

24th June 2024

Prequel

pre·quel

[ˈpri:kw(ə)l]

noun

A story or film containing events that precede those of an existing work.

The idea of a “prequel” in the world of movies has been around for a while. The first film in a franchise appears with already rounded characters, who proceed, over a number of sequels in the franchise, to grow, age and develop. But where did they come from? What’s their back-story? What made them what they are? What influenced their character-development? The “prequel” seeks to answer these questions.

When we meet people in adult life, or when we’ve been friends with folk over a number of years, we know something of the nature and character of who they are now, and, if we’ve known them for a while, how that character has changed and developed over time. But understanding a person is all the more fascinating and revealing when you get to the “prequel”. Sometimes, of course, the prequel to a person’s life remains hidden, generally for perfectly good reasons – painful episodes; incidents to be ashamed of; character stains; events that are difficult to talk about. Not every prequel is a good one.

I wonder if, from time to time, it might be useful to play the movie that’s the prequel to our own life. There’s no need to offer a screening of it to anyone else, because it’s just for you. But might it be useful to sit alone in our own private movie theatre and remind ourselves of who we were once were, what formed our character, who were our influences, what we were ashamed of, things that made us proud, and so on? Are we pleased about what has developed out of that prequel? Are there scenes we need to play over again in order to make sense of them? Do we need to pause the action here and there, to spend more time with this person or that, or to anchor a moment we need to remember? Might there be sections we fast-forward because we don’t want to be reminded of this or that?

None of us appear fully formed in the movie franchise of our adult life. We all have a prequel. Let’s not forget how important it might be.

A prayer for today

Alpha and Omega – from prequel to finale – let Love be the constant theme. Amen

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