bordwell, 1997.

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

A plot can be understood as a purely narrative element, prior to genre, which refers to the organization of events, highlighting elements and marginalizing others, in order to provide the story with direction and unity. The adventure plot has contained three main features throughout western narrative history: the exploration of an exotic environment, an episodic structure, and a physical conflict (Green, 1991; Taves, 1993; Pérez Bastías, 2001; Sánchez-Escalonilla, 2002).

The exploration of an exotic environment with a strongly marked physiognomy is the core of the adventure narrative, since the plot focuses on the events that occur throughout a long journey. Specifically, the oldest source for adventure plots, the Greek epic poem *Jason and the Argonauts* (contained in the *Theogony of Hesiod*, written in the VII-VIIIth centuries B.C.) revolves around a treacherous journey in search of the Golden Fleece. This narrative tradition is also found in later sources such as the Byzantine or Greek-Roman novel from the III-IV centuries A.D. The young lovers Theagenes and Cariclea, protagonists of *The Aethiopica* of Heliodorus, considered by Jean-Yves Tadié (1996: 19) one of the fundamental works of the adventure genre, must confront all types of conflict in the form of storms, caves and prisons to safeguard their true love.

A connection can easily be found between the two main characters in *The Princess Bride* and *The Ethiopian*, both consisting of a courageous young man and a woman of extraordinary beauty, whose love affair transforms all the obstacles they encounter in their journey into adventure. In *Butch Cassidy the Sundance Kid* the journey through the State of Wyoming and South America is also the central event. They initially escape from a *superposse* who is pursing them and their subsequent search of treasure leads them to the promised land of armed robberies: "When I say Bolivia, you think California", Butch tells Sundance, "because they're falling into it down there - silver mines, tin, gold; payrolls so big we'd strain our backs stealing 'em" (Goldman, 1995a: 21).

The journey as the central element provides the adventure plot with an episodic structure, as each event is often linked to a distinct geographic location. In the case of *The Princess Bride*, every episode takes place in a specific location in the Kingdom of Florin (the Cliffs of Insanity, the Fire Swamp or the Forest of Thieves) and the exploration of these locations plays an essential role in the adventurous experience of the sick boy who hears the story of Westley and Buttercup from his grandfather. So, the breakdown of the plot into separate acts and the relevance of the main plot take on a secondary role. Consequently, rather than following the events described in the film, most of the audience's attention is drawn to the unique situations that the characters confront. The "bicycle dance" of Butch and Etta, the Union Pacific's explosion that spews the money through the air, the sword fight between the Man in Black and Íñigo Montoya – these are the episodes that are the most likely to be remembered by the viewer, rather than the central plot of the story.

In addition to the importance of the journey and its episodic structure, the adventure story is constructed around a physical conflict or goal, which usually contains patterns of search, escape or revenge (Balló & Pérez, 1998: 19). These are present in both screenplays: the search and rescue of Buttercup in *The Princess Bride* (there is a revenge subplot with the character of Íñigo Montoya, too), and the escape from the *superposse* by Butch and Sundance. Therefore, physical action prevails over character development in both scripts, since the characters' personal feelings tend to remain in the background.

## 4. The Charming Character as a Goldmanian Archetype: The Influence of Romantic and Adventure Hollywood Comedy

In addition to containing certain aspects of the adventure narrative tradition, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride* offer personal features of Goldman's scriptwriting that are harmoniously integrated into the type of plot described above: these

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

are characterization, conflict, and irony. The prototype film character that appears in much of Goldman's work will be discussed first.

The character can be the backbone of a filmmaker's style –its unifying element (Sangro & Huerta, 2007: 12)– and William Goldman's work features a typical film character that appears in many of his films: that of an attractive young man, usually around thirty, with an outgoing and optimistic temperament, whose charming smile shields him from any type of conflict.

With his first original film character, the outlaw Butch Cassidy, Goldman created a spontaneous, witty and playful personality with a craving for risk and adventure that served as the model for other major film characters throughout his writing career. It is the same type of personality that was used for the aviator Waldo of *The Great Waldo Pepper*, pirate Blackbeard in the unproduced script *The Sea Kings* (Goldman, 1978a), the adventurer Oliver Plexico of *The Year of the Comet*, poker player Maverick in the script of the same title and, with certain particularities, in the characters of the Man in Black/Westley and Íñigo Montoya in *The Princess Bride*. This type of characterization is one of the most distinctive and personal aspects of William Goldman's work.

With their sanguine temperament (Sánchez-Escalonilla, 2014: 334–338), Goldman's main film characters have an extraordinary appeal and are born leaders. They have complete confidence in themselves and their intuition and they often draw up new plans of action, since they are interested in the outside world as a source of future projects. As Butch Cassidy repeatedly claims, "I've got vision and the rest of the world wears bifocals!" (Goldman, 1995a: 21).

Goldman's main character firmly believes that ingenuity is more important than physical strength and he never confronts conflicts directly or violently. On the contrary, and thanks to his skill with words and his playfulness, he makes difficult situations appear less dramatic and uses his social skills to resolve conflicts, just as Butch Cassidy does when confronted by Harvey Logan, another member of his band. Similarly, Westley convinces Íñigo and Fezzik to take part in a clever ploy to break into the castle without using any violence against the guards, and he gets Prince Humperdinck to surrender with the use of his wit.

Created in accordance with the exotic and playful worlds they inhabit, Goldman's characters do not undergo any type of personal transformation during the story. Therefore, their appeal does not depend on the audience's ability to personally identify with the film characters, as is the case of dramatic characters. Íñigo Montoya or Butch Cassidy catch the audience's interest because their wit and vitality are delightful to watch. The viewer adopts an attitude of complacency towards them, which is the type of audience reaction normally associated with comic or unreal characters (Seger, 1990).

The vitality and wit of Butch and Sundance, Westley and Iñigo Montoya –as shown in their sophisticated verbal swordplay–, have much in common with the characters of Hollywood's classic adventure comedy (Saada, 1988: 42), as the swordsmen films of Michael Curtiz and Errol Flynn, like *Captain Blood* (Michael Curtiz, 1935) or *Robin Hood* (Michael Curtiz, William Keighley, 1938). William Goldman's unique use of language, as the characters' basic source of cheerfulness and playfulness, is very similar to the type of language used in *screwball* romantic comedy (Echart, 2005; Gehring, 1986; Cavell, 1981). It makes little difference that Goldman's characters are Wild West outlaws, pirates, or fairy tales' princesses: their language exudes intelligence, refinement and cheerfulness, and produces aesthetic delight by itself, regardless of the events narrated in the film (Kozloff, 2000: 51-60).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

## 5. The Search for the Extraordinary: The Deep Conflict in William Goldman's Characters

After discussing the type of film character that appears in much of Goldman's work, we will describe another unique aspect of Goldman's writing that involves the use of conflict in the traditional adventure plot.

As scripts included in the classic narrative system, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride* are built around a major conflict that determines the kind of plot driving the entire story. We understand that conflict is an element intimately related to plot, since the character´s confrontation to a problematic situation (a matter than can be physical or psychological) must achieve, in order to be dramatic, a resolution; thus developing the events of a story through a beginning, a middle and an end[3]. As stated above, the conflict in the adventure plot tends to be of a physical nature: Butch and Sundance's conflict is the flight from the *superposse*, whereas Westley's physical conflict is the princess' rescue.

But we may also mention a deeper conflict –of a personal or a spiritual nature– closely related to the characters' motivation, and here is where an author tends to express himself. According to García-Noblejas (1998: 54), the main conflict involving the film characters –the goals they pursue– is always described through the story in terms of happiness.

Following this approach, Butch and Sundance's deepest desire is to continue with their life as outlaws, but they do not have material or practical ambitions. They hold up trains and banks for fun rather than for the money they get, as is exemplified in the second assault of the Union Pacific train, when they break out laughing at the sight of their loot spewed across the sky after the massive explosion in the mail coach. In their world there is no place for holding a routine job, having a family or paying taxes; i.e., the normal aspects of everyday life. Etta Place also looks upon ordinary life as a form of repression and a source of frustration, and so decides to flee with them to New York and then to Bolivia: "I'm twenty-six," she tells them, "and I'm single, and I teach school, and that's the bottom of the pit. And the only excitement I've ever known is here with me now. So I'll go with you" (Goldman, 1995a: 89).

In short, the main and deep conflict in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* –the characters' goal inserted into the main plot– is the search for adventure or the pursuit of the playful side of life, so the element that the story presents in terms of happiness is the pursuit of the extraordinary. Actually, considering William Goldman's film work as a whole, his main characters tend to live far away from the usual or the ordinary: they are Wild West outlaws (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*), acrobatic pilots (*The Great Waldo Pepper*), jewel thieves (*The Hot Rock*), spies (*Marathon Man*), private detectives (*Harper*), princesses and swordsmen (*The Princess Bride*), pirates (*The Sea Kings*), hunters (*The Ghost and the Darkness*) and professional poker players (*Maverick*). Consequently, these extraordinary characters crave an extraordinary lifestyle. They are all searching for something, either because of their youth or the normal youthful craving for adventure and new experiences, even if they are no longer in their twenties (Alfonso, 2008: 198-203). And even though this inspires positive values like vitality and optimism, it likewise reveals a pessimistic view of ordinary life and its responsibilities.

The deep conflict of the characters in *The Princess Bride* is very similar in nature. Even though Westley and Buttercup are looking for true love, what the protagonists of the story really want –the grandfather and grandson, and the audience that they embody– is precisely the enjoyment of idealistic adventure fiction, because of its contrast with the real, tragic

---

[3] Conflict is a central issue in classical screenwriting, and all definition attempts revolve around the concepts of struggle, confrontation, problem, obstacle, stress, combat, conflict, tension, contradiction, opposition, or dispute (Lance, 2001; Bordwell, 2008; Seger, 2010).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

world. To fully understand this, it is necessary go to back briefly to the original material on which the script is based; i.e., William Goldman´s novel *The Princess Bride*.

The novel is presented as a compilation of an ancient book that Goldman's father read to him as a boy, supposedly written by one S. Morgenstern. Thus, a false Bill Goldman –who mixes real and fictional data about himself– constantly interrupts the story of Westley and Buttercup, by commenting on the emotional impact that certain scenes had on him as a child, and what he has learned since then.

Thus, the novel *The Princess Bride* is close to Northrop Frye's ironic mythos (2006: 332), which applies a realistic focus to fantasy and creates a liminal space between fiction and reality. It is also a meta-fantastic narration, a concept defined by George Aichele (1997: 498-514; 1998: 55-68) as fairy tales about fairy tales. Aichele states that meta-fantasy can work in two ways. First, the characters can be self-conscious to the point of commenting on their roles in the story and its meaning, as in the novel *The Last Unicorn* by Peter Beagle, published in 1968. Second, meta-fantasy can use a story as a framework, allowing the reader to see the text as artifice. This is precisely the case of *The Princess Bride*.

Much of the ironic tone of the novel lies exactly in these fictional Bill Goldman comments, which presents the wonderful love story of Buttercup and Westley as a painful contrast to his disappointing marriage. In the film adaptation, this fictional Goldman has been split into two new characters: an unnamed grandfather reading S. Morgenstern's *The Princess Bride* to his sick grandson. This way, Goldman's candid view of the story is taken up by the child, and his adult experience is taken up by the grandfather, who repeats the sentence that made a big emotional impact on Goldman as a child: "Well, who says life is fair? Where is that written? Life isn't always fair" (Goldman, 1995a: 339). So even though the script preserves the novel's metafiction and the adult view of a fairy tale, the bitterness of William Goldman's voice has been diluted and the bitter irony has been transformed into an amiable one.

## 6. Conflict Resolution: Catastrophe and Innocence

The main conflict marks the beginning and the end of a story. In the beginning, it starts the action by providing the catalyst, and in the end it concludes the causal sequentiality with a *climax* –the height of dramatic tension–, in which the conflict is favourably resolved –the character gets what he wants– or unfavourably –the character fails– (McKee, 1999: 42, 220-22, 309-12). Frank Kermode (1983: 61) states that "an ending provides duration and meaning to the whole," so it is the essentially revealing aspect of a story's meaning.

*The Princess Bride* and *Butch Cassidy...* have a similar main conflict, but according to the genres they pertain to, they end with opposite resolutions: the fairy tale ends with a favourable resolution of the characters' hopes (Buttercup is rescued by her true love, and the grandfather achieves the goal of converting his skeptical grandson to his romantic credo), but the *new western*'s characters find a tragic ending in a world that does not meet their romantic expectations.

Northrop Frye (2006: 150), within his controversial theory of myths, considers this traditional distinction between "happy ending" and "tragic ending" as two fundamental parallel movements in the narrative field and associates them with the world of "romance" and innocence, and the world of "realism" and experience, respectively: "The downward movement is the tragic movement, the wheel of fortune falling from innocence toward *hamartia*, and from *hamartia* to catastrophe. The upward movement is the comic movement,

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

from threatening complications to a happy ending and a general assumption of post-dated innocence in which everyone lives happily ever after"[4].

From this perspective, the screenplay of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* traces a narrative movement from innocence to catastrophe. The characters believe they live in an ideal world, where there are no rules and in which they feel invulnerable. Butch and Sundance's desire to continue as outlaws is eventually resolved in an overwhelmingly unfavourable way, as an inevitable consequence of the lifestyle they have chosen. Thus, the rules that dominate the movements of Butch and Sundance, according to Frye's "downwards" model, are inevitable and they are based on an realistic world: the outlaws of a wild west that is about to disappear are punished by an increasingly perfect law, and the action seems to be driven by implacable destiny: as sheriff Bledsoe tells them, "You just want to hide out till it's old times again, but it's over. It's over, don't you get that? It's over and you're both gonna die bloody, and all you can do is choose where" (Goldman, 1995a: 69).

In contrast to *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, the rules that govern the world of *The Princess Bride* are the ideal rules of a fictional world in which the main conflict resolution is favourable, making a move "upwards", from the threat of tragic consequences to a state of happiness: after overcoming their enemies, lovers Westley and Buttercup run away together.

We must emphasize that in the favourable resolution of this conflict, chance plays a crucial role, since the story is full of happy coincidences and chance encounters, but they work because the whole story of *The Princess Bride* is precisely a tribute to the arbitrary conventions of fairy tales, that even uses a *deus ex machina*[5] as a comic resort after Westley's tragic death: Íñigo and Fezzik carry Westley's corpse to a sorcerer named Miracle Max, who gives him a "resurrection pill" after stating that Westley is "mostly dead only" (Goldman, 1995a: 258).

In short, Goldman respects the usual conflict resolutions in both genres. *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* preserves the major role of fate in westerns, whereas *The Princess Bride* enhances the usual happy ending of fairy tales and adventure films.

## 7. Irony and Film Genre Conventions

Irony is one of the major elements of Goldman's authorship. He takes this ironic detachment from his scripts by playing with film genre conventions, either to exalt them (thus making them into a parody, since it is an imitative irony), or to transform or subvert them, where he expresses himself by marking the distance between the expected film genre conventions and the new turns in the plots that he develops as an author[6]. Sometimes

---

[4] Thomas Pavel (2005: 35-38), in his very personal history of the novel, makes a similar categorization: Pavel believes that happy endings are part of the pre-modern or idealistic novel's tradition, in which the world reacts favourably to the ideals pursued by the protagonists; and that the tragic ending belongs to the modern or realistic novel, where the story involves a protagonist whose idealism is unfavourably received by the world around him. Specifically, Pavel provides a useful example of this by referring to *Don Quixote*, which he considers the first modern novel. It should be noted that Pavel partially supports this categorization in regard to certain statements made by Georg Lukács in his *Theory of the Novel* (1929), where Lukács refers to the "character inside the world" of an epic and the "character outside the world" of a novel.

[5] The *deus ex machina* is the contrived and unconvincing resolution of a dramatic knot, a twist that seems unlikely, an effect without a cause. Ultimately, it is the narrator's miraculous intervention to resolve a matter in an absurd way (Sánchez-Escalonilla, 2014: 83-84).

[6] This issue adjoins the academic discussion on film genre theory and the *auteur* theory. Academics have traditionally held that the connection between generic convention and the author's voice can work in two different ways: cohesion or tension. This link between film genre and the *auteur* theory has existed for a long time (*cf.* Gledhill, 1985: 58; Neale, 2000: 11).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

Goldman tends to exalt film genre conventions so much that he highlights the fictional status of the story, thus entering the realm of meta-fiction.

Therefore, even though film criticism has treated Goldman's work as a parody, here it will be considered as ironic, in the sense that his work tends to take a detached look at itself (Booth, 1994; Hutcheon, 1994). Northrop Frye (2006: 208-223) points out that irony can have comical purposes –as happens with satire– or tragic, and it is in this purpose of irony where the touchstone of the author's vision can be found. This kind of irony, which is present in varying degrees in many of Goldman's works, is evident in *The Princess Bride* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and as we shall see, it is not exactly tragic, but melancholic, since it points to a disappointing real world and a celebration of fiction as a necessary refuge.

In *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, Goldman reveals a number of elements that stand in stark contrast to the classic Fordian western. For instance, Goldman transforms the usual glorification of marriage into an ambiguous love triangle, or mocks the myth of civic commitment featured in westerns by portraying noncommittal local citizens who ignore the requests of a concerned marshal to form a posse to go after Butch and Sundance.

But the main subversion of the Western genre performed by Goldman is to portray a Wild West where fun and play can be found, rather than conquest. Goldman achieves this through the characterization of the main characters. Butch and Sundance live in a happy state of regression, with a permanent craving for play and remaining in a permanent state of childhood by embracing the Peter Pan complex, in the words of popular psychology (Kiley, 1983). For instance, willingly or unconsciously ignoring the possible consequences of their actions, Butch and Sundance construct their own dream world, a world which is much more appealing than the real one. Therefore, these characters have not only an escapist attitude towards the ordinary dimension of life, but also towards personal responsibility, towards laws that hold human beings legally responsible for their actions.

The characteristic spontaneity of Butch and Sundance, their moral ambiguity, their ability to survive on their own resources and their sense of invulnerability, are traits that remind us of picaresque literature. The conman archetype[7], embodied by the XVIth century Spanish literary character of Lazarillo de Tormes (Gómez Yebra, 1988), is a patently individualistic character, still in his early years, immersed in continuous flight, uprooted from his family and avoiding direct confrontation. Instead, he decides that cunningness and improvisation are the best ways to achieve his usually lucrative goals, as shown in XIXth century English characters of Dickens' Oliver Twist or Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. This type of child character who tends to evade social, psychological and moral problems, is also recurrent in English literature during the XXth century, as in Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (Locke, 2011).

Following this kind of characterization, Butch and Sundance are adventurers who live for fun and play. They are not virtuous, but hedonists. Uprooted from their community, their ambitions have no public commitments, such as the hero's sense of social responsibility, whose goal is to "protect and serve" a community of people or someone in particular[8]. Instead, these conmen´s projects are designed for personal gain only and are of a playful nature: the conmen aspire to lead comfortable lives, even behaving as outlaws if necessary. Thus, Butch and Sundance are certainly a far cry from the courageous film

---

[7] By archetype we mean any element of a literary work (in this case a character) that is repeated enough in literature or films so as to be recognizable as an element of our narrative experience (*cf*. Frye, 2006: 331).

[8] Heroism has had different meanings throughout history and it has been presented in diverse narrative forms. We use the term here in accordance with the Greco-Christian Western tradition (Lasso de la Vega, 1962: 88). This is the way heroism is commonly used in film language: a "hero" is the virtuous character who makes personal sacrifices in order to "protect and serve" (Sánchez-Escalonilla, 2002: 18).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

character who abides by a set of moral principles and bravely faces his opponents, and they are ultimately complete opposites to the heroic archetype, which is normally found in classic westerns (Fenin and Everson, 1973). When Goldman includes a heroic character in his scripts, he does so ironically. A good example of this is the scene where a concerned marshal tries to organize a posse composed of local citizens to capture Butch and Sundance, only to discover that a bicycle salesman has easily "stolen" the attention of his audience.

But despite this break with genre conventions, William Goldman has preserved the convention that outlaws will ultimately be punished for their crimes, which is characteristic of classic westerns. However, William Goldman´s concept of law enforcement is very different from that of John Ford's and similar to that of Sergio Leone or Sam Peckinpah. Classic westerns emphasize the need to establish justice and order in a lawless territory and the importance of the law in achieving the noble goals of justice. However, in Butch´s and Sundance´s world justice does not exist; rather it is the strongest who impose their rules, as reflected in the unequal battle between the two American outlaws and a Bolivian army consisting of a hundred men.

The concept of death is also similar to that of the New Western. Although Leone's and Peckinpah's films are very different from those of Goldman in their exaltation of violence, in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* death becomes also an implacable element which is foretold at the beginning of the story and it points to the tragic end of these film characters, who belong more to picaresque literature than to the western genre. The opposite was true of classic Western epics, where the moral aspect of human actions was stressed and death was presented as something not only possible but likely. In classic Westerns death also inspired hope as it was considered an honorable sacrifice intended to achieve a greater good[9].

In the case of *The Princess Bride*, the script is full of details that contrast with the genre conventions of adventure films and fairy tales. Thus, in contrast to the nineteenth-century fairytale, Goldman presents a beautiful girl who wants to be rescued from her wedding to the Prince by a fearsome pirate, or a gentle giant who fights for charitable purposes, or a witch who happens to be the voice of truth.

Also, Goldman plays back genre conventions to exalt them romantically –this is what Wes Gehring (1999: 2-4) called reafirmative parody– highlighting, for instance, the supernatural element of fairy tales, either in the form of wizards such as Miracle Max and fabulous creatures such as the screaming eels or the ironic R.O.U.S (Rodents of Unusual Size). Goldman also clearly refers to classic Hollywood adventure films, as in the chivalrous swordfight between the Man in Black and Íñigo Montoya.

The fundamental element, which Goldman respects and exalts in *The Princess Bride*, is the positive link between love and death: Goldman seems to emphasize that love is the only thing that can challenge death and overcome it; an idealism typical of fairy tales or knightly deeds that Goldman leaves intact. The same goes for the characterization of Westley, who is the only true genuine hero in an all of Goldman's work. But Goldman consciously inserts him in a fairy tale; and not a common fairy tale, but one which is explicitly presented as literary fiction.

Goldman goes further in *The Princess Bride*. Since both the novel and the screenplay are a story within a story –thus entering the realm of metafiction– Goldman presents genre conventions and the rules governing fictional universes in sharp contrast with the real world. This narrative approach of Goldman leads him to make use of genre conventions

---

[9] Ruth Gutierrez (2006) states that after the genre transformation "westerns were no longer epic in nature but they were transformed into a melodramatic and tragic genre. (...) A different story is told: a story of frustration. (...) Westerns, in the traditional sense, originated and came to an end with John Ford".

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride*

without becoming implausible. For example, this enables Westley to be "resurrected" thanks to the sudden appearance of Miracle Max; or a wounded Íñigo Montoya to recover with the force of his famous phrase "My name is Íñigo Montoya, you killed my father, prepare to die" (Goldman, 1995a: 376); or false suspense to be created with Buttercup's improbable death when being attacked by the screaming eels; or the viewer to be deceived –with the scenes of the child listening to the story– about Buttercup's nightmare regarding her wedding to Humperdinck, which is initially portrayed as a real event.

This ironic detachment, achieved by enhancing the narrative conventions of the fairy tale and its fictional status, gives the viewer the impression that heroism and "true love" – and those magical coincidences that enable all potential obstacles, including death, to be overcome– are only possible, unfortunately, in a context of pure fiction. Therefore, *The Princess Bride* becomes what Northrop Frye (2006, 332) called *ironic mythos:* a kind of narrative which portrays an idealized world in contrast to reality, usually taking the form of a parody or a similar narrative form.

## 8. Conclusion: Playful Escapism as an Answer to Goldman's Melancholy

With his entertaining and delightful universe, William Goldman's scripts may not seem to confront serious issues in any depth. However, as García-Noblejas (2006: 75-90) points out, there are films that under the guise of a purely delightful "first navigating" conceal an inconvenient "second navigating", where much more is offered than what seemed possible at first glance[10]. Their background is far more disturbing than expected, or less appealing or favourable than their outward appearance. This is the case of these two William Goldman scripts.

By inserting characters in search of fun in a film genre that tends to be of a solemn nature, as in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and highlighting the fictional status of *The Princess Bride*'s universe, William Goldman exalts the human need to play and to enjoy fiction. He provides an ode to the playful dimension of life. However, Goldman also raises a profound human issue: the distance between idealistic human expectations and harsh reality, something closely related to the topic of the existence of pain[11]. Thus, in *The Princess Bride* Goldman becomes ironically detached from its narrative devices, contrasting the idealism of fiction with a discouraging real world; or, in Frye's words (2006: 334), "the world of romance with the world of experience". In *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, the film characters find refuge in a dream-like attitude towards a world of pain, as can be seen in the final page of the script, just before their imminent death. We can conclude, therefore, that the sensitivity revealed by these two scripts, their worldview or *weltanschauung*, is a playful escapism that denotes a pessimistic view of life[12].

---

[10] Following Paul Ricoeur, García-Noblejas (1982: 465-472) indicates that viewer experiences two different things when watching a film: the first experience (first navigating) involves an intellectual *comprehension* of the work, while the second experience (second navigating) is the *application* of the film's message to the viewer's personal life. This is the concept of *poetic reception*.

[11] Thomas Pavel (2005: 42) claims that the eternal issue in literature (or film, which is what concerns us here) is whether an individual can inhabit the world where he was born and whether his aspirations for happiness can be fulfilled in this world.

[12] We take the known term *weltanschauung* from the German philosopher and historian Wilhelm Dilthey (1899-1911). By worldview or *weltanschauung*, Dilthey referred to a global perspective of life that encompasses everything that an individual knows about the world, how he emotionally evaluates it and how he willingly responds to it. This worldview can accommodate features of various currents of thought, but this is essentially a sensitivity and is therefore essentially eclectic (*The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 1995). In this paper, the term *weltanschauung* refers to the vital attitude (the interpretation of the state of humanity in the world) which is present *in the work* of William Goldman; i.e, its *poetic worldview*, conceived as the vision of life embodied in the actions portrayed in his work. Ultimately, we have chosen to use the term of *worldview* because we believe it is the most appropriate perspective from which to study *the entire work* of an author, since it transcends both the work in itself (the

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic
in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

Both Butch/Sundance and Grandfather/Kid resort to escapism, although they follow different routes and the consequences of their actions are completely different. In the first case, Butch and Sundance have their playful evasion in a childish way by robbing trains. Since their desire for escapism is permanent –but play, by its nature, must be limited in time (Pieper, 2006)– their story ends tragically. On the contrary, the grandfather and kid who enjoy the tale of Westley and Buttercup withdraw only temporarily from reality through their enjoyment of fiction, and this escapism forces them to return with renewed energy to real life. The child returns to its prosaic reality after having certainly been transformed, having discovered the thrill of an adventure story, without feeling uncomfortable when true love is mentioned, and asking his grandfather to return the next day to read *The Princess Bride* again. It should be noted, however, that this favourable view of escapism did not appear in the original material on which the script is based, since the novel is much more bitter and pessimistic and more in tune with the rest of William Goldman's work.

Escapism, defined as the attitude of fleeing from reality through play or fantasy, seems to appear constantly in the work of William Goldman. His novel's characters, foreshadowed in his non-published short stories, reveal an escapist attitude of reality, whether they are young people who live in a world that they don´t comprehend or adults overwhelmed by their family responsibilities (Alfonso, 2008: 16-30). Raymond Trevitt, the alienated protagonist of Goldman´s first novel, *The Temple of Gold* (1957), attempts to escape from a hostile world through extreme experiences and ultimately through a geographical escape. Similarly, the characters Peter Bell of the novel *Your Turn to Curtsy, My Turn to Bow* (1958), Eustis Clay of *Soldier in the Rain* (1960) and *Walt of Boys and Girls Together* (1964) daydream to withstand their unbearable daily living; such as the alienated Babe Levy of *Marathon Man* (1974) -a novel that would be adapted to film- that is using his training as a marathon runner to escape from his painful memories. In the novels *The Thing of It Is...* (1967) and its sequel, *Father´s Day* (1971), Goldman deals with marriage dissatisfaction recurring to escape: Amos McCracken flees from his depressing daily life by resorting to fantasies so powerful that the reader of the novel confuses them with the character´s reality. In the novel *The Princess Bride* (1973), this escapist character is precisely the false Bill Goldman, who attempts to fly away from his unsatisfying family life first through an attempted affair, and soon after trough the reading of a fairy tale.

This escapist attitude of Goldman´s fiction characters continues in his most personal film work. In *The Great Waldo Pepper* (George Roy Hill, 1975), characters decide to confront a world that is contrary to their desires by taking shelter in thrilling activities such as performing dangerous aerial acrobatic stunts. In the unproduced script *The Sea Kings* and the film *The Year of the Comet* (Peter Yates, 1992), the protagonists want to escape from their daily occupation -the responsibilities of a plantation in the Caribbean and a tedious job in a London wine cellar- in order to live the adventures of a pirate or a prospector of enological rarities.

As we can see, Goldman´s characters, both in film and fiction, confront a society that is intrusive and curtails their desire for freedom, and they decide to escape from it through mischief, fun, play or mental evasion.

This attitude of taking refuge in play or adventure fiction to confront a painful world has been present in fiction since the beginning of modern literature (it is a central issue in

---

worldview can be expressed more or less explicitly in each work) and the meaning of the text (since it can refer to philosophical or anthropological issues). Finally, we believe that the thematic perspective is the most appropriate approach for studying individual works, and we thus avoid the theoretical problems underlying this notion (Pavel, Bremond & Landy, 1995: 1-9).

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic
in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

Don Quixote). More recently, the philosopher Alejandro Llano (1989: 93, 98, 116) also found traces of a cultural and artistic environment that opted for nostalgia, in both a restorative and crepuscular nature, and he called it *the new sensibility*, a sensibility that he branded as postmodern. Llano distinguishes *postmodernism* –a word, as he admits, that has been used *ad nauseam* in the cultural debates of the late twentieth century– from *late modernism*, an extension of the modern process in its permanent critical attitude, its belief in progress and its desire to transform the world. The postmodern sensibility, by contrast, would be a yearning for the primary and endearing things and a desire to return home after having developed, among other things, a taste for fairy tales and mythical narratives. Film is one of the cultural fields in which this sensitivity would be expressed, since film plays a social role through what it "reveals but does not display (...). It is the basic attitude of a nation, a historical period, a class, a religious or philosophical creed: all this subconsciously picked up by a personality and condensed into a work" (Panofsky, 2000: 121).

In conclusion, William Goldman's escapism approaches this kind of postmodern melancholy. By exalting the need for playfulness and candor in children's fiction, Goldman seems to embody a sense of nostalgia for a lost childhood which was lost forever. So says old Ted Brautigan in one of Goldman's last scripts, *Hearts in Atlantis*, watching the children playing on the porch of his house: "Sometimes when you're young, you have moments of such happiness, you think you're living in some place magical, like Atlantis must have been. Then we grow up and our hearts break in two" (Hicks, 2001).

## References

Aichele, G. (1997). Postmodern Fantasy, Ideology, and the Uncanny. *Paradoxa 3*(3-4), 498-514.

_(1988). Two Forms of Meta-Fantasy. *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts 1*(3),55-68.

Alfonso, E. (2008). *William Goldman: guionista y autor* [doctoral thesis]. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, Facultad de Comunicación.

Andersen, R. (1979). *William Goldman*. Boston: Twayne.

Balló, J. and Pérez, X. (1998). *La semilla inmortal. Los argumentos universales en el cine*. Barcelona: Anagrama.

Beale, L. (1972). The American Way West. *Films and Filming 18*(7), August.

Booth, W. (1994). *A Rhetoric of Irony*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bordwell, D., Staiger, J. & Thompson, K. (1985). *The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bordwell, D. (1997). *On the history of film style*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

_(2008). *Poetics of Cinema*. New York: Routledge.

Brady, J. (1981). *The Craft of the Screenwriter. Interviews with Six Celebrated Screenwriters*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

*Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, The* (1995). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cavell, S. (1981). *Pursuits of Happiness. The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Cook, D. (1981). *A History of Narrative Film*. New York: Norton.

Echart, P. (2005). *La comedia romántica del Hollywood de los años 30 y 40*. Madrid: Cátedra.

Fenin, G. and Everson, W. (1973). *The Western*. New York: Grossman.

Frye, N. (2006). *Anatomy of Criticism. Four Essays*. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press.

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

García-Noblejas, J. J. (1982). *Poética del texto audiovisual. Introducción al discurso narrativo de la imagen*. Pamplona: Eunsa.

_(1998). Fundamentos para una iconología audiovisual. *Comunicación y Sociedad 1*(1), 21-71.

_(2006). La identidad temática en Hero, un hermoso y extraño cuento chino. In M. Frago, A. Martínez & E. Cuevas (Eds.) *Personaje, acción e identidad en cine y literatura*. Madrid: Eiunsa.

Gehring, W. D. (1986). *Screwball Comedy: A Genre of Madcap Romance*. New York: Greenwood Press.

_(1999). *Parody as Film Genre*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Gledhill, C. (1985). History of Genre Criticism. In P. Cook (Ed.) *The Cinema Book*. London: British Film Institute.

Goldman, W. (2001a). *The Temple of Gold*. New York: Ballantine Books (First ed. 1957. New York: Alfred A. Knopf).

_(2001b). *Boys and Girls Together*. New York: Ballantine Books (First ed. 1964. New York: Atheneum Publishers).

_ (2001c). *Marathon Man*. New York: Ballantine Books (First ed. 1976. New York: Delacorte Press). (1958). Your Turn to Curtsy, My Turn to Bow. New York: Doubleday & Company.

_(2000). *Which lie did I tell? More adventures in the Screen Trade*. London: Bloomsbury.

_(1995a). *Four Screenplays*. New York: Applause.

_(1995b). *Five Screenplays*. New York: Applause.

_(1978a). *The Year of the Comet*. First draft. William Goldman Archives. Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. University of Columbia, New York.

_(1978b). *The Sea Kings*. First draft. William Goldman Archives. Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. University of Columbia, New York.

_(1973). *The Princess Bride*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

_(1971). *Father´s Day*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

_(1967). *The Thing of It Is...* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

_(1960). *Soldier in the Rain*. New York: Atheneum Publishers.

Gómez Yebra, A. (1988). *El niño-pícaro literario de los siglos de oro*. Barcelona: Anthropos.

Green, M. B. (1991). *Seven Types of Adventure Tale: An Etiology of a Major Genre*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Gutiérrez, R. (2006). Ecos de la épica heroica en el cine. *Nueva Revista*, n. 106.

Hart, H. (Oct 1969). Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. *Films in Review 20*(8).

Hicks, S. (Director) (2001). *Hearts in Atlantis* [Video]. Los Angeles: Warner Home Video.

Hutcheon, L. (1994). *Irony's Edge. The Theory and Politics of Irony*. London: Routledge.

Kermode, F. (1983). *El sentido de un final*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Kiley, D. (1983). *The Peter Pan Syndrome: Men Who Have Never Grown Up*. Chicago: Dodd Mead.

Konigsberg, I. (1998). *The Complete Film Dictionary*. New York: Penguin.

Kozloff, S. (2000). *Overhearing Film Dialogue*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lance, L. (2001). *A Poetics for Screenwriters*. Austin: The University of Texas Press.

Lasso de la Vega, J. S. (1962). *Héroe griego y santo cristiano*. La Laguna: Universidad de La Laguna..

Llano, A. (1989). *La nueva sensibilidad*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe.

Locke, R. (2011). *Critical children: the use of childhood in ten great novels*. New York: Columbia University Press.

McKee, R. (1999). *Story. Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York: Reganbooks.

Neale, S. (2000). *Genre and Hollywood*. London: Routledge.

Panofsky, E. (2000). *Sobre el estilo. Tres ensayos inéditos*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Pavel, T. (2005). *Representar la existencia*. Barcelona: Crítica.

Alfonso, E. & Frago, M.
**The Adventure screenplay in William Golding: the playful and the ironic**
**in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Princess Bride***

Pavel, T., Bremond, C., Landy, J. (eds.). *Thematics: New Aproaches*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Pearl, J. (May 1961). "The Sundance Kid". Climax. William Goldman's personal clipping. William Goldman Archives. Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. Columbia University, New York.

Pérez Bastías, L. (2001). *El cine de aventuras*. Madrid: Ediciones Internacionales Universitarias.

Pieper, J. (2006). *Una teoría de la fiesta*. Madrid: Rialp.

Price, S. (2010). *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rose, S. (1998). The Princess Bride. *Films in Review 39*, January.

Saada, N. (1988). Dis, Grandpa, raconte-moi une histoire. *Cahiers du Cinéma 405*, March.

Sánchez-Escalonilla, A. (2014). *Estrategias de guión cinematográfico*. Barcelona: Ariel.

_(2002). *Guión de aventura y forja del héroe*. Barcelona: Ariel.

Sangro Colón, P. y Huerta Floriano, M. A. (2007). *El personaje en el cine*. Madrid: Calamar.

Seger, L. (2010). *Making a Good Script Great*. Beverly Hills: Silman-James Press (Third Ed). First edition: Dodd Mead, 1988.

_(1990). *Creating unforgettable characters*. New York: H. Holt.

Schatz, T. (1981). *Hollywood Genres*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tadié, J.Y. (1996). *Le roman d'aventures*. Paris: Quadrige/PUF.

Taves, B. (1993). *The Romance of Adventure: The Genre of Historical Adventure Movies*. Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi.