

# Narrative approaches in "the chronicles of a death foretold" by gabriel garcia ma...



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## **Narrative approaches in “ The Chronicles of a Death Foretold” by Gabriel Garcia Marquez Essay Sample**

Gabriel Garcia Marquez uses as a variety of different narrative approaches in the chronicles of a death foretold, to effect the readers perception of narrator himself. These unique narrative strategies make the reader question the intentions of the narrator, his own character and the means in which the narrator tells the unusual hazy and jumbled chronicle of Santiago's murder.

The narrator's characteristics and his unique magical realism have an important effect in the narration of the chronicle. The narrator's position in relation to the town and Santiago is very significant. The narrator is Santiago's old friend, they are both of the same segregated class. The narrators aliment with the victim makes the reader query what it may be the narrator is trying to achieve through his peculiar investigation. His friendship with Santiago seems to show he may be swaying towards Santiago's innocence, in the chronicle. The narrator describes Santiago in a way that was obviously not shared by the town, “ By his nature, Santiago was merry, peaceful and openhearted.”(6). This is definitely not the perception that the reader receives from other recollections of the towns people, for example the narrator describes “ Santiago had an almost magical talent for disguises”(75), however this is his description of when Santiago dressed up whores so they looked so similar that they would burst out in tears.

The narrator seems to portray Santiago in the light, and the reader is able to see this through the obvious contradiction of his views of Santiago and the town's. Even though the narrator seems to describe Santiago in an

honorable way unlike many others would have not, his lack of moral outrage at the murder itself or the town that stood by and watched seems very unusual. He seems to have no real emotional feelings towards the murder of his friend; it was coincidentally the narrator who was sleeping with Maria Alejandrina Cervantes behind Santiago's back while he was murdered, a whore who Santiago had been deeply involved with. The narrator's content with the murder of his friend also relates to the way he investigates Santiago's murder. The narrator may give detailed quotes and a wide view of events, but however does not provide in depth analysis or information through his questioning of the town twenty seven years later.

He lacks the will to question beneath the surface, to really investigate Santiago and the town because truly he would be investigating his own very questionable morals. Marquez allows the reader to understand this content however still gives the narrator the ability to tell the chronicle through magic realism. Marquez gives the narrator the ability to know what others in the town think and feel, information that could not have come from his bleak investigation techniques. This realistic fiction still enables the reader to doubt the morals of the narrator and also receive the events of the chronicle. The unusual aspects of the narrator where he seems to try to reveal Santiago as a good man, however clearly has no emotion towards the murder of his friend, show he is perhaps trying to clear a guilty conscious or defend his own segregated class.

One of the most distinctive strategies Marquez uses in the chronicle is the novel's jumble of time. The investigation of Santiago's death is written in a factual, journalistic style, which has no linear establishment at all, no <https://assignbuster.com/narrative-approaches-in-the-chronicles-of-a-death-foretold-by-gabriel-garcia-marquez-essay-sample/>

chronological sequence, the narrator jumps from recollections of his own to others in an order that appears to have no purpose. For example we learn the fate of the Vicario brothers before we discover any details of Santiago's murder. This sequence of events gives the impression the narrator is not investigating a murder not really trying to discover innocence or guilt, but simply describing an aspect of an event. This jumble of memories causes the reader to have to piece together the murder of Santiago, effectively giving the impression of piecing a past story back together. The structure of the chronicle has a great effect on the readers understanding of the creation of the chronicle, through memories twenty seven years later.

We learn the death of Santiago at the very first sentence of the book; this knowledge of the chronicle supports and shows the reader how the death of Santiago was seen as unavoidable. His murder is announced at the beginning of the novel, just like the Vicario brothers are said to think of the murder "as if it had already happened". The murder like the sequence of events leads up to the anticipated murder of Santiago. The way Marquez orders the novels memories gives the sense that the narrator saw Santiago's death was fate, that he accepted the murder of his friend.

The narrator at the beginning of the book says he has returned to "put the broken mirror of memory back together from so many scattered shards."

This quote is implied early in the novel and sets the knowledge for the readers understanding of the narrators, unreliability of telling the chronicle.

Information the narrator provides in the chronicle contradicts and

undermines more often than it seems to clarify. The first of these is as

simple as varying accounts of the weather on the morning of Santiago's

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death. " Many people concided in recalling that it was a radiant morning with a sea breeze, as was to be expected in a fine February of that period. But most agreed that the weather was funeral, with a cloudy, low sky and the thick smell of still waters and at the moment of the misfortune a thin drizzle was falling." (4) As a book progresses the untrustworthy narration begin to become related to Santiago's murder. The narrator gives the memories even a more faded illusion due to the celebrations for Angela Vicario and Bayrardo San Romans wedding the night before.

The narrator himself has hazed visions of the memories he plans to 'rescue', twenty seven years later but also the towns people who he investigates all seem to have fuzzy alcohol drenched memories, it was the narrators sister that was said to have had 'eight-proof hangover'. The foundation for the narrative is based on the blurred memories, these varying accounts of information and so from the multiple perceptions and points of view there is never on one version of the truth that clearly exists. This is an important aspect that Marquez gives the chronicle; the reader is unable to trust the narrator and the town's memories. Marquez through these unreliable memories shows how Santiago is murdered because it was not in anyway proven that he deflowered Angela, however that he was accused. Marquez relates this to the narrative, by telling the story, by carefully choosing and arranging recollections the narrator's version of events can be seen as the truth. Marquez makes it clear that the narrative is selective and judgmental so again the reader can subject the narrator to criticism.