What is Good Design?

On the problem of stereotypes and innovation in character design as reflected through the mentor archetype

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Abstract

This thesis aims to analyze the conventions of Character Design, and how one may innovate without losing visual communication. Focus is put on discussing stereotypical patterns as an inescapable but potentially harmful aspect of human behavior. The type of character being examined is the Mentor Archetype, as known in the Hero’s Journey, but also used throughout narrative in all its forms. A number of mentor characters from film, animation and video games are examined in order discern what common elements there are to the various depictions of mentors found throughout both historic and popular culture, and a small number of pictures displayed to prove points. The terms archetype, stereotype, cliché and sign are looked at, and their role in the area of Character Design examined, with support from literature and articles. The social, societal, psychological and philosophical ramifications of these terms and how they relate to Character Design and the audience are discussed with further support from literature and articles. Conclusions are drawn of the importance of innovation and the harmful nature of stereotypes, and new kinds of further research are suggested.
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Since the beginning of speech, man has told stories. Stories are part of how we make sense of the world; we use it for the recounting of events from one person to another, and the passing down of knowledge, and it is the form that our episodic memory and our dreams take. Though the spoken or written form has been the norm of storytelling, with time, the way we tell stories has developed just as much as the way we live. Alongside the inventions that have shaped modern society, such as cars and airplanes, new vehicles for conveying story have also surfaced, such as film, animation and even computer games.

An essential part of the story is the characters, and the way the audience gets to know them. The many tools the storyteller may utilize here fall within the category of characterization. Included are the actions of the character itself, the speech of the character, its behaviour, and even what other characters say about it. Naturally, the character’s appearance also affects how the audience sees it and what impression it makes on them.

Character design is the art of shaping a character’s appearance. The counterpart of character design in live-action is a combination of costume design and casting, and the central purpose is the same in both mediums: choosing the right appearance for the character, so as to communicate its nature to the viewer in an effective visual manner. Character design could conceivably be referred to as “the art of first impressions”.

A more practical aspect of the design phase in regards to animation is to make sure that the character is easy to animate and is able to achieve its desired function within the medium and in the chosen style and setting. The live-action counterpart in this aspect would be the fact that the costume an actor wears often helps them get into character and feel as one with the story and setting, proving the importance of the appearance of the character for the production itself as well as the end product and its audience.

Good design communicates well, looks good and fulfills all practical requirements that may be imposed by the context surrounding the design. With design as a tool for visual communication, it can be helpful to the viewer if a character is instantly recognizable the moment we see it, even when it is to fulfil a range of very specific functions within the story.

Archetypes are ancient patterns and themes found throughout history in many cultures, as if they emanated from a common unconscious. Stereotypes are very specific patterns categorized and stored within each separate mind to make the next occurrence of that pattern instantly recognizable. Both archetypes and common stereotypes can serve as design tools to effectively communicate with the intended audience. Is not abiding to such patterns the opposite of innovation?
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the following question:

Since a good design is meant communicate efficiently, but a stereotype may have an undesirable effect on the audience, is there a way to create a design that is innovative, yet communicative, and what does that entail?

A number of sub-questions arose:

Are stereotypes harmful or helpful?

Are archetypes, stereotypes and clichés necessary evils, or can they be purged?

What do mentors generally look like?

What, if anything, are recognizable mentor signs?

Is it possible to maximize innovation for a character design for a mentor character by including the essential recognizable elements while leaving the rest of the design to the imagination of the artist?

What is good character design?

The intention is not to find the definite answer for these questions, but to investigate the matters relating to them. All of them have been touched upon throughout the text. It is assumed that character design, as a branch of visual communication, wishes to convey the nature of a character through its appearance. It is the strange path between novelty and familiarity that many forms of art and entertainment are forced to tread, lest they bore or confuse their audience.

Innovation and the opposing yet related subjects of stereotypes, clichés and archetypes have to be looked at, and the findings of previous research discussed. The matter of design as it relates to the visual presentation of fictional characters is also discussed in the same way.

One hypothesis is that as long as the design includes clearly understandable symbols or visual traits relating to the purpose of the character in the story, the rest of the design may take any form, thus allowing for innovation without sacrificing communication. In the case of the mentor, these symbols would primarily be ones representing “knowledge” (such as a book, a lab coat or reading glasses) and “age” (in the case of males, usually a grey beard, and with females, grey hair).

Another hypothesis is that a mentor may be designed to look like anything, and the characteristics of a mentor character will become clear through the character’s presence and behavior within story. However, this defeats the purpose of character design as a tool of exaggeration within the filmmaking process, as a character whose appearance is not enhanced to” look like a mentor” may instead look distracting to the viewer.
If the artist wants to be set free, the stereotype must be questioned. To question the stereotype, it must be defined. To define it, several examples must be looked at, and common traits be identified, and they be put into question. Is the stereotype necessary for communication?

The underlying purpose of this investigation is to aid the art of Character Design, so that more innovative characters may be designed quicker, and the medium be enriched with more interesting characters for the benefit of the audience and the art form. Mentor characters are merely the specific type of character being examined; hopefully, all characters based on archetypes may benefit from this. Note that the purpose of this thesis does not entail the creation of exact instructions (for example a ‘step-by-step guide’) on how to make better character designs.

Stereotypes and clichés need to be questioned, lest the insultingly dull and familiar take precedence over the innovative and exciting everywhere. And if a relatively neutral stereotype can be turned on its head, so can more offensive and harmful ones. Art, design and storytelling should prevent prejudice, not give rise to it. From this perspective, the designer must always be aware of what kind of prejudice his work may give rise to.
2 Method and materials

To further the position of innovation, the things holding it back must be examined, and the ramifications discussed. Initially, the key concepts of stereotypes, clichés, design, innovation, archetypes and mentors are introduced and lightly discussed, and what they bring to the world of character design and visual storytelling. A presentation of typical mentor \textit{signs} (bits of visual communication) follows. Then, the negative aspects of the different concepts are brought to light and discussed. A concluding discussion that brings everything together follows, and the text ends with a final conclusion.

To find the most unifying traits of mentor designs in general, over 100 mentor character designs from live-action film, animated films and television programmes have been looked at. Each of these traits or \textit{signs} are presented with multiple examples, initially those that confirm the sign. A list of the analyzed mentor characters is found in the appendix section.

The mentor as a function is an integral part to narrative and as such make take many forms: a character may exist for this purpose alone, and may leave the story entirely after its purpose is fulfilled; or the function itself may only appear temporarily in the behaviour of one or several already established characters, or within the hero himself. The aim is to examine characters whose relationships with another character is based on mentorship, and as such have been designed with that purpose in mind.

It should be noted that it is impossible to generalize the characteristics of visual interpretations to find elements that will be reliable on a universal level. Audiences may differ significantly in their ability to perceive and interpret visual cues and hints incorporated into the visual presentation of a character. However, it is important to see what form the stereotype has taken in the past to properly show what is missing, what patterns are “unfair”, what must be done in the future. The matter is further discussed.

It should be noted that it is not absolutely imperative for a character to “look the part” – a gifted storyteller will make it work anyway. Conversely, the character not looking like what it is could be a reflection of the story in and of itself, meant to surprise the audience.

It is also worth mentioning that a mentor character may take many forms within the narrative itself, removed from the visual aspect. They may have other duties than guiding the hero and in serial works they may have their own private story arcs independent of the conflicts relating to the main character or hero. In these cases the hero may even become a mentor to them, acting as a mirror, reflecting their own teachings back at them when they need to remember their own advice the most, showing that the hero has truly learnt their lesson.

The Mentor archetype has been chosen for many reasons, the first of them being personal interest. Secondly, the mentor is arguably the most flexible yet neutral. It has a clear purpose within the story, with potential specific imagery closely tied to it, though not as clear as typical villainous or heroic attributes may be. As a narrative device, it is ever present, yet not entirely too broad to be overwhelming, as might be the case with the Ally, Protagonist and Antagonist archetypes. Thirdly, as far as stereotypes within the archetypes go, it is relatively neutral.
3 Previous research

When it comes to the subject of stereotypes in character design and how it relates to the audience, there has been some previous research. However, more research may have to be carried out about the visual representation of narrative functions or mythical character archetypes in character design and its efficiency and necessity as a tool of communication within different mediums. More research may also need to be carried out examining audience reactions to visual innovation in film and other mediums, and the impact of stereotypical portrayals on the film and video game industries; that is to say whether or not stereotypical characters actually result in more profit for the video game publishers and film studios.

Yi Mou and Wei Peng have examined popular video games and related promotional material, looking at gender-role and racial portrayals in video games, in *Gender and Racial Stereotypes in Popular Video Games*. Implications of stereotype in videogames, social and psychological impacts on players, particularly adolescents, are discussed, but not how visual stereotypes relate to narrative archetypes (Mou, Peng 2009). The conclusions presented suggest stereotypical portrayals of people may have a negative impact on audience members.

*Learning Character Design from Experts and Laymen* - in this study, Islam *et al.* have created a simple game for gathering data on audience perception of animated character body shape, with manual labeling of perceived role, physicality and personality. Several traits that appeared connected in audience perceptions were bunched together in categories. Though possible characteristics of mentors were included in the study, the results showed no specific mentor type surface amongst the bunched characteristics. The study looked for audience perception of character silhouette and not audience reaction to the characters appearance as presenting a narrative device (Islam 2010). The study does show that audience members connect certain visual characteristics with certain personality traits, leading to expectations on that character, showing character design at work as a tool of visual communication.

In *Stereotypic Images of the Scientist: The Draw-A-Scientist Test* David Wade Chambers presents the findings of carrying out a test that had many children of different ages draw what they perceived as a typical scientist (Chambers 1983). The results suggest stereotypical depictions of certain kinds of people are created from external input from cultural exposure over time and, unlike archetypes, are not inherent to the human mind. The study also shows that even children may connect certain specific visual traits to a specific type of person or character.

More research has been made in the individual subjects of stereotypes, clichés and design as visual communication, but not how the concepts relate to character design specifically. Greg O. Niemeyer with the Departments of Art Practice and of Film Studies at the University of California investigates the role of cultural dispositions in visual perception in *The function of stereotypes in visual perception* (Niemeyer 2003). In SNAPSHOTS, or: Visual Culture’s Clichés from Photographies Vol 4., No.2 September 2011 Lynn Berger looks at snapshot photography and the clichéd patterns that have developed in the field, and discusses the development and impact of the cliché in human culture (Berger 2011). These and more sources and their findings are discussed more in-depth further on.
4 Results

4.1 PART ONE

4.1.1 Stereotypes and Clichés

Certain visual traits about an object we see combine to form a stereotype – an instantly recognizable representation of an idea. Niemeyer writes that the act of recognition works like “a sorting process”, with the mind comparing shapes with what is known from before, things already stored and categorized in the backs of our minds (Niemeyer 2003). When a suitable category is found that matches the target within acceptable bounds, the process stops, and then “the object is classified and recognized, until there is evidence that a better classification is possible.” Niemeyer goes on to state that the mind carries out this process in response to “faces, hands, food, bodies, letters and symbols, patterns, objects and places”, and that “Single perceptions can match with multiple categories simultaneously.” This is part of how we make sense of the world: we compare everything we experience to what we have experienced before – visuals, sounds, ideas, sensations, possibly even thoughts we’ve thought before until we are certain that we recognize it. Even when the experience is of a nature incompatible with the recollections of previous ones, we continue to employ the same method, Niemeyer says.

We stick to the same method; we seek a best match between sensation and stereotype. If we see an object for the first time, we are likely to say that that new sensation reminds us of a stereotype we already know. We then classify the new sensation near that stereotype. We create a new categorization for that object by name, function, shape, and experience. The next time we see this same new thing, we already have a fitting new stereotype for that sensation. The generation of new stereotypes is perhaps an essential component of learning.

(Niemeyer 2003: 62)

In this view, stereotypes are indeed inevitable, as they are formed within our minds as a product of every experience; learning itself results in stereotypes. As all humans go through this process constantly, ending up with countless stored stereotypes, it is inevitable that some near-identical stereotypes will be shared amongst many minds, with possible minute differences being ignored for sake of convenience (until further evidence suggests a new stereotypical category must me formed). With shared stereotypes everywhere, instantly recognizable by many minds, they form valuable assets in communication, like a language with its individual words both speakers understand.

In a study conducted in 1983 by David Wade Chambers, of Social Studies of Science, Deakin University, Australia, children of different ages were asked to draw a picture of a scientist. The pictures were compared to a set of “typical elements” that had been compiled based on depictions of scientists in popular media. From the study, it could be gathered that the stereotype of the scientist did not develop until second or third grade, and in low-income schools it could take as long as fifth grade. This would suggest that, unlike archetypes, such stereotypes are not innate to the human mind, but are products of the environment and upbringing. Interestingly there was no great variance in the depictions of the scientist throughout the different areas where the test was carried out, other than the children in Asia drawing more women scientists and young beardless men.
Stereotypes and archetypes become useful tools in the area of Character Design as a manner of visual communication, as the designer may base her design on a common depiction of a particular type of person or a common theme that echo through the human mind. Entertainment designers learning about the craft are often instructed by senior designers to start out a design from a general stereotype. In a tutorial video from his school of design, veteran concept artist Feng Zhu says about this creative process:

…If you’re designing for example something evil, things like skulls, red, darkness, spikes, chains, they automatically play with the perception of evil that’s built into most human beings. When they see a skull, when they see things, they know ‘alright, this is probably not a good guy’. So, in entertainment design, we kind of build upon that, so that’s why in most films or games you play, bad guys have a certain feel and good guys have a certain feel and you don’t need to explain anything – you just know. And that’s a good start, at least, with the design, and you can get more sophisticated as you go. (Zhu 2010)

The final sentence is important. Relying on stereotypes too heavily and too often without adding that extra bit of innovation may after too many repetitions force the stereotype into becoming a cliché. A cliché is defined by the Oxford dictionaries as “a phrase or opinion that is overused and betrays a lack of original thought”, “a very predictable or unoriginal thing or person” or, in (chiefly British) print “a stereotype or electrotype.” Audiences have come to recognize certain tropes used in media such a film as overused, causing them to be considered trite and ‘cheesy’. This can range from spoken lines (a character falling to his knees, shouting ‘no’ at the heavens after a particularly tragic event) to certain visual conventions (characters walking side-by-side in slow motion towards the camera) to ‘movie physics’ (cars exploding in a hellish fireball from mild damage to the front end). Clichés are further discussed in part 2.
4.1.2 Design, Innovation, and Archetypes

Though characters are remembered mostly for their roles in the story, several layers of visual detailing are employed to bring their roles to life. Starting with basic shape and proportion, artists create layers of skin tones, hair styles, attire, accessories, key postures, gait, action energy, mannerisms and facial expressions [4,5]. Furthermore, drawing styles may vary widely across cultures, media and practice for novice artists to pick up the necessary skills to create impactful characterizations for a certain target audience [18].

(Islam 2010)

On his Character Design DVD from the Gnomon Workshop, Cameron Davis says “It’s all about telling a story visually, which I personally think is the most effective way” as he demonstrates his process of designing a character for animation or games. “It’s about exploring shapes, exploring metaphors.” Design is a rapidly developing area of thought today, the definition of which is difficult to pin down, with more and more creative disciplines utilizing methods of a “designerly” nature. However, Rodgers (Rodgers 2013) writes: “In essence, design thinking is a methodology to generate innovative ideas.” “Part of design thinking’s success has been down to the distinctive and valuable activities that designers routinely undertake in their work. That is, the often- idiosyncratic motivations, strategies, tools and priorities designers utilise that help them shape their design processes and, in turn, the future visions of the world that they project.” (Rodgers 2013) Innovation, it seems, is inseparable from design. Yet, aspiring character designers are taught to adhere to old archetypal patterns when designing, and only through further education do they mature.

In Universal Principles of Design, Lidwell et al. write about archetypes, saying they “are believed to be a product of unconscious biases and dispositions that have been “hardwired” in the brain over the course of human evolution” (Lidwell 2010: 28). It is recommended to try to incorporate archetypes (anything from themes of life & death to the character archetypes of the Hero’s Journey and even dream imagery like eyes and teeth) into any aspect of any design because of the broad and powerful reach they have, and for the fact that they can be used where language and other traditional means of communication cannot, but “reactions to specific archetypes may vary across cultures and, therefore, should be tested on target populations prior to use.” (Lidwell 2010: 28)

![Picture 1: Cameron Davis demonstrates archetypal visual language for communicating good or evil character nature. He goes on to stress that these are only basic rules to start out from, and that all rules can be broken.](image-url)
The usefulness of archetypes is echoed in the sentiment of Feng Zhu, as he speaks of how the archetypal visual signs of good and evil will be clear to a 5-year-old as well as a 55-year-old, which is useful to the big budget video games that try for a broad audience appeal. (Zhu 2010) Cameron Davis speaks of the shape language commonly used in animated film, and comments upon the common phenomenon of recognizing a character as closely resembling other characters appearing throughout mainstream animated films, and claims that “It’s about creating an iconic character, one you can look at without knowing about the story or the setting and instantly know what she represents.” It’s about effective visual communication.
4.1.3 Mentors

The word “mentor” originates from the Greek word “menos”, meaning mind or spirit. It is associated with “a strong sense of purposefulness and agency” (Guroian 2008: 76). From the mere word, the purpose of such characters becomes clear. While the hero archetype is the main character that must make an inner and outer journey in order to resolve the dramatic conflict of the story, and the villain or antagonist is the one opposing the hero in his efforts, the mentor is the force of good behind the hero, pushing him forward.

Vogler writes that the hero in a tale may have to prepare himself before answering the Call to Adventure, in a stage called Meeting with the Mentor, “whose many services to the hero include protecting, guiding, teaching, testing, training and providing magical gifts.” (Vogler 2007:117) Vladimir Propp refers to the character type by the names “donor” and “provider”, which accurately reflects the function of supplying the hero with not only useful, but needed things for the journey. (Vogler 2007:117)

Mentors reflect important aspects of human existence: the passing down of knowledge, hope in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, guidance in times of confusion, and protection from someone older and wiser. Mentors also provide their respective protégés with tools, rewards and motivation, just as we in life through a sudden fortunate turn of events may find the one thing we needed to carry on during one particular struggle. Vogler writes that “in the anatomy of the human psyche, Mentors represent the Self, the god within us, the aspect of personality that is connected with all things.” It is the higher, wiser self, our more divine aspect, and in stories the mentor represent what the hero may become – his highest aspirations. (Vogler 2007: 40).

The bond between teacher and student is an old one, and a unique one. Though similar in some respects to the bond between parent and child, it is also dissimilar. Though teacher and student may share a common goal, like equal peers on the same journey, the mentor bond is different. Guroian states that within the works of Homer, characteristics of the mentor relationship are established.

...as distinguished from ordinary friendship, the mentorial relationship is hierarchical. It is characterized by inequality of experience, knowledge, and skills. The mentor is the superior and the mentee willingly submits to his mentorial authority.

Literature and the Real Meaning of Mentorship By Vigen Guroian

Not all Mentors work solely for the benefit of their protégé, however. For example, in the Star Wars saga, while Luke Skywalker had his mentors Obi-Wan and Yoda guide him onto the right path, his father Anakin’s newer mentor Emperor Palpatine deceived and corrupted him, making him perform truly evil deeds and become his apprentice Darth Vader, even turning him against his former master Obi-Wan. It is only in the last few minutes of the final film, set years later, that Anakin redeems himself by turning on the Emperor, seeing the error of his ways. There are many means for the hero to learn what he must learn in order to complete his quest; some more difficult, time-consuming and grim than others. Arguably, when the audience witness such a difficult path, the harder the resistance to change in the character, the more satisfying the change.
It is important we study the mentors of fiction. Guroian laments the misuse of the word “mentor” in today’s society, as it does not reflect the ancient meaning, with today’s so-called mentors being regular teachers or even tutors without any love for their craft or deep respect of the special relationship. Art is a reflection of society – perhaps it should be the other way around, in order for society to retrieve this form of bond between master and apprentice that is so powerful to observe as to deserve being depicted time and time again throughout history and into present day.

The mentor is an archetype function that can take many forms, but is in some ways almost always present. “Even if there is no actual character performing the many functions of the Mentor archetype, heroes almost always make contact with some source of wisdom before committing to the adventure” (Vogler 2007:118). Archetypes are powerful themes and patterns ingrained in the ancient memory of humanity and are very useful to artists.
4.1.4 Signs

American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce, a major contributor to semiotics, defines a sign as "A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign." (Helsinki.com). Signs are essentially bits of communication, each having a signal aspect – a physical side, the side we perceive; and a meaning – what it represents, indicates or means. He identifies three types of signs: *icon*, *index* and *symbol*. Icons have meaning to us because they have a visual similarity to what they refer to. A picture of a person is an icon of that person. The “print” function in text programs is usually accessed through clicking an icon resembling a printer. An index is a kind of sign that has a direct correlation in space or time with what it represents; it can be said to indicate or point to something, just as our index fingers are used to direct attention towards something relevant at that moment. The act of crying indicates that the person doing so is sad; cloudless skies and sunshine indicates hot weather in most places. Symbols, however, are more abstract and only have meaning because its users have together come to an agreement as to what meaning it shall have. The “power” button on many modern electronic devices is accompanied by a small circular symbol with a short, vertical line intersecting it at the top. This has no direct visual connection to the function or action of activating or deactivating electronic devices, yet its meaning will seldom escape the user of the device, because he or she and the manufacturers and designers of the product, as well as the entire culture within which the device is used has agreed that the symbol have that particular meaning. (Helsinki.com).

In “Teaterns Tecken”, Sven Åke Heed discusses the signs of theater (Heed 2002: 31-35). Theater, like film, communicates with the audience in many ways, incorporating a range of signs. People have tried to define and categorize these signs. Tadeusz Kowzan made distinctions between visual and aural signs, and split these into signs that signs that originate from the actor and those that do not. His categorization has however been criticized as it is considered to be incomplete, lacking words not originating in the actor, or words “only appearing as visual signs”. Another attempt was made by Manfried Pfister in his book “Das Drama”. His categories are based on what kind of sensory input the sign works in, the type of code employed (verbal or not), the originator of the sign and the “information flow”. This is considered a more complete categorization, but unlike Kowzan, Pfister did not include the aspects of time and space (Heed 2002: 31-35).

While the book discusses theater, there is of course reason to contemplate these principles within film and animation, and how it relates to the art of Character Design. The visual signs originating from the actor (or visual, non-verbal, durative signs of the figure according to Pfister) such as costume, hair and make-up could easily be translated into all signs originating from the animated character’s appearance, with the animation of being the counterpart to theater’s mime, gesture and so forth. If character design is indeed a means of visual communication and from each design a number of signs are delivered to the audience, what signs would then represent the aspects of the Mentor in his many depictions?
4.2    PART TWO

4.2.1    Signs of the Mentor

These findings what could be the signs of the mentor have been found. For lack of better terms, these have been called old age, beard, apparent disadvantage/lack of power, magical/supernatural nature, and style/attitude and are further elaborated below. These are but a few possible signs common to or typical of the mentor archetype as embodied in characters; these particular signs are the reappearing signs found throughout this particular set of mentor characters. Unfortunately, these presented signs can neither be confirmed nor disproven as signs of the mentor, for no source can provide a definite answer, not even the creator, as according to some, the interpretation of the audience is the final power, the interpreter.
4.2.1.1 Old age

Merlin the Wizard, the legendary mentor of King Arthur in the old legend has often been featured in film and other media. He has not only been the typical mentor, but has also been seen in adaptations where he is the protagonist, and most, if not all of these stories take place long before he became the wizened old man we know him to be. So important is the model of the hero’s journey as one towards experience and wisdom that even a character who is almost a symbol of wisdom himself is turned into an inexperienced youth, and is in turn assigned a mentor, in order for him to be able to make that journey before our eyes.

![Different depictions of a younger Merlin](image1)

**Pictures 2 a, b, c:** Different depictions of a younger Merlin

![Different depictions of a more traditional older Merlin](image2)

**Pictures 2 d, e, f:** Different depictions of a more traditional older Merlin (*d* and *e* come from the same sources as *a* and *b*, respectively.)

A similar example is found in the world of *Star Wars*. The first *Star Wars*, later labeled as “*Episode IV: A New Hope*”, was released in 1977 and introduces the character of Obi-Wan Kenobi, one of the last remaining Jedi Masters. He acts as mentor to the protagonist Luke Skywalker throughout the story, guiding him on his path to becoming a Master himself, and saving the galaxy. However, in *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (1999), which takes place many years before *Episode IV*, it is Obi-Wan that is the young pupil, and by his side is Qui-Gon Jinn, his own mentor. In the next installment in the series, *Episode II: The Attack of the Clones* (2002), Obi-Wan is again the master, with his pupil Anakin Skywalker having been assigned to him at the end of *Episode I*. Though only a handful of years have passed, Obi-Wan’s appearance has changed drastically, now sporting a beard despite there being no reason for him to do so, unless some in-world tradition dictates it. He could very well be beardless and be no worse mentor for it. Could it be that the actor was asked to grow a beard to mark the character of Obi-Wan as older and wiser, now that he is the mentor and not the pupil? As with the depictions of Merlin, when the same character is the mentor, it is old and bearded, and when it is not the mentor, it is younger and sports no beard.
Anakin Skywalker (left) and Obi-Wan Kenobi (right) from *Star Wars: Episode II: Attack of the Clones*. In this film Obi-Wan is the mentor of Anakin.

An elderly Obi-Wan Kenobi from *Star Wars: Episode IV: A New Hope*. In this film Obi-Wan is the mentor of Luke Skywalker (not pictured), and one of the few remaining Jedi masters in the galaxy.

A side-by-side comparison of Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi as Jedi apprentices. (Note that the text at the bottom pairs the character appearances with the wrong episodes; Anakin as seen in this picture appears in *Episode II*, and Obi-Wan as pictured here appears in *Episode I*.)

In more classic and historic cases more examples of age and the beard can be found. Shakespeare provides the example of the witches in Macbeth - old crones that advice the main character about his future; and in several plays the character of Sir John Falstaff appears, large old, bearded, usually a comic character, but also a father figure to Prince Hal, the future King Henry V. In Kalevala, the national epic of Finland the character of Väinämöinen is referred to as old and wise, and almost always depicted with a long beard. In Christianity, Jesus Christ is also almost always depicted with a beard.
4.2.1.2 Apparent disadvantage/lack of power

Picture 4 a (left): Professor Charles Xavier.

Picture 4 b (right): Group picture of characters from X-men Evolution, all of them possessing various superpowers. Arguably, most if not all of the other characters look more powerful, supernatural or at least more physically fit than Professor X. Note however that the Professor is placed in the middle of the group, hinting at his central position in the context as a whole.

Professor Charles Xavier, also known as Professor X, a character originally conceived by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby for the comic X-men in Year 1963, here re-imagined for the animated series X-men Evolution (2000). In the world of X-men, certain humans have started to gain super-powers because of genetic mutation, and Dr. Xavier is co-founder and headmaster of the X-men academy for gifted youths.

The original design comes through largely unchanged in this iteration, designed for the 2003 animated TV-series X-Men Evolution. Professor X’s primary features are his bald head, his distinct eyebrows and sharp gaze, and his wheelchair. All of them are meant to emphasize the sense that this character possesses formidable mental abilities. Being visually older than the people that surround him, coupled with the matter of his psychic superpowers makes it quite acceptable that he is the wise one of the character roster. He is one of the most powerful mutants, and his powers include everything relating to telepathy - being able to read, influence, control and manipulate the minds and actions of others, and much more.
Shifu, from Dreamworks’ *Kung Fu Panda* (2008) is a renowned master of martial arts, set to train the unlikely “Chosen One” Po, an overweight and clumsy panda. Clad in traditional-looking martial arts garb, and donning an elongated moustache, Shifu is a plausible performer of martial arts. However, what makes him a master?

Similar to the case of Professor X, a physical disadvantage is here used to contrast the character’s apparent level of ability with his intended/actual one. How come a disabled man is the headmaster for a school of super heroes? Why is a tiny furry creature the martial arts master, when his pupils are big and dangerous predators? Either the character is not the one posited, or it hides great skill, wisdom and power behind a modest exterior. Not unlike the blind seer Tiresias from Homer’s *The Odyssey* the appearance of weakness or mediocrity hides the power within. Other popular examples of these mentors are Yoda from *Star Wars*, and Jiminy Cricket from *Pinocchio*; both much smaller than their respective protégés, but delivering great lessons. Just as Athena, Goddess of wisdom hid behind the guise of Mentor, so do these kinds of mentors hide their abilities behind an insignificant exterior. Contrast has always been a powerful artistic tool.

*Picture 5 a (left):* Master Shifu from *Kung Fu Panda*. *Picture 5 b (right):* Master Shifu displaying his power on his pupil Po, who is noticeably larger.

*Picture 5 c (left):* Yoda from *Star Wars: Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*.  
*Picture 5 d (right):* Jiminy Cricket and Pinocchio from Disney’s *Pinocchio*.  


4.2.1.3 Magical/Supernatural nature

**Picture 6 a (left):** Luna from *Sailor Moon.*

**Picture 6 b (right):** Pinocchio and the Blue Fairy from Disney’s *Pinocchio.*

**Picture 6 c:** Gusteau and Remy from Pixar’s *Ratatouille.*

Though nothing signifying age can properly be discerned from the appearance of the cat Luna from *Sailor Moon,* the mark in her forehead could be a type of symbol indicating a magical origin and the fact that the cat possesses the ability to speak serves to strengthen the image of her as a supernatural creature. The blue fairy from Disney’s version of the classic tale *Pinocchio* is quite overtly supernatural, appearing from starlight, constantly glowing as she speaks to the puppet she brought to life. In Pixar’s *Ratatouille,* the main character, a rat named Remy is accompanied throughout the film by a hallucination of the master chef Gusteau, his role model, who gives him advice in the story.

Magical creatures and beings bestowing gifts and words of warning are common throughout ancient myths and folk tales. In Arthurian legend, the Lady of the Lake was the one to give King Arthur his sword Excalibur, and in *One Thousand and One Nights* several magical genies appear to grant the wishes of their masters after they have overcome certain challenges to procure them.
4.2.1.4 Style/Attitude

**Picture 7 a (top left):** Urahara Kisuke from *Bleach.*
**Picture 7 b (top right):** The eponymous character from Disney’s *Mary Poppins.*
**Picture 7 c (bottom):** LouAnne Johnson from *Dangerous Minds.*

This could be considered the real-world or “low-magic” counterpart of otherworldly appearance. A character may not look aged and wizened, frail and insignificant, or overtly magical, but instead they may dress and behave in a certain way; quirky, eccentric, tough or stoic. They have a style all their own and this instills respect in those they meet, or they have a strong attitude, bordering on being a pushover, but it’s all to drive home a point, or to teach tough lessons to prepare the mentee for a tough world. They either dress up or down (or possibly “sideways”) compared to others, depending on the variant and setting. Either way, they seem to “stick out”. Urahara Kisuke from *Bleach* is a powerful swordsman who challenges his student to cut his characteristic hat from the top of his head, but during this exercise he almost kills the student to prepare him for the tough world that awaits, and to push him into unlocking his inner power. LouAnne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer) in *Dangerous Minds* toughens up and dons a leather jacket in order to face and teach a class of sullen teenagers, all from lower-class and underprivileged backgrounds. Mary Poppins (Julie Andrews) from the film of the same name wows the family she enters as a nanny, being fun, almost peculiar yet strict and fair.
4.3 Audience

As has been shown, the mentor can take many forms. However, as was noted in the methodology section, different audiences will identify different things in a character design. For example, younger children not able to read may not consider a stack of books to be a significant sign of a knowledgeable nature, whilst an adult might, and so accept the character as a mentor figure to the protagonist. Another adult may find the idea of using of books to imply knowledge to be trite and predictable, and as such see the story in a negative light, while another child may envy the character’s ability to read, and see it as all the wiser and possibly even mysterious.

There is always an artistic intention with any creation; even with those intentionally left without meaning, the intention was exactly that the work have no meaning. It is quite difficult, however, to predict whether the intention will come through in the end or not. Heed writes about playwriting: “It is the audience’s reception of the work that grants it its ultimate meaning, and this can lie far away from what the writer originally intended (Heed 2002: 26). The end effect of the creation lies solely with the audience, and is impossible to completely know beforehand. An artist cannot read its audience’s mind, neither in advance nor at present, so is it therefore the creator’s fault if the audience reacts in unintended ways?

“Audience considerations are integral components of the process of visual communication” according to Ann C. Tyler. A designer attempts to make its audience believe what has been demonstrated within the work, and the purpose of this is either to make the audience take action, to educate them or to provide an experience in need of approval, or disapproval. There are varying views on the subject of the relationship between audience and communication process. In one perspective, the designed object is isolated from the audience, and a merely esthetic creation; the audience watches, but there is no discussion and no communication or meaning. “Another characterizes the audience as a passive reader in the communication process”; they may interpret a visual statement, but are not part in the formation of the actual meaning. Semiotics, the realm of Pierce and Heed, brings a third view that “recognizes the specificity of the audience”, with its beliefs and interpreted messages that spring from it; “the audience reads the literal message while also interpreting the signs which express the ‘iconic message’”, and the audience becomes an active reader in the formation of the particulars of the message. “Yet another view… is a rhetorical analysis of design”, in which the audience is not a reader, but a participant in a dynamic argument; in this view, the design is not merely making a statement but trying to persuade the audience into accepting new beliefs by referencing old ones and “transforming social values through argument”. These are only some of the existing views on the subject (Margolin 2000: 104-105).

The view of a design as merely a visual and esthetic experience is expanded upon further on:

Though all design creates some type of experience for the audience, experience is rarely the primary communication goal. If the goal of a design is experiential, then it is often interpreted as a focus on the esthetic moment. Experience, is a display of values, however, and esthetics is simply one of any number of values. When an experience is the goal of an agent, the design displays or exhibits particular values for the audience to consider. The audience may identify with the values or they may condemn or reject the values. (Margolin 2000: 111)
4.4 PART THREE

In the end of “Teaterns Tecken”, Sven Åke Heed discusses postmodern criticism of the semiotics he’s based the book on (Heed 2002: 106). The critics include Jean-Francois Lyotard, who questioned the reason behind ever employing semiotic method to analyze theater to begin with, and claimed theater should create a presence of “one body, one object, one movement, without all forms of intention,” and the audience is free to make of it what they will. Jacques Derrida further promotes the futility of seeking meaning with his theory of deconstruction, which refers to a method of analysis and the fact that true meaning cannot be defined, for the meaning is constantly in flux, and once a definition is in place, the meaning has already changed. Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan’s theory on subjectivity is similar in that the way we see the world is constantly in motion and constantly changing, and as such absolute truths cannot be assessed (Heed 2002: 106).

If the appearance of a mentor is considered to not have meaning, what is then the purpose of character design as a means of visual communication? Is it then only to serve the aesthetic experience? In “Art as Technique”, Viktor Shklovsky writes:

“The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects “unfamiliar,” to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object: the object is not important...” (Shklovsky 1917)

It is evident that archetypes are useful tools, but the act of starting from templates may have become a clichéd behavior pattern, with stereotypes taking over and possibly affecting the psychology of adolescents in the video game audience. Yi Mou and Wei Peng have written about gender and racial stereotypes in video games: from a study of popular video games and promotional material, the conclusion could be drawn that the vast majority of playable video game characters are white males, with a black playable character only appearing in a basketball game, and women characters rarely being playable, usually appearing as supporting characters, and often in a moderately to highly sexualized and stereotyped form. Mou and Peng go on to discuss that being exposed to these stereotyped depictions of certain kinds of people may affect the audience, particularly adolescents, in how they may view these people in real life afterwards. It is clear that stereotypes may not only cause clichés to form, but also give rise to prejudice.

Tao Ran, writing about the Chinese animation industry, laments the lack of original and compelling characters. :”Tedious and repeated theme, undoubtedly, will exacerbate the image chosen and lose the recognition of the public. Therefore, when creating an animation character, people should walk out of conventional wisdom, choose more promising characters, study some unpopular books, excavate and extend some traditional ideas to broaden their vision and horizon.” (Ran: 2011)

Perhaps it is not the designers’ habits of using patterns, but rather the pressures of the industry and its economical factors. Feng Zhu mentioned the importance of broad appeal, and Character Designer Scott Patton of Gnomon Workshop, as he is designing a giant (an archetypal being indeed) for a hypothetical feature film stresses the importance of innovation, whilst apparently lamenting the creative intrusions of superiors in the production hierarchy:
“I don’t want it to be stereotypical. Your job as a concept artist or character designer is to stay away from the typical, to do what they don’t expect, and when they eventually steer you back to the stereotypical thing you can at least have something that you’re proud of before they steered you the wrong way.” (Patton: 2008)

Rodgers wrote: “There is no universally agreed upon definition of ‘design thinking’, but the strongest common denominator embraces the centrality of the user and empathy to the human condition.” (Rodgers 2013) However, if it is not the innovative ideas of the designer that comes through in the end and it is instead money that dictates the final image that does not seem to be the case at all. If the designer is not allowed to do their job, why use (character) designers at all? Why not reuse old designs? And if the designers are not allowed to roam free, how are we to rid the world of stereotypes and clichés?

Conversely, to the Homeric Greeks clichés were very important as a form of “mnemonic device”. In their oral culture “knowledge, once acquired, had to be constantly repeated or it would be lost: fixed, formulaic through tapperns were essential for wisdom and effective administration.” Anton Zijderveld claims that is still the case today, with clichés containing “in a sense, the experiences and observations of former generations”. Others agree, saying that we must not feel ashamed to express ourselves through clichés, a language essentially shaped by the ages, and understood throughout time. (Berger 2011: 178-184)

On the other hand, Niemeyer writes that while an individual learns through the creation of stereotypes, a culture progresses, and both science and art participate in it, advancing society by finding stereotypes that are better than those before. (Niemeyer 2003: 62) Within the realm of science, new breakthroughs are made and the old stereotypes concerning the world around us are replaced with new ones. “In the case of art, an artwork seeks to propose a better way of representing an aspect of human experience”, and if the new stereotype benefits culture, it is adopted. “The benefits typically include new cultural identities, new ways of thinking, new ways of dreaming, or new ways of seeing emotional experiences.” The conclusion of this ever-going process, Niemeyer muses, would be a “complete match between stereotypes and reality” that would perhaps “include a complete consciousness of reality” and “there would be no more accidents and surprises, no more misunderstandings, errors and omissions.” (Niemeyer 2003: 62) In this view, one could claim that stereotypes on the whole are not constantly being replaced, but upgraded, as is human culture, all in part thanks to art and design.

Then what of the cliché? Lynn Berger, citing Zijderveld, writes that a cliché, though technically a harmless idea, makes its way into the mind of the public and through repetition and ease of access becomes the only idea, robbing the people of individuality and “prevents people from critical reflection and original thought”, an aspect employed by things such as political propaganda. (Berger 2011: 181) “The cliché is a political phenomenon. Terms like “containers for memory” and “mnemonic devices” may suggest a mere instrumentality and passivity, but clichés and snapshots in turn influence consciousness and perception as well.” (Berger 2011: 180) Clichés are generally considered the opposite of originality, creativity and individuality, but at the same time it carries out the previously mentioned vital function of the “mnemonic device”. Clichés seem to be both unwanted and needed. Additionally, Berger writes that “Zijderveld has noted that “shaking up a society’s clichés is as hazardous an enterprise as trying to overthrow its institutions”.” (Berger 2011: 181) Arguably, is up to the designers and artists of the world to innovate and gently combat the spreading of clichés, and the prejudice that comes with them.
5 Closing Discussion

It could be argued that including one or more of the signs of the mentor will successfully communicate to the audience the nature of the character as a mentor figure/function within the story because of the recognizable stereotyped visual signal elements ingrained within the mind of the audience, fulfilling the purpose of design as visual communication, and the rest of the design may then be of any form the designer so chooses, fulfilling the goal. However, whether a particular audience member requires this sort of direct visual indication is unclear. In addition, a particular set of signs used over and over may give rise to a stereotype; in this case, the use of a few required signs is abandoned in favor of a single overall recognizable image, which is not as original.

Many signs have been identified that signify a mentor. However, the value of these signs be called into question, for a design can be enjoyed merely on aesthetic grounds, and according to some schools of thought, trying to explain the visual and categorize it is a trivial affair in the ends, since absolute meaning is apparently impossible to define. Then again, it must be remembered that in other views the ultimate interpretation and meaning lies with the audience, and as such any sign herein referred to possesses truth and value. A design can be based in aesthetic grounds alone – or it can have meaning.

The tendency to use stereotypes as basis for new character designs is a multi-facetted issue: stereotypes have given rise to clichés that are partly unwanted and partly essential to cultural memory, according to some; stereotypes can affect adolescents and end up portraying certain people in untruthful and demeaning ways – one could even say the acceptance of such tendencies has become a stereotyped behavior in itself. Stereotypes are however useful means of communication because of ease of recognition to the audience and giving the designer a head start on his designing. Designers show a great deal of interest in innovation, and innovation can be claimed to be a part of design itself, and yet clichés still happen, in part because of the need to keep everything entirely recognizable to a wide audience for big budget projects. While archetypes hit deep and wide and are less harmful than stereotypes or clichés are, isn’t abiding to any pattern a form of exclusion of possible new innovations that lie outside that pattern?

The widespread use of stereotypes can serve to prove their effectiveness to some degree, but while if adults are intelligent enough to understand the role of a character without obvious visual hints, and the youngest children have not even developed and understanding of stereotypes, is the target audience for stereotypes only in the range of ages 8 and up into adolescence? The study by Mou and Peng discusses how adolescents can be negatively affected by certain stereotypes in media. Rather than reinforcing stereotypes, art can be used to break them, as shown in an exercise conducted by Seidler in 2011, in which sixth-grade students were asked to draw comics about disability to break stereotypical notions of people with disabilities:
After brainstorming and discussing several disability stereotypes with my sixth-grade students, we examined artwork by Riva Lehrer, whose *Circle Stories* series of portraits depicts artists with disabilities with whom Lehrer collaborated to determine the nature of the imagery; David Hevey, a photographer whose portraits for the series *Striking Poses* show people with disabilities in the midst of joyful experiences; Jon Wos, whose self-portraits explore the complex role of Osteogenesis Imperfecta in his life and sense of identity, differing from the entirely tragic or entirely heroic depictions of people with disabilities that are so common in visual culture; and E. Brooke Lanier, whose text-based paintings look like eye charts doctors show patients to assess their vision, but contain messages such as “I cannot see you but I know you are staring at me”. For my students, these works of art served as powerful examples of some ways artists fight back against the stereotypes we had discussed before viewing the images.

The students’ artwork not only challenged stereotypes relating to the disability community’s abilities, but also reflected students’ understanding of disability within the affirmative model. The majority of students’ comics rejected the notion that people with disabilities wish to be “normal” or strongly desire to change their physical state; instead, they affirmed the positive life experiences of people living with disabilities.

Students completed a written reflection about the project after their comics were finished. Many students’ comments indicated that their ideas about disability, stereotypes, and the power of art had changed as a result of their participation. As one sixth-grader wrote, “Drawing the background and characters and being able to use it to make fun of a stereotype was really cool.” (Seidler 2011)

While using a stereotype as a starting point for character design purposes may be a platform from which to leap with ease into the final design, breaking such a stereotype may evidently be a thoroughly enjoying experience on its own, even to adolescents. On all these grounds, can the use of stereotypes be justified any longer?
6 Conclusion

The use of stereotypes in entertainment design and stereotyped depictions of certain people may lead to prejudice being spread. Stereotypes can also give rise to clichés that are unwanted by the audience. Innovation is an inherent attribute of design thinking, but stereotypes go against this. Signs seem more reliable than stereotypes, but the use of signs and semiotics is questioned. With different views and opinions voiced in different sources, each side with strong arguments, conclusions are difficult to be drawn. It seems, however, that innovation is beneficial to society, while stereotypes have a range of negative side effects.

A better study would have to be carried out, similar to the one carried out by Islam et al., studying audience reactions to designs (rather than common pictorial elements of past interpretations as done here) but with a focus on certain signs rather than the body silhouette, as they relate to how the character is perceived. To allow for the whole character to be visible, trademarked characters will be recognizable and will incite the previously avoided source material related associations and bias. If countermeasures to this are not available, a large set of original characters will have to be designed, with altered variables to investigate the range, flexibility and influence of different signs, and how they relate to each other within a design and the audience reaction to that and so forth. Similarities could be drawn between the way a typographer designs its characters/symbols and how the character designs the narrative figures – what reads better?

If possible, new original signs could be created and tried out and compared to the established signs. These could be based on unused or uncommon archetypal patterns and imagery, or entirely on new concepts created by artists and designers. The actual role of gender and race in regards to how a character is perceived should also be examined.

And, as stated earlier, more research may have to be carried out about the visual representation of narrative functions or mythical character archetypes in character design and its efficiency and necessity as a tool of communication within different mediums. More research may also need to be carried out examining audience reactions to visual innovation in film and other mediums. The actual role of stereotypical characters in the economic profit for the video game publishers and film studios will have to be thoroughly examined in the future.

The final conclusion that would be suitable to end with would be this: it seems that it is up to the designers of the world to innovate and replace the stereotypes of today, to make the artistic experience more interesting and new, and to combat the spread of prejudice.
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Appendix: List of Mentors

Chris Redfield, *Resident Evil franchise*

Huey, *Boondocks*

Mr. White, *Reservoir Dogs*

Obi-Wan Kenobi, *Star Wars franchise*

Paul, *Deus Ex*

Tygra, *ThunderCats*

John Keating, *Dead Poets Society*

John Kimble, *Kindergarten Cop*

Charles Xavier, *X-men: Evolution*

Cyrus, *Warhammer 40 000: Dawn of War*

LouAnn Johnson, *Dangerous Minds*

Mary, *The Muppets*

Monk Gyatso, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

Dewey Finn, *School of Rock*

Professor Snape, *Harry Potter film franchise*

Mr. Garrison, *South Park*

Syrio Forel, *Game of Thrones*

Seymour Skinner, *The Simpsons*

Hank McCoy/The Beast, *X-men comics*

Mace Windu, *Star Wars franchise*

Phil, *Hercules*

Azimuth, *Ben 10*

Frankie Dunn, *Million Dollar Baby*

Evangeline, *Mahou Sensei Negima!*

Kreia, *Knights of the Old Republic*

Shifu, *Kung Fu Panda*
Mickey, *Rocky*

Samos, *Jak and Daxter franchise*

Xaldin, *Kingdom Hearts II*

Merlin, *The Sword in the Stone*

Albus Dumbledore, *Harry Potter film franchise*

Princess Celestia, *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*

Erasmus, *Quest for Glory*

Iroh, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

Ford Cruller, *Psychonauts*

Rafiki, *The Lion King*

Fin Raziel, *Willow*

Professor Potsdam, *Magical Diary*

Voodoo Lady, *Tales of Monkey Island*

Miss Frizzle, *The Magic School Bus*

Uncle, *Jackie Chan Adventures*

Augus, *Asura’s Wrath*

Avatar, *Wizards*

Flemeth, *Dragon Age: Origins*

Aughra, *The Dark Crystal*

Fairy Godmother, *Cinderella*

Yoruichi, *Bleach*

C.C., *Code Geass*

The Blue Fairy, *Pinocchio*

Mary Poppins, *Mary Poppins*

Nanny McPhee, *Nanny McPhee*

Mrs. Doubtfire, *Mrs. Doubtfire*

Chef, *South Park*
Gabriel, *The Simpsons*

‘Bleeding Gums’ Murphy, *The Simpsons*

Dennis, *Far Cry 3*

Mashed Potato Johnson, *Metalocalypse*

Dr. Schultz, *Django Unchained*

Kazaam, *Kazaam*

God, *Bruce Almighty*

Zecora, *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*

The Oracle, *The Matrix*

Amma, *Beautiful Creatures*

Phineas, *DMC Devil May Cry*

Luna, *Sailor Moon*

Fu, *American Dragon Jake Long*

Kaepora Gaebora, *The Legend of Zelda franchise*

Mushu, *Mulan*

Nibbler, *Futurama*

Yoda, *Star Wars franchise*

Jiji, *Kiki’s Delivery Service*

Yuuno, *Magical Girl Lyrical Nanoha*

Kerberos, *Cardcaptor Sakura*

Jubei, *BlazBlue*

Gobber, *How to Train Your Dragon*

Owl, *Bambi*

Zapp Brannigan, *Futurama*

King Bumi, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

True Master, *Teen Titans*

Maat, *Final Fantasy XI*
Hero’s Shade, *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*

Bruce Wayne, *Batman Beyond*

Toph and Katara, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

The father and the grandfather, *La Luna*

White Panter and Puma Loco, *El Tigre*

The Silent Monk & Old Hop, *The Forbidden Kingdom*

Sarah Connor, *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*

Dr. Stein, *Soul Eater*

Jiraiya, *Naruto*

Gusteau, *Ratatouille*

Brother Aidan, *The Secret of Kells*

Master Splinter, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles franchise*

Mia Fey, *Ace Attorney*

Dr. Light, *Mega Man X*

Master Oogway, *Kung Fu Panda*

Mufasa, *The Lion King*

Rufus, *Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure*

Morpheus, *The Matrix*

Qui-Gon Jinn, *Star Wars franchise*

Ramirez, *Highlander*

Magi Lune, *Fern Gully The Last Rainforest*

Doc Hudson, *Cars*

Aku Aku, *Crash Bandicoot franchise*

Cynthia, *Pokémon franchise*

Telephone, *Toy Story 3*

Izumi Curtis, *Fullmetal Alchemist*

Urahara Kisuke, *Bleach*
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