Creating Believable Characters

- Users of interactive media create their own character <u>subtext</u> based on what <u>context</u> the project's characters are placed in.

- <u>Subtext</u> is when the user "plots" the future circumstances of the character's inner or outer "story" as they imagine what might happen next.

Believable Characters - Context

- Dialogue and action are the scalpels with which a writer bares a character's inner story.

- <u>Exercise</u>: Suppose you were told that a man viciously slapped a boy at a street corner. Without knowing anything else, how would you feel about the man? What does he look like? What about the boy? What's happening in this scene?

Believable Characters - Context

- <u>New Info</u>: You have just learned that as the man viciously slaped the boy, the boy droped a handgun he was pointing at the man's head.

- Review your initial impressions. Do your initial thoughts match what really happened in the scene? What about your descriptions of the characters? Were they accurate?

Believable Characters - Context

- You'll notice that your thoughts and impressions will change depending on the what <u>context</u> the information is presented to you.

- When you create characters and/or narrative modules for interactive projects, you should be aware that that <u>context</u> plays a critical role in user-character relations (subtext).