Unit 22

Single camera drama

**What is single camera drama?**

The single camera setup, or single camera mode of production, is a method of filmmaking and video production. The prospect of single camera formats and multi camera formats are simple. Single camera uses one camera and multi camera uses two or more.

Single camera formats give a director more control over a shot, however it is more expensive and more time consuming as a shot has to be planned thoroughly so that they can give actors correct timing for when they step into a shot.

Multi camera formats have their advantages too. They have advantages in things such as live TV and sport as they can show different angles on what they are broadcasting. Some examples of multi camera TV broadcasts are thing like Football, live TV shows such as the chase. Multi camera can show different views of actors, showing facial expressions and body language. Multi camera formats are also used in Talk shows as they can show audience participation which is something that single camera cannot do. Multi camera is also used in Panel shows and sketch shows too.

A single camera – either motion picture camera or professional video camera – is employed on the set, and each shot to make up a scene is taken independently. An alternative production method, which is more widely used is till called a “single camera”

Single camera exactly as it sounds; a one off drama with a beginning, middle and end.

**Serial:** A serial is a type of show that is ongoing; it is much like a serial meaning the episode goes on every week. The difference is that with a serial the story changes as the course of the show goes on, meaning that each episode is left on a cliffhanger and so that the story unfolds episode after episode for as long as it runs on. The story changes as the show goes on episode after episode. An example of a serial is a show called Emmerdale. Emmerdale is a good example because it has been running for a long time, with new characters brought in and the story changing, the show has been very popular with lots of people viewing it weekly. Shows like emmerdale show that serials are good; meaning more and more shows are or will be using serial format over other options.

**Series:** A series is a number of episodes that run under the same title all ending the story at the end of each episode. An example of a series would be things such as dramas like the bill. The difference with a series as apposed to a serial is that the story doesn’t change as the show goes on; it is pre-written before the show is actually made and broadcasted on TV. When a certain amount of episodes have been broadcasted they are divided into seasons. An example of a successful series would be the paranormal investigation show most haunted which has over 15 full series of episodes since when they started back in 2002. Series 16 is being broadcasted on the Internet.

**Drama:** A drama is a dramatic TV show, which is usually fictional along the lines of traditional drama. This excludes, for example, [sports television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sports_television), [television news](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_news), [reality show](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reality_show) and [game shows](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Game_show), [stand-up comedy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stand-up_comedy) and [variety shows](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Variety_show). Also, by convention, the term is not generally used for [situation comedy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Situation_comedy) or [soap opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soap_opera).

Most dramatic television programming falls within other standard categories such as [miniseries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miniseries), [made-for-TV movies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Made-for-TV_movies) or certain rather circumscribed dramatic genres. One major category of dramatic programing, particularly in the United States, is [Crime Drama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime_Drama).

Some examples of [BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC) dramatic programming would be the serials [The Six Wives of Henry VIII](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Six_Wives_of_Henry_VIII_%28TV_series%29) or [Our Friends in the North](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Friends_in_the_North).

Some examples of US television drama series are [Breaking Bad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breaking_Bad), [The Wire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wire), [The Sopranos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sopranos), [Sons of Anarchy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sons_of_Anarchy), [Lost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lost_%28TV_series%29), [Mad Men](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mad_Men), and [Parenthood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenthood_%282010_TV_series%29).

**Genres:**  There are many genres of TV shows that are broadcasted on Television nowadays and they fall into either the category of single camera or multi camera.

Shows that will fall into single camera are shows such as The Addams Family, The Munsters, Get Smart. Apart from giving these shows a feature film style, it was very good for the visual effects used in them, such as magical appearances and disappearances, and lookalike doubles where the regular actors played a dual role.

Single camera comedies were becoming prevalent in the early 1970’s

A TV show called M.A.S.H was shot using single camera format as it had a large cast and many locations.

The show Happy Days started off as a single camera drama in 1974 before switching to multi camera in its second season

Here are some shows that fall into the multi camera format: I Love Lucy, The Amos ‘n Andy Show and Mork & Mindy.

**Narrative:** Films use narrative techniques. Here is an example: *“Mr Deed uses various narrative structures. It uses Todorov theory as it has an equilibrium, Longfellow deeds living happily in new Hampshire running a pizzeria; Disruption, his uncle dying and him investing Blake media, a 40 billion dollar company; and a resolution, a closer heir being found and him taking home 1 billion dollars.”*

This narrative is multi strand as it has other stories happening along the way. here is an example: *“Longfellow Deeds falls in love with with Pam Dawson, school nurse from Winchestertonfieldville, Iowa, however, Pam is actually named Babe Bennett, a New York News Reporter. This in a way creates an unrestricted genre as we see evens unraveling before the characters in the Film.”*

There are different techniques used in the narrative structures which are sued in single camera productions.

Linear narratives are story lines that run from start to end in chronological order, meaning they don’t have any flashbacks or flash-forwards or broken up in anyway. The most popular linear story lines are used in soap operas such as Coronation Street and Eastenders.

Non-linear narratives can be made in anyway including random orders, flashbacks or flash-forwards. A non-linear narrative can be very effective when making a film, as you might want to reveal the ending before you actually begin telling the start. A lot of films by Tarantino are non-linear

There are narratives such as Realist and Anti-realist narratives, these two have a difference as a realist narrative has a story line that has happened in the past whereas an Anti-realist narrative is not real and uses a lot of after effects.

**Technical Aspects:** The lighting in a single camera setup is typically reconfigured for each camera setup. In single camera productions you have different types of lighting such as high key, low key, natural lighting and ambient lighting.

High key lighting is used in film, TV and photography which is used to reduce the amount of lighting ratio present in the scene. High key lighting It is now used to suggest an upbeat mood. It is commonly used in sitcoms and comedies and is homogeneous (Alike and of the same kind) and free from dark shadows.

Low key lighting is often used to hide features using a single light to show only what is wanted to be seen in the shot

Natural lighting is used to create a natural feel to the shot only relying on the sun or moons reflection and no special effects.

Ambient lighting is the combination of light reflections from various surfaces to produce a uniform illumination which is called the ambient light.

Diegetic sound is the sound that can be heard by the by the characters in the scene that may be added after

Non-diegetic sound is sound that cannot be heard by the characters, so things like music which is used to add tension to the scene or just to set a scene

Sound effects are artificial sounds that are created to replace natural sounds making them less noticeable or more dramatic

Ambient sound is sound used in the background of a scene to set the tone of a scene whether it is to create a feeling of safety or tension or whatever feeling you want

Dialogue is the sound that comes from the actors playing their parts with their voice, for example: Tom cruises voice heard when he was playing the role of Ray Ferrier in war of the worlds

A voice over is the voice of someone that is talking over a scene often used in documentaries or a directors commentary

Synchronous sound is sound that is synchronized with what is going on in a scene

Asynchronous sound is when sound is not matched with what is going on in the scene but more rather to create a distortion effect with the scene

On screen sound represents any sound that is made in the scene in front of the audience to take them to a specific point or just because it is part of the scene

Off screen sound represents any sound that is made off screen. Off screen sound is most commonly used to signify a transition to another scene or to startle the audience.

**Scene building:**  To build a scene you need to find suitable setting that is suitable to the story. For example if you were making a drama that is set in Victorian times then you would need a Victorian looking location and Victorian outfits to go with time period, if someone was to come into the scene wearing a costume that didn’t fit with the rest then it wouldn’t look right unless it was part for the story and intentional.

**Bibliography:**  <http://www.slideshare.net/rdtwilson/single-camera-production-19068571>

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