



Storytelling so easy even a caveman can do it.

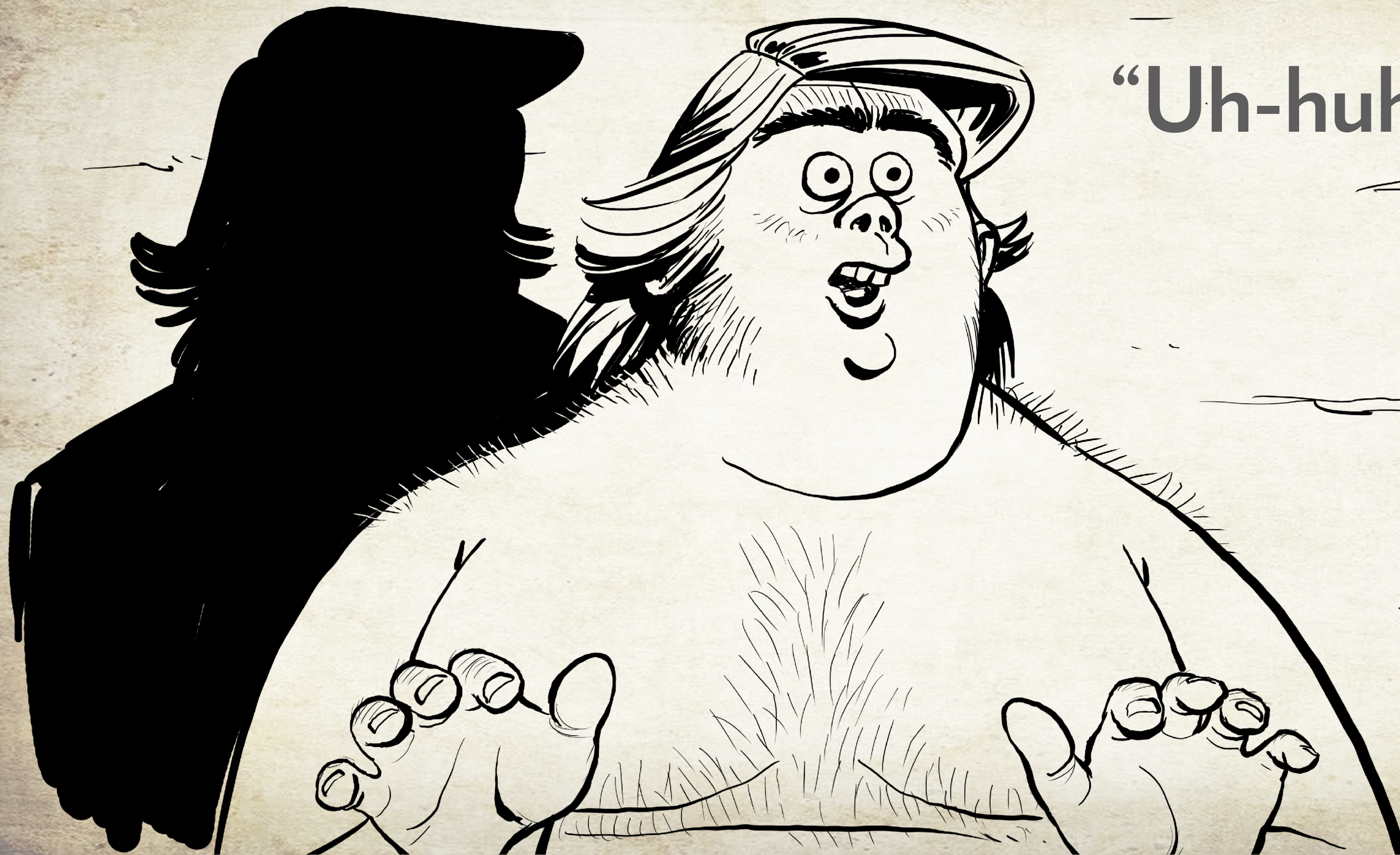
“Hey, Thog, where you been?” Larry asked, tending the fire.





“I catch saber-toothed salmon for dinner,” Thog grumbled.





“Uh-huh...”

“But saber-toothed tiger show up.”





“Uh-oh!”

“I show tiger fish. He like better than Thog.
So I’m back here safe with you, hungry.”



“Aha.”



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“Uh-huh...”

Setup



“Uh-oh!”

Problem



“Aha.”

Solution



Larry grunted the three-act structure of Thog’s story.
Some believe that storytelling as a learning tool was more
important to our evolution than our opposable thumbs.

THE PRIMAL AND, BUT, THEREFORE (ABT) NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

The ABT uses these same three forces of story:

Agreement, Contradiction and Consequence.

Our primal pattern-seeking, problem-solving, decision-making, *buying* limbic brain adores this story structure.

Let's look at it throughout the history of storytelling.

300 BC

BEGINNING MIDDLE END



Aristotle discussed these three forces of story in his book *Poetics* when he said every story has a beginning, middle and an end.

Duh, right?

But in business, we typically leave out the middle of the story because that's where the complication is. If you provide no struggle, conflict or problem, you have no story.

You are non-narrative and boring.

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1585 AD

Introduction Rising Action Climax



Shakespeare mostly wrote in five acts, but you can boil them down to the same triad of story: Introduction, rising action and climax.

People love that story!

1780 AD

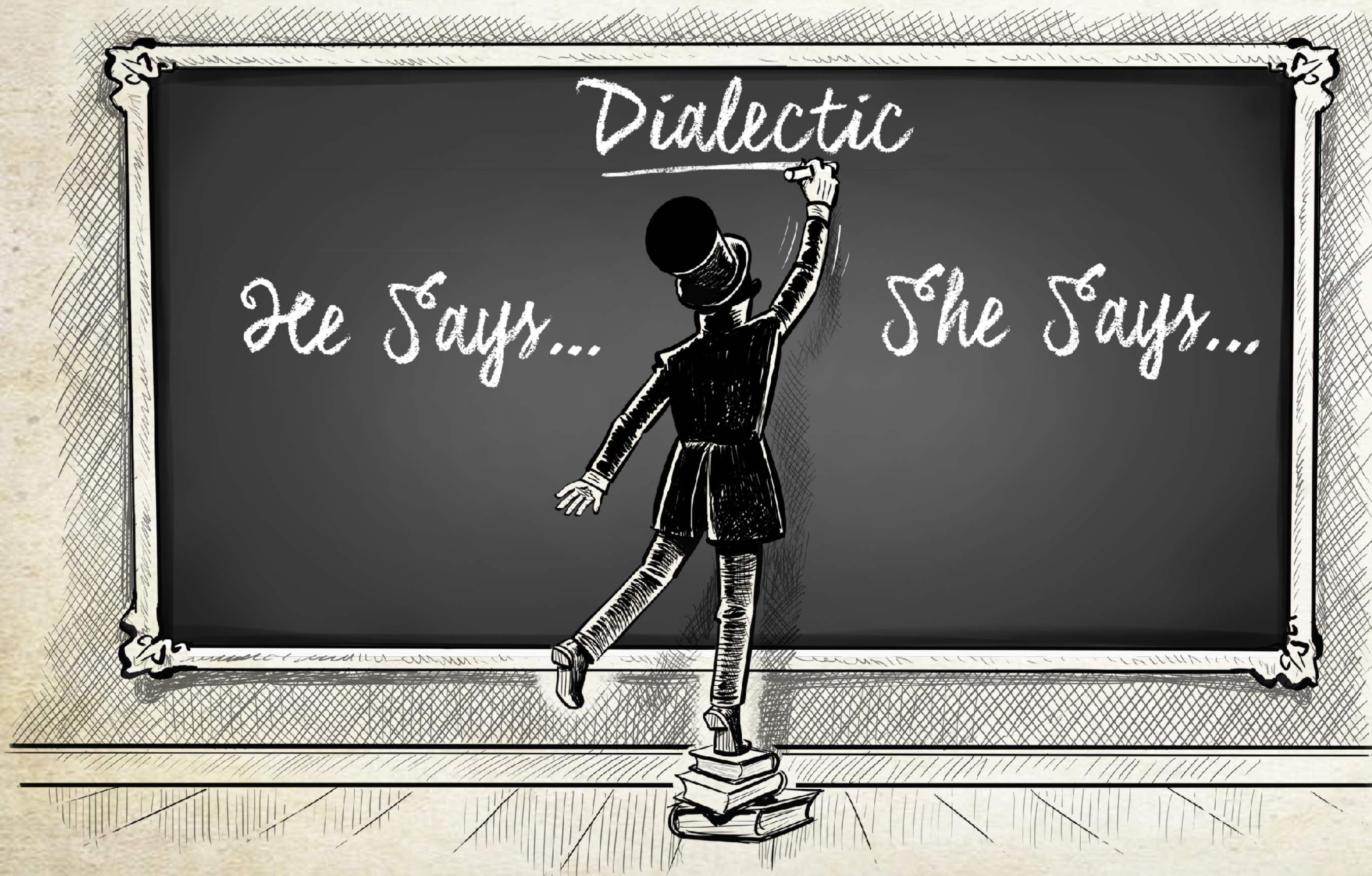
Exposition Development Resolution



Even Mozart's sonata allegro form is based on the three-act story structure of exposition, development and resolution.

1820 AD

Thesis Antithesis Synthesis

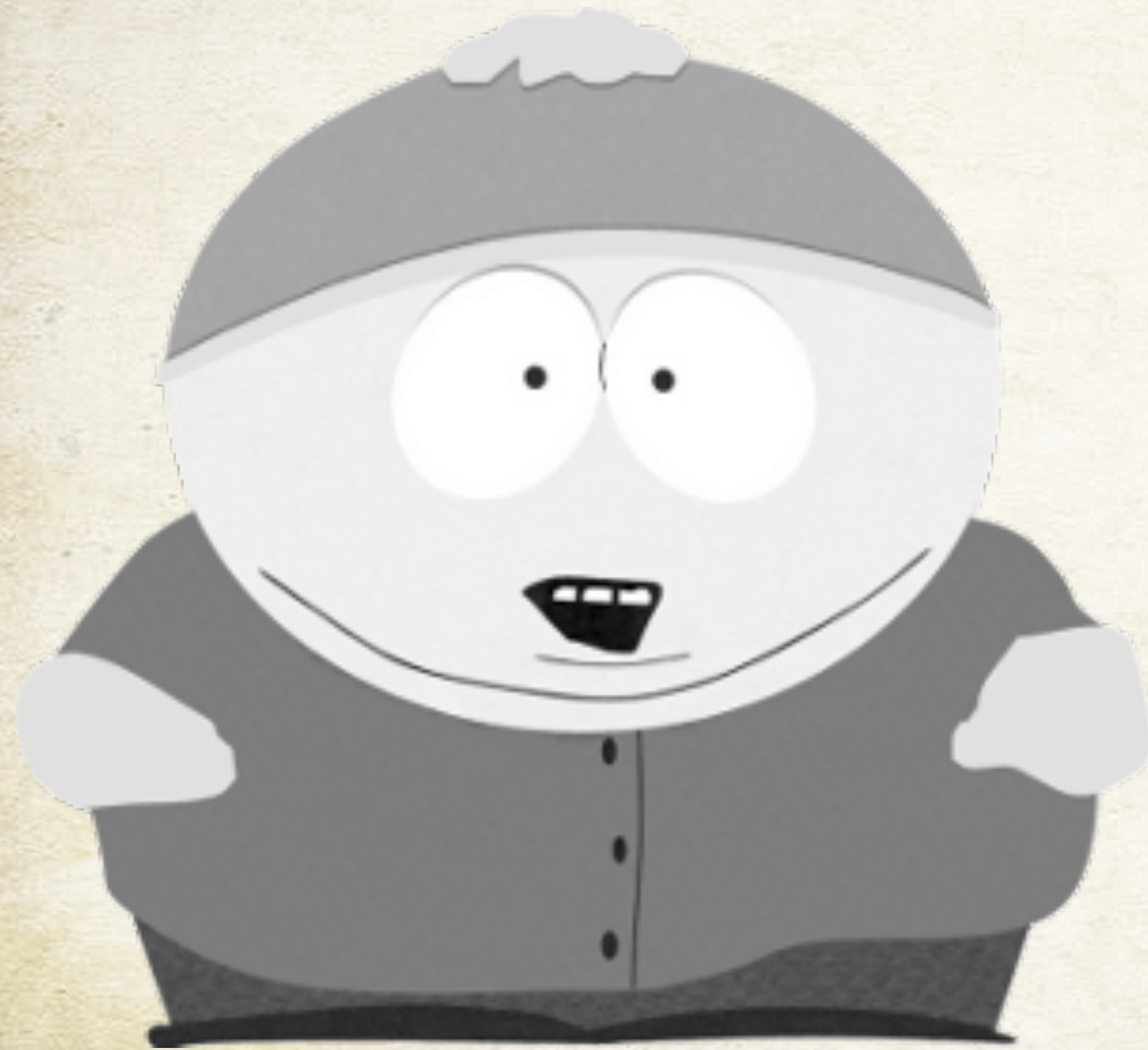


Philosopher Hegel referred to it as the tripartite story structure. What emerged was the dialectical method, better known as debate.

The three-act structure is thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

2025 AD

AND BUT THEREFORE



South Park creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker pursue the three forces of story in a process they call the “Rule of Replacement.”

They replace the overuse of the word “And” in dialogue with either “But” or “Therefore” because this structure propels the story forward.

“And” sets up the scene. “But” provides the complication that intrigues our survival brain, and “Therefore” resolves the consequence of the action.

South Park has been on air for 28 years with over 300 episodes.

They know story structure.

THE ART IS THE DNA OF STORY

AND = Agreement/Setup

BUT = Contradiction/Problem

THEREFORE = Consequence/Solution

Uh-huh...

Uh-oh!

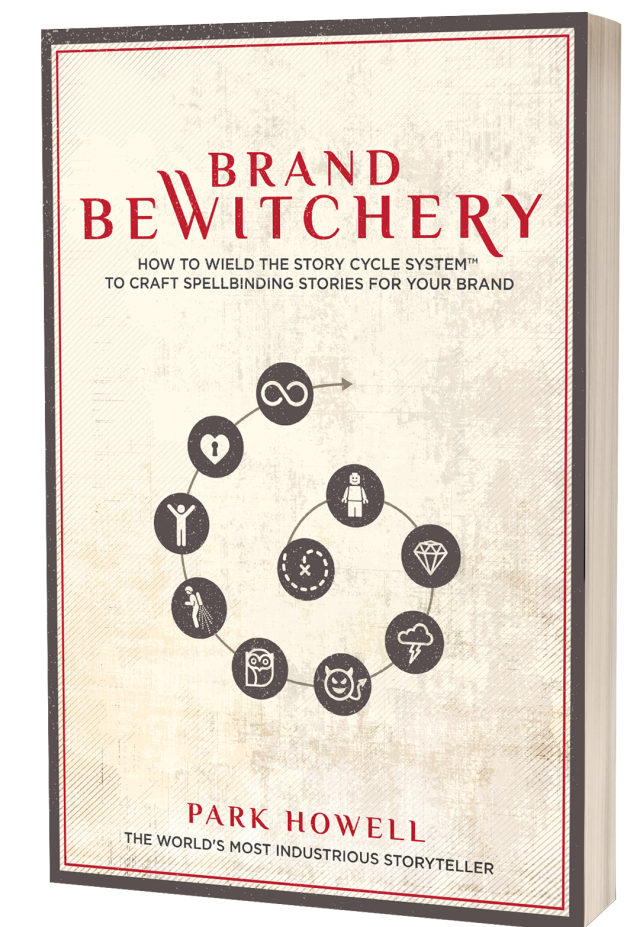
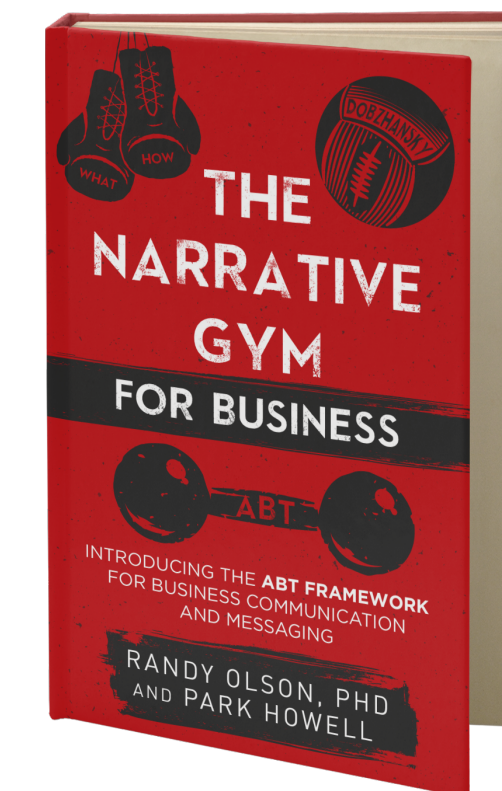
Aha.



BRING YOUR BRAND STORY OUT OF THE DARK AGES

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