MAS845 Assignment 2
World Scenario and Representation
Due 2/26/04

The focus of this assignment is to develop a story set and a representation that can be used to explore different ways of sequencing the set. Later we combine the sets and explore what types of representation might work across all of them. Students work in small teams.

The story:
Each team creates a "story" with three characters. The story should be based in the present and located in the Cambridge/Boston environs. The narrative structure for each character will need to follow a specified (by the team) structure. The three character narratives need to fit together into a single structured narrative. The end goal is to be able to navigate each team's project either on a character level or larger multi-character level. The multi-character level will need to represent different ways of looking at the world - could be complementary or contradictory, but must be different. (The Carol Pearson reading should help with this.)

The mission:
These stories have been commissioned for a space mission. A physical representation of the story will be shot off into space, will our nearest star system, Alpha Centauri, and then return toward Earth. Assuming that it is not intercepted by another life form, it will return to earth in 100 years. Aside from the vehicle's scientific duties, it will act as a traveling time capsule to either represent present day life on earth to another life form or remind our descendants of what life was really like, how people really loved, hated, related, etc. This is important because any distant life form may already have intercepted radio signal representations of everything from Gilligan's Island to Jerry Springer, to Friends and Howard Stern. And assuming popular media recordings of ourselves will likely still be around on earth in another century, here is an opportunity for us to represent ourselves differently, hopefully with more honest, and in a more "parsable" or navigable way.

The presentation:
The teams will need to present or "tell" their project the following week. (The Lipman reading will help a little with this). Part of the telling will have to include the other parts of story representation, perhaps even an image that shows how to navigate the story. (Like the image etched into the side of Voyager http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov/image/images/spacecraft/disc.jpg). This representation is important because it is provides a key by which future generations or other forms of life can find, navigate and understand the story. The story needs to be well thought out, internally consistant and can be presented using whatever combination of modes -- storyboards, written text, structural representations, etc. -- the authors feel best conveys the story and its representation.