CULTURAL BORROWINGS

Appropriation, Reworking, Transformation

Edited by
Iain Robert Smith

Blank Page

A *Scope* e-Book

Cultural Borrowings: Appropriation, Reworking, Transformation

Edited by Iain Robert Smith

Table of Contents

Part I: Hollywood Cinema and Artistic Imitation

Part II: Found Footage and Remix Culture

Part III: Modes of Parody and Pastiche

Part IV: Transnational Screen Cultures

Notes on Contributors

Pamela Atzori is currently a Doctoral student at Aberystwyth University in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies. Her thesis is entitled *The Dickens Phenomenon and His Enduring Popularity on International TV Adaptations: The Encounter between Popular Literature and the Universal Screen Cultures it Inspired*. She is currently preparing an article for publication in an international multi-disciplinary volume on Charles Dickens. Her main research interests are TV drama (particularly Victorian literary adaptations) and popular television, as well as national European television and cinema in general.

Sérgio Dias Branco is researcher in film and philosophy at the New University of Lisbon and an invited member of the film analysis group The Magnifying Class of the University of Oxford. He has taught film and television at the University of Kent, where he is completing a PhD on the aesthetic patterns of television fiction series. His research on the aesthetics of moving images has been presented at Yale University and the University of Glasgow, among others. Sérgio's writing has been published in Refractory -- forthcoming publications include an essay on film noir, and book chapters on *Battlestar Galactica*, Abel Ferrara's The *Addiction*, and Guy Maddin's cinema.

Brigid Cherry teaches courses on the horror genre, cult film and television, and music in popular culture. She has researched horror film fandom, particularly the female audience, and other cult and fan audiences. She recently published a book on horror cinema with Routledge.

Emma Cocker is a writer and Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University. Book chapters include 'Not Yet There: Endless Searches and Irresolvable Quests' in *Telling Stories: Countering Narrative in Art, Theory and Film* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009); 'Over and Over Again and Again' in *Classical Myth/Contemporary Art* (Ashgate Publishing, 2010) and 'From Passivity to Potentiality: The Dynamic of Stillness' in *Stillness in a Mobile World* (Library of Sociology Series, Routledge, 2011).

Darren Elliott is a doctoral candidate in Media Arts at Royal Holloway and Film Education Coordinator at the University of Hertfordshire. His thesis *Queer Horror Film and the Erotic Male Spectacle* considers an emerging sub-genre of parodic horror titles that foreground the erotic evisceration of the male body, via the adoption of hypermasculine iconography in a desperate disavowal of the "horrific" conflation of gay masculinity with femininity. He has presented papers at Cine Excess, Brunel University; New Nightmares, Manchester Metropolitan University and Monsters and Monstrosity, Oxford University.

Austin Fisher recently received his doctorate from Royal Holloway, University of London, and also holds degrees from the University of Birmingham and Queen Mary, University of London. His PhD thesis, *Radical Frontiers: Political Violence in the Italian Western*, analyses militant left-wing trends which arose from within the "Spaghetti" Western genre around the time of the 1968 protest movements.

Cultural Borrowings:
Appropriation, Reworking, Transformation
ISBN: 978-0956464101

Eli Horwatt is a doctoral candidate in the department of Film and Media Studies at York University in Toronto, Canada. His thesis, *The Work of Art in the age of [ctrl]-C: Digital Remixing and Contemporary Found Footage Film Practice on the Internet*, delineates the relationship between avant-garde film aesthetics and videos made by subcultures of media activists on the Internet. He has published on Machinima and experimental media, and writes about strategies of appropriation in art and the moving image.

I.Q. Hunter is Principal Lecturer in Film Studies at De Montfort University, Leicester. He has published widely on horror, science fiction and exploitation cinema.

Stijn Joye is a research and teaching assistant in the Department of Communication Studies at Ghent University (Belgium) where he is a member of the 'Centre for Cinema and Media Studies' (CIMS) and 'Center for Journalism Studies' (CJS). His areas of research and publication include the concept of artistic imitation in film, international news (agencies), and the representation of global suffering. He is currently finalising a PhD on the news media coverage of international humanitarian crises. In 2006 he was awarded the IAMCR Prize in Memory of Herbert I. Schiller.

Jordan Lavender-Smith is pursuing his Ph.D. in English and Film Studies at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. His academic interests include self-reflexivity in fiction and film, seriality and addiction, Early- and Postmodern dramaturgy, and, more generally, the cultural causes and consequences of literary forms. He teaches in the English department at the City University of New York's Queens College.

Jason Scott lectures in Film Studies at Leeds Trinity & All Saints. His Ph.D. thesis, Discourses recognizing aesthetic innovation in cinema: Bonnie and Clyde, a case study, adopted a historical reception approach, applying discourse analysis to explore critical and wider receptions of the film. He is currently developing research on the character-oriented franchise in film and related media into a book The Character-Oriented Franchise. His previous articles have featured in Geraghty and Jancovich (eds.) (2008) The Shifting Definitions of Genre and Scope: An Online Journal of Film and Television Studies.

Iain Robert Smith is a doctoral candidate in the Institute of Film and Television Studies at the University of Nottingham. His thesis, *Hollywood Remix: Transcultural Appropriation in the Popular Cinemas of Turkey, India and the Philippines*, explores the myriad ways in which iconic elements of American popular culture have been borrowed and transformed in other national contexts. He has published articles on this theme in *Velvet Light Trap* and *Portal: Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies.*

Neelam Sidhar Wright is a doctoral candidate in the school of Media, Film and Music at the University of Sussex. Her thesis *Bollywood Eclipsed: The postmodern aesthetics, scholarly appeal and remaking of contemporary popular Indian cinema* uses postmodern and adaptation theory to explore how Bollywood has changed after its economic liberalisation at the turn of the twenty-first century.

ii

Her research offers a redefinition of contemporary Bollywood cinema and suggests ways in which this cinema can be better incorporated into Western film studies courses.

Acknowledgements

Foreword

Mark Gallagher and Julian Stringer, University of Nottingham, UK

Scope is ten years old. We are pleased to mark our tenth anniversary of continuous publication with our first e-book, Iain Robert Smith's edited volume *Cultural Borrowings: Appropriation, Reworking, Transformation*. We hope our readers will enjoy this free-to-all collection of original scholarship on processes of adaptation in film, television and new media.

We are proud of the reputation *Scope* has built up over the past decade as one of the most respected journals in English-language Film and Television Studies. How has this been achieved? The journal's contribution to scholarship may be judged in a number of different ways. These include: the range and quality of the work we publish; the presence of our distinguished editorial advisory board; the fact that numerous articles first published in *Scope* have been reprinted in hard copy books by university presses and other publishers; the adoption of *Scope* articles for classroom use and for module reading packs; the widespread citation of the journal's output in other books, journals and bibliographies; and the warm messages of support we frequently receive at events such as academic conferences as well as through the electronic ether. Further evidence of our widespread impact is supplied by the fact that our web site enjoys a very high "hit" rate, and that visitors come from "all four corners of the world".

Scope's *raison d'etre* is research excellence. The feedback we receive from professional colleagues suggests that we are able to publish a steady stream of high-quality scholarship primarily because of the rigorous nature of our peer-review process. Article submissions are sent to external readers and only accepted for publication after full consideration of readers' reports at editorial board meetings. We take care to provide authors with productive feedback, and our section editors work closely with writers to improve the quality of their work. Maintaining tight quality control over peer review procedures means that we publish far fewer articles than we receive. Indeed, many articles that we have been forced to reject have ended up being published in other distinguished hard copy and online journals instead.

We have played an important role in publishing the work of established and emerging scholars worldwide. In the fourteen issues appearing since 2005 alone, *Scope* has published articles from scholars based in the US, UK, Canada, Hong Kong, China, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Greece and Finland. We have reported on conferences held in the UK, US, Canada, France, Turkey, Australia, Hong Kong, China and Malaysia. Our reporters, and our many book and film reviewers, hail from these locations as well as many other points of origin around the world. Few if any other journals in our discipline can claim a similar breadth of authors and zones of interest. This diverse range of voices attests to our commitment to truly global scholarship in film and television. Our international advisory board serves as further evidence of this commitment, as of course does *Scope*'s long record of publishing articles about the many tributaries of global cinema—and more recently television—in local, national and regional contexts as well as historical and theoretical ones.

As *Scope* looks beyond its tenth year of publication, we encourage our readers, and the Film and Television Studies communities in which we operate, to join us in shaping the direction of screen scholarship. *Scope* wishes to maintain a broad remit that excludes no promising area of film and television scholarship. At the same time, we believe periodic special issues can successfully concentrate attention around particular research areas, enabling the kinds of deep and sustained dialogues around a subject that periodicals with wide-ranging content cannot customarily provide.

We therefore welcome suggestions for further special issues, as well as discrete article submissions that speak to the diversity of global screen cultures as well as the specificity of contemporary critical models. In particular, to continue *Scope*'s dynamic engagement with the breadth of screen media, we encourage contributions on television and new media subjects, on production studies of global and local film industries, and in areas of reception and audience studies. Overall, through this special tenth anniversary e-book, and through *Scope*'s established mix of articles, conference reports, and reviews of books, films and television programs, we hope to continue the journal's productive interventions into ongoing critical and cultural debates.

A Note of Thanks

Scope has benefited over the past decade from the hard work and goodwill of countless friends and colleagues. A dozen members of staff and over thirty postgraduate research students at the University of Nottingham have sat at one time or another on our editorial board – all have given freely of their time, energy and expertise. The distinguished scholars comprising our editorial advisor board have read and reviewed more than their fair share of manuscripts while also offering invaluable advice and support. Academics from around the world have also served as occasional reviewers, volunteered their ideas, and sent us their best wishes. We are very grateful to you all.

Our biggest thanks, however, must go to our contributors and readers. Without your support, *Scope* would not exist. Certainly, the journal's ongoing success is a testament to the talent and enthusiasm of the many fine scholars in Film and Television Studies who make our discipline so vibrant and so exciting.

Cultural Borrowings: Adaptation, Reworking, Transformation emerged from a conference of the same name, held at the University of Nottingham on 19th March 2008, organized by Iain Robert Smith and supported by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council) and MeCCSA (Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association). *Scope* is indebted to Iain for the dedication and passion with which he has brought this e-book to maturity.

Introduction

Iain Robert Smith, University of Nottingham, UK

Talent Borrows, Genius Steals (Anon.)

The above quotation has been variously attributed to Oscar Wilde, Pablo Picasso, TS Eliot, Igor Stravinsky, William Burroughs, and even Morrissey, singer with British indie band The Smiths. This uncertainty of origin seems rather apt. Resonant of the current shift in adaptation studies, it draws attention away from the notion of textual originality to reflect the more intertextual processes of borrowing and theft that pervade cultural production. Challenging static notions of textuality which implicitly construct a hierarchy between source and adaptation, the study of adaptations has instead shifted its attention onto the endless circles of intertextual borrowings and hybridity. Indeed, in an essay that has done much to reinvigorate the study of adaptations, Robert Stam has suggested that:

> Film adaptations are… caught up in the ongoing whirl of intertextual references and transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation and transmutation, with no clear point of origin. (Stam, 2000: 66)

This emphasis on adaptation as an endless process of recycling with no clear point of origin has helped shift the field away from the dreaded Achilles heel of adaptation studies -- namely, fidelity discourse. Offering a textual comparison between the novel and its adaptation, such studies were structured by implicit value judgements based around whether the film had been faithful to the "original" text. Often concluding with the authors simply deriding the filmic adaptations as "sycophantic, derivative, and therefore inferior to their literary counterparts" (Cartmell and Whelehan, 2007: 1), studies of this kind rested upon problematic conceptions of originality and literary value.

Thankfully, over the last decade, pioneering work in adaptation studies (Stam, 2000; Sanders, 2005; Hutcheon, 2006; Cartmell and Whelehan, 2007; Geraghty, 2007; Leitch, 2007) and its younger sibling remake studies (Mazdon, 2000; Verevis, 2006, Bozelka, 2008) has reoriented the field of study away from reductive value judgements and stale conceptions of textual fidelity towards a focus on Bakhtinian intertextuality. This shift has also birthed two new academic journals -- *Adaptation: The Journal of Literature on Screen Studies*, launched in 2008, and the *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance*, launched in 2007. In the words of Thomas Leitch, "After years of being stuck in the backwaters of the academy, adaptation studies is on the move" (Leitch, 2008: 63).

Nevertheless, despite this shift in theoretical focus, there is still a prevailing model of book-into-film that ignores the rich variety of adaptations throughout film, television and new media -- from character-oriented franchises to internet mash-ups, and from found-footage video art to B-movie rip-offs. This special issue seeks to challenge the current limitations of adaptation studies by consider-

ing cultural borrowings across a diverse range of media and through a diverse range of methodologies.

When video artist Charles Lum mixed sequences from the horror film *Carrie* (1976) with images and sounds from gay pornography in his experimental short *Indelible* (2004); or when director Sanjay Gupta reworked elements of *Reservoir Dogs* (1992) in the Bollywood musical *Kaante* (2002); or when the Beastie Boys recreated scenes from the Italian comic book adaptation *Danger: Diabolik* (1968) in the music video to "Body Movin'," they were all appropriating elements from prior cultural texts for use in the creation of new works. Bringing together insights from across the disciplines, this collection develops our academic models of adaptation and appropriation in order to consider what is at stake when these artists borrow and transform elements from pre-existing work in new cultural texts.

The issue is organised in four sections, each dealing with a different form of cultural borrowing. Part I examines "Hollywood Cinema and Artistic Imitation" and provides three complimentary historical accounts of the development of adaptation within US cinema. First, IQ Hunter, in his article "Exploitation as Adaptation," complicates notions of textual originality by examining the whirl of intertextual references that fed into *Jaws* (1975) and the cycle of exploitation films that followed, which he terms "Jawsploitation." Functioning as a thorough cataloguing of the *Jaws* meme from *Piranha* (1978) to *Deep Blue Sea* (1999), the article also offers a productive model for understanding exploitation cinema as itself a mode of adaptation. Jason Scott then takes us back to an earlier incarnation of artistic imitation in Hollywood, historicizing its development in "The Character-Oriented Franchise: Promotion and Exploitation of Pre-Sold Characters in American Film, 1913-1950." While most discussions of franchises and synergy focus on the contemporary media landscape, this is the first article to concentrate its sole attention on the role of pre-sold characters -- from Dick Tracy to Superman -- in the development of the early Hollywood franchise system. Rounding off this section is Stijn Joye with "Novelty Through Repetition: Exploring the Success of Artistic Imitation in the Contemporary Film Industry, 1983-2007," building on current work in the field of adaptation studies by exploring the phenomenon from a quantitative perspective. Examining an extensive data set from 1983-2007, Joye helps lend credence to the oft asserted yet rarely substantiated notion that adaptations and remakes have become increasingly prevalent in the contemporary film industry.

Just as Part I investigates the historical development of artistic imitation in Hollywood, then Part II looks to the future and examines the contemporary practice of "Found Footage and Remix Culture." Opening with Eli Horwatt's article "A Taxonomy of Digital Video Remixing: Contemporary Found Footage Practice on the Internet," the section provides insights into the complex processes of adaptation that pervade new media technologies. Horwatt's contribution offers both a useful taxonomy of the different form of digital video remixing from "Political Remix Video" to "Trailer Mash-Ups" and traces the antecedents to this trend in avant-garde found-footage filmmaking practice. Next, Emma Cocker's article "Ethical Possession: Borrowing from the Archives" focuses on the Italian filmmaking team Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi, who utilise found-

footage in their work. Cocker theorises a movement in cultural/art practice away from hollow borrowing towards forms of creative appropriation that offer more empathic models of engagement with memory, history and the archive. Closing this section is Sérgio Dias Branco's "Music Videos and Reused Footage." Discussing music videos that rework existing footage, and drawing on William Wees to propose a new typology (assemblage, collage, montage) to categorise these distinct forms of reuse and recombination, Branco makes a significant contribution to the study of found footage in music video.

Shifting focus onto more imitative forms of appropriation, Part III focuses on "Modes of Parody and Pastiche." Offering a fresh take on the phenomenon of cult film pastiche in the contemporary music video, Brigid Cherry utilizes a close analysis of the Beastie Boys' video for "Body Movin'" and its palimpsestuous relationship with Mario Bava's *Danger Diabolik*, to interrogate the role of pastiche in music video and how this relates to the wider cultural economy of fandom and subcultural identity. In her article, "From Cult to Subculture: Re-Imaginings of Cult Films in Alternative Music Video," Cherry considers how such borrowings can be seen to evoke culturally shared cognitive schema in which bands communicate their own set of generic and subcultural competencies directly to the viewer. Next, Darren Elliott's "Queering the Cult of *Carrie:* Appropriations of a Horror Icon in Charles Lum's *Indelible*" seeks to problematize the appropriative act. Discussing the various queer borrowings of Brian De Palma's film *Carrie*, the article explores the sexual politics of appropriation through various case studies including an RSC musical, a drag performance entitled "Carrie: A Period Piece" and the video art film *Indelible*. Specifically addressing the relationship between the gay male subject and the female protagonist of *Carrie*, the author raises pertinent questions regarding disavowals of femininity in queer appropriation. Continuing this interrogation of the potentially dangerous implications of appropriation, Jordan Lavender Smith's "Irony Inc.: Parodic-Doc Horror and *The Blair Witch Project*" utilizes Linda Hutcheon's work on parody to interrogate the parodic documentary form. Showing how parody does not always function as a challenge to social hierarchies, and can actually work to re-establish authority both formally and socially, the article injects a note of caution into discussions of the parodic form.

Finally, in Part IV, the focus shifts away from the predominant focus on US media to consider the contribution that "Transnational Screen Cultures" can make to our understandings of the adaptive act. Exploring the political implications of the spaghetti western, Austin Fisher's "A Marxist's Gotta Do What a Marxist's Gotta Do: Political Violence on the Italian Frontier" considers ways the militant Italian Westerns of the late 1960s adapted the conventions of the American Western for explicitly political ends. Through a discussion of the ways the Western genre's central fixation on the justification of lethal violence in a noble cause resonates with contemporaneous discourse on the efficacy of armed insurrection, Fisher makes an important contribution to scholarship on the relationship between cinema and the New Left. Continuing the focus on transnational adaptation of American popular culture, Neelam Sidhar Wright, in "'Tom Cruise? Tarantino? E.T.? ...Indian!': Innovation Through Imitation in the Cross-Cultural Bollywood Remake," offers an authoritative survey of such texts as *Main Hoon Na* (2004), *Kaante* and *Koi…Mil Gaya* (2003) that respectively adapt elements from

the Hollywood films *Mission: Impossible* (1996), *Reservoir Dogs* and *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial* (1982). Closing the special issue with what appears to be a more traditional study of adaptation is Pamela Atzori with "'La Television des Professeurs?': Charles Dickens, French Public Service Television and *Olivier Twist*." Yet what Atzori offers is a unique perspective on cross-national adaptation, considering a 1962 French televisual adaptation of *Oliver Twist* entitled *Olivier Twist*. Responding to some recent attempts in adaptation studies to move away from studying adaptations *as* adaptations (see Geraghty, 2007) the author makes the case for retaining the comparative aspect of adaptation study, while avoiding the danger of falling back into fidelity discourse.

Taken as a whole, this special issue points the way towards a more inclusive form of adaptation studies. Drawing on insights from across the fields of film and television studies, cultural studies, sociology, literature and social anthropology, the collection expands our notion of adaptation well beyond book-into-film. Of course, with such a diverse range of material now being studied as adaptations, one could well ask, as Linda Hutcheon has: "What is *not* an adaptation?" (Hutcheon, 2006: 170). With remakes, mash-ups, found footage, parodies, pastiches, franchises, and music videos all appearing alongside more traditional forms of adaptation, the field appears to be diverse indeed. Yet, rather than attempt to offer any kind of definitive answer as to what qualifies as an adaptation, this collection suggests that the blurring of boundaries is ultimately more productive. If adaptation studies can adapt and draw in insights from across the disciplines, then it will have succeeded where so many other fields of study have ultimately failed. It is time for us to borrow. It is time for us to steal.

References

Bozelka, Kevin John et al (eds.) (2008) Remakes and Adaptations [Special issue]. *Velvet Light Trap* 61 (Spring).

Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan (eds.) (2007), *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cartmell, Deborah, Timothy Corrigan and Imelda Whelehan (eds.) (2008-) *Adaptation: The Journal of Literature on Screen Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Geraghty, Christine (2007) *Now a Major Motion Picture*: *Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Hand Richard J. and Katja Krebs (eds.) (2007-) *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance*. Bristol: Intellect Books.

Hutcheon, Linda (2006) *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York and London: Routledge.

Leitch, Thomas (2007) *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Leitch, Thomas (2008) Adaptation Studies at a Crossroads, *Adaptation* 1 (1), pp. 63-77.

Mazdon, Lucy (2000) *Encore Hollywood: Remaking French Cinema*, London: BFI.

Julie Sanders (2005) *Adaptation and Appropriation*. London: Routledge.

Stam, Robert (2000) Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation, in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. 54-76.

Verevis, Constantine (2006) *Film Remakes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Filmography

The Blair Witch Project. 1999. Dir. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. Haxan Films.

Carrie. 1976. Dir. Brian De Palma. United Artists.

Danger: Diabolik. 1968. Dir. Mario Bava. Dino De Lauretniis Cinematografica.

Deep Blue Sea. 1999. Dir. Renny Harlin. Warner Bros.

E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial. 1982. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures.

Indelible. 2005. Dir. Charles Lum.

Jaws. 1975. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures.

Kaante. 2002. Dir. Sanjay Gupta. Pritish Nandy Communications.

Koi…Mil Gaya. 2003. Dir. Rakesh Roshan. Yash Raj Films.

Main Hoon Na. 2004. Dir. Farah Khan. Venus Films.

Mission: Impossible. 1996. Dir. Brian De Palma. Paramount Pictures.

Piranha. 1978. Dir. Joe Dante. New World Pictures.

Reservoir Dogs. 1992. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. Miramax Films.

Blank page

Part I:
Hollywood Cinema and
Artistic Imitation

Exploitation as Adaptation

I.Q. Hunter, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.

> (Melville, 1850)

This shark, swallow you whole.

> (Quint in *Jaws* [1975])

This article argues, first, that exploitation can be usefully thought of as a mode of adaptation; and, second, that this throws light on "*Jaws*ploitation" films -- the franchised sequels, unlicensed rip-offs and other imitations that followed the unprecedented success of Steven Spielberg's *Jaws* in 1975. These exploitation versions, from *Grizzly* (1976), *Tentacles* (1977), *Tintorera* (1977) and *Piranha* (1978) right up to *Deep Blue Sea* (1999), *Lake Placid* (1999), *Open Water* (2004), *Adrift* (2006), *Rogue* (2008) and *Shark in Venice* (2008), attest to *Jaws*'s memetic vitality and continuing cultural impact. My intention in this article is to pursue "*Jaws*ness" across numerous adaptations from copying and plagiarism to parody, homage and glancing allusion. *Jaws* lends itself to this kind of cinephiliac intertextual *dérive* more readily than pretty much any other film, except perhaps *King Kong* (1933) (Erb, 1998). Certainly, few movies have given rise to such an extravagant surfeit of imitations, so much so that the "*Jaws* rip-off" film is virtually a horror sub-genre in its own right.

Adaptation as Exploitation

Adaptation studies used to focus on the translation of books, especially "classic" and literary novels, into films and TV series. Recent scholarship works with a much broader definition of adaptation, no longer taken to mean simply novel-into-film (with the assumption being that "the novel is better") but also films derived from such non-literary sources as comics, trading cards, and theme park rides. Emphasising intertextuality over fidelity, the best work in the field locates adaptation within a range of long established industry practices that spin out and recycle narratives in the form of remakes, sequels, hyphenates, novelisations, videogames, DVD extras and "world building" franchises as well as straightforward "films of the book" (Stam 2000; Elliott 2003; Leitch 2007; Hutcheon 2007; Geraghty 2007; Cartmell and Whelehan 2007; Jenkins 2007). Adaptation, from this point of view, is a rational commercial strategy for commodifying textual material by disseminating it across numerous media (for authoritative statements of this, see McFarlane, 2000; Leitch, 2003; Murray 2008). In fact it is extremely difficult to find any film that is not involved in a relation of adaptation or indeed multiple, overlapping kinds of adaptation and textual extension. *Casino Royale* (2006), for example, is certainly an adaptation (the third) of Ian Fleming's novel, but it is also a remake; a prequel and "origin story;" the first instalment of a serial continued with *Quantum of Solace* (2008); and a "rebooting" of a long running series with its own intertextual authority and requirements. Linda

Hutcheon asks, "What is *not* an adaptation?" (Hutcheon, 2006: 170); one might equally ask, "What is *only* an adaptation?" Analysing adaptation as an industrial process therefore involves more than directly comparing books with films, using fidelity as the key yardstick. As Robert Ray notes, "the cinema's very different determinations (commercial exposure, collaborative production, public consumption) [makes] irrelevant methods of analysis developed for 'serious literature'" (Ray, 2001: 128). Adaptation, much like genre itself, is a method of standardising production and repackaging the familiar within an economy of sameness and difference.

Using this notion of adaptation as intertextuality, I want to consider that seemingly marginal phenomenon, the exploitation film.

Exploitation is an all-purpose and invariably pejorative label for cheap, sensational movies distributed to a sectionalised market, nowadays mostly straight to DVD. What has usually been exploited since the period of "classical exploitation" in the 1920s-50s is a controversial topic like sex or drugs, presented in a luridly voyeuristic manner (Doherty, 2002: 2-36). But exploitation films often explicitly imitate other movies, cannibalising their titles, concepts and publicity gimmicks. Sometimes this gives rise to a tightly defined cycle of films inspired by a mainstream or exploitation success -- a slew of blaxploitation films after *Sweet Sweetback's Baad Asssss Song* (1971) or Hell's Angels films after *The Wild Angels* (1966) -- but it may involve aping, more or less faithfully, the most exploitable elements of a specific high-profile movie. Such "exploitation versions" -- low budget and invariably low grade -- piggy-back on the hype accompanying a major release. This was Roger Corman's signature production method with *Bloody Mama* (1970) and *Boxcar Bertha* (1972) (cashing in on *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967)), *Death Race 2000* (1975) (*Rollerball* (1975)), and *Carnosaur* (1993) (*Jurassic Park*, which it pipped to the box office by three months) (Hillier and Lipstadt, 1981: 12-20). Even though exploitation versions may borrow little more than a title, concept and poster design, that is more than enough to secure a potentially lucrative association with the original.

For example, the internet buzz around *Snakes on a Plane* (2007), whose outlandish title earned it a cult following during production, inspired *Snakes on a Train* (2007), which was released to DVD three days before the cinema release of its big-budget rival. While *Snakes on a Train* pilfers *Plane*'s title and basic premise, its supernatural back-story, emphasis on body horror and curiously serious tone are sufficiently different to avoid a plagiarism suit. Some contemporary companies are wholly dedicated to pre-emptive straight to video imitations of blockbusters, notably The Asylum, which produced *Snakes on a Train*, *The Da Vinci Treasure* (2006), *Transmorphers* (2007), *AVH: Alien vs. Hunter* (2007) and *I am Ωmega* (2007); and Seduction Cinema, which specialises in such soft-core versions as *Kinky Kong* (2006), *The Lord of the G-Strings: The Femaleship of the Ring* (2003) and *Spider-babe* (2003) that seize on appetising textual material and rework it in a lower -- or since the originals are rarely art films, even lower -- cultural register (Hunter, 2006; Smith, 2009). As I have argued elsewhere unlicensed adaptations often illuminate their originals by modifying and correcting their subtexts and implications (Hunter, 2006). The possibility exists, though most parodies don't take advantage of it, that they "might exercise their peda-

gogical vocation by revealing with clarity and irony the ideological significations embedded in the entertainment values of Hollywood high-tech spectacles" (Vieira and Stam, 1985: 37). Even soft- and hardcore porn versions such as *The Lord of the G-Strings* and *A Clockwork Orgy* (1995) can been seen as potentially creative appropriations at the limits of copyright rather than simply as parodic rip-offs (Hunter, 2005, 2006, 2007a).

Imitation is, of course, standard practice across all entertainment media. Hollywood minimises risk by sticking closely to generic formulae and updating familiar properties in disguised versions. Thus, in ascending order of cynicism and postmodern homage, *Sleepless in Seattle* (1993) reworks *An Affair to Remember* (1957); *BarbWire* (1996), *Casablanca* (1942); and *Disturbia* (2007), *Rear Window* (1954) (see Verevis, 2006: 3-30). This might reasonably be described as exploitation, the economical reuse of pre-existing narrative resources (though unlike natural resources, stories proliferate rather than deplete with exploitation). Exploitation films, insofar as exploitation still remains a distinctive mode of production, are set apart chiefly by independent production, video or DVD distribution, vanishingly small budgets, an emphasis on nudity and violence, and often nowadays a self-consciously trashy air of camp parody (Hunter, 2006).

On the one hand, exploitation is a minor, left-handed form of adaptation; on the other, it is adaptation's shadowy Other (as exploitation is also mainstream cinema's) -- because *all* adaptation, by a certain way of thinking, is exploitation. Mainstream cinema adapts novels for the same reason exploitation films latch onto hit movies -- it makes financial sense to capitalize on products pre-tested in the marketplace. Even with an eminently respectable heritage movie like *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), the purpose of adapting Austen's novel for the umpteenth time was to secure commercial advantage from its familiarity, Janeite fan-base and literary reputation. Exploitation and adaptation differ insofar as adaptation typically implies an acknowledged and, if copyright is relevant, legitimately purchased relationship with a prior text usually in another medium. An exploitation film that copies another film, as a short cut to establishing a relationship with an audience, is constrained to play a different intertextual game from a conventional adaptation. While emphasising marketable similarities to its unlicensed "hypotext's" selling points, an exploitation film must nimbly evade the legal problems that would attend genuine fidelity; duplication must pass as generic similarity (Stam 2000: 66). Crossing the line from exploitation to outright plagiarism (exploitation's own Other, one might say) can prove an expensive mistake, as in the case of *Queen Kong* (1976), whose release was blocked by the producers of the 1976 remake of *King Kong* because it violated their copyright on oversized lovelorn gorillas (Hunter, 2005).

If adaptation often invokes metaphors of adultery (a bad adaptation is guilty of infidelity), exploitation suggests other crimes -- theft, con-artistry or rape. Even so, the most literary of literary adaptations shares with the most tawdry exploitation movie (and, one might add, with all remakes and sequels) this fundamental and troubling similarity -- both are "copies" typically regarded as inferior to their sources and even as *necessarily* inferior to them. This is no less true of Oscar-bait like *Atonement* (2007) than of trash like *Snakes on a Train*. Unneces-

sary supplements, both films exist in derogatory relationships of parasitism and anxious dependency on their pre-texts.

Jaws and Intertextuality

Jaws is based on the novel by Peter Benchley, a bestseller whose paperback rights were sold for half a million dollars and whose movie rights went before publication for $150,000 (Sounes, 2006: 223). The film's status as adaptation was emphasised in its publicity -- which made sense since the book had become a publishing phenomenon (Morgan, 1978: 140-50). The film acknowledges its source directly both in the text -- Benchley has a cameo as a news reporter -- and in its advertising, the poster design, for example, being carried over from Paul Bacon's artwork on the US hardback edition.

It is important to note that not all adaptations make much of the fact. Adaptation is an optional frame of reference in the film's publicity as well as in the minds of audiences and critics. The frame's usefulness depends on whether the source's literary cachet or commercial success justifies discursively identifying the film as an adaptation in posters, trailers, press kit and other "paratexts." "These secondary, ancillary and satellite texts," as Martin Barker argues, "shape in advance the conditions under which interpretations are formed" (Barker, 2004). "Architextuality," Gérard Genette's term for how texts anticipate their reception by invoking other texts and contexts, prepares audiences to make sense of a film, manages their expectations of it, and retrospectively shapes their understanding of its meaning and significance (see Verevis, 2006: 130-31, for a discussion of this in relation to remakes). In the case of *Atonement*, framing the film within a discourse of adaptation (indeed, one of authentic and faithful adaptation) was both unavoidable and commercially essential, given the high profile of the source novel and the advantages of aligning the film with the prestigious and lucrative "genre" of literary adaptations (see Leitch, 2008, for an analysis of adaptation as a genre). Catherine Grant remarks, "The most important act that films and their surrounding discourses need to perform in order to communicate unequivocally their status as adaptations is to [make viewers] *recall* the adapted work, or the cultural memory of it" (Grant, 2002: 57). The same is true of exploitation versions, whose ancillary materials discursively anchor them to their objects of imitation.

In fact, there are good reasons, even in the case of the most faithful literary adaptation, to argue against necessarily prioritising the novel as the film's determining inter- or pre-text (strictly, if fidelity is an issue, a film should be judged by how far it realised the potential of its screenplay, which is the most immediate and authoritative pre-text) (see Hunter, 2007b, which argues this with reference to *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2005)). As Sarah Cardwell notes, in any film adaptation "a considerable proportion of the filmic text…is not explicable in terms of the source book" (Cardwell, 2002: 62). This is certainly the case with *Jaws*, which, though obviously indebted to the novel for its characters, storyline and defining gimmick of the man-eating shark, is complexly related to numerous genres and texts ranging from canonical classics to camp trash.

Briefly and in no particular order of relevance, Benchley's novel shares discursive space (allusion, influence, similarity) in Spielberg's film with Melville's *Moby-Dick*; Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952); Spielberg's TV movie, *Duel* (1971), also about a relentless behemoth; 1950s monster movies such as *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954) and *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955); Henrik Ibsen's *The Enemy of the People* (1882); the films of John Ford (the motif of the obsessive hunt echoes *The Searchers* (1956); "Shall we gather at the river?," which appears in several of Ford's movies, is whistled by two hapless amateurs shark-fishing with the Sunday roast) and Howard Hawks' (the theme of male camaraderie); and crucially Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) (the track-in and zoom-out "*Vertigo*" shot when Brody sees the attack on the Kintner boy), *Psycho* (1960) (the first shark attack intricately re-imagines the shower scene), and *The Birds* (1963). An important precursor in raising public awareness of Great Whites was the documentary, *Blue Water White Death* (1971), in which Ron and Valerie Taylor, who later filmed the shark footage in *Jaws*, go in pursuit of the elusive beasts (the film also inspired *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2004)). The thudding rhythms of John Williams's unforgettable score draws on Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring", which filmgoers of Spielberg's generation might recognise as the soundtrack to the dinosaur sequence in *Fantasia* (1940) -- an entirely appropriate reference point for *Jaws*' invocation of ancient primeval terror. A more complex intertextual secret sharer is Disney's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954). Captain Nemo, who rams ships with his shark-like submarine, The Nautilus, is, like Ahab, another prototype for Quint's obsession with nautical revenge. Spielberg's mechanical shark pays homage to *20,000 Leagues*'s giant squid, the most celebrated SFX sea beast before *Jaws*; both were designed by Robert A. Mattey. And both films allude to the horrors of the Bomb: the Nautilus is driven by atomic power, while Quint survived the sinking of the USS Indianapolis, which delivered the Hiroshima bomb to the island of Tinian in 1945. *Jaws* also belongs with two specific generic trends of the early 1970s -- disaster movies such as *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972) and *Earthquake* (1974), in which ordinary people confront natural catastrophes; and "revenge of nature" horror films such as *Frogs* (1972), *Willard* (1971), *Ben* (1972) and *Phase IV* (1974). *Jaws*'s anthropophagous oral fixation aligns it too with the cannibalistic themes of *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974) and, on a Freudian level, with the porn film, *Deep Throat* (1972), which is name-checked when a fisherman remarks of the gaping maw of a strung-up tiger shark, "It's got a deep throat, Frank." An allusion to Watergate is perhaps also intended (Deep Throat being of course the cover name of *The Washington Post*'s high-placed informant), for there are other sly references to the scandal: the Mayor is a ringer for Nixon and the medical officer for Kissinger.

One could try to pin down the different kinds of adaptation involved here, ranging from direct translation of the novel to the unsystematic allusions characteristic of New Hollywood's playful cinephilia (though Spielberg's key reference points are much the same as the other "Movie Brats'": *The Searchers*, Corman, Hawks, the American Hitchcock), allusions that, like wormholes, connect the film to very different intertextual worlds. [1] Adaptation studies is fixated on taxonomies minutely separating out and defining the different orders of adaptation and 'transtextuality' (Genette's (1997 [1982]) and Stam's (2000) are among the

most comprehensive and persuasive), but it is difficult to do this here with any great accuracy (or enthusiasm).

Take, for example, *Moby-Dick*, which *Jaws* in one way or another resembles, or is inspired by, or riffs on, or degradingly popularises, or indeed exploits (though, according to John Baxter, Spielberg "complained the book had a little *Peyton Place*, a little *Godfather*, a little*Enemy of the People* and plenty of *Moby-Dick*" and that he "spent a lot of time taking out the similarities between … Melville and Benchley (Baxter 1997: 120-21)). *Jaws* the film has obvious parallels to Melville's novel -- the white shark recalls the whiteness of the whale; Quint's obsession mirrors Ahab's; it all culminates in a sea chase. In Benchley's novel the shark dies (or seems to die) spiralling downwards with Quint strapped to it as Ahab was to the whale, which being an archetype survives (see Metz, 2007). Spielberg's ending, in which the shark is defeated, wrenches the material away from Melville and locates it firmly within the tradition of the horror film. But as Dean Crawford notes, it is the film that ironically is perhaps in the end more faithful to Melville:

> While both the movie and book versions of *Jaws* owe considerable debt to Melville, Spielberg's is greater since his shark is the more mysterious monster, a malevolent counterforce to our own species. Whereas in Benchley's *Jaws* nature strikes back unwittingly, Spielberg's shark, like Melville's white whale, appears to operate with a motive at least as methodical as Ahab's madness. (Crawford, 2008: 77)

There are other echoes of *Moby-Dick* in the film -- the song "Farewell and ado to you fair Spanish ladies" is in both (Melville, 1992 [1851]: 187), but as it is a traditional sea shanty, this may really just be coincidence. (It later crops up as a tantalising echo in *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World* (2003).) Allusions to the *novel* of *Moby-Dick* are in any case questionable, since they might equally well refer to John Huston's 1956 film version; which would be in keeping with Spielberg's method of displacing literary references by cinematic ones. Indeed an early draft screenplay showed Quint laughing at Huston's *Moby Dick* in a cinema (the object of mirth is perhaps Gregory Peck: miscast by Huston, he would have made a pretty good Quint) -- an adaptation of that scene turns up in Scorsese's*Cape Fear* (1991) (another Peck remake, to continue the game of movie connections). Although Quint is generally taken to be a parodic Ahab, his unusual name has resonances we might pick up -- to *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) and Jack Clayton's adaptation, *The Innocents* (1961), in which Quint is a malevolent supernatural perversion of masculinity; and to *The Nightcomers* (1971), Michael Winner's exploitation prequel to *The Turn of the Screw*, in which Marlon Brando's Quint represents, like Shaw in *Jaws*, a style of working class masculinity made obsolete in the New Hollywood by ordinary bourgeois guys like Scheider and Dreyfuss. Quint also carries faint echoes of Queeg, the mad captain played by Humphrey Bogart in *The Caine Mutiny* (1954), though Quint is the gamey consummation of every movie sea-dog from Ahab to Captain Bligh. These allusions, if that is what they are, should not lead us to conclude that *Jaws* is not an adaptation of Benchley after all or that *Moby-Dick* is not worth comparative study. [2] They simply confirm that films have their own referential ecology and multiple lines of intertextual descent. Christine Geraghty

puts this well: "The complex textual referencing of many adaptations, their layering of genres, performances and settings, provides evidence for how they work as films, not as versions of another form nor as a whirl of references without their own shape" (Geraghty, 2007: 197). Indeed, the crucial intertextual relationship informing *Jaws* aesthetically is arguably Hitchcock, who is evoked through allusions, rather than *Moby-Dick*, which is the film's mythic prototype, or Benchley's novel, which supplied most of its cardinal functions.

*Jaws*ploitation

The success of *Jaws* led to (and pioneered the idea of) multiple sequels as well as prompting dozens of *Jaws*ploitation movies from as far afield as Italy, Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines. There were also numerous licensed spin-offs such as comic books, toys, and board games -- indeed *Jaws* is credited with inspiring the first, albeit unofficial, videogame adaptation, *Shark JAWS* in 1975. A couple of hours with IMDb, Wikipedia and Amazon.com's recommendations page throws up a frankly deranging series of "movie connections" for *Jaws*, mostly linking it with the products of the US and Italian exploitation industries. I shall not attempt to list them all.

*Jaws*ploitation films essentially came in two waves. The first, on the heels of the film's release, was a model exploitation cycle capitalising on *Jaws*-mania. These films, parasites borne along on the success of their host, reworked *Jaws*'s plot to showcase a variety of killer beasts – not only sharks (*Mako: Jaws of Death* (1976), *L'ultimo squalo* [*Great White*/*The Last Shark*](1981)) and shark-like monsters (*Up from the Depths* (1979)), but barracuda (*Barracuda* (1978)), grizzly bears (*Grizzly*, the top-grossing independent film in the US in 1976; *Claws* (1977)), octopi (*Tentacoli* [*Tentacles*], memorable for its surreally heavyweight cast of Hollywood veterans (Henry Fonda, John Huston, Shelley Winters)), shark-octopus hybrids (*Shark: Rosso nell'oceano* [*Devil Fish / Devouring Waves*] (1984)), piranhas (*Piranha*, *Killer Fish* (1979), *Piranha Part Two: The Spawning* (1981)), killer whales (*Orca* (1977)), crocodilian (*Alligator* (1980) and a belated Australian contribution, *Dark Age* (1987)), a beach (*Blood Beach* (1981): tagline: "Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water, you can't get to it"), and cod (*Bacalhau* (1975)). [3] Not all of these ripped off *Jaws* directly (*Killer Fish*, for instance, exploited *Piranha*'s box office success), and not all were cheap drive-in fodder (*Orca* was a major Hollywood release) but they certainly aimed to hook audiences with comparable pleasures. *Jaws* also led to celebrity status for sharks in general and two US TV cartoon parodies starring the fish were produced in 1976, *Misterjaw* and *Jabberjaw* (1976-1978). Allusions to *Jaws* flourished almost as soon as it was released and as J. Hoberman remarks, "there were few American fears that were not displaced onto the shark in parodies of *Jaws*'s poster" (2003: 147). Few films remain so identifiable from the smallest visual or musical clue, whether it is a shot of a fin in*1941* (1979) and *Airplane II: The Sequel* (1982) or a brief "dum *dum*" from Cameron Diaz as she drunkenly awaits a telling off in *In Her Shoes* (2005).

Many other nature-running-amok thrillers of the period might be classed among *Jaws*ploitation films, such as *The Pack* (1977), *The Car* (1977), *The Swarm* (1978), *Empire of the Ants* (1977), *Squirm* (1976)*, The Food of the Gods*

(1976), *Long Weekend* (1978) and *The Day of the Animals* (1977). They are certainly influenced by *Jaws*'s visual tropes (for example, the ants' tessellated point-of-view shots in *Empire of the Ants*). But it is likely that the success of *Jaws* simply perpetuated what Tarantino called the early seventies' "Mother Nature goes ape-shit kind of movie," and also encouraged that cycle's combination with the disaster film in, for example, *The Swarm* and to some extent the remake of *King Kong*. [4] More fundamentally *Jaws* also bore out the efficiency of what Noel Carroll called "perhaps the most serviceable narrative armature in the horror film genre" -- the "Discovery Plot," with its four movements: "onset" (the monster is revealed), "discovery" (the monster is discovered by a person or a group, but its existence is not acknowledged by the authorities), "confirmation" (the authorities are eventually convinced of the monster's threat), and "confrontation" (the monster is met and usually killed) (Carroll, 1981: 23). It is hard to disentangle the influence of *Jaws*, in creature features from *Empire of the Ants* to *King Cobra* (1999) and *Crocodile* (2000), from adherence to general narrative conventions of the horror film that *Jaws* happened to reinvigorate and perfect.

This first cycle of *Jaws*ploitation continued till roughly 1987 and the release of *Jaws the Revenge*; perhaps the last was Joe D'Amato's *Sangue negli abissi* (*Deep Blood*) (1989). A second, continuing wave of *Jaws*ploitation films followed Spielberg's *Jurassic Park*, itself a reinvention of *Jaws*, which reinvigorated the creature feature with the twin novelties of computer generated special effects and the theme of genetic manipulation. Most of these were TV and straight to video movies (the TV remake of *Piranha* (1996); *Alligator II: The Mutation* (1991); *Lake Placid 2* (2007); *Croc* (2007) and *Shark Swarm* (2008) in the Sci-Fi Channel's "Maneater" series); and The Asylum's *Mega Shark vs. Giant Octopus* (2009), but they included some mid-budget thrillers, such as *Anaconda* (1997), *The Relic* (1997), *Lake Placid*, *Eight Legged Freaks* (2002), *Gwoemul* [*The Host*] (2006), and the wave's most self-aware and influential evocation of *Jaws*, *Deep Blue Sea*. No longer a cycle of exploitation films cashing in on a blockbuster, these work variations on a horror sub-genre, the creature feature, which preceded *Jaws* but is now wholly inextricable from it.

Roughly we can divide the *Jaws*ploitation movies of both waves into two categories: creature features and sharksploitation films.

Creature features play a kind of commutation game, substituting for sharks some other malevolent rogue species alluded to in the film's title. Their plots had similar cardinal functions to *Jaws*, with the same kind of events taking place in much the same order. This was not especially taxing to contrive since *Jaws*'s "Discovery Plot" is so stripped to the bone (beast attacks people, people kill beast) that, like *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932), its barest essentials could be lifted without risk of plagiarism*.* Of the films in the first cycle, before *Jaws* was established as a pop culture myth, three are especially interesting in their different modes of adaptive exploitation, namely imitation, revision and parody*.*

Grizzly (*Claws*, as reviewers tended to rename it; a documentary extra on the DVD is "Jaws with Claws") recapitulates *Jaws* in some detail -- oversized bear, represented by point of view shots and accompanied by percussive chords, attacks attractive young women, man kills bear, blowing it up with a rocket

launcher. There is even a recap of Quint's Indianapolis speech, when one character gives a hushed campfire rendition of a story about "a whole herd of man-eating grizzlies tearing up Indians." *Orca*, more ambitiously, develops and inverts *Jaws*'s theme of personal revenge in its tall tale of a killer whale pursuing the shark-hunter who harpooned its pregnant mate. The film is an eco-friendly reshuffling of *Moby-Dick* in that a whale pursues Ahab, a woman loses a leg, and the whale wins. *Orca* came up against a limitation of the *Jaws* formula. It is certainly true that *Jaws* grants the shark a degree of motive and intelligence ("Smart fish," Quint remarks wonderingly when the shark goes under the boat). But unlike King Kong, the shark -- or its equivalent in the exploitation versions -- needs to be mythically charged but essentially characterless, more a symbol, narrative function or malevolent agent of external evil (as in *Piranha*) than a thing capable of anthropomorphism and sympathetic humanlike emotion.

The stand-out film of the first *Jaws* cycle is *Piranha* (1978), produced by Roger Corman and directed by Joe Dante. Intended to cash in on the production of *Jaws 2* (Hillier and Lipstadt, 1981: 41), it is a droll pre-fabricated cult movie, which introduced an anti-establishment agenda typical of Corman -- the military bred the titular, super-aggressive "mutant cannibal piranhas" for use in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War: "radiation, selective breeding; they called it Operation Razorfish." As in *Grizzly*, in which one female victim is killed while topless under a waterfall, *Piranha* adds nudity to *Jaws*'s PG-rated mix. The plot follows *Jaws* quite closely (the story goes that Universal wanted to sue New World for plagiarism but dropped the suit after Spielberg approved of the film) but also introduces numerous allusions to other films (*Citizen Kane* (1941), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956)) in what would become the signature manner of exploitation auteurs like John Carpenter and Corman alumni such as Dante (*The Howling* (1981)), and John Landis (*Into the Night* (1985)). *Piranha* is wittily knowing about itself -- a shot near the start of the *Shark JAWS* arcade game situates the film among the numerous unofficial *Jaws* spin-offs -- and *Jaws*'s intertextual debts: a girl is seen reading *Moby-Dick* on the beach, while references to *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and a clip from *The Monster that Challenged the World* (1957) firmly reclaim *Jaws* for the tradition of 1950s SF. Indeed Jon Davison, one of *Piranha*'s producers, insisted that *Piranha* was targeting not *Jaws* but one of its key precursors:

> Everyone talks about what *Piranha* owes to Steve Spielberg and *Jaws*. What it really owes something to is Jack Arnold and *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*. *Jaws* was really nothing more than an expensive 50s monster-on-the-loose picture. So*Piranha* may be a rip-off of *Jaws*, but I prefer to think of it as a rip-off of *Black Lagoon.* (Hillier and Lipstadt, 1981: 45)

The same line of parody was taken in *Alligator,* also written by John Sayles and packed with filmic in jokes (as a rule the most effective approach for an exploitation version; as Dante said, "A picture of this type made on this budget just couldn't play on a serious level" (Hillier and Lipstadt, 1981: 45)). Like *Piranha*, *Alligator* claims *Jaws* for 1950s science fiction and the association of monsters with mad science in such classics as *Them!* (1954) and *Gojira* [*Godzilla, King of the Monsters!*] (1954), to which *Jaws* paid subtle homage in Quint's Indianapolis

speech, which implied the shark was metaphorically if not literally a product of the Bomb.

It is worth briefly mentioning two erotic parodies. *Deep Jaws* (1976), a soft-core sex film whose title ingeniously links *Jaws* with that other instantly proverbial film of the period, *Deep Throat*, is about a film studio that decides to make a sex film about mermaid fellatrices. *Gums* (1976) replaces the shark with a mermaid who, with "a different set of jaws," as *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) poster put it, gives blow jobs to unsuspecting swimmers. Both films are tedious and daft but as so often with exploitation versions they draw attention to perverse subtexts repressed in the original. *Gums* neatly literalises and defuses what Jane Caputi claims is *Jaws*'s violently sexual evocation of "the castrating female, the terrible, murderous mother of patriarchal nightmare and myth" (Caputi, 1988: 147).

The second category of *Jaws*ploitation films, sharksploitation, initially either loosely remade *Jaws* (*L'ultimo squalo* remade it so closely that it was pulled from cinemas and has still not been officially released in the US) or, ignoring the plot of *Jaws* entirely, was simply films with sharks in them. Given energetic advertising, this was sufficient to strike up a rewarding affiliation with *Jaws*. *Jaws*'s official sequels were especially inhibited from deviating too far from the template, which in any case allowed for little variation. *Jaws* 2 (1978) was a teen slasher film; *Jaws 3-D* (1983), a technological upgrade with unconvincing 3D effects; and in *Jaws the Revenge*, the shark pursued a comically personal vendetta against Chief Brody's widow. *The Deep* (1977), interestingly, was also promoted as a sequel to *Jaws.* A maritime yarn based on Benchley's follow up novel, it is not a shark film at all and boasts few dangerous creatures except a moray eel. But its publicity material centred on its legitimate contiguity to the *Jaws* brand in that it shared the same writer and also starred Robert Shaw. As *The Deep*'s producer, Peter Guber, remarked, "Anyone who reads the book can see immediately that *The Deep* cannot even remotely be construed as a 'sequel' to *Jaws …*. The *Jaws* association, however, is a potent one in the film industry, and … our only real ace in the hole" (Guber, 1977: 2). The poster graphically reinforced this relationship and instead of a shark depicts a young woman in snorkelling flippers struggling to the ocean surface. Exploitation versions, as one might expect, slavishly imitated Mick McGinty's iconic design for *Jaws*'s poster as being the most economical way of signalling a connection with its promise of titillating thrills. The posters for *Tintorera*, *Grizzly*, *Tentacles* and *Up from the Depths* feature their respective beasts menacing a lone young woman, and even now the posters or DVD covers of second wave films like *Deep Blue Sea*, *12 Days of Terror* (2004)*, Spring Break Shark Attack* (2005)*, Rogue*, and *Shark in Venice* tend to show monsters in vertical ascent towards attractive starlets.

Of the first cycle of sharksploitation films, *Mako: Jaws of Death* is one of the most imaginative. Despite the title it is actually about a loner with a mystical connection with sharks who protects them from fisherman and other enemies. Although the title draws the film into *Jaws*'s orbit, it is much closer to *Willard* in its progressive depiction of sharks as victims of human predation, and thus anticipates *Deep Blue Sea*; *Sangue negli abissi*, in which an ancient Native American spirit takes the form of a killer shark; the anti-*Jaws* shark-ecology documen-

tary, *Sharkwater* (2006); and Peter Benchley's later non-fiction books on shark conservation, which made amends for *Jaws*'s demonization of Great Whites (Benchley, 1995). [5] *Mako* is a good example of exploitation securing its commercial viability by referencing another film in its title and publicity, and then through incompetence, negligence or creative necessity, doing something entirely different. This is perfectly in keeping with exploitation practice. Once the audience has been lured into buying a ticket or renting the DVD, a film has achieved its purpose and its actual content is irrelevant, but sometimes divertingly adrift from what is promised in the ancillary materials. The same is true of *Tintorera* (actually based on a novel), which is not the gore-fest depicted on its poster but a soapish drama about a couple of shark-hunting beach bums with barely a handful of scenes involving the promised tiger sharks. The film is not very good (though Wikipedia claims it has a cult reputation in Mexico), but often fascinating in its attempt to square picaresque romance with the demands of sharksploitation.

Aside from *Aatank* (1996), "the Bollywood *Jaws,*" most of the recent sharksploitation films are straight-to-video and TV movies, often filmed in South Africa and Bulgaria. The leading specialist is Nu Image, which produced the *Shark Attack* trilogy (1999-2002),*Hammerhead* (2005), and three films helmed by the Israeli director, Danny Lerner -- *Shark Zone (*2003), *Raging Sharks* (2005) and *Shark in Venice*. This last, a sort of *Raiders of the Lost Shark*, is a deliriously trashy generic hybrid inspired by *National Treasure*(2004) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2006), in which the Mafia release sharks into the canals of Venice in order to protect Medici treasure. Among bigger-budget films *Deep Blue Sea* was probably the most significant. A playful, postmodern splicing of *Jaws* and *Jurassic Park*, it acknowledges the impossibility of escaping *Jaws*'s gravitational pull by killing off its genetically engineered super-sharks in the manner and order of the ones in *Jaws* and the first two sequels (namely, gas explosion, electrocution, and explosion). This theme of genetic mutation was subsequently taken up by *Blue Demon* (2004), *Shark Attack* (1999), *Shark Attack 2* (2001), *Hammerhead*, and *Shark Swarm* (2008), in which pollution causes Great Whites to swarm and kill for pleasure, but it was actually anticipated by Benchley's novel*White Shark* (1994) about a shark-human hybrid, which was filmed for TV in 1998 as *Peter Benchley's Creature* (see Crawford, 2008: 83). Jurassic sharks are another recent innovation, appearing in *Shark Attack 3: Megalodon* (2002) and *Shark Hunter* (2001) as well as in the continuing parallel tradition of *Jaws*-inspired novels, such as Steve Alten's *Meg* (1997). Other films, such as *12 Days of Terror*, about the New Jersey shark attacks of 1916, filled in some of the back story of *Jaws* and the history that inspired it (*The Mission of the Shark: The Saga of the USS Indianapolis* (1991), a TV movie, had already dramatised the story made notorious by Quint's monologue). By now *Jaws* was a classic film rather than a hot property to exploit. Recent shark films do not attempt copies (with the odd exception like *Cruel Jaws* (1995)) but rather engage in citation and homage (*Shark Hunter*: "We're going to need a bigger sub"), acknowledging *Jaws*'s determining association with sharks and its continuing supremacy as a model for thrillers about man versus nature. The same is true of the creature features. In *Anacondas: The Hunt for the Blood Orchid* (2004), for example, one character scares his companions in an Amazonian swamp by humming the *Jaws* theme moments before he is swallowed by a CGI snake.

Open Water and *Adrift*, low-budget independent rather than exploitation movies, are two of the best recent *Jaws*-related films. *Open Water* is a high-concept hyphenate, as the DVD box notes: *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) meets *Jaws*, a formula successful enough to inspire two excellent Australian crocodile films, *Black Water* (2007) and *Rogue*. *Open Water* and *Adrift* are both small scale dramas about people stranded in the ocean, in which *Jaws* is an intertextual resource rather than the target of imitation; the relation is one not of exploitation so much as of silent evocation (but see Metz, 2007, for a striking interpretation of *Open Water* as an "anti-porn film" challenging what he sees as *Jaws*'s pornographic sexism). *Open Water* does pay direct homage to *Jaws*, in that the main characters have the surnames Watkins and Kintner, the names of *Jaws*'s first two shark victims, but otherwise builds tension by subtly working against *Jaws*'s unrealistic representation of the "rogue" shark. *Open Water*'s sharks, filmed for real on location, are smallish, hunt in groups, and bump victims before testing them out with a bite; in short, they behave like the sharks, presumably also oceanic whitetips, which Quint describes in his Indianapolis speech. The intertextual relation with *Jaws* no longer needs to be stressed; it is simply and inevitably there and used to great advantage not only by inciting audience awareness of "*Jaws*ness" to produce suspense, but by "correcting" the inaccuracies of the hypotext and negating audience expectations in a suspenseful and creative way.

In *Adrift*, by contrast, there are no sharks at all, except ambiguously when one seems to nudge a character underwater. *Adrift* was opportunistically advertised in the USA as *Open Water 2: Adrift*, though it was an unrelated production. (A classic exploitation strategy is to rename films and promote them as unofficial sequels -- Bava's *Reazione a catena* (1971) became *The Last House on the Left, Part II* and, in Italy, Fulci's *Zombi 2* (1979) purported to be a sequel to Romero's *Zombie: Dawn of the Dead* (1978).) *Adrift*, framed as a sequel to the "shark movie" *Open Water*, rather than as a stand alone film with a remarkably similar set up, is a different and potentially frustrating experience. As one disgruntled poster to IMDb complained:

> Open Water 2 was so annoying that I found myself rooting for gigantic man-eating sharks to devour this pack of treading water whiners. And guess what? No sharks!!! Why bother doing a sequel to Open Water if your going to forget the most terrifying aspect, the eaten alive by sharks in the ocean part. That's like Snakes On A Plane Part 2 forgetting the snakes. (delj, 1997)

The absence of sharks is dramatically a strength, for it enables the film to swerve away from the obvious narrative development (and from *Open Water*, which it is otherwise in danger of plagiarising) in favour of a story about friendship, materialism and female strength. *Jaws* is so powerful a precursor text that the threat of sharks in the ocean could be taken for granted. But for audiences misled by *Adrift*'s discursive framing as a sequel to a shark movie, the absent sharks implied only that the budget couldn't stretch to filming them.

Fin *de Siècle*

So why was *Jaws* so especially, perhaps even uniquely, resonant and imitable? There are two reasons, quite apart from its greatness as a work of film art. First, its narrative structure is of surpassing elegance and simplicity. The shark is little more than a lethal narrative device, albeit one with disturbing sexual overtones. This crucially influenced the slasher film and its offspring -- *Halloween* (1978), *Alien* (1979), *The Terminator* (1984), even the henchman, Jaws, in *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977) -- in which imperturbable killing machines embodied both anti-feminist backlash and the affectless malevolence of capitalism; in fact, the slasher film is itself a cycle of *Jaws*ploitation in its obsession with point of view shots and eroticised serial violence, which *Jaws* adapted from Hitchcock. *Jaws* also had an air of myth or urban legends (carried over into the slasher film too), so that *Jaws*ploitation films play like variations on archetypal fears rather than rip-offs of just one movie (see Hocker Rushing and Frentz, 1995).

The second reason why *Jaws* was so easily made over as exploitation is that it was of course essentially an exploitation film, albeit one blessed with a large budget and stunning craftsmanship. This was not unnoticed on its initial release -- "*Jaws* and *Bug* -- The Only Difference is the Hype", as Stephen Farber put it in the headline of his *New York Times* review, alluding to exploitation producer's William Castle's 1975 film (quoted in Andrews, 1999: 117). *Jaws*'s graphic quali-ties, its poster with the implied sexual threat to a nude female swimmer, and its debt to 1950s B-movies all underscored that like many other films of the "Holly-wood Renaissance" it was upscale exploitation fare, though more tailored for a family audience than the novel, with its gratuitous sex scenes between Hooper and Ellen Brody. In the 1970s the New Hollywood encroached on exploitation's territory with an unprecedented wave of violent and sexually explicit films, often directed by alumni of Roger Corman's production outfits, which expensively re-visited what had once been strictly bargain basement genres (Hunter, 2008). As Corman complained:

> The major challenge has been finding new markets and recouping costs while the majors have dominated the exploitation genres with budgets ten times higher than ours…. [I]t was Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* who once wrote, 'What is *Jaws* but a big-budget Roger Corman movie?' But when Spielberg and the Lucases make technically exquisite genre films, they cut deeply into the box-office appeal of our kind of picture. (Corman, 1998: xi)

Carol Clover dubbed this process "trickle up", reversing the usual relation of ex-ploitation to its source:

> When I see an Oscar-winning film like *The Accused* [1988] or the artful *Alien*…I can't help thinking of all the low-budget, often harsh and awkward but sometimes deeply energetic films that preceded them by a decade or more -- films that said it all, and in flatter terms, and on a shoestring. (Clover, 1992: 20)

The difference between mainstream and exploitation was increasingly the budget rather than the topic, level of gore and nudity, or distribution or promotional techniques. *Jaws*, for example, had a summer opening, TV ads, and saturation bookings, all promotion strategies pioneered by exploitation that soon became standard throughout Hollywood. At the same time *Jaws*, like its shark "a perfect engine" (as numberless critics have remarked), became the template for the new Hollywood blockbuster, so that in a sense all subsequent films were adaptations of its successful formula and the big-budget B-movie became the staple of mainstream production.

Jaws was also a gift to exploitation filmmakers because, unlike *King Kong* and *Jurassic Park*, which self-reflexively celebrated the display of special effects, the shark was defined by *not being seen*, except briefly, till it belly-flops onto the *Orca* at the end of the film and is revealed as a rubbery disappointment. This suspenseful technique of withholding a clear view of the shark, initially enforced by the mechanical sharks' failure to work, legitimised the representation of monsters by shoestring methods such as point of view shots, metonymic close ups of paws and claws, and scrappy bits of stock footage. Until the digital innovations of *Deep Blue Sea,* the sharks in sharksploitation films are surprisingly absent as coherently presented creatures. As in *Jaws* they tend to be a digest of poorly matched documentary footage, model work, and briskly edited close-ups. A postmodern extreme of bricolage is achieved by *Cruel Jaws*, in which the shark is represented *entirely* by footage lifted from *L'ultimo squalo, Deep Blood* and the first three *Jaws* films.

In spite of its basic simplicity, *Jaws* was wildly over-determined by metaphorical and symbolic contexts, cannily solicited in the film. Watergate, paranoia, styles of masculinity, the myth of the hunter, allegories of class, misogyny, guilt over Hiroshima and Vietnam -- all these interpretive possibilities were highlighted by contemporary reviews and have been elaborated on by academic critics ever since. The film proved an irresistible combination of high concept premise and "metaphorical polymorphousness" (Andrews, 1999: 25). The possible readings are comprehensively summarised by Friedman (2006: 163-4) and more concisely by Rubey, 1976: "the shark reflects a disguised hatred of women and the preoccupation of our society with sadistic sexuality, a view of business as predatory and irresponsible in human terms, and a fear of retribution for the atomic bombing of Hiroshima". Walter Metz combines these in reading *Jaws* as a Cold War updating of *Moby-Dick*, not only a backlash film against the Women's Liberation Movement but also as a Vietnam War film:

> When Chief Brody stuffs an oxygen tank down the shark's throat and uses his rifle to blow him up, *Jaws* is producing a multifaceted image. After Brodie [sic] blows up the shark, it sinks to the bottom of the ocean, looking distinctly like a sinking submarine. Thus, Brodie [sic] is able to avenge the shark's murder of his friend [sic] Quint, which is polysemically also revenge against the Japanese who traumatised him via his experience on the USS Indianapolis. (Metz, 2004: 228)

Metz then goes on to argue that Brody killing the shark with the cylinder "has frightening allegorical consequences on the 1975 context of *Jaws*":

> For if the use of the nuclear bomb at Hiroshima is celebrated by Quint…then the film's positioning of Brodie's [sic] lesson as doing the same to the shark means allegorically that the way to win Vietnam would be the re-use of similar atomic weaponry. Throughout the film, the shark is positioned as a Vietcong-like entity: skulking round an underwater jungle, unseen, ready to spring out at any unexpected moment. And after all, the beach is the safest place for Americans, both in Vietnam and in *Jaws.* (Metz, 2004: 228)

My point is not to deride such interpretations, fanciful as they might seem, but to highlight the ease and seeming naturalness of the film's wide-ranging allegorical applicability (see Andrews, 1999: 143-150 on the "feeding frenzy for semioticians" (143) that followed the film's release). If for Metz the shark is a vengeful phallus, the Vietcong, an offspring of the white whale, and a World War II Japanese submarine [6], other critics maintain with equal plausibility that it is a *vagina dentata*, enraged nature, a rapist, Gloria Steinem, a Jungian archetype, the Bomb, and Watergate and that its explosive death is Hiroshima, an orgasm and a symbolic castration. I could go on. But, as Antonia Quirke suggests, "The biggest blessing fate bestowed on Spielberg in the 1970s was an indifference to politics. *Jaws*, like*Duel*, is an intriguing allegory precisely because the young nerd had no agenda" (Quirke, 2002: 49). The kind of strategic ambiguity engineered in *Jaws* is now central to Hollywood storytelling. With reviews and cult readings instantly available on the internet, it makes sense to cram films with competing possible interpretations that maximise the films' appeal and readability to multiple audiences. It was *Jaws*, the shark that swallowed the *Zeitgeist*, which more than any other film habituated audiences and critics to reading popular movies in extravagantly allegorical terms.

One final way, briefly, of thinking about *Jaws* is as a meme, Richard Dawkins's term for a proliferating unit of culture, which he introduced in *The Selfish Gene* (1976). As Linda Hutcheon puts it, "Memes are not high-fidelity replicators: they change with time, for meme transmission is subject to constant mutation. Stories too propagate themselves when they catch on: adaptations -- as both repetition and variation -- are their form of replication" (Hutcheon, 2006: 177). Memetics -- the science (or pseudo-science) of memes -- is a controversial field and the meme is probably a useful metaphor rather than a truly scientific concept (two accessible introductions to memes are Dennett, 1995: 335-369, and Blackmore, 1999). What does the *Jaws* meme consist of? A couple of notes ('dum *dum*'), a shot of a fin, a point of view shot (as already mentioned, *not* seeing the monster is a defining mark of *Jaws*ness), or some combination of all three? It is perhaps more accurate -- but wholly unscientific -- to say that the *Jaws* meme is just this: *shark*. The film has so thoroughly colonised the very idea of "shark" that any representation of one, from Discovery Channel documentaries (*Air Jaws* (2001), about aerial attacks by South African Great Whites) to press reports of shark sightings and attacks (Connolly and Bates, 2009), to literary novels like Steven Hall's *The Raw Shark Texts* (2007) with its "conceptual shark", must silently acknowledge the film's lurking precedence, its authoritative discursive prefiguring of "shark". *Jaws* has so recalibrated the cultural meaning of shark that it is now *the* determining intertextual reference point even

when no specific allusion is intended. All films with sharks, all cultural representations of sharks, are *Jaws*ploitation now.

If that is so, the most complete adaptation of *Jaws*, and the perfect *exploitation* of its meme, is Damien Hirst's visual one-liner, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of One Living* (1992) -- the tiger shark in a tank -- which combines the minimum of transformed content with the maximum of implication. Instantly memorable, it is a precise memetic summary of *Jaws*'s massive semiotic presence. Hirst's shark is essentially a 3D still capable, on the one hand, of an exceptionally high degree of accuracy in replication and transmission (as when Hirst repeated the gesture with *The Kingdom* (2008), another production-line pickled fish) but, on the other, sufficiently high-concept to be copyrighted. As high art Hirst's shark seems an unlikely addition to the roll call of *Jaws*ploitation, yet its impact is wholly parasitic on *Jaws*'s supremacy as the apex predator meme in the domain of representing sharks. Hirst's art uses, in a more elevated register, much the same appropriative recycling procedures as video mashups like *Must Love Jaws* (2006) and slash fiction (see House-Keeper13, 2008 for a rare example of *Jaws* slash).

We have drifted a long way from discussing either trashy exploitation films or theories and methods of adaptation. But I hope I have demonstrated that exploitation and adaptation are not opposite means of deriving one text from another. As so often in adaptation studies, this is an apparent binary -- like "original" and "copy," "faithful" and "unfaithful," "parasite" and "host" -- in need of summary deconstruction. The perceived differences between exploitation and adaptation are the product of, first, the cultural politics of legitimacy and, second, the vicissitudes of copyright legislation. I find it more useful to redescribe exploitation as unlicensed adaptation and adaptation as licensed plagiarism, questioning the distinction between exploitation and more "respectable" modes of intertextuality in order to emphasise crucial similarities of commercial motive and aesthetic technique.

John Ellis remarked that "Adaptation into another medium becomes a means of prolonging the pleasure of the original presentation, and repeating the production of a memory" (Ellis 1982: 4-5). The same is true of exploitation versions, which mutate their sources to ensure their usefulness and viability in the textual environment of low budget cinema. As with all modes of adaptation, their purpose is not only to exploit, but also to salvage, resurrect and preserve.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] For a discussion of intertextuality and transtextuality in Spielberg and especially *1941*, see Morris (2007: 66-69).

[2] See Hocker Rushing and Frentz (1995: 78-99) for an extended Jungian comparison of *Moby-Dick* and *Jaws*; and Govender (2008) for a discussion of how *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* also shares "some striking similarities" with *Moby-Dick*.

[3] A summary of some of these films is provided by Slater (2007) and Jankiewicz (2009: 199-206); see also Crawford (2008: 82-84); Vieira and Stam (1985) offers a politically sophisticated analysis of *Bacalhau* as a self-denigrating admission of Brazilian cinema's inferiority to dominant cinema.

[4] "Mother Nature goes ape-shit kind of movie" is how Quentin Tarantino describes *Long Weekend* in the documentary, *Not Quite Hollywood: The Wild, Untold Story of Ozploitation* (2008).

[5] The exploitation versions do not experiment with turning the shark into the outright hero of the narrative, as in the "Hookjaw"' strip in *Action* comic (Barker, 1990: 13), and the 2006 videogame, *Jaws Unleashed*.

[6] See Willson, 1977 for an analysis of *Jaws* as a submarine film in the tradition of *The Enemy Below* (1957) and *Run Silent, Run Deep* (1958).

References

Alten, Steve (1997) *Meg: A Novel of Deep Terror.* London: Doubleday.

Andrews, Nigel (1999) *Jaws*. London: Bloomsbury.

Barker, Martin (1990) *Action: The Story of a Violent Comic*. London: Titan Books.

Barker, Martin (2004) News, Reviews, Clues, Interviews and Other Ancillary Materials -- A Critique and Research Proposal. *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and TV Studies* February. [online] Available at:
http://www.scope.nottingham.ac.uk/issue.php?issue=feb2004&section=article
[Accessed 10 March 2009]

Baxter, John (1997) *Steven Spielberg: The Unauthorised Biography*. London: HarperCollins.

Benchley, Peter (1974) *Jaws*. London: André Deutsch.

Blackmore, Susan (1999) *The Meme Machine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Caputi, Jane (1988) *The Age of Sex Crime*. London: The Women's Press.

Cardwell, Sarah (2002) *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Carroll, Noel (1981) Nightmare and the Horror Film: The Symbolic Biology of Fantastic Beings, *Film Quarterly* 34 (3), pp. 16-25.

Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan (eds.) (2007) *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clover, Carol (1992) *Men, Women and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film*. London: British Film Institute.

Corman, Roger, with Jim Jerome (1998) *How I Made a Hundred Movies in Hollywood and Never Lost a Dime*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Crawford, Dean (2008) *Shark*. London: Reaktion.

Dawkins, Richard (1976) *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dennett, Daniel (1995) *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life*. London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press.

Doherty, Thomas (2002) *Teenagers and Teenpics: The Juvenilization of American Movies in the 1950s.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Elliott, Kamilla (2003) *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, John (1982) The Literary Adaptation: An Introduction. *Screen* 23 (1), pp. 3-5.

Erb, Cynthia (1998) *Tracking King Kong: A Hollywood Icon in World Culture*. Detroit: Wayne University Press.

Friedman, Lester D. (2006) *Citizen Spielberg*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Genette, Gérard (1997 [1982]) *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Geraghty, Christine (2007) *Now a Major Motion Picture*: *Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Govender, Dyalan (2008) Wes Anderson's *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* and Melville's *Moby Dick*: A Comparative Study, *Literature/Film Quarterly* 36 (1), pp. 61-67.

Grant, Catherine (2002) Recognising *Billy Budd* in *Beau Travail*: Epistemology and Hermeneutics of Auteurist "Free" Adaptation, *Screen* 43 (1), pp. 57-73.

Guber, Peter, with Barbara Witus (1977) *Inside The Deep*. New York: Bantam.

Hall, Steven (2007) *The Raw Shark Texts*. Edinburgh: Canongate.

Hillier, Jim and Aaron Lipstadt (1981) *BFI Dossier Number 7: Roger Corman's New World*. London: British Film Institute.

Hoberman, J. (2003) *The Magic Hour: Film at Fin de Siècle*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Hocker Rushing, Janice and Thomas S. Frentz (1995) *Projecting the Shadow: The Cyborg Hero in American Film*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Hunter, I.Q. (2005) The Irrational Enlargement of *Queen Kong*, *Film International* 15 (3), pp. 42-49.

Hunter, I.Q. (2006) Tolkien Dirty, in Ernest Mathijs (ed.), *The Lord of the Rings: Popular Culture in Global Context*. London and New York: Wallflower Press, pp. 317-33.

Hunter, I.Q. (2007a) *A Clockwork Orgy*: A User's Guide, in Elizabeth Wells and Tamar Jeffers McDonald (eds.), *Realities and Remediations: The Limits of Representation*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 101-11.

Hunter, I.Q. (2007b) Post-Classical Fantasy Cinema: *The Lord of the Rings*, in Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan (eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Literature on Screen.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 154-66.

Hunter, I.Q. (2008) *A Clockwork Orange*, Exploitation and the Art Film, in Sara Martin (ed.), *Recycling Culture(s)*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 11-20.

Hutcheon, Linda (2006) *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York and London: Routledge.

Jankiewicz, Patrick (2009) *Just When You Thought It Was Safe: A* Jaws *Companion*. Albany: BearManor Media.

Jenkins, Henry (2007) The Pleasure of Pirates and What It Tells Us About World Building in Branded Entertainment. [online] Available at: http://www.henryjenkins.org/2007/06/forced_simplicity_and_the_crit.html [Accessed 6 June 2009]

Leitch, Thomas (2003) Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory. *Criticism* 45 (2) (Spring), pp. 149-71.

Leitch, Thomas (2007) *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Leitch, Thomas (2008) Adaptation: The Genre. *Adaptation* 1 (2), 106-20.

McFarlane, Brian (2000) "It Wasn't Like That in the Book", *Literature/Film Quarterly* 28 (3), pp. 163-169.

Melville, Herman (1850) Hawthorne and his Mosses, *The Literary World*. New York: EA Duyckinck.

Melville, Herman (1992 [1851]) *Moby-Dick or, The Whale.* London: Penguin.

Metz, Walter C. (2004) The Cold War's 'Undigested Apple-Dumpling': Imaging *Moby-Dick* in 1956 and 2001, *Literature/Film Quarterly* 32 (3), pp. 222-228.

Metz, Walter C. (2007) Shark Porn: Film Genre, Reception Studies, and Chris Kentis' *Open Water*, *Film Criticism* 31 (3), pp. 36-58.

Morgan, Ted (1978) Sharks: The Making of a Best Seller, in Robert Atwan, Barry Orton and William Vesterman (eds.), *American Mass Media: Industries and Issues*. New York: Random House, pp. 140-150.

Morris, Nigel (2007) *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg: Empire of Light*. London and New York: Wallflower Press.

Murray, Simone (2008) Materializing Adaptation Theory: The Adaptation Industry, *Literature/Film Quarterly* 31 (1), pp. 4-20.

Quirke, Antonia (2002) *Jaws*. London: British Film Institute.

Ray, Robert B. (2001) *How a Film Theory Got Lost and Other Mysteries in Film Studies*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Rubey, Dan (1976) The *Jaws* in the Mirror, *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 10-11, pp. 20-23. [online] Available at: http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC10-11folder/JawsRubey.html [Accessed 5 Sept 2008]

Slater, Jay (2007) The Tooth Hurts!, *The Dark Side* 126, pp. 40-43.

Smith, Iain Robert (2009 forthcoming) When *Spiderman* Became *Spider-babe*: Pornographic Appropriation and the Political Economy of the Softcore Parody Genre, in Ernest Mathijs and Xavier Mendik (eds.), *Peep Shows: Cult Visual Erotica*. London: Wallflower Press.

Sounes, Howard (2006) *Seventies: The Sights, Sounds and Ideas of a Brilliant Decade*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Stam, Robert (2000) Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation, in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. 54-76.

Verevis, Constantine (2006) *Film Remakes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Vieira, Joao Luiz and Robert Stam (1985) Parody and Marginality: The Case of Brazilian Cinema, *Framework* 28, pp. 20-49.

Willson, Robert (1977) *Jaws* as Submarine Movie, *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 15, pp. 32-33. [online] Available at: http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC15folder/JawsSubmarine.html [Accessed 5 Sept 2008]

Websites

Benchley, Peter (1995) Oceans in Peril. [online] Available at: http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/OCEAN_PLANET/HTML/ocean_planet_book_peril_intro.html [Accessed 6 June 2009]

Connolly, Ellen and Stephen Bates (2009) Monster Munch: Three Shark Attacks in 24 Hours Throw Australian into Jaws Panic. *Guardian* 13 January. [online] Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/13/australia-shark-attacks [Accessed: 6 June 2009]

Delj (2007) Rooting For Sharks!. IMDb 27 February. [online] Available at: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0470055/usercomments?start=0 [Accessed 10 March 2009]

HouseKeeper13 (2008) Working Out the Kinks. [online] Available at: http://www.fanfiction.net/s/4652160/1/Working_out_the_Kinks [Accessed 8 March 2009]

Filmography

Aatank. 1996. Dir. Prem Lalwani. Bemisal Films Pvt. Ltd.

The Accused. 1988. Dir. Jonathan Kaplan. Paramount.

Adrift [*Open Water 2: Adrift*]. 2006. Dir. Hans Horn. Orange Pictures.

An Affair to Remember. 1957. Dir. Leo McCarey. Jerry Wald Productions.

Air Jaws: Sharks of South Africa. 2001. Dir.Jeff Kurr. Discovery Channel.

Airplane II: The Sequel. 1982. Dir. Ken Finkleman. Paramount.

Alien. 1979. Dir. Ridley Scott. Twentieth Century Fox.

Alligator. 1980. Dir. Lewis Teague. Group 1 International Distribution Organization Ltd.

Alligator II: The Mutation. 1991. Dir. John Hess. Golden Hawk Entertainment.

Anaconda. 1997. Dir. Luis Llosa. Cinema Line Film Corporation.

Anacondas: The Hunt for the Blood Orchid. 2004. Dir. Dwight H. Little. Screen Gems.

Atonement. 2007. Dir. Joe Wright. Working Title.

AVH: Alien vs. Hunter. 2007. Dir. Scott Harper. The Asylum.

Bacalhau [*Cod*]. 1975. Dir. Adriano Stuart. Omega Films.

Barb Wire. 1996. Dir. David Hogan. Dark Horse Entertainment.

Barracuda. 1978. Dir. Harry Kerwin. American General Pictures.

Ben. 1972. Dir. Phil Karlson. Bing Crosby Productions.

The Birds. 1963. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Universal.

Black Water. 2007. Dir. David Nerlich and Andrew Traucki. Australian Film Commission.

The Blair Witch Project. 1999. Dir. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez. Haxan Films.

Blood Beach. 1981. Dir. Jeffrey Bloom. Compass International Pictures.

Bloody Mama. 1970. Dir. Roger Corman. American International Pictures.

Blue Demon. 2004. Dir. Daniel Grodnik. Marla's Gardens Company

Blue Water, White Death. 1971. Dir. Peter Gimbel, James Lipscomb. Cinema Center Films.

Bonnie and Clyde. 1967. Dir. Arthur Penn. Warner Bros.

Boxcar Bertha. 1972. Dir. Martin Scorsese. American International Pictures.

Bug. 1975. Dir. Jeannot Szwarc. William Castle Productions.

The Caine Mutiny. 1954. Dir. Edward Dmytryk. Stanley Kramer Productions.

Cape Fear. 1991. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Universal.

The Car. 1977. Dir. Elliot Silverstein. Universal.

Carnosaur. 1993. Dir. Adam Simon. New Horizon.

Casablanca. 1942. Dir. Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros..

Casino Royale. 2006. Dir. Martin Campbell. Eon Productions.

Citizen Kane. 1941. Dir. Orson Welles. RKO.

Claws. 1977. Dir. Richard Bansbech and R.E. Pierson. Alaska Pictures.

A Clockwork Orgy. 1995. Dir. Nick Cramer. Pleasure Productions.

The Creature from the Black Lagoon. 1954. Dir. Jack Arnold. Universal.

Croc. 2007. Dir. Stewart Raffill. Thai Occidental Productions.

Crocodile. 2000. Dir. Tobe Hooper. Nu Image.

Cruel Jaws. 1995. Dir. Bruno Mattei. Europe Communications S.r.l.

Dark Age. 1987. Dir. Arch Nicholson. F.G. Film Productions.

The Da Vinci Code. 2006. Dir. Ron Howard. Columbia.

The Da Vinci Treasure. 2006. Dir. Paul Mervis. The Asylum.

Day of the Animals. 1977. Dir. William Girdler. Film Ventures International.

Death Race 2000. 1975. Dir. Paul Bartel. New World Pictures.

The Deep. 1977. Dir. Peter Yates. Columbia/EMI.

Deep Blue Sea. 1999. Dir. Renny Harlin. Warner Bros..

Deep Jaws. 1976. Dir. Perry Dell. TFCI.

Deep Throat. 1972. Dir. Gerard Damiano. PD Inc/Vanguard Films.

Disturbia. 2007. Dir. D.J. Caruso. DreamWorks SKG.

Duel. 1971. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal TV.

Earthquake. 1974. Dir. Mark Robson. Universal.

Eight Legged Freaks. 2002. Dir. Ellory Elkayem. Warner Bros..

The Enemy Below. 1957. Dir. Dick Powell. Twentieth Century Fox.

Empire of the Ants. 1977. Dir. Bert I. Gordon. Cinema 77.

Fantasia. 1940. Dir. Ben Sharpsteen. Walt Disney Pictures.

The Food of the Gods. 1976. Dir. Bert I. Gordon. American International Pictures.

Frogs. 1972. Dir. George McCowan. American International Pictures.

Gojira [*Godzilla, King of the Monsters!*]. 1954. Dir. Ishiro Honda. Toho Film.

Grizzly. 1976. Dr. William Girdler. Film Ventures International.

Gums. 1976. Dir. Robert J. Kaplan. AVC.

Gwoemul [*The Host*]. 2006. Dir. Joon-ho Bong. Chungeorahm Film.

Halloween. 1978. Dir. John Carpenter. Compass International Pictures.

Hammerhead. 2005. Dir. Michael Oblowitz. Nu Image.

The Howling. 1981. Dir. Joe Dante. AVCO Embassy Pictures.

In Her Shoes. 2005. Dir. Curtis Hanson. Fox 2000.

The Innocents. 1961. Dir. Jack Clayton. Twentieth Century Fox.

Into the Night. 1985. Dir. John Landis. Universal.

Invasion of the Body Snatchers. 1956. Dir. Don Siegel. Walter Wanger Productions.

It Came from Beneath the Sea. 1955. Dir. Robert Gordon. Columbia.

Jabberjaw. 1976-1978. Hanna-Barbara. ABC.

Jaws. 1975. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal.

Jaws 2. 1978. Dir. Jeannot Szwarc. Universal.

Jaws 3-D. 1983. Dir. Joe Alves. Universal.

Jaws the Revenge. 1987. Dir. Joseph Sargent. Universal.

Jaws Unleashed [videogame]. 2006. Appaloosa Interactive.

Jurassic Park. 1993. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Amblin/Universal.

Killer Fish. 1979. Dir. Anthony M. Dawson [Antonio Margheriti]. Carlo Ponti-Filmar do Brazil Production.

King Cobra. 1999. Dir. David Hillenbrand. Trimark Pictures.

King Kong. 1933. Dir. Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack. RKO.

King Kong. 1976. Dir. John Guillermin. Paramount.

Kinky Kong. 2006. Dir. John Bacchus. Seduction Cinema.

Lake Placid. 1999. Dir. Steve Miner. Twentieth Century Fox.

Lake Placid 2. 2007. Dir. David Flores. Twentieth Century Fox.

The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou. 2004. Dir. Wes Anderson. Touchstone.

Long Weekend. 1978. Dir. Colin Eggleston. Australian Film Commission.

The Lord of the G-Strings: The Femaleship of the Ring. 2003. Dir. Terry M. West. Seduction Cinema / E.I. Independent Cinema.

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. 2001. Dir. Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema.

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King. 2003. Dir. Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema.

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. 2002. Dir. Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema.

Mako: Jaws of Death [*Jaws of Death*]. 1976. Dir. William Grefe. Mako Associates.

Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World. 2003. Dir. Peter Weir. Twentieth Century Fox.

Mega Shark vs. Giant Octopus. 2009. Dir. Jack Perez. The Asylum.

Mission of the Shark: The Saga of the USS Indianapolis. 1991. Dir. Robert Is-cove. CBS.

Misterjaw. 1976. DFE. NBC.

Moby Dick. 1956. Dir. John Huston. Moulin Productions.

The Monster That Challenged the World. 1957. Dir. Arthur Laven. Gramercy Pic-tures.

Moonraker. 1979. Dir. Lewis Gilbert. Eon Productions.

The Most Dangerous Game. 1932. Dir. Irwin Pichel and Ernest B. Schoedsack. RKO.

Must Love Jaws [video mashup]. 2006. Dir. Mike Dow and Ari Eisner. Smacky Productions.

National Treasure. 2004. Dir. John Turteltaub. Walt Disney.

The Nightcomers. 1971. Dir. Michael Winner. Scimitar Productions.

The Night of the Living Dead. 1968. Dir. George A. Romero. Laurel Group.

1941. 1978. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal.

Not Quite Hollywood: The Wild, Untold Story of Ozploitation. 2008. Dir. Mark Hartley. City Films Worldwide.

La Notte degli squali [*Night of the Sharks*]. 1987. Dir. Tonino Ricci. Amanecer Films.

The Ωmega Man. 2007. Dir. Griff Furst. The Asylum.

Open Water. 2004. Dir. Chris Kentis. Plunge Pictures LLC.

Orca. 1977. Dir. Michael Anderson. Paramount.

The Pack. 1977. Dir. Robert Clouse. Warner Bros.

Peter Benchley's Creature [*Creature*]. 1998. Stuart Gillard. MGM Television.

Phase IV. 1974. Dir. Saul Bass. Paramount.

Piranha. 1978. Dir. Joe Dante. New World Pictures.

Piranha [*Piranhas*]. 1996. Dir. Scott P. Levy. Concorde-New Horizons.

Piranha Part Two: The Spawning. 1981. Dir. James Cameron. Chako Film Com-pany.

The Poseidon Adventure. 1972. Dir. Ronald Neame. Irwin Allen Productions.

Pride and Prejudice. 2005. Dir. Joe Wright. Working Title.

Psycho. 1960. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Paramount.

Quantum of Solace. 2008. Dir. Marc Forster. Eon Productions.

Queen Kong. 1976. Dir. Frank Agrama. Cine Art Produzione / Dexter Films.

Raging Sharks. 2005. Dir. Danny Lerner. Nu Image.

Rear Window. 1954. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Paramount.

Reazione a catena [*Last House on the Left, Part II/Bay of Blood/Twitch of the Death Nerve*]. 1971. Dir. Mario Bava. Nuova Linea Cinematografica.

Red Water. 2003. Dir. Charles Robert Carner. Sony Pictures Television.

The Relic. 1997. Dir. Peter Hyams. Paramount.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. 1975. Dir. Jim Sharman. Twentieth Century Fox.

Rogue. 2008. Dir. Greg Mclean. Dimension Films.

Rollerball. 1975. Dir. Norman Jewison. United Artists.

Run Silent, Run Deep. 1958. Dir. Robert Wise. Jeffrey Productions.

Sangue negli abissi [*Deep Blood*]. 1989. Dir. Joe D'Amato. Filmirage S.r.l.

The Searchers. 1956. Dir. John Ford. Warner Bros..

Shark Attack. 1999. Dir. Bob Misiorowski. Nu Image Films.

Shark Attack 2. 2001. Dir. David Worth. Nu Image Films.

Shark Attack 3: Megalodon. 2002. Dir. David Worth. Nu Image Films.

Shark Hunter. 2001. Dir. Matt Codd. Bright Ideas.

Shark in Venice. 2008. Dir. Danny Lerner. Nu Image.

Shark JAWS [arcade game]. 1975. Atari.

Shark: Rosso nell'oceano [*Devil Fish / Devouring Waves*]. 1984. Dir. Lamberto Bava. Filmes International.

Shark Swarm. 2008. Dir. James A. Contner. RHI Entertainment.

Sharkwater. 2006. Dir. Rob Stewart. Sharkwater Productions.

Shark Zone. 2003. Dir. Danny Lerner. Nu Image.

Sleepless in Seattle. 1993. Dir. Nora Ephron. TriStar Pictures.

Snakes on a Plane. 2006. Dir. David R. Ellis. New Line Cinema.

Snakes on a Train. 2006. Dir. The Mallachi Brothers. The Asylum.

Spider-babe. 2003. Dir. Johnny Crash. Seduction Cinema.

Spring Break Shark Attack. 2005. Dir. Paul Shapiro. Film Afrika Worldwide.

The Spy Who Loved Me. 1977. Dir. Lewis Gilbert. Eon Productions.

Squirm. 1976. Dir. Jeff Lieberman. American International Pictures.

The Swarm. 1978. Dir. Irwin Allen. Warner Bros.

Sweet Sweetback's Baad Asssss Song. 1971. Dir. Melvin Van Peebles. Yeah.

Tentacoli [*Tentacles*]. 1977. Dir. Oliver Hellman [Ovidio Assonitis]. American International Pictures.

The Terminator. 1984. Dir. James Cameron. Hemdale.

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre. 1974. Dir. Tobe Hooper. Vortex.

Them!. 1954. Gordon Douglas. Warner Bros..

Tintorera. 1977. Dir. Rene Cardona, Jr. Conacite Uno/Hemdale.

Transmorphers. 2007. Dir. Leigh Scott. The Asylum.

12 Days of Terror. 2004. Dir. Jack Sholder. Orly Adleson Productions.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. 1954. Dir. Richard Fleischer. Walt Disney Productions.

L'ultimo squalo [*Great White / The Last Shark*]. 1981. Dir. Enzo G. Castellari. Film Ventures International.

Up from the Depths. 1979. Dir. Charles B. Griffith. New World Pictures.

Vertigo. 1958. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Paramount.

The Wild Angels 1966. Dir. Roger Corman. American International Pictures.

Willard. 1971. Dir. Daniel Mann. Bing Crosby Productions.

Zombie: Dawn of the Dead [*Dawn of the Dead*]. 1978. Dir. George A. Romero. Laurel Group.

Zombi 2 [*Zombie Flesh Eaters*]. 1979. Dir. Lucio Fulci. Variety Film Production.

The Character-Oriented Franchise: Promotion and Exploitation of pre-sold characters in American film, 1913-1950

Jason Scott, Leeds Trinity University College, UK

This article outlines the concept of the character-oriented franchise, developing some of the historical precedents for economic and promotional strategies common to contemporary media franchises. After providing a definition, I explain the significance of the character(s) within the franchise, adapting Richard Dyer's conceptualisation of the functions of stars. Furthermore, I elaborate on the relationship between the character-oriented franchise and different aspects of synergy, which leads into my proposing distinct types of franchise, nevertheless configured around characters. The main body of the article will then illustrate this typology, working through a range of historical examples predominantly spanning American film production between 1913 and 1950, whilst including properties derived from other media. I address the studio context of production of these films, and note evaluations of their status within trade responses.

The character-oriented franchise involves the exploitation of pre-sold or familiar characters. That is the selling of media or ancillary products based upon a proven property, with an established market, where the focus of advertising is on the name of the character, rather than around a star. In essence, the character-oriented franchise is distinct from the dominant focus of classical Hollywood studios upon the star (Neale, 2000: 238 cites Balio, 1995: 101); the featured actors or stars are interchangeable, or without proven box office appeal, no 'coin attracters' in the terminology of a *Variety* review of *Blondie* (*Variety,* 1938a). This corresponds with many contemporary film franchises, "more ensemble movies than star-driven pictures" (Skopal, 2007: 193). Similarly, Bennett and Woollacott have described the way the Bond films: were defined by the character, rather than stars; traded on a formula; and developed spin-offs (Bennett and Woollacott, 1987: 48-9, 273; 166, 198; 38). Hall has defined the film franchise as "a picture defined by its ability to generate various spinoffs such as sequels and merchandising opportunities" (Hall, 2006: 171), but for the purpose of this article I am including films that are spin-offs of other media products or narrative forms.

Following Richard Dyer, I argue that the proprietary character (Altman, 1999: 115) functions as capital, investment, outlay, and for the market in a similar way to his description of the function of stars (Dyer, 1979: 11). The character is a form of capital, a property, legally determined by primary and secondary rights, owned or licensed for a particular period or territories. As a form of brand it also has a capital value for the production company. Similarly, the character functions as an investment, both in developing as a film franchise, as well as the costs of rights (or options) to use the character, story, or other copyrighted property, or trademarked elements. Whilst the proprietary character doesn't entail the same kinds of outlay involved in the fabrication of stars, for a series of films there is a necessary expenditure on sets, props and other aspects of the

production design. Likewise, there are the salaries of those contracted creatives employed upon the franchise projects. Perhaps most significantly, the proprietary character functions within the market, and for marketing the individual film. As a guide for audience expectations, through formula, and a guarantee of quality, the proprietary character differentiates the product of the studio in a similar way to their contracted stars. The proprietary character ensures a degree of familiarity for cinemagoers and exhibitors, and hence serves to encourage the production of series, remakes, or sequels, thus balancing the audiences' desire for novelty and familiarity in an alternative but equivalent fashion to genre and star vehicles (Altman, 1999: 115; Buscombe, 2003: 22). It also works to meet exhibitor demand for films with an established appeal or audience. Altman notes that from the early cinema period, around 1900, "idiosyncratic and easily identifiable characters (sometimes actually borrowed from the comic strips) were created so that each individual film could contribute to marketing the next." (Altman, 1999: 116)

Eileen Meehan has differentiated five behaviours that comprise synergy, each associated with contemporary media franchises and transindustrial conglomeration: recirculation, repackaging, reversioning, recycling and redeployment (Meehan, 2005: 124). Whilst these provide one non-exhaustive typology, her focus is the intensification of synergy since the 1980s, and particularly its significance for those conglomerates that control U.S. television (Meehan, 2005: 123). Recirculation describes the licensing of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* to a new Viacom television network UPN, to utilise their established appeal. Recycling, "when a part of an artefact is reused in the creation of another artefact," describes the sampling or remediation of content associated with digital convergence, but implicitly for Meehan being recognized and so adding pre-sold appeal to the new media text. Discussing director's cuts and variant editions, prevalent since laser disc and particularly DVD diffusion, Meehan terms these reversioning (Meehan, 2005: 124). Whilst precedents exist for these, her terms of repackaging and redeployment are more salient for the period and examples I will discuss. However, I suggest that historically character-oriented franchises are best understood in terms of how they extend the media product, that is generate spin-offs, and how they enhance promotional and exploitation possibilities, through the tie-in and established market. Therefore I will be distinguishing film sequels and series, film serials, merchandise and other textual spin-offs. The latter encompasses both Meehan's categories of redeployment and significant aspects of repackaging in the period I am focussing on.

Film sequels constitute the "[c]hronological extension of a…precursor narrative that was originally presented as closed and complete in itself," most commonly continuing the story of the protagonist(s), but also including spatial expansions of the story world, the utilisation of a second generation of related characters, and arguably prequels as a reverse chronological extension (Budra and Schellenberg, 1998: 7, 8; Baker, 1997: 237). Whilst sequels can develop into series, it is worth noting that series films are "narratively self-contained," and based upon "a formula of characters, settings, situations and storylines which can remain constant factors in individual movies" (Singer, 1990: 190 footnote 1; Pye, 1982; 181; Neale, 2000: 249). These repeated elements might not include

shared protagonists (Crafton, 1993: 260-271; Neale, 2000: 249). Film serials, in contrast, extend the experience of the single film text by division, with the selling of the media product in chapters, featuring "an overarching story that carried over from episode to episode" (Singer, 1990: 190 footnote 1). Most importantly, as with film series, the serial enhances the possibilities of advertising and exploitation through an established market for the second and subsequent instalment. Merchandise extends the initial media product through "the production and sale of goods in the form of or bearing copyright images and/or logos, including such products made under license" (Bryman, 2004: 2; Baker, 1997: 238). Whilst also relating to ancillary formats, other textual spin-offs extend the story or character from its origin into another narrative form, such as from a film into a book, radio series, or comic, or vice versa (Williams and Hammond, 2006: 451). Meehan describes this as redeployment, in which "the symbolic universe encapsulated in an artefact -- whether a television series, film, novel, or other intellectual property -- is moved to create a new TV series, film, novel, etc., that is both dependent on, but removed from, the original" (Meehan, 2005; 125). Notably, her definition would also incorporate merchandise, but it is useful to distinguish between different kinds of transfer of intellectual property, since textual spin-offs have a legal basis in changed format rights, such as novelization publishing rights, founded upon copyright, rather than merchandising, which through "licensing depends entirely on the protectability of the trademark" (Baker, 1997: 233, 237; Gaines, 1990: 178). Meehan's categories also overlap, since she notes that before the advent of VHS "the primary forms of repackaging were comic books, photo-novels and books" (Meehan, 2005:124). She identifies repackaging with the creation of an accessible or tangible form of the original media text, often with additional material, which thus extends the theatrical experience of a film, or initial viewing of broadcast television series (ibid).

Whilst the terminology of franchises, synergy and spin-offs are more recent, associated primarily with media conglomerates (Thompson, 2007: 17, 36; Maltby, 2003: 211-212), it is still useful to identify how these concepts relate to the economic and promotional strategies of film production and distribution companies in the pre-classical and studio period. Most notably, how could they differentiate their films whilst still reducing the risk associated with a new product; exploit publicity and indirect methods of raising awareness, or establishing awareness, including cross promotion; and take advantage of ancillary revenues or offloading production, advertising and marketing costs through tie-ins? Janet Staiger discusses innovations of the U.S. film industry that addressed these issues, which were largely implemented by around 1915. These include "the development of routine procedures for creating consumer identification of specific films to see or theatres to attend (i.e., the differentiation of its product) -- accomplished by 1915;" identifying "media channels and product features" for promotion; "exploitation of indirect methods of appeal and interest," all in place by 1915; and solving problems around standardisation of national advertising which she argues was tried during the 1910s, but became normative in the 1930s (Staiger, 1990: 4). Staiger traces how some of the practices were adopted from other industries and more general shifts in advertising; such as tie-ins through the product placement of Macy's gowns within a play, *1492*, in 1893 (Staiger, 1990: 5 cites Allen, 1980: 487). "Tie-ins included the presentation of stories in multiple media, thus multiplying the exposure contacts for a

consumer (a standard device for increasing name recognition of a product)" (Staiger, 1990: 11). Whilst the tie-in, or tie-up, is primarily, but not exclusively concerned with publicity (Blakeston, 1948: 122), production planning, and the requisite reduction of risk, also coalesced with some of these practices.

> For almost a century, Hollywood studios and producers have used every primary product -- every film -- to create an even more lucrative secondary product: a brand-name-like feature that can be inserted into subsequent films, thus guaranteeing audience fidelity and continued income. (Altman, 1999: 121)

Besides the use of stars, as noted above, this has been pursued through creating "cycles of films … identified with a single studio," that is, proprietary cycles (Altman, 1999: 59). This is one variation of the broader tendency in publishing and film production to attempt to imitate the success of individual films and thus generate cycles (Neale, 2000: 9; Cawelti, 1976: 9). I will now illustrate these types of franchise, and strategies such as tie-ins, and the use of pre-sold characters with established consumer awareness, through a number of historical cases. In particular, I consider serials and then series which anticipate the prevalence of sequels and series within contemporary franchises, as well as practices within animation that help to contextualise the innovations of Disney in synergy and merchandising.

Silent Film Serials as Character-Oriented Franchise?

Whilst I defined film serials as an extension of the product through division into chapters, it can also be argued that they constituted an alternative approach to the multiple reel feature film to extend the product from the one or two reel film that played at each theatre for no more than a week. "It saw the logic of adopting the practices of serialization, already a mainstay of popular magazines and newspapers," but with individual episodes "billed as 'feature' attractions" (Singer, 1996: 106). Additionally, and concomitant on their status as "feature" attractions, serial production facilitated tie-ins and warranted increased and extensive advertising, without requiring roadshowing or alternative exhibition or distribution practices (Quinn, 2001: 38, 46). "In this situation, serials were ideal vehicles for massive publicity … Serial producers invested extremely heavily in newspaper, magazine, trade journal, billboard, and tram advertising, as well as grandiose cash-prize contests" (Singer, 1996: 106; Staiger, 1990: 13, 27 footnote 37). Their potential for tie-ins was instrumental: "[i]n fact, movie serials in the United States started as jointly produced and published ventures… the first occurrence of this in the U.S. was Edison's 1912 *What Happened to Mary?*" which was released "in cooperation with *The Ladies' World*," followed by *The Adventures of Kathlyn* (1913) "co-released by Selig and the Chicago *Tribune*" (Staiger, 1990: 11; Singer, 1996: 106). Singer notes how these collaborations functioned, with tie-in stories:

> Until around 1918, elaborate and well-promoted prose versions of many serial queen melodramas were published by instalment in the women's pages of newspapers and national women's magazines, scheduled to ap-

> pear in print just before the theatrical exhibition of each episode. (Singer, 1990: 170)

Such concurrent tie-ins, aligned with twelve to fifteen chapter serials, were utilised by all the major production studios with the exception of Biograph, aligned with a majority of the high circulation newspapers in key markets (Singer, 1996: 107; Singer, 1990: 172). *The Perils of Pauline*, the first Pathe serial, was "produced with the financial backing of William Randolph Hearst, who … gave it maximum publicity in his newspapers" (Slide, 1970: 172). The film heralded the consolidation of serials in America, as noted in its *Variety* review, which opens "The serial thing in movies has come to stay" (*Variety*, 1914a). Just weeks beforewith the release of *Fantomas* (1914) *Variety* had predicted the profitability of the serial, suggesting American producers "get out a Nick Carter, Diamond Dick or Old Sleuth series" (Monk, 1914). As this implies, some serials were based around established characters, whereas many American serials were focussed on their eponymous, film originated female protagonists. It is worth qualifying the extent to which these constituted character-oriented franchises, given the importance of their female stars. Slide suggests *What Happened to Mary?* made a star of Mary Fuller, and hence her star appeal was exploited for the sequel *Who Will Marry Mary?*, as well as its successor *Dolly of the Dailies* (Slide, 1970: 157, 159). Serials were associated with "fans [who] would return week after week to see their favourite stars" (Slide, 1970: 157). However, the star was not always essential, for *The Hazards of Helen* (Kalem, 1914-16) which ran to 119 episodes, Helen was initially played by Helen Holmes, but she left Kalem in 1916 for Signal. The serial continued with Helen Gibson taking over the lead role, but both were substituted by actresses Anna Q. Nilsson and Elsie McLeod when either was unavailable during shooting (Slide, 1970: 161, 164). Similarly for *Girl Detective* (Kalem, 1914), Ruth Roland starred for 8 episodes, but when she left for the Balboa Co., she was replaced by Cleo Ridgely. This satisfies the condition of interchangeable actors within the character-oriented franchise, whilst additionally the serials promoted subsequent episodes, were sometimes sequelized, and produced other tie-ins beside the newspaper or magazine fictionalisation, such as the Photoplay edition book. *The Adventures of Kathlyn* was arguably the first true serial, with each instalment ending "to be continued next week" (Slide, 1970: 158), and also possibly the first serial turned into a Photoplay edition. Novelizations featuring still photos of the star/character were also produced for other serials, including *The Perils of Pauline*, *The Exploits of Elaine* (with the story serialized in Hearst papers, and the photoplay edition published by Hearst International Library Co.) and the second of its sequels *The Romance of Elaine* (1915), following *The New Exploits of Elaine* (published by Harper & Bros.) (Petaja, 1975: 6-7, 137).

Finally, it is worth clarifying the status of these early American silent serials. Besides the significant success of the Pearl White serials, the success of the Grace Cunard/Francis Ford serials has been claimed "in many ways responsible for the expansion of the Universal Company" (Slide, 1970: 170). However, this was a transitional period, with the move to feature films and the significance of first-run theatres increasing. "Almost never screened in large first-run theatres, serials were a staple of small, cheap 'neighbourhood' theatres," which still formed the majority in numbers, albeit already first-run theatres made more money

(Singer, 1996: 106). These silent serials, then, correspond in part to the charac-ter-oriented franchise, but with the proviso that they developed and exploited stars -- but it was the character's name that was retained for sequels, and the tie-ins were focused on the narrative and character as much as the stars.

A Studio Based on a Pre-existing Character/World Franchise, or Syndicate of Characters

In 1914, the Oz Film Manufacturing Co. was established on the basis of "Exclu-sive control of the Works of L. Frank Baum in Motion Pictures" (Eyles, 1985: 50), with Baum contributing the rights to his books (those he still owned). Baum had already written seven Oz novels, along with three previous stage adaptations, whilst there were four earlier one-reel Selig film versions produced in 1910 (Ey-les, 1985: 43-49). For the Oz Film Manufacturing Co.:

> [t]he first film was *The Patchwork Girl of Oz,* a version of Baum's latest book.… The company then made *The Magic Cloak of Oz,* an adaptation of Baum's 1905 book *Queen Zixi of Ix* that had nothing to do with the Land of Oz. After that came *His Majesty, the Scarecrow of Oz*, a new story with many familiar characters, including Dorothy and the Tin Woodman. (Eyles, 1985: 49)

Whilst *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* was released by Paramount in September 1914 "to tepid response," a distributor could not be found for *The Magic Cloak of Oz,* and a "minor company took *His Majesty, The Scarecrow of Oz* only after it had been agreed to retitle it*The New Wizard of Oz*, in the hope of cashing in on ear-lier success" (Eyles, 1985: 50). Although the company soon disbanded, Baum clearly aimed to cross-promote his Oz properties, with *The Patchwork Girl of Oz,* and more significantly intended to create spin-offs from his successful books or stories in other media to exploit further revenues. For instance his book *The Tik-Tok of Oz* was based on the earlier stage play *The Tik-Tok Man of Oz*, whilst he also developed a 'cross-over' story combining characters from his successful non-Oz series of books and those based in Oz, *The Scarecrow Of Oz* which also re-used the plot and initial title of the last Oz film (Eyles, 1985: 50). This kind of recombination of elements intended to exploit a pre-sold property was particu-larly evident in the re-titling of the second and third films, with no concern for how this might tarnish the value of the "brand".

Whilst the Oz Film studio was based on a limited number of literary properties, in contrast in 1916 the International Film Service, an offshoot of Hearst's Inter-national News (wire) Service (INS), was created "to capitalise on the *American*'s [a New York daily newspaper] biggest comic strip characters, among them Krazy Kat, Happy Hooligan, and the Katzenjammer Kids." In effect, it was transferring the strategy of syndication of newspaper comic strips to film, for cartoon adapta-tions of comic strip characters (Kanfer, 2000: 48; Crafton, 1993: 178). Comic strips had established mass appeal, and as early as the 1880s "some already had casts of regularly recurring characters," whilst their popularity was exploited in the Hearst-Pulitzer New York circulation wars during the 1890s, featuring first in weekly papers, then in daily newspapers (Crafton, 1993: 36). There had been early live action adaptations, as intimated by Altman above. "Starting in 1902,

for example, Biograph created a series of film versions of Frederick Burr Opper's *Alphonse and Gaston* comic strip" (Beaty, 2007: 365). Furthermore numerous appropriations of the Happy Hooligan character began with the Blackton & Smith "Happy Hooligan" films in 1899, an Edison copyrighted *Hooligan Assists the Magician* (1900), followed by four other adaptations in 1903, whilst American Mutoscope and Biograph made ten "Happy Hooligans" in 1903 (Crafton, 1993: 37, 40). Similarly, Biograph produced two "Katzenjammer Kids" films in 1903 (Crafton, 1993: 40). Beaty suggests that, beyond comic strip characters being appropriated to market the films, they could launch successful film franchises as well as other tie-in products. Richard Felton Outcault launched the "Buster Brown" strip for the *New York Herald* in 1902, and has been claimed as "the originator of tie-in merchandising; he licensed Buster and his dog Tige to advertise everything from cigars to shoes." In 1903 Edison was contracted to produce eight films based on the strip, with one directed by Edwin S. Porter in 1904 (Crafton, 1993: 40; Beaty, 2007: 365).

However, it was with *The Newlyweds* (1913, Éclair), that "a series of animated cartoons based on the famous Newlywed pictures of George McManus" demonstrated the potential for an ongoing cartoon adaptation of the comic strips, and was notably described by a trade journal article by reference to the comic title first, then its creator (*Motion Picture World* 15/2/1913 cited by Crafton, 1993: 83). "Thus *The Newlyweds* became the first cartoon series with a recurring cast of characters appearing regularly in a way analogous to the weekly comic strip." (Crafton, 1993: 81-83) Crafton identifies this as the first animated continuity series, featuring consistent protagonists (Crafton, 1993: 271). Subsequently, from February 1916 the Hearst-Vitagraph News Pictorial ran animated cartoons based on the characters of Tom Powers and George Herriman, with the intention of adding further characters licensed by the syndicate in April, including those from Tad, George McManus ("Bringing Up Father"), Hal Coffman, Fred Opper, Harry Herschfield, Cliff Sterrett, Tom McNamara, and Winsor McCay. At a time when animation was subject to a patents based oligopoly, the company acquired a license to use cel animation in 1916 (Crafton, 1993: 178). Series production of cartoons enabled economies, with the reuse of backgrounds, poses and reactions from the characters. Furthermore, industrialised techniques and division of labour were aligned around the character at IFS, since Gregory La Cava, the studio supervisor, "began the practice of making each character series a semiautonomous production, and encouraged the crew of *Krazy Kat* to compete with that of *Bringing up Father*" (Crafton, 1993: 181). Besides these two series, others were based on Opper's Happy Hooligan character, Tad's Judge Rummy, and T.E. Power's Parcel Post Pete. Whilst the IFS films efficiently redeployed the syndicated strip characters, and utilised the cross-promotional possibilities of Hearst's newspaper ownership, with the masthead on the Hearst comic strip pages advertising "see us in the movies" (Crafton, 1993: 181), I would suggest that unlike the case of the Oz films, they exemplify repurposing. Following Negroponte, this is the reuse of intellectual property, or already existing media content, within media produced and owned by the same company, for instance secondary narrative forms, or ancillary merchandise (Negroponte, 1995: 63). Partly motivated by achieving savings, with the reuse of amortized property such as images, particularly in the digital era, this is subtly distinct from Meehan's definition of repackaging, which encompasses the licensed spin-off, and rede-

ployment, since the producer maintains a financial interest in both the original and ancillary text, emphasising the need for fidelity, or at least consistency and respectful appropriation. In this instance, the "films served to support the more lucrative field of comic strips, by reminding the audiences of their favorite characters" (Bendazzi, 1994: 53). This contrasts with the more common licensing of rights for ancillary media texts (Jenkins, 2006: 105). Arguably, this maintenance of character fidelity, and consistency of other imagery, deriving from the economics of animation production, anticipates the controlled synergy practiced by the Disney company discussed below (Crafton, 1993: 272).

Despite the copyright protection afforded strip cartoon characters (Gaines, 1990: 176), the Hearst syndicate's most popular property "The Katzenjammer Kids" suffered competition, since Hearst owned the rights to the title, but the rights to use the characters were kept by the artist Rudolph Dirks, following his departure from the *Journal* for Pulitzer's *World* in 1912. Thus two parallel strips ran, "The Katzenjammer Kids" strip in the *Journal*, and "Hans und Fritz" in the *World*. Whilst the Katzenjammer Kids featured in IFS films from January 1917, debuting in *Der Captain is Examined for Insurance* (1917), by June that year Dirks's "Hans and Fritz" were adapted as animated films distributed by the Short Feature Exchange (Crafton, 1993: 181). Irrespective of this competition, the animation branch of INS was closed on July 6, 1918, due to it not "helping to sell any more newspapers" (Crafton, 1993: 181; Kanfer, 2000: 48). Nonetheless, several of the cartoon series were continued, produced under license to Frank Moser, including Happy Hooligan, Shenanigan Kids with the Captain and the Inspector, and Old Judge Rumhauser, until 1920, whilst the Krazy Kat shorts continued to be produced into the 1920s (Crafton, 1993: 183; Bendazzi, 1994: 88). This was also not going to be the end of Hearst's syndicate interests in character-oriented film franchises, as I discuss below in relation to the re-adaptation of characters from King Features Syndicate comic strips in live action 1930s serials.

The Animated Character Franchise

Whereas the IFS film series, and character-oriented franchises, originated with characters from newspaper cartoon strips, soon within animation it was the films that were producing spin-offs in other media, and being extended with tie-ins and merchandise, including in the 1930s and 1940s comic adaptations of characters such as Mickey Mouse, Betty Boop, Porky Pig and Woody Woodpecker (Bendazzi, 1994: 84):

> During the 1920s the hegemony of the comic-strip hero waned, and characters developed exclusively for the screen, such as Koko the Clown and Felix the Cat, began to thrive …[the period] marked primarily by the emergence of the 'continuity character series' (Crafton, 1993: 10).

Arguably the Fleischer studios were built on the success of Koko the Clown, or rather the Inkwell franchise since the protagonist was not initially named (Kanfer, 2000: 48). Similarly, the Pat Sullivan studio profited significantly from Otto Messmer's Felix the Cat from the early 1920s onwards (Wells, 1998: 132). Felix became the subject of a merchandise craze, with *Film Daily* reporting "Felix handkerchiefs, Felix toys, Felix chinaware…" in 1924 (Kanfer, 2000: 41), and in

"a reversal of the customary routine of comic strip into film," Felix was turned into a comic, drawn by Messmer (Kanfer, 2000: 66). However, Felix was not the first animated character tied in to merchandise, in 1917 Quacky Doodles films followed the comic stories and their spin-off toys and books (Langer, 2002: 110).

Despite this shift, with animated characters developed for the screen generating character-oriented franchises by means of series and merchandise, silent anima-tion was "not commercially important," and the animation studios were depend-ent on their distributors (Crafton, 1993: 4). This was still the case for Disney, but with the Disney company the extension of their short films through mer-chandising, coupled with co-ordinated cross-promotion, would lead to a more successful and significant development of character-oriented franchising. Disney would also effectively differentiate its product, in part through innovations such as synchronised sound and then Technicolor, as well as by enhanced production values achieved through higher budgets (Gomery, 1994: 72-3; Kanfer, 2000: 95). "From its inception, Disney created strong brands or characters that were marketed in various forms (mostly through films and merchandise) throughout the world" (Wasko, 2001b: 1). This creation and exploitation of character brands was not immediately fruitful for the company, and Wasko and others note the strategy of synergy they practiced expanded dramatically from the 1950s with their interconnected diversification through the Disneyland theme park and tele-vision series, as well as the creation of their own distribution company Buena Vista (Wasko, 2001a; Anderson, 1994: 137; Gomery, 1994: 77; Telotte, 2004). However, in the first instance, whilst the early Disney character Oswald the Lucky Rabbit led to merchandise, including candy bars, baby rattles and dolls, as well as featuring in a series of short animations, the royalties for this merchan-dise were kept by the distributor company Universal (Heide & Gilman, 1994: 37), and worse still (for Disney) the distributor took control of the character, re-placing Disney as the producer with an Oswald studio, with the series continuing for a decade (Crafton, 1993: 210). Yet Disney recovered from this setback, and benefited from the control they exercised over their characters subsequently. Wasko notes that (Walt) Disney achieved success "through his beloved character creations" (Wasko, 2001a: 7). The popularity of Mickey Mouse, following his third film *Steamboat Willie* (1928), provided the initial impetus: through the se-ries of animated shorts (fifteen in 1929) (Heide & Gilman, 1994: 33). Yet a sta-ble of Disney characters provided the basis for merchandise; Mickey, Minnie, Horace Horsecollar, as well as Clarabelle Cow, and from 1934 on Donald Duck was the second most popular character, and characters from the *Silly Symphony* series of films were briefly licensed and exploited, such as the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf (Heide & Gilman, 1994: 14). The Mickey Mouse Club pro-vided opportunities for cross-promotion within 150 theatres by the end of 1930, to up to 200,000 members; and from 1929, but particularly from early 1930 onwards with the licensing of Mickey Mouse merchandise (de Cordova, 1994: 207; Wasko, 2001a: 7). This included Mickey Mouse dolls and a comic strip from January 1930, syndicated through the King Features Syndicate and became more extensive from February 1930 following the contract with the George Borgfeldt Company for "international licensing, production and distribution of Mickey Mouse merchandise" (Wasko, 2001a: 10; Heide & Gilman, 1994: 38; Wells, 2002: 161).

Disney "grew from a marginal operation to a successful niche company, specializing in one phase of movie-making, animation," and particularly during the Depression it was the co-ordinated exploitation of merchandise that helped the company to survive and grow (Gomery, 1994: 71-2, 73). Disney would effectively innovate new forms of repurposing and repackaging, embodying alternative but complementary approaches to character-oriented franchising. These were enhanced by the degree and extent to which Disney controlled all aspects of character exploitation, even for licensed products. Zipes argues the company saw no difference between films and other products: "[t]he copyrighted label was what counted most" (Zipes, 1997: 92). Sidestepping his ideological critique, as an economic strategy this stress on merchandise not as an afterthought to successful film products, but as an interdependent source of promotion and revenue (through both licensing fees and royalties) (Gomery, 1994: 73), planned and released in advance of, or at least to coincide with the film, set them apart and anticipated many aspects of contemporary media synergy and franchises. "Design and artwork was supplied free of charge to licensees to ensure that the images of Mickey Mouse and his friends were consistent with the cartoon film characters who might change, sometimes imperceptibly, from film to film" (Heide & Gilman, 1994: 43). Monitoring the quality and consistency of licensed materials, and time of their release, Disney developed a systematic approach to repurposing its characters. The momentous shift to animated feature production with *Snow White* exemplified this, as in 1936 more than seventy licenses were granted for tie-ins including clothing, food, toys, books, phonograph records, sheet music, comics, and picture books, all well *before* the film was released (Wasko, 2001a: 14). Whilst the classic Disney animated features were not followed by sequels at the time, they still illustrate the character-oriented franchise through this extension into tie-ins and ongoing sales and licensing of merchandise and ancillary media products, whilst prior to the feature films the animated shorts were organised around character series, with Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, as well as the non-character based *Silly Symphony* series which nevertheless developed merchandisable characters. Furthermore, Disney subsequently re-exploited their amortized feature films, from 1944 through theatrical re-releasing, approximately every seven years. The animated shorts were repurposed and recycled, through compilation features such as *Make Mine Music* (1946) and *Melody Time* (1948). Features and shorts were then recycled and recirculated for the television series, the characters repurposed for the theme park, and eventually their value to the Disney library exploited through repackaging as VHS video and DVD and other new media formats (Gomery, 1994: 74, 77; Wasko, 2001a: 21). Whilst Disney spin-offs often preceded theatrical releases, with video and DVD they came to exceed their profitability. "The Disney company has grown and expanded by vigilantly *controlling its products, characters, and images*" (Wasko, 2001a: 222; my emphasis). However, until the 1950s, as with its predecessors in animation, Disney was still dependent on its "distribution agreements with powerful studio patrons" -- Columbia (1929-1931), United Artists (1931 to 1936), and then RKO (1936 to 1954) -- "to fully exploit marketing leverage" and ensure wide, and first-run release of its film product (Gomery, 1994: 72).

Intermedia Series and Serials -- the Build-up, Re-adaptation, and Cross-promotion of Characters

> Serials became much more closely associated with pre-existing characters in the Sunday comics, comic books, radio, and pulp magazines. In 1936 Universal bought the rights to many comic strips owned by the King Features Syndicate and other studios made similar deals. (Singer, 1996: 110)

Whilst the silent serials had previously exploited tie-ins and the cross-promotional potential of newspaper serialisation, the 1930s saw more widespread connections between film producers and the characters of various other media. The incentives remained the same, to exploit tie-ins, and perhaps more significantly the pre-sold quality of characters, their established market awareness, or what was termed by the trade journal *Variety* at the time "build up" (Barn, 1937; *Variety*, 1938b). These approaches were not restricted to the film industry (Jones, 2005: 73). Rather the film producers consistently sought to profit from existing cross-promotion through re-adaptations of properties already developed, and successful, in a secondary format. And as in the 1910s with IFS, they made use of characters often licensed and controlled by newspaper syndicates, including the Hearst owned King Features Syndicate, which were familiar to a national, and international audience through newspaper strips, comics and radio.

For example the *Variety* review of *Jungle Jim* (1937), stressed in the credit: "Based on the King Features Syndicate strip by Alex Raymond" (possibly since King Features were particularly litigious and active in asserting their ownership of properties). The review opened:

> A 12-weeker, 'Jungle Jim' is a follow on the successful comic strip predecessor, 'Ace Drummond'… Great tieup possibilities with papers using the strip, especially those sheets which own radio stations and make an institutional build up practice of reading the comics by air each Sunday morning. (Barn, 1937)

Similarly an earlier review of *Flash Gordon* (1936) confirmed in the credits "Based on Alex Raymond's cartoon strip of same title (King Features)," and the review claimed: "[y]oungsters should eat it up because of advance bally via cartoons in the syndicated dailies," concluding, "'Flash Gordon' should be a top grosser in serial field"; this was justified in terms of its production values as well as this "build up" (Wear, 1936). Notably this was Universal's most expensive serial, costing $350,000, nearly triple the average production budget of $125,000 (Gifford, 1982: 777). Generally serials were budgeted lower, in line with lower rentals, with each chapter achieving "only about five dollars per theatre at most, while feature pictures brought in three times as much" (McCarthy & Flynn, 1975: 124). Reviewing its sequel, *Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars* (1938) *Variety* identified it as "prime plucking for nabes [neighbourhood theatres] which have had audiences avid for this sort of fare. Smart casting and production is evidenced in the job of celluloiding the character already built up by Alex Raymond's newspaper (King Features) comic strip." This review similarly distinguished the production values from the norm in serials (*Variety*, 1938b). However, tie-ins and the ex-

ploitation of 'build up' was no guarantee for success, as the review for *Little Orphan Annie* (1938) appraises in its second and final paragraphs; "[d]espite the popularity of the 'Little Orphan Annie' cartoon strip, picture cannot hold up except as filler on secondary duallers, or from kid matinees. …exploitation tiein with strip will not save picture" (*Variety*, 1938c).

"The Shadow" illustrates the prevalence of cross-promotion and tie-ins in other media. Originating in radio and running from 1930-1954. Street & Smith, leading publishers of pulp fiction, sponsored *The Detective Story Hour* a weekly drama narrated by "Shadow", and then created a spin-off magazine in April 1931, which ran 1931-49 (Jones, 2005: 73; Richards, 2002: 170). "The first issue of *The Shadow* sold out. In the economic free fall of 1931, very few magazines were selling out. It began as a quarterly, but by late that year it was coming out twice a month" (Jones, 2005: 74).

> The radio success of the Shadow inevitably inspired movie spin-offs. There were a couple of low budget Shadow features: *The Shadow Strikes* (Lynn Shores, 1937) and *International Crime* (Charles Lamont, 1938)… Columbia brought out a serial, *The Shadow* (James Horne, 1940) with Victor Jory, and there were a trio of Monogram B-pictures … *The Shadow Returns* (Phil Rosen, 1946), *Behind the Mask* (Phil Karlson, 1946) and *The Missing Lady* (Karlson, 1946). (Richards, 2002: 171)

Similarly, whilst Dick Tracy originated in the strips of the Detroit *Mirror* and New York *Daily News* in 1931, he was appropriated by radio from 1934 (Broes, 1992: 97; Jones, 2005: 75). Owned by the Chicago Tribune syndicate, this was just one of their strips adapted to radio, alongside *Little Orphan Annie* and *Terry and the Pirates* (Harmon, 2001: 79). The character was serialized by Republic, in *Dick Tracy* (1937), also reversioned as a feature, *Dick Tracy Returns* (1938), *Dick Tracy's G-Men* (1939), and *Dick Tracy vs. Crime Inc* (1941), which primarily exploited the name of the property, and later appropriated for a series of RKO features. These included *Dick Tracy* (1946), *Dick Tracy vs Cueball* (1947), *Dick Tracy's Dilemma* (1947), and *Dick Tracy Meets Gruesome* (1947).

Columbia also produced serials and series films. "Series films had the advantage of originating elsewhere. Blondie, the most durable of the series films (1939-1951), started as a Chic Young comic strip" (Dick, 1992). Again, *Blondie* was "a King Features Syndicate property since 1930," and appropriated for a radio series from 1939-51 (Parish, 1971: 33). Likewise, for its serial *Superman*, the poster tagline reads "Based on the SUPERMAN adventure feature appearing in SUPERMAN and ACTION COMICS magazines, in daily and Sunday newspapers coast-to-coast and on the SUPERMAN radio program broadcast over the Mutual Network" (Hewetson, 1969: 6).

Demonstrating the range of budgets and studios involved in series based on pre-sold character, my final historical case also suggests how a character-oriented franchise could be variously repurposed or repackaged at different moments, depending on historical and economic circumstances. Tarzan originated as a serialised story in the *Evening World*, which was republished in a popular fiction magazine, later novelised and led to a series of books. Whilst there were earlier,

silent film appropriations of the character it was *Tarzan the Ape Man*(1932) by MGM that demonstrated the lucrative mass appeal of this character-oriented franchise. However, despite the significance of the investment by MGM in the film, it is worth noting that "*Tarzan* came to radio in 1932 in a series of 364 pre-recorded fifteen-minute episodes," and similarly in "1932, United Features Syndicate began its comic strip of *Tarzan*" (Parish, 1971: 304). "Paradoxically, the MGM *Tarzan*s drew little from Burroughs' original concept, but rather, the impetus stemmed from the studio's 1931 jungle adventure tale*Trader Horn*", which had done good business internationally, prompting the idea of "devising an original story that might involve Trader Horn with the ape man" (Behlmer, 1987a: 39). Hence, this first MGM film was planned as an early hybrid, or cross-over franchise, combining characters from different sources. A contract dated April 15, 1931 "specified that 'Burroughs grants rights to Metro to write an 'original story', using character of 'Tarzan', and any other characters used in stories heretofore written by author," whilst Burroughs would vet scripts "to be sure they were not based (in whole or in part) on his own works" (ibid). Whilst Trader Horn was removed from the script, the film which cost $652,675 was sufficiently successful for MGM to purchase the rights "to produce a second Tarzan film and an option to produce two further pictures" (Behlmer, 1987a: 43). The independent producer Sol Lesser had already obtained the rights to make a Tarzan film, and produced two films *Tarzan the Fearless* (1933) and *Tarzan's Rev*enge (1938), whilst Burroughs himself was involved in production of a serial by new company Burroughs-Tarzan Enterprises, *The New Adventures of Tarzan* serial, each being low budget redeployments of the character (Cheatwood, 1982: 165). MGM initially responded to protect their investment by increasing the budget for their sequel, *Tarzan and His Mate* (1934) with a negative cost of $1,279,142 (Behlmer, 1987a: 46). MGM later contracted with Burroughs and Lesser, to continue the series, but only until the impact of World War Two removed a significant source of revenues, "around 50 per cent of the market for these films" (Cheatwood, 1982: 173). Lesser, who acquired the property, continued to exploit the franchise, but with much reduced budgets and revenues, whilst nonetheless guaranteeing product for the distributor RKO.

Conclusion

Throughout this article I have elaborated some of the ways in which the character-oriented franchise has been utilised, during the period 1913-1950, with both economic failure (the Oz Film Manufacturing Co.) and significant success (Disney), by peripheral or marginal film studios (the niche animation studios, Poverty Row serial and series specialists) through the spectrum of Hollywood studios, Columbia to RKO to MGM. I have illustrated the distinct types of franchise, film sequels and series, film serials, merchandise and other textual spin-offs, as well as alternative approaches to franchising and appropriation of the character: redeployment, repackaging and repurposing. These strategies have been variously innovated and adopted, either by film production companies, or adapted from other industry practices to their specific historical and economic circumstances, to reap particular benefits from the exploitation of pre-sold or familiar characters. In the immediate term the proprietary character has differentiated the product of the studio, both appealing to an audience through balancing novelty and familiarity, and also reducing risk to assure distribution and exhibition,

and in the medium term fulfilling their commitment to exhibitors (or distributors) for regular product. In the longer term the character-oriented franchise has provided stability, through alternative or recurrent revenue streams, and, corresponding to the practice in popular fiction publishing, has functioned to expand and increase the value of the studio library. Whilst this was not a significant source of revenue for film studios, with the possible exception of Disney, before the development of first television, as a market for fully amortized product, and then conglomeration, to consolidate and more effectively exploit Intellectual Property for long term profits, as Meehan's article suggests this is now a key aspect of transindustrial conglomerates and their practices of synergy. In developing the concept of the character-oriented franchise I have endeavoured to suggest the precedents for some of today's synergistic approaches, but also qualified the differences from the present in all but the case of Disney. Similarly, I have indicated how notions such as repurposing are salient to established media, with a long history, despite their more marked relevance to digital media in the contemporary period and economies of multiformity (Albarran & Dimmick, 1996). This article has explored both the inter-relationships of the film industry with other media, entertainments and the wider economy, and also suggested how some of these connections, and shared or imitated practices, have resulted in broader impacts. Whilst I have rehearsed the common argument for the unique and important role of Disney in this, I have tried to contextualise their innovations in terms of earlier and contemporaneous approaches. In particular, following Crafton and Kanfer, I have argued for the significance of the industrial techniques and particular economies of animation, as well as the specific historical circumstances of the Disney company, in contributing to their development of co-ordinated and controlled cross-promotion, tie-ins, and other forms of synergy. I have also qualified their dependence on the studio system, as demonstrated by Gomery. Furthermore, though, I have clarified that the approaches of repackaging and repurposing were not restricted to animation, being common to serial fictional forms, and corresponding to the economies of all media industries (the reused imagery and iconography of cartoon strips, the generic reutilisation of sets and props for film series). In fact, I would argue that the translateability of the character, in the character-oriented franchise, is what enables both repackaging and repurposing. "Smith makes the point that characters, story, and iconography are easily transferred between media 'because they appear to be the properties of a diegetic world and not characteristics distinct to a medium'" (Smith, 1999: 32 cited and quoted in Cohen, 2007: 13). However, perhaps the most significant change since the period I have discussed is the legal status of these translatable characters. In relation to U.S. copyright law, following a case in 1954 it was determined "characters [were] mobile pieces in relation to the *work*" (Gaines, 1990: 176). And yet trademark law has replaced copyright in ensuring the exploitation potential of characters, and has facilitated "popular characters to leave their textual origins" (Gaines, 1990: 177). Gaines develops the significance of trademarks for television series, and their possible licensing and merchandising: "*Maverick, Howdy Doody, Annie Oakley*, and *Superman* were ideal vehicles because both the name of the main character and the series title could be protected by trademark law" (Gaines, 1990: 177). She also notes the precedent established by the licensing of comic strip or comic book characters, as protected images, with the example of *Superman*, and stresses:

"[m]erchandise licensing depends entirely on the protectability of the trademark" (Gaines, 1990: 178).

> In more recent years, proprietary characters named James Bond, Rambo, Indiana Jones, Conan, Batman or Superman, along with such repeatable titles as *Godfather, Grease*, *Jaws*, *Halloween*, *Star Trek*, *Weapon Predator*, *Robocop* and *Die Hard* have helped Hollywood to reap record profits, thanks to the legal protection that the system now offers. (Altman, 1999: 117)

As Hall notes, in respect of the commercial success of film franchises originating in other media, virtually all the highest grossing films of the period 1970-1976 were adaptations of popular novels, utilizing the pre-sold novel or tie-in possibilities of publishing, whereas from the later 1970s successful franchises were more likely to derive from a comic (*Superman*), a television series (*Star Trek – The Motion Picture*) or another film (Hall, 2006: 171). As both Altman's and Hall's points suggest, the box-office importance of the character-oriented franchise has increased dramatically, compared with the period I have explored. This can be explained by a number of factors:

> 1. in terms of the shift to film studios as libraries, or more broadly owners of intellectual property, rather than their basis in (first-run) theatrical real estate, as a result of the Paramount Decree and conglomeration; and
>
> 2. a concomitantly risk-reduced, increase in budgets and scale for character-oriented franchises from their earlier common status as marginal or B pictures; with
>
> 3. the recognition of a different (global) Hollywood target audience due to demographic and social shifts (the same young audience previously associated with the low return, peripheral productions); and
>
> 4. exploitation of multiple release platforms and technologies, and new profitable products such as video games.

In relation to this last aspect, new opportunities have developed for both concurrent tie-ins and cross-promotion, and lucrative forms of subsequent repackaging (DVDs), and redeployment (spin-off series), all coordinated within, and exploited by, the diverse divisions of media conglomerates.

Nevertheless, despite these marked differences in kind, the motivations for many of the practices associated with contemporary character-oriented franchises, as well as media franchises more generally, differ only by degree from the reasons similar or related approaches were innovated and adopted in very different circumstances, during the period 1913-1950: product differentiation, and utilising indirect or additional methods of promotion and exploitation.

References

Albarran, Alan B. and John Dimmick (1996) Concentration and Economics of Multiformity in the Communication Industries, *Journal of Media Economics* 9 (4), pp. 41-50.

Allen, Jeanne (1980) The Film Viewer as Consumer, *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 5 (4), (Fall), pp. 481-499.

Altman, Rick (1999) *Film/Genre*. London: British Film Institute.

Anderson, Christopher (1994) *Hollywood TV: The Studio System in the Fifties*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Baker, Rhonda (1997) *Media Law*. London: Routledge.

Balio, Tino (1995) *Grand design: Hollywood as a modern business enterprise, 1930-39*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Barn (1937) Review of *Jungle Jim*, *Variety*, (24 February).

Beaty, Bart (2007) Comics and Comic Books, in Barry Grant (ed.), *Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film* Vol. 1. New York: Schirmer Reference, pp. 365-368.

Behlmer, Rudy (1987a) Tarzan: Hollywood's Greatest Jungle Hero! (part 1), *American Cinematographer* 68 (1), (January), pp. 38-48.

Behlmer, Rudy (1987b) Tarzan and MGM: The Rest of the Story (part 2), *American Cinematographer* 68 (2), (February), pp. 34-44.

Bendazzi, Giannalberto (1994) Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation. London: John Libbey.

Bennett, Tony and Janet Woollacott (1987) *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Blakeston, Oswell (1948) The Tie-Up Comes of Age, *Sight and Sound* 17 (67), (Autumn), pp. 122-123.

Boichel, Bill (1991) Batman: Commodity as Myth, in Roberta E. Pearson and William Uricchio (eds.) *The Many Lives of the Batman: Critical Approaches to a Superhero and His Media*. New York and London: Routledge and BFI, pp. 4-17.

Bordwell, David (2006) *The Way Hollywood Tells it: Story and Style in Modern Movies*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Broes, Arthur T. (1992) *Dick Tracy*: The Early Years, *Journal of Popular Culture* 25 (4), (Spring), pp. 97-121.

Brooker, Will (1999) Batman: One Life, Many Faces, in Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan (eds.), *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*. London: Routledge, pp. 185-198.

Bryman, Alan (2004) *Disneyization of Society*. London: Sage.

Budra, Paul and Betty A. Schellenberg (1998) Introduction, in Paul Budra and Betty A. Schellenberg (eds.) *Part Two: Reflections on the Sequel*. Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press.

Buscombe, Edward (2003) The Idea of Genre in the American Cinema, in Barry Keith Grant (ed.), *Film Genre Reader* Vol. III. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 12-26.

Cawelti, John G. (1976) *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cheatwood, Derral (1982) The Tarzan Films: An Analysis of Determinants of Maintenance and Change in Conventions, *Journal of Popular Culture* 16 (2), (Fall), pp. 127-142.

Cohen, Michael (2007) Dick Tracy: In Pursuit of a Comic Book Aesthetic, in Ian Gordon, Mark Jancovich and Matthew P. McAllister (eds.) *Film and Comic Books*. Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, pp. 13-36.

Crafton, Donald (1993) *Before Mickey: The Animated Film 1898-1928*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cross, Robin (1981) *The Big Book of B Movies, or How Low Was My Budget*. London: Frederick Muller.

De Cordova, Richard (1994) The Mickey in Macy's Window, in Eric Smoodin (ed.) *Disney Discourse: Producing the Magic Kingdom*. London: Routledge, pp. 203-213.

Dick, Bernard F. (1992) The History of Columbia, 1920-91, in Bernard F. Dick (ed.), *Columbia: A Portrait of a Studio*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, pp. 2-64.

Dixon, Wheeler (ed.) (1986) *Producers Releasing Corporation: A Comprehensive Filmography and History*. Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Co.

Dyer, Richard (1988) *Stars*. London: British Film Institute.

Eyles, Allen (1985) *The World of Oz*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Fell, John (1974) *Film and the Narrative Tradition*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Fernett, Gene (1973) *Poverty Row: 1930-50*. Florida: Coral Beach Publications.

Finler, Joel W. (1988) *The Hollywood Story*. London: Octopus Books.

Gaines, Jane (1990) Superman and the Protective Strength of the Trademark, in Patricia Mellencamp (ed.), *The Logics of Television*. London: BFI, pp. 173-192.

Gifford, Dennis (1982) Flash Gordon and the Weenie from Outer Space, *The Movie* 4 (39), pp. 777-779.

Gomery, Douglas (1994) Disney's Business History: A Reinterpretation, in Eric Smoodin (ed.) *Disney Discourse: Producing the Magic Kingdom*. London: Routledge, pp. 71-86.

Hall, Sheldon (2006) Blockbusters in the 1970s, in Linda Ruth Williams & Michael Hammond (eds.), *Contemporary American Cinema*. London: McGraw-Hill, pp. 164-181.

Harmon, Jim (2001) *Great Radio Heroes*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company.

Heide, Robert and John Gilman (1994) *Disneyana: Classic Collectibles 1928-1958*. New York: Hyperion.

Hewetson, Alan (1969) Comics in Cinema, *Cinema* 5 (4), pp. 2-7.

Hirschhorn, Clive (1989) *The Columbia Story*. London: Pyramid Books.

Jenkins, Henry (2006) *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Jewell, Richard B. (1984) Hollywood and Radio: Competition and Partnership in the 1930s, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 4 (2), pp. 125-141.

Jones, Gerard (2005) *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book*. London: Heinemann.

Kanfer, Stefan (2000) *Serious Business: The Art and Commerce of Animation in America from Betty Boop to Toy Story*. New York: Da Capo Press.

Langer, Mark (2002) John Randolph Bray: Animation Pioneer, in Gregg Bachman and Thomas J. Slater (eds.), *American Silent Film: Discussing Marginalized Voices*. Carbondale, Illinois and London: Southern Illinois University Press and Eurospan, pp. 94-114.

Maltby, Richard (2003) *Hollywood Cinema*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

McCarthy, Todd and Charles Flynn (1975) *Kings of the Bs: Working Within the Hollywood system*.New York: E.P. Dutton.

McLean, Adrienne L. (2003) "New Films in Story Form": Movie Story Magazines and Spectatorship, *Cinema Journal* 42 (3), (Spring), pp. 3-26.

Meehan, Eileen R. (2005) Transindustrialism and Synergy: Structural Supports for Decreasing Diversity in Commercial Culture, *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 1 (1), pp. 123-126.

Monk (1914) Review of *Fantomas*, *Variety* (27 March).

Neale, Steve (2000) *Genre and Hollywood*. London: Routledge.

Negroponte, Nicholas (1995) *Being Digital*. New York: Knopf.

Parish, James Robert (1971) *The Great Movie Series*. New York and London: A.S. Barnes and Thomas Yoseloff.

Petaja, Emil (1975) *Photoplay Edition*. San Francisco: Sisu Publishers.

Pye, Michael (1982) Sure-Fire Bets, *The Movie* 1 (10), pp. 181-184.

Quinn, Michael (2001) Distribution, the Transient Audience, and the Transition to the Feature Film, *Cinema Journal* 40 (2) (Winter), pp. 35-56

Richards, Jeffrey (2002) Hollywood and Radio, in *Hollywood* (Film and Television History, book 2). Open University Press.

Simonet, Thomas (1987) Conglomerates and Content: Remakes, Sequels, and Series in the New Hollywood, in Bruce Austin (ed.) *Current Research in Film: Audiences, Economics, and Law* Vol. 3. pp. 154-162.

Singer, Ben (1990) Female Power in the Serial-Queen Melodrama, *Camera Obscura* 22, (January), pp. 90-129.

Singer, Ben (1996) Serials, in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.) *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 105-111.

Skopal, Pavel (2007) "The Adventure Continues on DVD": Franchise Movies as Home Video, *Convergence* 13 (2), pp. 185-198.

Slide, Anthony (1970) *Early American Cinema*. London and New York: A. Zwemmer and A.S. Barnes.

Smith, Greg M. (1999) Shaping *The Maxx*: Adapting the Comic Book Frame to Television, *Animation Journal* 8 (1) (Fall), pp. 32-53.

Staiger, Janet (1990) Announcing Wares, Winning Patrons, Voicing Ideals: Thinking about the History and Theory of Film Advertising, *Cinema Journal* 29 (3) (Spring), pp. 3-31.

Telotte, J. P. (2004) *Disney TV*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Thompson, Kristin (2007) *The Frodo franchise:* The Lord of the Rings *and Modern Hollywood*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Variety (no author given) (1914a) Review of *Perils of Pauline*, *Variety* (10 April).

Variety (no author given) (1938a) Review of *Blondie*, *Variety* (2 November).

Variety (no author given) (1938b) Review of *Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars*, *Variety* (16 February).

Variety (no author given) (1938c) Review of *Little Orphan Annie*, *Variety* (30 November).

Wasko, Janet (2001a) *Understanding Disney: The Manufacture of Fantasy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Wasko, Janet (2001b) The magical-market world of Disney, *Monthly Review* 52 (11) (April), pp. 56-71.

Wear (1936) Review of *Flash Gordon*, *Variety* (11 March).

Wells, Paul (1998) *Understanding Animation*. London: Routledge.

Wells, Paul (2002) *Animation and America*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Williams, Linda Ruth and Michael Hammond (eds.) (2006), *Contemporary American Cinema*. London: McGraw-Hill.

Yockey, Matt (2008) Somewhere in Time: Utopia and the Return of Superman, *The Velvet Light Trap* 61 (Spring), pp. 26-37.

Zipes, Jack (1997) *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales, Children and the Culture Industry*. London: Routledge.

Filmography

The Active Life of Dolly of the Dailies (1914) Serial. Dir. Walter Edwin. Edison Company.

The Adventures of Kathlyn (1913) Serial. Dir. Francis J. Grandon. Selig Poly-scope Company/*Chicago Tribune*.

Behind the Mask (1946) Dir. Phil Karlson. Monogram Pictures Corporation.

Blondie (1938) Dir. Frank R. Strayer. Columbia Pictures Corporation.

Der Captain is Examined for Insurance (1917) Dir. Gregory La Cava. International Film Service.

Dick Tracy (1937) Serial. Dir. Alan James/Ray Taylor. Republic Pictures.

Dick Tracy (1946) Dir. William Berke. RKO Radio Pictures.

Dick Tracy Meets Gruesome (1947) Dir. John Rawlins. RKO Radio Pictures.

Dick Tracy Returns (1938) Serial. Dir. John English/William Witney. Republic Pictures.

Dick Tracy's Dilemma (1947) Dir. John Rawlins. RKO Radio Pictures.

Dick Tracy 's G-Men (1939) Serial. Dir. John English/William Witney. Republic Pictures.

Dick Tracy vs. Crime Inc (1941) Serial. Dir. John English/William Witney. Republic Pictures.

Dick Tracy vs Cueball (1947) Dir. Gordon Douglas. RKO Radio Pictures.

The Exploits of Elaine (1914) Serial. Dir. Louis J. Gasnier/George B. Seitz/Leopold Wharton. Wharton/Pathé Exchange.

Fantômas (1914) Dir. Louis Feuillade. Société des Etablissements L. Gaumont.

Flash Gordon (1936) Serial. Dir. Frederick Stephani/Ray Taylor. Universal Pictures/King Features Production.

Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars (1938) Serial. Dir. Forde Beebe/Robert F. Hill/Frederick Stephani. Universal Pictures/King Features Production.

Girl Detective (1914) Serial. Dir. James W. Horne. Kalem Company.

The Hazards of Helen (1914-6) Serial. Dir. J. Gunnis Davis/J. P. McGowan/Robert G. Vignola. Kalem Company.

Hooligan Assists the Magician (1900) Edison Manufacturing Company.

International Crime (1938) Dir. Charles Lamont. M & A Alexander Productions Inc./Grand National.

Jungle Jim (1937) Serial. Dir. Forde Beebe/Clifford Smith. Universal Pictures.

Little Orphan Annie (1938) Dir. Ben Holmes. Colonial Pictures Corporation.

The Magic Cloak of Oz (1914) Dir. J. Farrell MacDonald. Oz Film Manufacturing Company.

Make Mine Music (1946) Dir. Bob Cormack/Clyde Geronimi/Jack Kinney/Hamilton Luske/Joshua Meador. Walt Disney Pictures.

Melody Time (1948) Dir. Clyde Geronimi/Wilfred Jackson/Jack Kinney/Hamilton Luske. Walt Disney Pictures.

The Missing Lady (1946) Dir. Phil Karlson. Monogram Pictures Corporation.

The Newlyweds (1913) Dir. Emile Cohl. Éclair.

The New Adventures of Tarzan (1935) Serial. Dir. Edward A. Kull. Burroughs-Tarzan Enterprises

The New Exploits of Elaine (1915) Serial. Dir. Louis J. Gasnier/Leopold Wharton/Theodore Wharton. Wharton/Pathé Exchange.

The New Wizard of Oz (1914) Dir. L. Frank Baum. Oz Film Manufacturing Company.

The Patchwork Girl of Oz (1914) Dir. J. Farrell MacDonald. Oz Film Manufacturing Company.

The Perils of Pauline (1914) Dir. Louis J. Gasnier/Donald MacKenzie. Pathé Frères.

The Romance of Elaine (1915) Dir. George B. Seitz/Leopold Wharton/Theodore Wharton. Wharton/Pathé Exchange.

The Shadow (1940) Serial. Dir. James W. Horne. Columbia Pictures Corporation.

The Shadow Returns (1946) Dir. Phil Rosen. Monogram Pictures Corporation.

The Shadow Strikes (1937) Dir. Lynn Shores. Colony Pictures/Grand National Pictures.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937) Dir. David Hand. Walt Disney Productions.

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (1993-1999) Paramount Television.

Star Trek – The Motion Picture (1979) Dir. Robert Wise. Century Associates/Paramount.

Star Trek: The Next Generation (1987-1994) Paramount Television.

Steamboat Willie (1928) Walt Disney/Ub Iwerks. Walt Disney Productions.

Superman (1948) Serial. Dir. Spencer Gordon Bennet/Thomas Carr. Columbia Pictures Corporation

Superman (1978) Dir. Richard Donner. Dovemead Films/Film Export A.G./International Film Production/Warner Bros. Pictures.

Tarzan and His Mate (1934) Dir. Cedric Gibbons. MGM

Tarzan the Ape Man (1932) Dir. W.S. Van Dyke. MGM

Tarzan the Fearless (1933) Dir. Robert Hill/William Lloyd Wright. Sol Lesser/Principal Productions Inc.

Tarzan's Revenge (1938) Dir. Ross Lederman. Principal Productions Inc./20th Century Fox.

Trader Horn (1931) Dir. W.S. Van Dyke. MGM.

What Happened to Mary? (1912) Serial. Dir. Charles Brabin. Edison Company/McClure Publishing Company.

Who Will Marry Mary? (1913) Serial. Dir. Walter Edwin. Edison Company/McClure Publishing Company.

Novelty through Repetition: Exploring the Success of Artistic Imitation in the Contemporary Film Industry, 1983-2007

Stijn Joye, CIMS - Centre for Cinema and Media Studies, Ghent University, Belgium

In March 1895 the Lumière brothers introduced the magic of the silver screen in the *Grand Café* at *Boulevard des Capucines*, Paris. One of the instant classics of that pioneering stage and a blockbuster *avant-la-lettre* was the short movie *L'arroseur arrosé* (1895). In a documentary style the Lumières visualized the prank of a gardener who gets soaking wet after looking into a hose. More than one hundred years later, practically everyone has seen the short movie which has become an early milestone in film history. What is less well known, however, is that the movie is a faithful adaptation of a comic sketched by French cartoonist Georges Colomb. Publishing under the pseudonym of *Christophe*, Colomb too was inspired by another medium, theatre (Leeflang, 1988: 15-16). This creative cross-media exchange of narratives would eventually develop into a distinct feature of film. Bestselling books, well-attended plays, celebrated television serials -- they all have found their way to the big screen, in many cases skilfully repeating their prior (financial) successes. In its infinite pursuit of inspiration and narratives, the film industry has never hesitated to recycle its own 'history' as well. Closely related to the practice of adaptation are thus the remake, the sequel and its siblings such as the prequel, spin-off and franchise. These two major production strategies can be subsumed under the concept of cultural borrowings or *artistic imitation*, "in the restricted sense of works of art that imitate other works of art" (Naremore, 2000: 13).

The presented research aims to link the known theoretical framework of artistic imitation with new empirical evidence of film popularity. For this purpose we focus on the American film industry of the last decades which has been determined by global media conglomerates and a (renewed) dominance of a commercial logic. Our main research goal is to explore the impact of these economic forces on the content produced by Hollywood and in particular the (revenue maximisation) strategies that Hollywood has developed to deal with the unpredictable nature of filmmaking. Most notably, the practice of artistic imitation is our object of study. The first research question takes a closer look at this concept of artistic imitation and its theoretical value for the field of film studies in general and adaptation studies in particular. A second research question evaluates the popularity of imitative types of film among Hollywood producers, marketing executives as well as cinemagoers. Is it justified to claim that repetition has prevailed upon novelty? And what is the most popular source material to be borrowed from? The third and final question investigates the veracity of a common industry wisdom arguing that in a very unsure business, artistic imitation is the closest thing to a sure thing. Can we find empirical evidence to support the well-established premise that so-called pre-sold movies have a better chance of making it at the box office compared to movies based on original screenplays? In

56

other words, we will assess the existence of a potentially positive box office effect resulting from the highly-rated pre-sold element.

Tackling first the issue of artistic imitation from a conceptual and historical perspective, a review of the literature will provide insights into the dynamics and economics of contemporary American film industry. Analysing the cumulated annual top 150 box office from 1983 till 2007, the empirical part of this paper further investigates success and prevalence of artistic imitation in modern Hollywood.

Artistic Imitation: Defining the Concept and its Value for Film Studies

> Movies aren't made, they are remade. (Irving Thalberg as cited in Manchel, 1990: 1491)

Introducing the concept of artistic imitation in film studies, James Naremore (2000: 13) referred to it as works of art that imitate other works of art. Although we can rightly argue that the concept of artistic imitation is still under theoretical development and in need of a more stringent definition, this paper draws upon artistic imitation as a conceptual framework incorporating two popular cinematic practices. On the one hand, movies can take the form of a remake or a continuation of a prior film. From sequels, series, prequels, spin-offs to re-issues and remakes, they all fall under the category of the so-called *recycled-script films* (Simonet, 1987: 156). On the other hand, we can identify the practice of *adaptations* of novels, comic books, television serials, plays and more recently video games in which a transfer or transposition between two different media takes place. Contrary to recycled-script films, adaptations cannot be considered as a simple remaking of a narrative. The distinctive feature of adaptation is "the matching of the cinematic sign system to a prior achievement in some other system" (Andrew, 1984: 96). These two practices, subsumed under the more general theory of artistic imitation, are related in a sense that both can essentially be looked upon as a creative reworking of an already existing and, in most cases, previously successful media product, thus perfectly encapsulating the "just like/completely different" adage of Hollywood filmmaking (Maltby and Craven, 1995: 113). This inherent pre-sold nature is believed to be the key feature of artistic imitation. From a commercial point of view, artistic imitation is as such equal to an enduring rich source of inspiration and a commonly accepted practice resonating back to the early days of film.

Although the exchange of narratives between film and other media has been a standard practice from the early days, critical and theoretical debate about the issue was not established until the mid-twentieth century (Aragay, 2005: 11). The field of adaptation studies is in other words "one of the most jejune areas of scholarly writing about the cinema" (Naremore, 2000: 1). [1] In addition, most scholarly work on adaptation has focussed primarily on theorizing the practice and in particular the relationship between source novel and film. Consequently, more contextualizing issues such as the underlying reasons for or the frequency of the practice have been granted a rather small share of academic interest. In-

troducing the general concept of artistic imitation to adaptation studies helps to overcome some of the field's theoretical and empirical limitations.

First, at the heart of adaptation studies are the quest for a definitive theory and the much discussed issue of fidelity (Bane, 2006: 35). Conventional criticism, within and outside academia, has been preoccupied with assessing the adequacy of a movie as compared to its source material (Maltby, 1992: 555). However, "the stress on fidelity to the original undervalues other aspects of the film's intertextuality" such as conditions within the film industry and the prevailing cultural, ideological and social climate (McFarlane, 1996: 21). Moving the discussion away from the tried and tested fidelity criticism, artistic imitation thus challenges adaptation studies to embark on a new course incorporating the social, cultural, ideological and especially economic forces that shape the actual process of artistic imitation. In recent years, leading scholars in the field have called for taking "into account the commercial apparatus, the audience, and the academic culture industry" (Naremore, 2000: 10). This paper, driven by political-economic concerns, contributes to this newly-emerging academic field by looking at the phenomenon from a quantitative point of view. Steering away from the traditional research questions, we will mainly examine the popularity of the practice.

Second, applying the concept of artistic imitation allows us to transcend the *in strictu senso* definition of adaptation as "Great-Novels-Into-Great-Films" (Naremore, 2000: 10) by including adaptations of plays, television serials and video games as well as other imitative practices such as the remake and the high-profile sequel. Using artistic imitation as a conceptual framework also responds to Thomas Leitch's request for widening the range of adaptation studies by considering the peculiar problems raised by non- or postliterary adaptations which can "throw a new light on the subject of adaptation and suggest a possible alternative to the chimerical quest for fidelity" (Leitch, 2007: 258).

Having illustrated the surplus value of artistic imitation for the field of adaptation studies, let us now have a look at the history of artistic imitation within the context of Hollywood cinema.

A Brief History of Artistic Imitation and Hollywood

> A parasitic practice dating back as far as the earliest years of "silent" cinema. (Austin, 2002: 114)

Artistic imitation is as old as cinema itself and it shows no signs of weakening (Bane, 2006: 5). The motivation to repeat narratives has however slightly changed over the years. With the fast rise of the new medium and its instant popularity, there was first of all a constant need for good stories and screenplays to meet the soaring demand. In those early days, the following quote of Marshall McLuhan (quoted in Ray, 2000: 42) was very appropriate for the movie business: "the content of a new medium is always an old medium." Other media and older films were the obvious fishing-pond, with copyrights often ignored. Remakes and adaptations of plays or especially novels proved to be the perfect fuel to keep Hollywood's dream machine going at a high pace.[2] A second reason to establish artistic imitation as "a presence that is woven into the very fabric of

film culture" (Jenkins quoted in Bane, 2006: vii) lies in the search for an artistic identity. The new-fangled medium was looking for serious recognition as art (Andrew, 2000: 30) and a form of *embourgeoisement* (Naremore, 2000: 4). Especially in high society circles, film had a vile reputation as being popular entertainment for the rabble. By borrowing respectable works of art like plays or literary classics as source material for a movie, the ambition was to attract a "better-quality" audience and enhance the cultural value of cinema (Cartmell, 1999: 30).

In its development as an art form and entertainment industry, the film medium continued to fall back on this success formula to such extent that some scholars even argue that "Hollywood has constantly remade" (Mazdon, 2000: 2). It appears that especially in times of high (financial) stakes, the profit-obsessed studios are eager to borrow from pre-existing works and rely on tested material. This "safety first" maxim was only to be replaced in times of crisis when innovation became Hollywood's last resort. The glory days of the American film industry (i.e. the decennia before the rise of television in the 1950s) for instance were heydays of artistic imitation while the subsequent two decades, which preceded New Hollywood, were characterized by low studio profits, high creative diversity and little artistic imitation (Dominick, 1987: 138). Though according to Overpeck (2007: 13) "the countercultural cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s was more an attempt to find some way to consistently attract a youthful audience than it was a commitment to artistic progress."

A turning point in the history of Hollywood was the period 1975 till 1980 which essentially saw "the transition of the American film industry out of its post-studio system malaise and into the current entertainment industry" (Overpeck, 2007: 13), commonly known as *New Hollywood*. Although opinions differ about the scale of changes and shifts with regard to the correctness of the adjective "New" in "New Hollywood", the American film industry since 1975 is generally considered to "understand its economics, its audiences and its products in dramatically different ways" (Maltby, 1998: 23). In the view of Thompson (1999: 3), key features of New Hollywood such as high concept blockbusters, synergy and conglomeration are basically *intensifications* of strategies and practices widely applied during the era of the classical studio system. What scholars however can agree on is that the process of conglomeration and consolidation in the late 1970s spurred a new wave of conservatism throughout Hollywood (Dominick, 1987: 151). An important event in this transformation of Hollywood was the successful legal assault from the National Association of Theatre Owners against the blind bidding practice in the mid 1970s.[3] The resulting loss of advance funds encouraged the major studios "to invest more and more money in proven properties and projects that were conducive to merchandising" (Overpeck, 2007: 1). Dealing with the high levels of (financial) risk and the inexorable demand for originality and novelty, the film industry experienced a conservative turn and developed adequate risk management strategies. On a corporate level we can distinguish expansion strategies such as vertical integration and conglomeration while on the level of the film product itself, authors point towards defensive market tactics such as the use of genres, formats, established stars and the development of content streams (Flew, 2007: 11-12). Exploding production and marketing budgets paved the way for a dominant business model that can be

summarized as maximizing profits by minimizing risks. In addition to high concept blockbusters, synergy and a reassessed star system, artistic imitation fitted the job profile. The increased importance of the marketing divisions further boosted the market value of artistic imitation given their pre-sold nature, already achieved popularity and awareness with the target audience. To sum up, artistic imitation was and is an obvious outcome of a market-driven Hollywood dealing with contingency and change.

Finally, we also need to refer to the larger societal context as imitation is essentially a fact of human practice (Andrew, 2000: 33). The conservative turn within Hollywood and subsequent rise of cultural borrowings by the end of the 1970s and early 1980s (Schatz, 1993: 21) happened to coincide with a rise of modern and postmodern consciousness.[4] According to James Monaco (1979: 280) among others, the film medium in those days bore a significant resemblance to the arts of painting and writing. A resemblance in the sense that all these forms of arts were past their prime and condemned to desperately recycling the past. Schliesser (1996: 3-5) referred to the fast proliferation of sequels, remakes and adaptations at that time as a symptom of a "used-upness" of the film medium. Trade journals and newspapers also interpreted artistic imitation's increasing popularity in terms of heralding the death of original ideas and screenplays in Hollywood. Simonet (1987: 154-156) collected several quotes from the 1970s and 1980s and summarized that journalists asserted that "recycling is done mostly for commercial reasons; and [...] it leads to aesthetically inferior films." Janet Waslin for instance was quoted arguing that "Hollywood may have never been more dangerously and unimaginatively beholden to its own past than it is right now [in 1983]" while other critics such as Hoberman diagnosed Hollywood with rampant *sequelitis* since the late seventies. During the following decades, this strand of criticism never really faded away as according to *Time* film critic Richard Corliss (1993: 63) Hollywood continued to make "big money by providing more of the same." In recent years critics have referred to artistic imitation as "déjà viewing" (Brown, 1998), as a consequence of a lack of imagination (Gehring, 1997) or as "been-there-seen-that-movies" (Peterson, 2002).

As our brief historical overview has illustrated, criticism and popularity of artistic imitation are thus closely related to broader evolutions within the film industry as well as within society. Media scholars depict our contemporary postmodern society as "a media-saturated environment dense with cross-references and filled with borrowings from movies, books and every other form of representation" (Naremore, 2000: 12-13). It is no coincidence then that our (post)modern times have "seen an exponential proliferation of adaptations across the whole range of performance media" offering "dynamic evidence of the importance and prevalence of intertextuality" (Hand and Krebs, 2007: 3).

In what follows we will look into some of the economic dynamics of New Hollywood and the features of artistic imitation that have established it as an important element of contemporary moviemaking in Hollywood.

Novelty through Repetition: Hollywood's Appetite for Artistic Imitation

> Just because Hollywood cannot predict how successful any one film will be does not mean that it has no effective guidelines for minimizing its risks. This is how large businesses work. (Thompson, 1999: 346)

Hollywood screenwriter William Goldman once declared that in the film industry nobody knows anything (Goldman cited in Maltby, 1998: 39). One of the key features of a creative media commodity such as a movie is in fact this "*nobody knows*"-idea. This refers to the demand uncertainty or the inevitable insecurity regarding the success the product will generate and ergo sum the (financial) risks related to its production and release (Caves, 2000: 1-3). The economics of the filmmaking process are notoriously unpredictable, and this results in a high level of risk attached to an investment in film production and distribution. Coping with these business risks and the huge budgets involved, artistic imitation is Hollywood's safest bet because "what worked before, will work again" (Turner, 1990). Studio officials have developed an unbridled appetite for financial security and proven commercial appeal. A quick look at the release schedule for the 2007 summer movies goes without saying: from *Spider-Man 3* (2007), *Transformers* (2007), and *The Simpsons Movie* (2007), to *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2007), *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007) and *Hairspray* (2007), all possible types of artistic imitation were present in large numbers. In 2008 Hollywood even managed to successfully revive 1980s iconic action heroes such as Indiana Jones, Rocky Balboa, Rambo and John McClane. The film business is, of course, a billion-dollar industry so this conservative approach is to some extent inescapable and understandable. In fact, according to Pokorny and Sedgwick (2008: 3), "[t]he key to understanding Hollywood is to understand how it deals, and has dealt, with the risks born of uncertainty."

Recycling old movies from the studio archives or adapting a novel not only reduces the risk factor, it also holds the advantage of a pre-tested story, ready for immediate production. "Buy a book and you get a beginning, a middle and an end" as Giles and Sawhill (1996: 80) put it. In most cases, you will also attract a built-in audience familiar with the existing fictional universe. Given the centrality of consumer awareness in promoting a new movie, artistic imitation is thus a boon for marketers. There is often an entrenched fan base for an original version, the majority of which will be eager to see the (new) film version, henceforth generating ready-made demand. For the other cinemagoers, viewer comprehension is achieved through conventional promotional efforts hinting at the successful source material. In this respect the marketing campaign for an imitative film could be basically summarized as "holding old friends and making new friends for the tale" (Allan Dwan quoted in Bane, 2006: 20). Several marketing executives emphasize the high marketability of artistic imitation. Terry Press, the then marketing chief of DreamWorks, for instance wrote about promoting sequels: "When you have a title people recognize, part of your battle is already won" (Press quoted in Gordon, 2006: 62). However, the reference to the source material should not be taken for granted. Only in those cases where the original can contribute to the financial success and cultural status of the imitation, is the tied-in link utilised during the promotion. *True Lies* (1994) for example was

based on a French movie *La Totale* (1991), of which no mention was made during the entire promotional campaign (Mazdon, 2000: 3). The pre-sold property in this case was not the original film but the star quality of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Another crucial reason behind the practice of artistic imitation is to be found at the core of the contemporary film industry and its characteristic style of filmmaking "molded by economic and institutional forces" (Wyatt, 1994: 8). With the establishment of diversified media conglomerates, new models of content-maximizing strategies have made their entrance in Hollywood. In order to further rationalize unpromising balance sheets and ensure maximum market penetration, proprietary content has to be recycled "across the gamut of company-controlled entertainment platforms" (Murray, 2005: 416). Controlling various media platforms such as film, television and books not only holds the key to synergy but has also considerable impact on which screenplays get developed and which do not. Artistic imitation in the sense of "proprietary content recycling" offers the possibility to re-package and re-market an already proven successful story into multiple, cross-promoting formats owned by a single conglomerate. *Superman* and *Batman*, for instance, are such successful pre-sold properties, initially published as comic books by DC Comics but best known for the television serials and high grossing movie franchises produced by Warner Bros., a Hollywood major. DC and Warner Bros. are both subsidiaries of the vertically integrated Time Warner conglomerate.

Although film is no exact science, it is however safe to state that artistic imitation has a commercially desirable pre-sold nature which is valued highly within the current industrial framework of New Hollywood. It offers "the best guarantee of commercial success, substantially outweighing the cost of […] acquisition" (Maltby, 1992: 559). Sequels, for instance, have already grossed over $20 billion at the box office since 1980 (Sood & Drèze, 2006: 352). In conclusion, the most important motivation for artistic imitation is its perceived capacity for reducing risks and maximizing profits by offering audiences a well-tried combination of novelty and familiarity.

Artistic Imitation from 1983 to 2007: A Quantitative Analysis

Many scholars have already attempted to unravel the success formula of a box office hit. Most tend to attribute success to such aspects as promotional budget, star system, superior production values or effects of synergy. This inquiry, however, has a different angle. The narrative or content is made central here. In order to contribute to the field of adaptation studies, our empirical research focuses on some well-acknowledged assumptions regarding movies based upon pre-tested material. There appears to be a general agreement among scholars and movie analysts that New Hollywood has relied largely and increasingly on pre-sold properties to minimize its risks while maximizing profit, and that artistic imitations tend to gross more than movies based on original screenplays, but there is no precise description of the frequency and box office performance of these practices. To date, not much academic research has been conducted on these issues. In its still young history, adaptation studies have instead been very keen on one-on-one comparisons between film adaptations and their literary

sources (Leitch, 2007: 21), mainly applying case study and film analysis as a preferred methodology, and largely ignoring structural and contextual factors. Or to put it in the words of David Bordwell: "[m]ost people who study film still don't recognize the centrality of money" (quoted in Gomery, 2005: 1).

These considerations consequently lead us to our two empirical research questions. First, based on an analysis of the frequency, we will try to find evidence for the alleged "death of original ideas" in New Hollywood. Do the data support the claim that the structural changes and economic forces characteristic of New Hollywood have inclined studios to safely invest more funds in artistic imitation? Secondly, we will assess the existence of a potentially positive box office effect resulting from the highly-rated pre-sold element.

Methodology

In order to answer these questions, we have compiled a data set consisting of 3748 cases. Drawing upon the idea that "box office grosses are the best index we have of a film's popularity" (Monaco, 1979: 39), this corpus represents the cumulated annual top 150 films released during the period 1983 to 2007 as collected by *Variety*, "the leading trade publication" (Balio, 2002: 166). Due to missing box office information for 1985, it was not possible to extract a top 150 for that year. Our chosen timeframe largely covers the period often referred to as the second Golden Era of the American film industry. We have classified the films by source material ("'original script" or "artistic imitation"), year of release, studio, category of artistic imitation and U.S. domestic box office gross. The subgroup of artistic imitation was then further divided into recycled-script films and adaptations. Some movies such as *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) or the entire *James Bond* franchise for example represented a conceptual problem for this classification. Taking the case of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, the film could rightly be classified as a recycled-script film (being a sequel to *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, 2001) and even rightly as an adaptation of a novel. In such doubtful cases, these movies, given their stronger relationship with their source novels (the cultural products that introduce, define and successfully establish these characters and their universes), were classified as literary adaptations.

Before discussing the results, some additional methodological issues should be noted. Drawing upon the data of *Variety*, the US domestic box office figures are unadjusted for inflation while the data set does not include the production costs and marketing budget of the films. Instead we attempt to explain box office success by taking the source material for the screenplay as our point of reference and the top grossing movies as our sample. Finally, indicators of reliability of the codebook were the *Coefficient of Reliability* (0,941) and *Scott's π* (0,879).

Results and discussion

Frequency of Artistic Imitation

Looking at the data set in general, artistic imitation accounts for 41.7%. Approximately four out of ten films are an adaptation of a novel, comic book, tele-

vision show, play, video game, or the reworking or continuation of an older movie. From all these creative options, the adaptation of a literary work (or comic book) is by far the most popular. Previous research of Morris Beja (1979) suggested that roughly 30 percent of all films produced each year were adaptations of literary originals while Andrew (1984) estimated that well over half of all commercial films were based on books. These might be slightly overrated figures given the fact that literary adaptations represent a 23% share of the cumulated top 150 films. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that a large proportion of Hollywood output is drawn from literary sources as is also illustrated by Graph One. Restricting the data set to artistic imitation only, literary adaptations account for 55.2% or 863 movies, followed at considerable distance by sequels and series (17.1% -- 267), adaptations of television shows (9.2% -- 144), movies based on a play or musical (8% -- 125), remakes (7.4% -- 115), reissues (1,9% -- 30) and the recent phenomenon of PC game adaptations (1.3% -- 20). To be complete, we have to note that in our analysis reworkings of literary adaptations are not part of the category "remake" (cf. Methodology), which explains the relatively low number of this category.
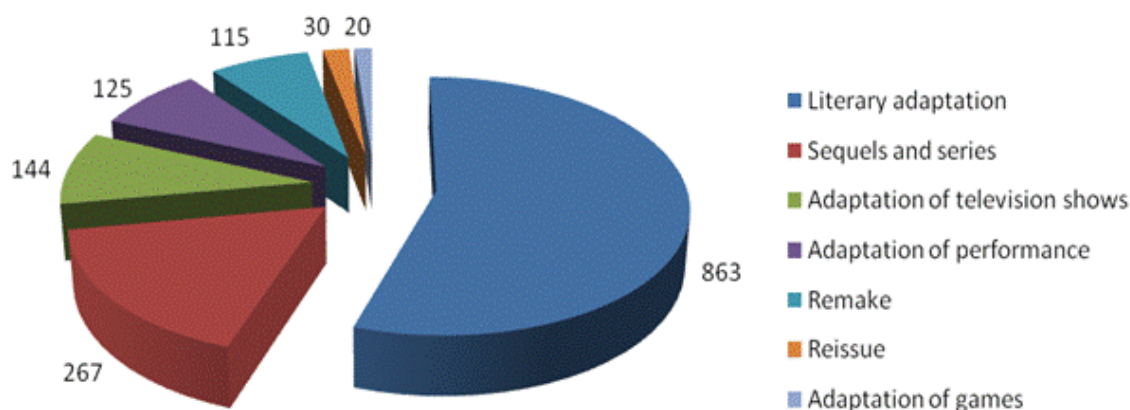
Graph One. Breakdown of Artistic Imitation by Source Material, 1983-2007 (N: 3748)

These overall results do not reveal possible shifts in the artistic imitation practice, so we conducted a year by year analysis (Graph Two). What immediately catches the eye is the constant growing proportion of imitative films. Starting from a rough 70-30 equation we get a 50-50 situation at the beginning of the new millennium. In 2005 artistic imitation movies even accounted for 52.7% of the 150 highest grossing films of that year, dropping to 49.3% for 2007. The data support the industry's firm belief that the pre-sold element leads to a positive box office effect. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that the majority of the top-grossing films are still movies developed from an original screenplay. In other words, New Hollywood is not the absolute reign of repetition nor does it herald the predicted death of original ideas and screenplays.
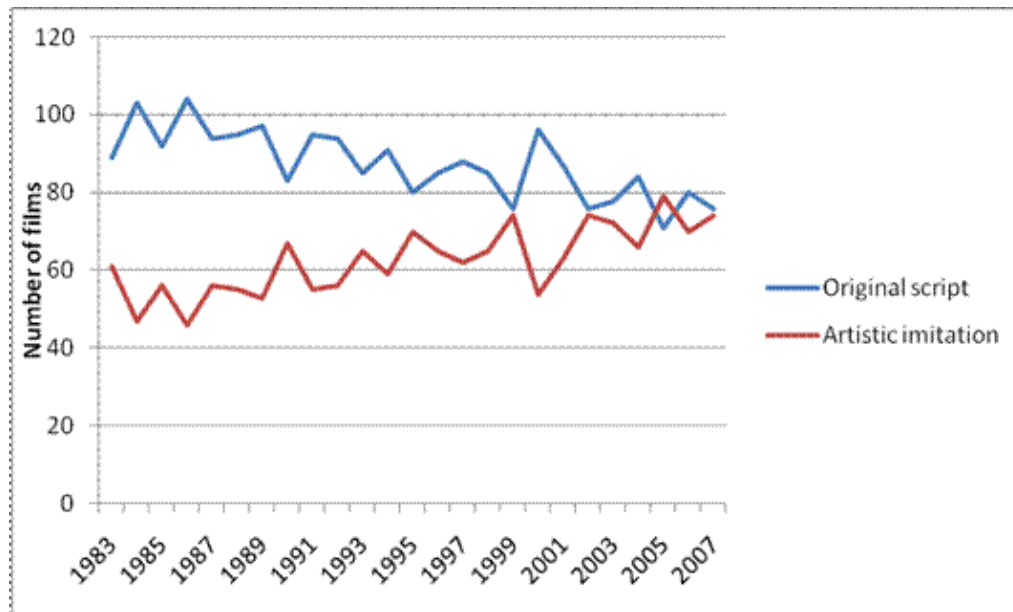
Graph Two. Number of Original and Imitative Films, 1983-2007 (N: 3748)

As Graph Two also clearly indicates, artistic imitation even suffered a major set-back in 2000. This remarkable drop in the number of films can be *partly* explained by a peculiar situation experienced by Hollywood studios two years earlier. 1998 witnessed the huge box office success of movies developed from an original screenplay such as, the all time number-one blockbuster *Titanic* (1997), *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and *Armageddon* (1998), all generating enormous profits while at the same time pre-sold films such as *Sphere* (1998, book adaptation), *Psycho* (1998, remake of a book adaptation) and *The Avengers* (1998, adaptation of a television show) did not deliver box office gold. The trend was reversed and this apparently encouraged studio executives to steer away from artistic imitation production in the next few years. However, this resurgence of movies based on original screenplays did not last very long as the 1999 and 2000 box office successes of *Star Wars – The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Toy Story 2* (1999), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000) and *Mission: Impossible II* (2000) firmly renewed the bank credibility of artistic imitation as a long-lasting Hollywood production line.

This analysis casts some light on the production strategies of the Hollywood studios, but the data also reveals a significant difference (p = .000) between the major studios and the independents. The majors Warner Bros., Universal Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Buena Vista (Walt Disney Company), 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures and MGM/UA have twice as many movies in the top 150 as the independent sector, but they also tend to borrow more from pre-existing material. 43.9% of their releases are based on a prior cultural product, while the independents have developed 63% of their released movies via original screenplays.

Artistic Imitation: A Tried and True Formula?

To assess the commercial impact of the pre-sold property at the box office, we ran an independent samples test or "T-Test". All conditions for the statistical test were fulfilled and the result was significant with p = .000. The average revenues of both categories of films differ significantly.[5] The group of movies based on an original screenplay and therefore not benefiting from any pre-tested element grossed over the period 1983 till 2007 an average of 16.3 million US dollars less per film than those which were categorized as artistic imitation. In other words, a tied-in link with a previously successful cultural product certainly pays off.

T-Test

Group Statistics

	Film	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Revenue (in $)	original script	2184	32092024,10	41766530,913	893721,3
	artistic imitation	1564	48350355,14	60173483,629	1521552

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Revenue (in $)	Equal variances assumed	115,308	,000	-9,763	3746	,000	-16258331	1665286,6	-2E+007	-1E+007
	Equal variances not assumed			-9,214	2605,492	,000	-16258331	1764612,7	-2E+007	-1E+007

Table One. T-test Output (N: 3748, p = .000)

Taking into account the changes in the ticket price and theatre capacity over the years, we need to adopt a longitudinal approach. Graph Three shows the evolution in average box office gross of both types. Due to the increasing price of a movie ticket over the last decades, the graph logically displays a positive trend. Again, artistic imitation proves to be a commercially more successful strategy. Conducting a T-Test for each separate year, the difference in average revenue is statistically significant with p < .005 for 1989, 1991 till 1997 and the period after 2000. Except for 1984, movies based on original screenplays gross on average less revenue at the American box office. In 1984, Hollywood developed a number of original screenplays which did extremely well at the box office but also laid the foundations of some high grossing franchises such as *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984), *The Terminator* (1984), *The Karate Kid* (1984), *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Police Academy* (1984).
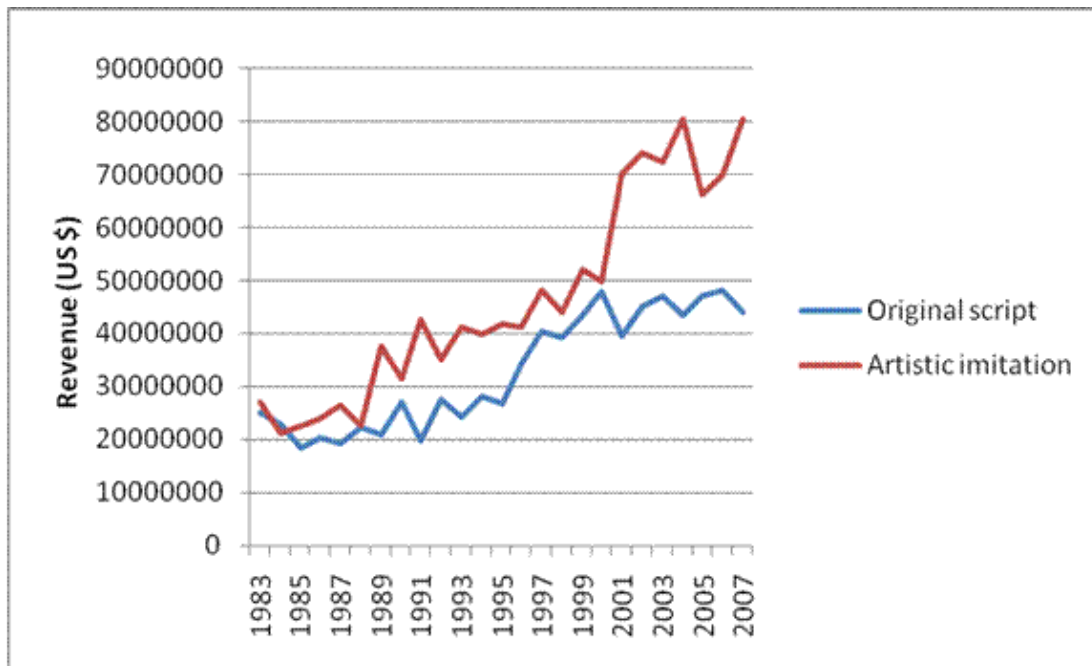
Graph Three. Average Revenue (US $) of Top 150 Films, 1983-2007 (N: 3748)

The emerging pattern since 2000 introduces the new millennium as a potentially new golden age for artistic imitation as average revenues are spectacularly soaring, indicating wide approval for the studio's release schedules from cinemagoers. Since 2000, Hollywood nourished the world with a number of highly successful and money-spinning franchises such as *Harry Potter* (2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009), *Spider-Man* (2002, 2004, 2007), *Shrek* (2001, 2004, 2007) and *Lord of the Rings* (2001, 2002, 2003). To illustrate this, after the 2007 release of the fifth instalment in the *Harry Potter* film series, the franchise has generated more than $4.47 billion worldwide, eclipsing box office takings for all previous twenty-two *James Bond* films ($4.44 billion) and the six *Star Wars* movies ($4.23 billion) (Garrett, 2007).

Final Remark on the Empirical Study

Combining both analyses reveals the full magnitude of artistic imitation. While being outnumbered by the films based on an original script, they nevertheless manage to gross more money at the box office. Of course, a whole host of exogenous factors such as advertising, star presence and other production values also affect the consumer's choice, but these factors were beyond the scope of this empirical research.

Conclusion

The first century of the film medium confirmed its inherent nature as an "endlessly repeating and endlessly repeatable signifying system" (Mazdon, 2000: 151). The art of the silver screen has not only been very active in recycling its own cinematic history, commercial and/or critical successes in other media outlets have also aroused Hollywood's interest for decades. Successful stories from literature, television and recently video games have been borrowed, establishing

artistic imitation as a key feature of the movie industry. Notwithstanding creative and aesthetic motivations, this study argues that artistic imitation essentially stems from a commercial strategy aimed at minimizing risk and introducing some (financial) security in a very unsure business. As the empirical data clearly illustrate, grounding the film screenplay on a pre-sold property equals an average 16.3 million dollar additional income at the box office. In a market-driven (film) industry, that is often the only argumentation required.

However, the commercial advantage of artistic imitation has not prevented occasional harsh criticism. Fuelled by the recent increasing popularity of the practice and facing a 52.7% share in 2005, critics are urging a global warning about the quality of film as an art form. Is the film medium destined to endlessly repeat itself? Is the New Hollywood then to be labelled as a *de facto* postmodern Hollywood? Will *Jaws 191* be the number one blockbuster in 2015? [6] The future will tell, but present answers should not be *a priori* negative. Artistic imitation does not exclude creativity and originality. On the contrary, novelty and familiarity have always been the two inseparable key ingredients of any successful movie. Just like genres, the popular practice of artistic imitation spurs variability within the boundaries of the familiar. Underlying these considerations is the idea of film as art, as a unique blending of imitation and innovation. In that respect, the following quote of Victor Shklovsky (quoted in Horton and McDougal, 1998: 6) makes an important concluding remark: "The function of art is to de-familiarize the familiar."

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] For an extensive overview of the academic discipline of adaptation studies, see Naremore (2000) and Bane (2006: 17-35).

[2] In the period of the silent cinema, many remakes were produced by a different studio or copyright holder. The Edison Company, Thomas Alva Edison's film studio, was for instance very active in remaking Lumière classics such as *La Sortie des Usines* (1895) (Forrest and Koos, 2002). Concerning the adaptation of plays, we can refer to the French "*Société de film d'art*" which became a genre and household name in adapting plays. Finally, regarding literary adaptations, one of the earliest instances of a popular literary character taking to the big screen was Sherlock Holmes in 1900. A lot of the major milestones in cinema history were in fact drawn from literary sources (Bane, 2006: 3-4).

[3] Blind bidding or advance bidding required exhibitors to submit bids for the licence to show a film before the film had even been made (Overpeck, 2007: 1).

[4] Inevitably, the concept of artistic imitation touches upon key notions of postmodernism such as pastiche, imitation and intertextuality. The idea of "cultural production born out of other cultural production" (Jameson quoted in Storey, 1997: 185) or artistic imitation is a well-discussed issue within postmodernism. Another core idea of postmodernism is that nothing is new or that nothing original is possible any more.

[5] The annual lists of high-grossing films are however not adjusted for inflation. Ideally, such analyses should be made in adjusted dollars. The outcome of the T-test should thus be regarded as an *indication*, pointing towards a potentially positive effect of artistic imitation at the box office.

[6] In *Back to the Future II* (1989) the leading character Marty McFly is transported to the year 2015 at a time when *Jaws 191* will be *coming soon* to a theatre near you.

References

Andrew, Dudley (1984) *Concepts in Film Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Andrew, Dudley (2000) Adaptation, in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation*. London: Athlone Press, pp. 27-37.

Andrew, Geoff (1991) Dummy show, *Time Out*, 3 April.

Aragay, Mireia (ed.) (2005) *Books in Motion: Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Austin, Thomas (2002) *Hollywood, Hype and Audiences: Selling and Watching Popular Film in the 1990's*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Balio, Tino (2002) Hollywood Production Trends in the Era of Globalisation, 1990-99, in Steve Neale (ed.), *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood*. London: British Film Institute Publishing, pp. 165-184.

Bane, Charles (2006) *Viewing Novels, Reading Films: Stanley Kubrick and the Art of Adaptation as Interpretation*. Louisiana: Louisiana State University.

Beja, Morris (1979) *Film and Literature*. New York: Longman.

Bluestone, George (1957) *Novels in Film: The Metamorphosis of Fiction into Cinema*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brown, Corie (1998) Hollywood's New Math, *Newsweek* 131 (3), pp. 65-66.

Cartmell, Deborah (1999) The Shakespeare on Screen Industry, in Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Wheleham (eds.), *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*. London: Routledge, pp. 29-37.

Caves, Richard E. (2000) *Creative Industries: Contracts Between Art and Commerce*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Corliss, Richard (1993) Sequels Aren't Equals, *Time*, 142 (26), p. 63.

Dominick, Joseph R. (1987) Film Economics and Film Content: 1964-1983, in Bruce A Austin (ed.), *Current research in film: Audiences, Economics and Law*. Volume 3. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, pp. 136-153.

Flew, Terry (2007) *Understanding Global Media*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Forrest, Jennifer and Koos, Leonard R. (eds.) (2002) *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Gehring, Wes D. (1997) Hollywood Suffers from Lack of Imagination, *USA Today* magazine, November, pp. 70-74.

Giles, Jeff and Sawhill, Ray (1996) Hollywood's Dying for Novel Ideas, *Newsweek* 128 (24), pp. 80-81.

Goldman, William (1983) *Adventures in Screen Trade: A Personal View of Hollywood and Screenwriting*. New York: Warner.

Gomery, Douglas (2005) *The Hollywood Studio System*. London: British Film Institute Publishing.

Gordon, Devin (2006) Back to the Future, *Newsweek* 148 (19), pp. 62-63.

Hand, Richard J. and Krebs, Katja (2007) Editorial, *Journal of Adaptation in Film & Performance* 1 (1), pp. 3-4.

Holt, James (2001) In Deregulation We Trust: The Synergy of Politics and Industry in Reagan-era Hollywood, *Film Quarterly* 55 (2), pp. 22-29.

Horton, Andrew and McDougal, Stuart Y. (eds.) (1998) *Play it Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Leeflang, Thomas (1988) *De wereld van de strip*. Houten: Van Wolkema and Warendorf.

Leitch, Thomas (2002) Twice-Told Tales: Disavowal and the Rhetoric of the Remake, in Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos (eds.) *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 37-62.

Leitch, Thomas (2007) *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents. From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Lupack, Barbara Tepa (1994) *Take Two: Adapting the Contemporary American Novel to Film*. Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press.

Maltby, Richard and Craven, Ian (1995) *Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Maltby, Richard (1992) "To Prevent the Prevalent Type of Book": Censorship and Adaptation in Hollywood, 1924-1934, *American Quarterly* 44 (4), pp. 554-583.

Maltby, Richard (1998) Post-Classical Historiographies and Consolidated Entertainment, in Steve Neale and Murray Smith (eds.), *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema*. London: Routledge, pp. 21-44.

Manchel, Frank (1990) *Film Study: An Analytical Bibliography*. Volume 2. Cranbury: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Mazdon, Lucy (2000) *Encore Hollywood: Remaking French Cinema*. London: British Film Institute Publishing.

McFarlane, Brian (1996) *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Monaco, James (1979) *American Film Now*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Murray, Simone (2005) Brand Loyalties: Rethinking Content Within Global Corporate Media, *Media, Culture & Society* 27 (3), pp. 415-435.

Naremore, James (ed.) (2000) *Film Adaptation*. London: Athlone Press.

Overpeck, Deron (2007) Blindsiding: Theatre Owners, Political Action and Industrial Change in Hollywood, 1975-1985. Paper presented at *The Glow in their Eyes: Global Perspectives on Film Cultures, Film Exhibition and Cinemagoing*, Ghent (December).

Pokorny, Michael and Sedgwick, John (2008) Profitability Trends in Hollywood: 1929 to 1999. *Paper presented at The ECREA 2nd European Communications Conference*, Barcelona (November).

Ray, Robert B. (2000) The Field of 'Literature and Film', in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation*. London: Athlone Press, pp. 38-49.

Schatz, Thomas (1993) The New Hollywood, in Jim Collins, Hilary Radner and Ava Preacher Collins (eds.), *Film Theory Goes to the Movies*. New York: Routledge, pp. 8-36.

Schliesser, John Templin (1996) *Toward a Cinema of Exhaustion: Cross-Cultural Influence, Imitation, and Intertextuality in Film*. Ann Arlor: University Microfilms.

Sedgwick, John (2002) Product Differentiation at the Movies: Hollywood, 1946 to 1965, *The Journal of Economic History* 62 (3), pp. 676-705.

Simonet, Thomas (1987) Conglomerates and Content: Remakes, Sequels, and Series in the New Hollywood, in Bruce A. Austin (ed.), *Current research in film: Audiences, Economics and Law*. Volume 3. New Yersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, pp. 154-162.

Sood, Sanjay and Drèze, Xavier (2006) Brand Extensions of Experiential Goods: Movie Sequel Evaluations, *Journal of Consumer Research* 33 (December), pp. 352-360.

Stam, Robert (2005a) *Literature Through Film. Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Stam, Robert and Raengo, Alessandra (2005b) *Literature & Film. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Storey, John (1997) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. London: Prentice Hall.

Thompson, Kristin (1999) *Storytelling in the New Hollywood: Understanding Classical Narrative Technique*. London: Harvard University Press.

Turner, Adrian (1990) Hollywood Recycles the Past for an Easy Sell, *The Sunday Times*, 3 June.

Stijn Joye

Wyatt, Justin (1994) *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in Hollywood*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Websites

Garret, Diane (2007) 'Harry Potter' Toots Box Office Horn. Warner Bros. Tub-thumps Franchise's Success. *Variety*. [online]
http://www.variety.com/article/VR1117971747.html?categoryId=13&cs=1
[Accessed 17 December 2007]

Peterson, Thane (2002) Déjà View at the Multiplex. *BusinessWeek*. [online]
http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/may2002/nf2002057_9099.htm
[Accessed 17 December 2007]

Filmography

Armageddon. 1998. Dir. Michael Bay. Touchstone Pictures.

L'arroseur arose. 1895. Dir. Louis Lumière. Lumière.

The Avengers. 1998. Dir. Jeremiah S. Chechik. Warner Bros.

Back to the Future Part II. 1989. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. Universal Pictures.

Beverly Hills Cop. 1984. Dir. Martin Brest. Paramount Pictures.

The Bourne Ultimatum. 2007. Dir. Paul Greengrass. Universal Pictures.

Ghostbusters. 1984. Dir. Ivan Reitman. Columbia Pictures.

Hairspray. 2007. Dir. Adam Shankman. New Line Cinema.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. 2001. Dir. Chris Columbus. Warner Bros.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. 2002. Dir. Chris Columbus. Warner Bros.

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix. 2007. Dir. David Yates. Warner Bros.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas. 2000. Dir. Ron Howard. Imagine Entertainment.

The Karate Kid. 1984. Dir. John C. Avildsen. Columbia Pictures.

Mission: Impossible II. 2000. Dir. John Woo. Paramount Pictures.

Police Academy. 1984. Dir. Hugh Wilson. Warner Bros.

Psycho. 1998. Dir. Gus Van Sant. Universal Pictures.

Saving Private Ryan. 1998. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Paramount Pictures.

The Simpsons Movie. 2007. Dir. David Silverman. Twentieth Century-Fox.

La Sortie des Usines. 1895. Dir. Louis Lumière. Lumière.

Sphere. 1998. Dir. Barry Levinson. Baltimore Pictures.

Spider-Man 3. 2007. Dir. Sam Raimi. Columbia Pictures.

Star Wars – The Phantom Menace. 1999. Dir. George Lucas. Lucasfilm.

The Terminator. 1984. Dir. James Cameron. Hendale Film.

Titanic. 1997. Dir. James Cameron. Paramount Pictures.

La Totale. 1991. Dir. Claude Zizi. Films Par Film.

Toy Story 2. 1999. Dir. John Lasseter and Ash Brannon. Walt Disney Pictures.

Transformers. 2007. Dir. Michael Bay. Paramount Pictures.

True Lies. 1994. Dir. James Cameron. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Blank Page

Part II:
Found Footage and Remix Culture

A Taxonomy of Digital Video Remixing: Contemporary Found Footage Practice on the Internet

Eli Horwatt, York University, Canada

> The literary and artistic heritage of humanity should be used for partisan propaganda purposes (Debord and Wolman, 1956: 15).

Found footage filmmaking refers to the practice of appropriating pre-existing film footage in order to denature, detour or recontextualize images by inscribing new meanings onto materials through creative montage. A central practice of the North American and European avant-garde film movements, found footage films often transform extant images in radical ways, simultaneously challenging traditional conceptions of authorship, ownership and copyright through examinations of media representation and repression. In the last four years, this practice has been given a new life on the Internet with the proliferation of digital video files online, developments in editing software and the draw of video distribution portals like YouTube.

I argue that this practice of moving image appropriation on the Internet, called digital remixing, represents a continuation in the development of the strategies and techniques of found footage filmmaking but possesses its own unique aesthetic and rhetorical contributions. In the past, the economic difficulty for (often insolvent) artists to obtain film footage resulted primarily in the use of B-films, film waste and ephemeral materials as opposed to more expensive mainstream film prints. The introduction of the inexpensive VHS standard playing and recording format created new non-institutional archives (in the form of video stores) and offered the option of home spectatorship. This encouraged new generations of found footage video artists to recycle mainstream films, which subsequently transformed the avant-garde technique from one that engaged with the "left-overs" of cinematic production to a new practice that critically examined popular culture. The economy of moving image storage technologies has directly impacted the kinds of found footage films made. Today this trend continues with online archives which can be accessed freely, albeit often illegally and remixed easily with editing software. The reciprocal archive that is YouTube, in which every video uploaded can be downloaded for a remix, has resulted in a remarkable number of videos which often, though not always, engage in a critical dialog with mainstream media. [1]

A prominent example of one such dialog occurred in 2007, when the television show *The Apprentice* coordinated with the Chevrolet car company and attempted a viral marketing campaign that gave internet users a platform to edit footage and music for a contest to design an advertisement for their new low fuel economy large size SUV -- the Chevy Tahoe. Instead of a glossy new car ad, they were bombarded with satirical commercials, which flooded their website and the internet with messages about the environmental irresponsibility of buying the vehicle. This was not just an example of viral marketing gone bad, it was symp-

tomatic of a collision between digital technology, contagious media and remix culture.

This event, and the many others like it, have contributed to a utopian discourse around digital remixing amongst scholars and individuals within the community looking to celebrate new methods of media critique, the possibility of bottom-up media distribution and an open dialogue between individuals and an increasingly concentrated mass media machine. In many ways, there is something to celebrate; many digital remixes intelligently and critically engage with popular culture by revealing social engineering, endemic racism, sexism and homophobia and by subverting the commodity spectacle in ways even Guy Debord could applaud. However, not all remixers are engaged in radical critique. As art theorist Hal Foster argues, works of appropriation art may reveal a "fetishism of the signifier" or an unwitting passion for the materials appropriated. (Foster, 1985:175) This fetishism of spectacle has a prominent place in other digital remixes, which perpetuate the spectacle of popular media by simply parroting ideology or in some cases transforming progressive works of art into juvenile internet memes.

Despite ambivalent attitudes over what the bulk of digital remixes will amount to, it is clear that they represent a radical shift in found footage filmmaking, with distinct subcategories and tendencies from avant-garde antecedents, a wholly new method of distribution, an open accessible archive of source material and a much larger audience. This stands in stark contrast to avant-garde works of the past which utilized actual film or video footage, were edited on flatbeds and AVID machines, were screened in underground theaters, museums and galleries and distributed (frequently at high cost) by a small number of artist, run co-operatives and distribution centres.

As a distinct and autonomous practice, digital remixing should be recognized with a taxonomy to classify the major trends and approaches in order to be understood as both a continuation and shift in the trajectory of moving image appropriation. Though taxonomies necessarily run the risk of categorical oversimplifications, I have created classifications in such a way that I hope not to stumble into such traps. The two dominant modes of digital remixing, political remixes and trailer remixes, curiously resemble the two approaches of found footage filmmaking outlined by Paul Arthur in his essay, "The Status of Found Footage." Arthur writes:

> Within European avant-garde circles of the '20s and '30s, found footage was reworked through editing techniques emphasizing fantastical, previously ignored formal or metaphoric qualities in otherwise banal scenes, a method of 'estrangement' found in films by Rene Clair, Hans Richter, Walter Ruttman, and Charles Dekeukeleire. A second tendency, evident in the work by Esther Shub, Dziga Vertov, and Joris Ivens, offers a politicized recalibration or inversion of scenes culled from 'official' newsreels and more marginal materials; in doing so it anticipates the collage ethos which has dominated the last 30 years of American documentary. (Arthur, 1999: 58)

Using Arthur's enunciation of these two tendencies, I hope to draw connections between the political transformations of the Soviet re-editors in political remixing

and the Surrealist juxtaposition and estrangement found in trailer mashups and recuts.

Political Remix Video

The preferred mode of discourse by radicals in the digital remixing community, political remix video or *PRVs* (a term coined by pioneer remixer Jonathan McIntosh) have been used as a platform for activists of all kinds, dealing with issues of identity, poverty, violence and consumerism in contemporary culture. Video collective Emergency Broadcast Network (EBN) and the San Francisco Bay Area band Negativeland, pioneered this form of activist remixing with videos that touched on copyright law and the military industrial complex through the 1990s with great prominence in the nascent "culture jamming" community. These two groups provide an important link between the video art community and digital remixers.

Emergency Broadcast Network, initially a group of three Rhode Island School of Design graduates, began making video collages which featured sampled hip-hop/funk beats or sound beds with lyrics composed with samples taken from entertainment and news media which mocked, undermined or assaulted traditional American values in the 1990s. During the 1991 Gulf War, EBN recorded the televised broadcasts of the war which were coupled with flamboyant news graphics and highly produced theme music and began remixing these elements with other popular television and music materials. The resulting video, a highly condensed rapid-fire account of the war and popular media surrounding it, was initially played in art galleries and later in nightclubs as a multi-media band. Part video art collective, part performance-troop, the group designed sophisticated electronic-sculptural components, similar to those of video artist Nam June Paik, like the *telepodium*; a podium surrounded by TV screens with mixing equipment, media input sources and a microphone which combined elements of religious altar, DJ set-up, and a news anchor's table with an affixed rocket launcher used to hurtle projectiles.

A decade later during the second Iraq War, Jonathan McIntosh -- a young media activist and artist -- began making an impressive series of political remixes under nearly identical circumstances to those of EBN co-founders Joshua Pearson and Gardner Post. McIntosh writes:

> In March of 2003, I found myself glued to the television watching in horror and disbelief as American bombs rained down on the people of Iraq. Like many people living in the United States, I was deeply disturbed by our mainstream media's cheerleading for war and their childlike fascination with military weaponry. As each broadcast seemed more and more void of humanity or concern for Iraqi lives, I was compelled to grab my video camera, hook it up to the screen and begin recording the carnage. Especially unsettling for me was the surreal juxtaposition of happy-go-lucky TV commercials for major brands scattered in-between news reports of an ancient civilization being laid waste in real time before my eyes. It was that absurdity coupled with my sense of outrage at the sheer injustice be-

ing perpetrated, which informed my first Political Remix Video (PRV) works. (McIntosh, 2008)

Early McIntosh remixes built upon EBN and Negativeland's incendiary juxtapositions of pop-culture and the military industrial complex and developed into some of the most rhetorically sophisticated remixes on the web. In his remix of a Kodak commercial called "Share Life: Iraq Tour," two young women take a car tour through a city carelessly snapping photos as they pass landmarks which subsequently appear on screen as photographs -- however, McIntosh transforms the commercial by altering the pictures so that they become grisly photographs from the front lines of the Iraq war. McIntosh's intention of highlighting the highly conflicting registers of television advertising in the presence of lethal warfare is a dominant feature of remix culture, as evinced in other works like his détournement of a Chevron ad campaign called *The Power of Human Energy* -- in which a gruesome mosaic of Iraqi atrocities and abuses by American soldiers are conjoined with an inventive montage as a narrator explains Chevron's honorable social conscience. These works, called "identity corrections", are a powerful way of working against corporate identity management, which attempts to rewrite corporate histories by promoting positive associations for the public.

One remix influenced by McIntosh's identity corrections appropriates Dow Chemical's "Human Element" ad campaign which seeks, in the company CEO's words, to "reconnect with the faces and values of the people Dow touches in a positive way." (Anon., 2006) Instead, remixer Christian Nilsen appropriates the narration from Dow Chemical's ad and places it over now infamous footage of a naked young Vietnamese girl, Phan Thị Kim Phúc, whose clothes and skin have been burnt off after a napalm attack. The work leaves an incredible impression on the viewer, emphasizing the sinister irony of Dow's attempt to promote itself as a good corporate citizen while solidifying the connection between Dow Chemical and their invention and production of what is still one of the most repugnant and inhumane weapons of mass destruction ever invented -- napalm. Works like this, when seen on a large scale can successfully disrupt ad campaigns designed by corporations as a subterfuge to counter bad press and terrible environmental and sometimes criminal records.

Bryan Boyce, another important figure bridging the gap between video art and digital remixing, has the distinction of being distributed by Video Data Bank (which counts Harun Farocki and Peggy Ahwesh among represented artists) and also having large view counts on YouTube. *Special Report with Bryan Boyce* integrates footage of news anchors whose speech is replaced with the disembodied mouths of actors from 1950s horror films. The video humorously transforms broadcast news anchors as harbingers of bad news into doomsday prophets, alien forces controlling the discourse of the country, insulting average news viewers for their gullibility and admitting to creating the tone of paranoia which rules American national discourse. Boyce employs "identity correction" by editing the speech of public figures so that in the mind of the remixer, their actions are synonymous with their words. This process is described by found footage filmmaker Craig Baldwin as "media jujitsu," or the act of "using the weight of the enemy against himself" (Bruyn, 2001) -- a form of forcing propaganda to dismantle its own claims. This technique has been used (and abused in many

cases) in innumerable remixes of speeches by figures in the Bush Administration, transforming words and editing the ex-president to declare, in the case of Edo Wilkins' remix, "I hope you'll join me in expressing fear and selfishness. We will embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed. We can be summed up in one word; evil." Another remixer transforms a press conference with Bush and forces him to make a heartfelt apology for the war in Iraq -- a kind of liberal fantasy played out with "real life" actors.

At the heart of political remixing lies an impulse to rebut mainstream media and promote contemporaneous critiques of culture through alternative channels free from endemic corporate censorship in journalism. One recent critique of found footage film leveled by theorist Adrian Danks suggests that the technique represents the artistic exhaustion of the avant-garde which has "retreat[ed] to the past in order to uncover hidden meanings within what can now be reconfigured as fixed cultural, political and social movements and histories (largely of the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s)" (Danks, 2006: 250). We might understand digital remixing as a prominent example of how found footage image making has become relevant to new generations through the appropriation of contemporary images in an effort to address pertinent socio-political issues.

The pervasive tone of these works demonstrates a deep suspicion of media itself -- specifically the authoritative voice of journalism and the persuasive techniques of advertising. Much of political remixing depends on deconstructing how desire is created through images, as evinced in the work of remix collective Wreck and Salvage. In their rapid-fire montage of advertisements that appear between children's programming, the video *Saturday Morning* illustrates how gender stereotypes/behaviors and eating habits are reinforced for children. The work, which appropriates both the advertisements and the unrelenting speed in which images appear on television, depicts how commercials shape desire through repetition. Other remixers focus on the repressive and hostile role media can play in acculturating the attitudes of filmgoers towards certain identities. Jaqueline Salloum's epic film-historical collage *Planet of the Arabs* does more than just highlight the pervasive portrayal of Arabs as terrorists, but digs through the archive to reveal strategies and tropes which pervade Hollywood cinema in regard to Arab characters. Elsewhere, Diana Chang has compiled a remix looking at racist caricatures in Disney films, the most recent remix to analyze the studio with predecessors looking at gender and the portrayal of masculinity. In *300 Epithets*, the film *300* is examined as a work of "rightwing revisionism" and is textually analyzed to highlight the film's homophobic, racist and conservative agenda.

Appropriated materials are often used in political mashups for educational purposes to subvert the source material and initiate it into a new and radical ensemble of images. *Manifestoon* purloins cartoon images to illustrate the first chapter of *The Communist Manifesto*, while *A Fair(y) Use Tale* explains copyright law through the cut-up words of Disney characters, a bold move considering the company is the most litigious studio in the world. In *The Fellowship of the Ring of Free Trade* subtitles are used to superimpose the story of trade agreements, the WTO and the various protest groups that have interceded on these issues over scenes from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003). The malevolent Sauron in the film is a symbol of corporate power who uses "free trade to rule

them all." Gandalf becomes Noam Chomsky and various characters come to embody the labor movement, environmental activists and radical historians.

The strategies enacted in political remixes can be traced back to one of the earliest practices of moving image appropriation pioneered by the same filmmakers who developed montage theory while working in the Soviet film industry. As Paul Arthur has suggested, one of the principle techniques in found footage filmmaking is the politicized recalibration of images which first occurs after the Russian revolution, when two departments of the Soviet film system were founded to re-edit films from capitalist countries to reflect pro-communist ideology (Arthur, 1999). Among these re-editors were four towering figures of Soviet filmmaking and montage: Lev Kuleshov, Esther Shub, Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov. As critic Yuri Tsivian has brilliantly detailed, these re-editors radically altered Western films through sophisticated editing techniques, transformations in intertitles and complete excising of certain characters for Soviet audiences both to reflect Marxist ideals and to confirm Soviet suspicions about western capitalism (Tsivian, 1996). In these state sponsored editing activities the appropriation of film objects for the purposes of ideological transformation begins -- and reappears again in the political remixing movement.

Though these remixes enact critical transformations of content, both the remixer and re-editor perform the same aesthetic strategy of replicating the grammar of the source material -- the words may have changed but the language is still the same. What distinguishes the Soviet re-editors from other found footage filmmakers is that their transformations occur clandestinely -- camouflaging the semantic alterations by maintaining the syntactic elements. This technique has lived on in culture jamming and détournement from artists as diverse as the Billboard Liberation Front and the appropriation of Robert Indiana's 1966 *Love* painting by General Idea. This replication of the grammar of source material is an important component of political remixes, which seek to mimic the "high production values" of corporate advertising but disturb their content. Additionally, this aspect of digital remixing initiates another stark contrast with its video art predecessors. While video art appropriators vied to disrupt the grammar and narratives of plundered works, digital remixers overwhelmingly work within the structure of the images they appropriate. Narrative, style, grammar and language are only rarely the site of transformation in the works of digital remixers -- instead these elements are replicated and the content, context and meaning become the site of revision. These works of détournement, are marked by the artist's desire to camouflage their transformations, almost as if to insinuate them back into the mediascape as authentic and original works.

As works of art, political remixes can be critiqued for their parroting of hegemonic visual discourses in mainstream media, rather than adopting less authoritarian modes of speaking back to the media. Furthermore, the correction or revision of traumatic images can be a hubristic undertaking which does not necessarily seek to understand the conditions which spawned the original images but rather is a self-congratulatory form of art-making for both the remixer and spectator. By this I mean, as artist Barbara Kruger has observed of works of appropriation, that they may "merely serve to congratulate" the spectator for their "contemptuous acuity" (Kruger, 2003: 1041) in identifying flaws in ideology

rather than the more complex task of identifying how such images came to fruition. Film theorist Catherine Russell argues with writer/filmmaker Sharon Sandusky who suggests that "successful works of art" that cull from the archive are a "'cure' to the dangers of the past" (Russell, 1999: 243). However, Russell does support the idea of archival revision but argues for works which "promot[e] a schizophrenic dispersal of discourses of mastery, authenticity, and authority through fragmentation, cutting up, and interruption" (Ibid). This understanding of revision is far more sympathetic to film and videomakers who work to avoid making claims as authoritarian and myopic as the materials they have sought to examine. In this way, filmmakers can avoid simply perpetuating the authoritarian and repressive hegemonic visual discourses they seek to debunk by taking a careful approach that gives the viewer the agency to draw their own conclusions. This said, digital remixers may choose to utilize the more direct form of address appropriated from mainstream media so as to illustrate its rhetorical simplicity.

The Trailer Remix

The emergence of digital remixing can be attributed in part to editor Robert Ryang's 2005 reedit of a trailer for a contest put together by the Association of Independent Creative Editors (Halbfinger, 2005). Ryang, who works at the PS260 editing house, re-cut a trailer for the Stanley Kubrick film version of the Stephen King horror novel *The Shining* (1980), transforming the appropriated footage into a schlocky romantic comedy set to Peter Gabriel's maudlin song *Solsbury Hill*. His transformation, called *Shining,* was initially hidden on a URL connected to the PS260 site, which after only two days of circulation caused servers to crash from web traffic. The video's circulation in the film community was swift and, shortly after its creation, Ryang was called by film studios who were scouting talent.

Since this watershed moment in viral video, hundreds of young disciples have made their own trailer mixes. Remixers have built blogs, created contests, written commentary and started online communities supporting trailer remixing. At thetrailermash.com, new works are posted several times a week where remixers have spirited debate over each trailer's merits. At totalrecut.com, a site devoted to appropriated film works of all kinds, you can download editing software, read literature about copyright and fair use, connect with other remixers and watch remixed work of all kinds. Over the last two years, trailer remixes have become increasingly sophisticated, leveling prescient critiques at films and how they are marketed, produced and politicized. That said, trailer remixes do not necessarily have a serious agenda; many are sophomoric and some can be downright nasty. They do not posses the same level of criticality present in PRVs; instead they should be understood as exercises in the reimagining and blending of disparate cultural elements in the same category as exquisite corpses and other Surrealist techniques, as I will explore later.

Easily the most popular form of digital remixing, trailer remixes do not simply parody the narrative of a film, they mock the entire marketing apparatus of films -- that being the trailer. As a form stuck somewhere between the province of art and marketing, trailers, like television commercials or political advertisements, are based on years of audience studies, current trends, and often outright fabri-

cations. The clichés of the trailer have become so standardized and predictable that nearly any plot can be transmogrified into a trailer formula to alter the genre. This is not to say that effective trailer remixes can be easily executed; a successful remix is predicated on a highly media literate creator who can deconstruct and recreate the nuances and technical devices employed by the film preview. The editor's skill appears in the music choices, sound cues and scene selection required to inscribe an entirely new meaning. Like the Soviet re-editors and political remixers, trailer remixes tend to imitate rather than disrupt the grammar of commercial cinema -- attempting to "pass-off" their transformations as authentic through the use of certain film industry clichés like FBI warnings, MPAA ratings cards, studio logos, cast and crew cards and dramatic trailer narrators in the style of the late Don ("In a world…") LaFontaine.

Trailer Re-Cuts

While I use the term digital remixing to refer broadly to all forms of digital found footage manipulation, a number of categories appear under this general umbrella. When discussing trailer remixing, there are two forms present: mashups and re-cuts. I refer to a trailer re-cut when the genre of a single film is détourned, such as *Shining*, or *10 Things I Hate About Commandments* by Mike Dow and Ari Eisner, which transforms the biblical epic *The Ten Commandments* (1956) into a high school comedy reminiscent of *Ten Things I Hate About You* (1999). This re-cut appropriates the discourse of another genre though it only utilizes images from one film. Sergei Eisenstein once commented that effective montage, as a critical and interruptive form could be employed by considering the formula: "Degree of incongruence determines intensity of impression" (Eisenstein, 1949: 50). This might help us understand why the most potent remixes unite what might be seen as dialectically opposite genres. An effective remix, critic Scott Mackenzie suggests, is predicated on the "ability to make the familiar unfamiliar through humorous dialectical juxtapositions" (Mackenzie, 2007: 14). Examples of this include the romantic re-cut of *Taxi Driver* (1976) about naïve first love and the Tom Hanks comedy vehicle *Big* (1988) transformed into a thriller about pedophilia. *Citizen Kane: Tha Remix* takes *Citizen Kane* (1941) and reframes it in the discourse of urban gangster films complete with a Tupac soundtrack and graffiti fonts for title interludes. These works transform the meanings of a single film by transforming the soundtrack, inter-titles, narration and tone so that it reflects a new genre.

Trailer Mash-ups

While trailer re-cuts create détourned readings of films, mashups are an amalgamation of multiple source materials which are montaged together to produce exquisite corpses from film fragments. The term was first used in conjunction with art to refer to the radical combinations of songs made by Jamaican club DJs. A trailer mashup combines images or sound from at least two films. This tradition of conjoining two films together can be traced back to some of the earliest Surrealist experiments with cinema, specifically those by Andre Breton, who, along with other friends enjoyed "nothing so much as dropping into the cinema when whatever was playing was playing, at any point in the show, and leaving at the first hint of boredom -- of surfeit -- to rush off to another cinema

where [they] behaved in the same way" (Breton, 2000: 73). Breton's game was meant to aid in creating radical combinations of images and in many ways is a precursor to American Surrealist Joseph Cornell's landmark found footage film *Rose Hobart* (1935). Critic Fatimah Tobing Rony encourages such an interpretation when she writes that "[t]he key elements of chance, disruption, and dislocation, and the refusal to accept the passive status of the spectator by actively creating their own montage in their heads, already enacted certain Surrealist characteristics of found footage film"(Rony, 2003: 131). For all these reasons Surrealism, in the tradition of Max Ernst's collage novels*,* Breton's associative word games and method of film viewing should be considered as vital to the invention of found footage filmmaking and its second rebirth at the hands of Joseph Cornell.

The Surrealist use of shocking juxtapositions had incredible humorous power in their hallucinatory elocution through chance encounters between cut out words or through methods of automatic writing. Max Ernst described this method as "the coupling of two realities, irreconcilable in appearance, upon a place which apparently does not suit them" (Ernst, 1948: 13). This is the trailer remix -- a work which amalgamates the discourse, style, structure, genre or footage of multiple film works all within the controlled and laconic confines of the film trailer.

A number of strategies are employed to successfully integrate multiple source materials together for trailer mashups. At their bare bones, mashups are composed of a montage from disparate films, which are given continuity through creative scene selection and editing. This technique itself likely emanates from some moments in Cornell's *Rose Hobart* but was most famously used by the recently deceased found footage filmmaker Bruce Conner. In Conner's *A Movie* (1958) a famous sequence uses disparate images to suggest a continuity of action with humorous results. Critic William Wees explains: "A submarine captain seems to see a scantily dressed woman though his periscope and responds by firing a torpedo which produces a nuclear explosion followed by huge waves ridden by surfboard riders."(Wees, 1993:14) Conner's assembling of narrative depends both on his own skill in selecting images which provide a sense of narrative continuity, but also relies on the spectator's inherent desire to construct narrative even when confronted with apparently disparate elements. This form of montage relies heavily on the uniformity of film grammar in mainstream films. In the mashup *You, Me and E.T.,* remixer Brianimal has characters from the film *You, Me and Dupree* (2006) converse with the alien from *E.T.* (1982) simply by cutting back and forth between the medium shots from the two films. It is worth noting here that remixers frequently use monikers both to evade legal issues stemming from copyright claims and as a means of creating a more easily identifiable product. Like graffiti artists before them, remixers use monikers to avoid legal prosecution, build their reputations and signal signature styles.

Mashups frequently use *overdubbing*, a practice which involves dropping the soundtrack of a film and creating new dialog or using dialog from another source. This technique was notably executed in both Woody Allen's *What's Up Tiger Lily* (1966) which transforms a Japanese Spy film into an absurdist comedy and in the Situationist film by René Viénet *Can Dialectics Break Bricks* (1973)

which transforms a Korean Kung Fu film into a Marxist polemic. Mashups which employ overdubbing find sound from one film and synch it with the mouths of actors from another film. Contemporary mashups tend towards the absurd when employing overdubbing, as featured in works like *Sesame Streets* which utilizes dialogue from a host of Scorsese films put into the mouths of the characters from the titular children's show, or *2001: Goodfellas* where HAL's docile voice is replaced with Joe Pesci's brutal portrayal of a mobster from *Goodfellas* (1990).

Frequently the titling of these works themselves will be humorous juxtapositions as in *All That Jaws*, *Brokeback to the Future* and *The Paris, Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. These titles are likely derived from the titles conceived by music mashup artists who compounded the titles from source materials amalgamated together. Artist John Oswald uses this humorous compounding with the song titles in his *Plexure* album, featuring songs with titles like *Ozzie Osmond* and *Marianne Faith No Morrissey*.

Apocalypse Pooh (1987), a mashup that does not utilize the trailer format, pioneered many of the techniques employed in contemporary trailer mashups. The mashup utilizes the score and dialogue from *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and synchs it to the animated characters in the Winnie the Pooh films. The film, made by Todd Graham, a student of the Ontario College of Art and Design, was originally made for presentation at underground film forums, however the work was resurrected on the internet and imitated to no end. Critic Scott Mackenzie contributed an elaborate history of the film and argues that it "successfully condenses the entire, allegorical, mythological and grandiose narrative of Coppola's film and provides a critical meta-commentary on both *Apocalypse Now* and the Winnie the Pooh featurettes" (Mackenzie, 2007: 11). Graham's work is one of the first to test the conjoining of dialectically opposite genres and benefits from working outside of the grammar of the film trailer.

A number of popular subgenres have appeared in the trailer mashup community, focusing on certain films or tropes. *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) mashups usually look at homosocial relationships or spaces and construct a gay subtext by including the inimitable Gustavo Santaolalla score to the film with the same intertitles from the *Brokeback Mountain* trailer. Clearly some of these works express homophobic attitudes, while others remixes queer texts in playful and humorous ways. *Brokeback Mountain* mashups are many and multifarious, some seek to restructure the film as heterosexual (like *Mount Brokeback*, which presents an Evangelical Christian awakening shared by two men), while others simply employ a queer reading of a film (like *Top Gun: Brokeback Squadron,* or the mashup of the sequel film *2 Fast, 2 Furious* [2003] called *2 Gay Bi-Curious*). Ultimately the fun of these works is in their queering of familiar stories --satirizing the way films are marketed and sold to audiences and the absurd caricatures of masculinity that lend themselves so well to a queering of the text.

While I argue that many digital remixes critique films and film marketing, they are just as often vacuous plays on titles and half-baked and poorly assembled demonstrations of improbability. One popular remix meme on the internet takes a scene from the climax of the German film *Der Untergang* (*Downfall*, 2004) which depicts Hitler's last hours of life in a bunker. The scene, which records Hit-

ler's unhappy revelation from high ranking officers that his empire is about to crumble and his capture is imminent, has been endlessly remixed through alterations in English subtitles to address the Canadian housing crisis, Obama's defeat of Hillary Clinton at the Iowa caucus or even self-referentially to how Hitler has become an internet meme on YouTube. *New York Times* writer Virginia Heffernan writes about "The Hitler Meme" as being, at its best moments, a glorious satirical slap in the face of Hitler, and at its worst, a remix imparting the dictator with a voice of the people. Heffernan writes:

Isn't that the outcome that Adolf Hitler, the historical figure, sought? Didn't he see himself as the brute voice of the everyman unconscious? How grim -- how perplexing, how unsettling -- that after more than 60 years of trying to cast and recast Hitler to make sense of him, we may have arrived at a version of Hitler that takes him exactly at his word. (Heffernan, 2008)

Inevitably the remixer's ability to transform messages, like the Soviet re-editor's, is as Eisenstein so adeptly put it "a wise" and sometimes "wicked game." (Tsivian, 1996: 340)

Appropriation as a Form of Cultural Resistance

As historical memory becomes the province of the moving image for new generations, artists have become concerned with the master narratives and ideological subterfuge of the privileged groups able to produce the historical artifacts and cultural documents that comprise popular media in the twentieth to the twenty-first century. The moving image archive as a site for storage and historical inquiry has been transformed by the works of found footage filmmakers into a malleable databank allowing for creative interventions into our understanding of the moving image and its pivotal role in creating historical memory. These archival interventions reveal and subvert historical engineering by appropriating the very weapons of ideological control, revising them to reflect the traumatic and repressive realities of their creation. In stark contrast to past works of found footage film, digital remixing (specifically political remix) concerns itself with contemporaneous archival interventions.

Critic Hal Foster argues that artists who appropriate materials find the locus of their power in the process of reconstituting meanings onto signs in order to disrupt the "monopoly of the code" (Foster, 1985: 173) constructed, presumably, by an elite of cultural producers. Foster invokes Baudrillard's assertion that "semiotic privilege represents… the ultimate stage of domination" and maintains that appropriation can disrupt the bourgeoisie's "mastery of the process of signification" (Ibid). This process has also been associated by critic William Wees with Umberto Eco's idea of aberrant decoding (Wees, 2002: 4) in which the reader chooses to read "the text in an unpredicted way, producing a deviant meaning" (Hanes, 2000). Appropriators can impose new meanings or disrupt accepted meanings through inventive transformation. Artists who appropriate film images do so in order to transform their cultural meanings in a world where signification is tightly controlled through repressive aspects of copyright law and great communications restriction primarily through controlling state apparatuses like the FCC in the United States.

Artistic appropriation, an idea at the forefront of conceptual art, has been associated with some of the most scandalous works of twentieth century art -- from Duchamp's readymade *Fountain* to Jeff Koons' vacuum cleaner series. Historically, artistic appropriation has been troubling for art critics and audiences alike for the irreverence towards the idea of the original and an uncomfortably close proximity to notions of plagiarism visible in the strategy. Critic Matthew Higgs writes, "implicit in all acts of appropriation and montage are the undercurrents of theft and violence (the act of cutting and dismemberment)" (Higgs, 2005: 93). Collage, one of the earliest forms of artistic appropriation, can etymologically be traced to a slang term for an illicit love affair (Hoffman, 1989: 5). Even the term mashup comes from the Jamaican patwa term for destroying something. Indeed, appropriation art has historically been considered suspect, raising serious questions about the value of art, the concept of authorship and perhaps most importantly how it is we define art itself. However appropriation has been employed for a diversity of purposes and with just as many strategies by artists, filmmakers and musicians.

It is at the site of transformation that one can observe how critiques are enacted by artists. The artistic repurposing, modification and denaturing of material has parodic dimensions which, as critic Linda Hutcheon argues, is "one of the major forms of modern self-reflexivity; it is a form of inter-art discourse" (Hutcheon, 1985: 2). Hutcheon suggests that parodic works are an important part of a progressive culture because "parody is one mode of coming to terms with the texts of 'that rich and intimidating legacy of the past'" (Ibid: 4). The unifying principal which seems to hold true for all appropriators is the wish to take a second look at a text. This second look is frequently motivated by an antagonistic relationship between the artist and the text and the wish to transform the text to reflect this reciprocality. The efforts of digital remixers on the internet to interrogate images of culture is a process of working through, rebuttal, criticism, interrogation and decoding of the highly disposable and ephemeral materials of contemporary culture. This process is a form of retribution or resistance. Video artist Nam June Paik described his installations as a response to mass media when he stated "Television has been attacking us all our lives, now we can attack it back"(Elwes, 2005: 5). Filmmaker Mark Rappaport defends his violations of copyright by saying "My excuse in a court of law would be that these images have corrupted us and it's our turn at bat" (Rappaport, 1996: 22). Many filmmakers and video artists voice variations on the belief that media has colonized our imaginations and found footage films are a means of resistance and critique -- an unauthorized way of redeploying hegemonic visual discourse to introduce dissent.

Active Reception and Remixing Culture

In conclusion, I'd like to consider the "passive reception" model of media discussed at length in Bertolt Brecht's essay "The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication" and in Jean Baudrillard's "Requiem for the Media." In these essays the current "distribution only" model of both television and radio are critiqued for their unilateral nature and non-adherence to an actual model for reciprocal communication. Baudrillard condemns "the media as the institution of an irreversible model of communication *without a response*" (Baudrillard, 1994: 84).

Eli Horwatt

Past scholarship on so-called democratizing media apparatuses or technologies like the video camera or the internet, have argued that such a response occurs through the use of guerilla communications channels which speak back to mainstream media. Digital remixers are engaged in just this -- a lucid response aimed at the media. The possibility of appropriating the materials of media to produce such a response changes non-reciprocal media practices, which may account for why the traditional media has been so aggressive to digital remixing practices as evinced by the many take down notices which have plagued remixers on YouTube. Most of these works are clearly protected by American fair use laws, but are still regularly prevented from internet distribution. Umberto Eco once conceived of "groups of communications guerillas who would restore a critical dimension to the passive reception" (Eco, 1986:142) of radio and television. Clearly we are seeing his prophecy enacted.

Notes

[1] All of the remixes discussed in this article may be found in the following playlist: http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=D52BD242C8855525

References

Arthur, Paul (1999) The Status of Found Footage. *Spectator: The University of Southern California Journal of Film and Television,* 20 (1), pp. 57-69.

Baudrillard, Jean (1994) *Simulacra and Simulation*. Sheila Faria Glaser (trans.) Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Bourriaud, Nicolas (2002) *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World*. Jeanine Herman (trans.) New York: Lukas & Sternberg.

Breton, André (2000) "As in a Wood," in Paul Hammond (ed) *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, pp. 72-77.

Danks, Adrian (2006) The Global Art of Found Footage Cinema, in Linda Badley, R. Barton Palmer and Seven Jay Schneider (eds) *Traditions in World Cinema*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, pp. 241-253.

Debord, Guy and Gil J. Wolman (1956) A User's Guide to Détournement, trans. Ken Knabb (2007), *Situationist International Anthology*. Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, pp. 8-13.

Eco, Umberto (1986) *Travels in Hyperreality*. New York, Harcourt.

Eisenstein, Sergei (1949) *Film Form.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

Elwes, Catherine (2005) *Video Art: A Guided Tour*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Ernst, Max (1948) *Beyond Painting and Other Writings by the Artist and His Friends*. New York: Wittenborn.

Foster, Hal (1985) *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*. Port Townsend: Bay Press.

Higgs, Matthew (2005) Video Quartet, in *Christian Marclay*. New York: Phaidon Press, pp. 82-91.

Hoffman, Katherine (1989) *Collage: Critical Views*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.

Hutcheon, Linda (1985) *A Theory of Parody*. London: Methuen.

Kruger, Barbara (2003) 'Taking' Pictures, in Charles Harrison and Paul J. Wood (eds) *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Malden: Blackwell. pp. 1041-1042.

Mackenzie, Scott (2007) The Horror, Piglet, the Horror: Found Footage, Mash-Ups, AMVs, The Avant-Garde, And the Strange Case of Apocalypse Pooh, *Cineaction* (72), pp. 8-15.

Rappaport, Mark (1996) Mark Rappaport's Notes on Rock Hudson's Home Movies, *Film Quarterly* 49 (4), (Summer) pp. 16-22.

Rony, Fatimah Tobing (2003) The Quick and the Dead: Surrealism and the Found Ethnographic Footage Films of Bontoc Eulogy and Mother Dao: The Turtlelike, *Camera Obscura* 18 (1), pp. 128-155.

Russell, Catherine (1999) *Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Art in the Age of Video*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Tsivian, Yuri (1996) The Wise and Wicked Game: Re-editing and Soviet film Culture of the 1920s, *Film History* 8 (3), pp. 327-343.

Yutkevitch, Sergei (1973) Teenage Artists of the Revolution, in Luda and Jean Schnitzer and Marcel Martin (eds) *Cinema and Revolution: The Heroic Era of the Soviet Film*. London: Secker & Warburg pp. 11-42.

Wees, William C. (1993) *Recycled Images: The Art and Politics of Found Footage Films*. New York: Anthology Film Archives.

Wees, William C. (2002) The Ambiguous Aura of Hollywood Stars in Avant-Garde Found Footage Films, *Cinema Journal* 41 (2), pp. 3-18.

Zryd, Michael (2003) Found Footage Film as Discursive Metahistory: Craig Baldwin's Tribulation 99. *The Moving Image* 3 (2), (Fall 2003) pp. 40-61.

Websites

Anon. (2006) Dow Chemical Launches 'The Human Element' Campaign. *Dow News Center.* June 20th. Available at: http://news.dow.com/corporate/2006/20060619c.htm [Accessed 13 September 2007]

Bruyn, Dirk de (2001) An Evening on Baldwin's Mountain, *Senses of Cinema* 13 (April –May) Available at:

http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/13/baldwin-mountain.html [Accessed 13 September 2007]

Halbfinger, David M (2005) His 'Secret' Movie Trailer is not so Secret Anymore. *New York Times*, September 30th. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/30/movies/30shin.html [Accessed 3 September 2007]

Halter, Ed (1999) Science in Action: Q and A with Craig Baldwin. *New York Press,* October 7th. Available at: http://www.nypress.com/12/40/film/film2.cfm [Accessed 12 October 2007]

Hanes, Philip (2000) The Advantages and Limitations of a Focus on Audience in Media Studies. *Media and Communications Studies* Available at: http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/pph9701.html [Accessed 6 June 2008]

Heffernan, Virginia (2008) 'The Hitler Meme.' *New York Times Magazine*, October 24th. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/26/magazine/26wwln-mediumt.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1&sq=downfall%20remix&st=cse&scp=1

[Accessed 7 January 2008]

McIntosh, Jonathan (2008) Building a Critical Culture with Political Remix Video. Rebellious Pixels, June 6th. Available at: http://www.rebeliouspixels.com/2008/building-a-critical-culture-with-political-remix-video#more-202 [Accessed 6 June 2008]

Filmography

2 Fast 2 Furious, 2003. Dir. John Singleton. Universal Pictures.

2001: A Space Odyssey. 1968. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. MGM.

Apocalypse Now. 1979. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. Zeotrope Studios.

Apocalypse Pooh. 1987. Dir. Todd Graham.

Back to the Future. 1985. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. Universal Pictures.

Big. 1988. Dir. Penny Marshall. Twentieth Century Fox.

Brokeback Mountain. 2005. Dir. Ang Lee. Paramount Pictures.

Citizen Kane. 1941. Dir. Orson Welles. RKO Radio Pictures.

La Dialectique Peut-Elle Casser Des Briques? (*Can Dialectics Break Bricks?*). 1973. Dir. Rene Vienet. Telemondial.

E.T. 1982. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures.

Goodfellas. 1990. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Warner Bros.

Jaws. 1975. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures.

Lord of the Rings [Trilogy] 2001-2003. Dir. Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema.

A Movie. 1958. Dir. Bruce Conner. Canyon Cinema.

Rose Hobart. 1936. Dir. Jospeh Cornell.

The Shining. 1980. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. Warner Bros.

Taxi Driver. 1976. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Columbia Pictures.

The Ten Commandments. 1956. Dir. Cecil B. Demille. Paramount Pictures.

Ten Things I Hate About You. 1999. Dir. Gil Junger. Touchstone Pictures.

Texas Chainsaw Massacre. 1974. Dir. Tobe Hooper. Vortex.

Der Untergang (*Downfall*). 2004. Dir. Oliver Hirschbiegel. Constantin Film.

What's Up Tiger Lily? 1966. Dir. Woody Allen. American International Pictures.

You Me and Dupree. 2006. Dir. Anthony Russo and Joe Russo. Universal Pictures.

Ethical Possession: Borrowing from the Archives

Emma Cocker, Nottingham Trent University, UK

> To rewrite modernity is the historical task of this early twenty-first century: not to start at zero or find oneself encumbered by the store-house of history, but to inventory and select, to use and download (Bourriaud, 2002: 93)

The "borrowing" of existing found-footage and archival material within artists' film and video operates at the interstice where a history of ideas relating to theories of production and consumption collides with debates around cultural memory and an emergent ethics of remembering (and of forgetting). Whilst the purposeful acquisition and manipulation of archival film material has some provenance, the current preoccupation with found imagery can seem imbued with its own culturally and historically specific sense of urgency or intent. The fetishistic grasping of rapidly disappearing analogue material, the collector's clamour for rare celluloid or even the archivist's paranoiac preservation of vanishing cultural data against the tide of collective amnesia, might all offer plausible accounts for the current fascination with the film archive and the appropriation of its content. Alternatively, the act of borrowing from the archive can be interpreted along with other forms of "cultural borrowing" as a specific tactic for resisting and responding to the pressures and accelerated temporalities of late capitalism, and the dislocation (from both present and past) experienced by the individual in relation to the global and increasingly virtual context in which they are expected to perform. What is at stake perhaps in the gesture of borrowing images from the archive is an attempt to craft an ethics for the present. It is a practice of re-writing history in order to gain a fresh perspective on both the past and the current situation, a process of inventory and selection of what has gone before in order to provoke new critical forms of subjectivity through which to apprehend an uncertain future.

In this article, I want to explore the use of found-footage or archival material within artists' film and video in relation to what some critics have described as a recent resurgence of interest -- even a paradigm shift -- in the practice of appropriation or cultural borrowing, where it appears to have been reactivated as a critical strategy for both revisiting the past and conceiving a politics for the future. At the turn of the twenty-first century, it is possible to witness a resurgence of interest in and theorisation of the act of appropriation in a way that initially appears different to certain earlier conceptualisations of such a practice. In this context, appropriation re-emerges as a tactic of resistance or recuperation, a subversive strategy for dismantling the logic of the dominant order -- the logic of Empire -- by reassembling its languages into counter-narratives or for resurrecting those histories and artefacts that have been marginalised or repressed within its terms. Here, "Empire" is used to refer to colonial or imperial histories, and at the same time signal the way that the term is used by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri to describe the conditions of "total subsumption" which they argue is characteristic of global capitalism (2001). Operating along the border between

consumption and production, appropriation becomes foregrounded as one of the ways by which artists might interrogate or respond to what Nicholas Bourriaud describes as the "proliferating chaos of global culture in the information age" (Bourriaud, 2002: 13). In his essay *Postproduction*, Bourriaud argues that whilst appropriation is not a new practice ("citation, recycling and détournement were not born yesterday" 2002: 9), there has been a shift in the gesture of borrowing since the 1990s away from "the manipulation of references and citation […] which naturally infers an ideology of ownership … moving toward a culture of the use of forms, a culture of constant activity of signs based on a collective ideal: sharing" (Bourriaud, 2002: 9). Other theorists have similarly pointed towards a shift in attitude in relation to the practice of cultural borrowing, where it is no longer perceived (as it perhaps was in the 1980s) as indicative of a form of ironic postmodern pastiche or empty inhabitation, but rather becomes framed as a re-politicised gesture through which artists might attempt to develop critical (and indeed empathetic) possibilities for a fragmented and chaotic world.

The "borrowing" of found-footage within artists' film and video additionally brings the theoretical interrogation of appropriation and its critical potential -- perhaps inescapably -- into dialogue with key debates on the use of the archive and its relationship to cultural memory. It would appear that certain debates around appropriation shift or gain added resonance if the borrowed material is archival -- specifically if the archival fragment constitutes the indexical inscription of a particular lived life onto celluloid film. At this particular conceptual interstice, the politics of appropriation -- questions around ownership, possession and in turn, sharing -- intersect with debates on how cultural memory is mediated (even produced) through an engagement with cinematic images and the technologies of mass culture. Here too, it is possible to witness a shift in attitude (in the work of some theorists) where the historical perception of mass culture creating only passive consumers becomes challenged by those who argue for the possibility of a form of active and even ethical production by the consumer therein. For example, for film theorist Alison Landsberg, mass cultural technologies have the potential to produce rather than pacify a form of critical subjectivity and an empathetic model of cultural memory. The production of cultural memory is itself intrinsically political, where it can be manipulated or contained by official powers or alternatively exploited for its resistant and oppositional potential. For Michel Foucault memory is an "important factor in struggle […] if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism" (Foucault, 1975: 28). Landsberg argues that if cultural or collective memories are now produced through the technologies of film and mass culture then perhaps such technologies might be harnessed to actively produce empathetic -- even resistant or dissenting -- forms of memory, a progressive politics (Landsberg, 2004).

The aim then is to further explore the possibility of a redemptive or empathetic form of appropriation (as a progressive politics of sharing or ethical possession) by focusing specifically on the borrowing of found archival footage within the work of Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi. In their work, rare archival footage is excavated and reframed, in order to foreground issues of war, fascism, colonialism, spectacle and the inescapable interconnections between. Images of the past are thus deftly reanimated in order to speak of issues and dilemmas pertinent to the concerns of the present. The intent is to explore how

Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's practice might be interrogated through (and indeed potentially complicate or problematise) the critical context provided by recent theoretical writing in relation to both appropriation and (re)presentational technologies. The article itself has been prompted by the unsettling experience of encountering the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi in the context of Tate Modern's ''Anticipating the Past - Artists: Archive: Film'' event back in 2006. The event had been staged to interrogate the different ways in which artists have made use of archival film or antiquated video footage within their practice. In his introduction to the event A.L Rees highlighted the provenance of such practices by tracing a trajectory of imaginative re-cutting of found footage back to various film artists from the 1920s in order to reveal different motivations therein: Surrealist examples such as the films of Joseph Cornell perhaps attempted to reveal an optical unconscious or buried psychological dimension within the borrowed footage, whilst Soviet Montage operated according to a more pronounced political imperative.

''Anticipating the Past - Artists: Archive: Film'' attempted to establish broad categories through which to approach and differentiate between contemporary practices of filmic borrowing. For example, the strand of discussion entitled ''Interrogating Archives'' questioned the conception of the archive as a passive repository that simply catalogues the past, through presentations from artists Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska (who spoke about their project *Screen Tests* [2005] in which they used film material from public regional Film and Television Archives) and from Patrick Keiller (who presented his project *The City of the Future* [2005] in which archival material is used to investigate the ways in which the city has changed during the last century). Alternatively, ''Remaking Hollywood'' focused attention on how artists have explored the -- at times disturbing -- subtexts of popular, specifically Hollywood, cinema with reference to the scratch video work of George Barber, and the composite imagery of Pat O'Neill who has been working with found-footage since the 1960s as a strategy for exploring notions of perception and memory. The work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi was framed in relation to the theme of ''History and Politics'', an interrogation of how newsreel and documentary inevitably function as an unreliable witness in spite of claims to the contrary. Here, they presented a screening of their feature-length film, *Oh, Man* (*Oh, Uomo*, 2004), the latest part of their First World War trilogy -- following the films *Prigionieri delle guerra* (*Prisoners of War*, 1995) and *Su tutte le vetta è pace* (*On the Heights All is Peace*, 1998) -- in which they continued to explore how it might be possible to represent the subjective experience of war and its aftermath.

Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi had been working with the Trento History Museum and the Italian History Museum of War of Rovereto, using archival film footage from 1914-1921 of the First World War. In the film *Oh, Man* they relentlessly represent archival footage of human suffering and atrocity brought about through modern warfare. The work draws on a statement from the writings of Leonardo Da Vinci, who asserted that exposure to the grim facts of war could encourage a turn away from violence, moreover that images of another's suffering had the capacity to promote empathy. Original footage is step-printed and slowed down to reveal the fleeting expressions and gestures of casualties wasted by war, as well as draw attention to the deteriorating -- scratched, blotched and fragile --

nature of the celluloid itself. In one sense, the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi can be situated within a broader "turn" within contemporary art towards the re-visitation of the past and re-politicisation of the present. For Alex Farquharson and Andrea Schlieker an interplay between aesthetics and politics and a move towards a more personal political form of documentary has emerged -- for example, in the work of Breda Beban, Ergin Çavuşoğlu, Rosalind Nashashibi, Zineb Sedira and Alia Syed -- where, "issues of exile and return, of fragmented identities and cross-cultural negotiation, of memory and time, loss and hope" have become increasingly foregrounded (Farquharson and Schlieker, 2005: 144). Farquharson and Schlieker also identify a renewed interest in the past, in the work of contemporary artists. However they are careful to distinguish the critical properties of the current preoccupation, stating that the forms "borrowed" or re-visited have been specifically selected, "not as naïve appropriation, nostalgic gesture or 'cultural regression', as Fredric Jameson would have it, but in awareness of the aspirations and ultimate failures" of the histories and forms they re-deploy (Farquharson and Schlieker, 2005: 54). They suggest that the appropriated material is not borrowed in passive terms, but is instead, "re-scripted, made malleable and injected with subjectivity -- not simply cited, but performed" (Farquharson and Schlieker, 2005: 55).

In one sense, Fredric Jameson's writing on postmodernism has become a kind of gloomy touchstone in any debate around appropriation. For him, appropriation was to be understood as an act performed through the empty or vapid quotation and referencing of the work of others, a form of postmodern pastiche or unauthorised possession based on fragmentation, excerptation and imitation. Jameson asserts that such a practice was symptomatic of the wider cultural malaise of the 1980s, a period of time that had "little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its own past" (Jameson, 1990: 8). Having lost or abandoned a sense of identity and history to a depthless and impoverished "perpetual present" Jameson argues that, "in a world in which stylistic innovation is no longer possible, all that is left is to imitate dead styles, to speak through the masks and with the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum" (Jameson, 1988: 18). Recent interest in the act of borrowing places renewed emphasis on appropriation as a tactic of recuperation and critique, attempting perhaps to differentiate itself from the forms of "vapid quotation" symptomatic of Jameson's view. For example, Richard Dyer asserts that it is possible to conceive of pastiche in affective or even empathetic terms, where "The most valuable point of pastiche resides in its ability to move us even while allowing us to be conscious of where the means of our being moved comes from, its historicity" (Dyer, 2007: 138). If Jameson (in Dyer's terms), argues that the closeness of pastiche to the thing it imitates "prevents it from having the distance necessary to critique" (Dyer, 2007: 157); then for Dyer this "politics of closeness" could rather more be seen as a critical strategy. In embracing closeness and proximity pastiche, "accepts the possibility of being seduced, penetrated, dependent or ventriloquised, without seeing this as a significant and anxiety-producing loss of autonomy" (Dyer, 2007: 179). Pastiche is a mode of imitation, and as such perhaps needs to be differentiated from the mode of appropriation discussed in this essay -- the explicit borrowing of actual archival material. Nonetheless, elements of Dyer's analysis (of pastiche and the potential for affect therein) might equally apply to the tensions within the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi. The artists' work uses

archival material to both critique its modes of representation whilst at the same time elicit a specifically emotional or affective response; it "is able to mobilize feelings even while it is signaling that it is doing so" (Dyer, 2007: 180).

At one level, Dyer's attempt to create a "politics" of pastiche might be understood within a broader "turn" towards the end of the twentieth-century where various theorists and artists have begun to rethink and recuperate a critical value for appropriation. In the recently published anthology *Appropriation* (2009), David Evans identifies a number of theoretical positions that have been used to contextualise forms of appropriation emerging during the 1980s -- which might offer different perspectives to Jameson's outlook -- in order to re-emphasis the critical (and indeed political) potential of cultural borrowing. For example, Evans argues that for Benjamin Buchloh appropriation could be interpreted as a practical manifestation of the "ideological critique of consumer culture" developed by Roland Barthes in *Mythologies* (1957) or that for Craig Owens, Barthes' ''Death of the Author'' (1968) enabled questions around the notion of originality to be foregrounded (Evans, 2009: 13). Evans also highlights earlier precursors to the contemporary manifestation of appropriation in Dada and Surrealism, or in the Situationist strategy of détournement -- the practice of reassembling the language and signs of the dominant ideology into counter-messages or narratives. In this sense, the proposed paradigm shift in the conceptualisation of appropriation might actually be considered as more of a return. Recent forms of "borrowing" could be viewed as a rejection of or resistance to the idea of "empty appropriation" and the occupation or imitation of dead styles as put forward by the likes of Jameson, at the same time as an attempt to rescue and resuscitate the critical or even radical potential of borrowing expressed in other contexts. For example, in his exhibition and essay ''Pictures'' (1979) Douglas Crimp advocates a radical potential for appropriation, before the notion had collapsed into a form of empty and vapid imitation and pastiche. For Crimp, "pictures have no autonomous power of signification (pictures do not signify what they picture); they are provided with signification by the manner in which they are presented" (Crimp, 1979: 85). For him the strategies of quotation, excerptation, framing and staging are devices for "uncovering strata of representation. Needless to say, we are not in search of sources or origins, but of structures of signification: underneath each picture there is always another picture" (Crimp, 1979: 87). Certainly, Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's *Oh, Man* is a construction of mute fragments, layer upon layer of "picture" to be "apprehended as representation" (Crimp, 1979: 77). Whilst it is possible to recognise certain recurring themes and types of image in the film -- for example the pomp and ceremony of parading cavalry juxtaposed against the endless portrayal of bodies disfigured or maimed by war -- and to distinguish a general or generic sense of what might be happening, the specific narrative details remain knocked back. In Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's film the hyperbole of the speech podium is rendered mute, crying children make no sound -- the material refuses to give up its meaning. In Crimp's terms, "We do not know what is happening in these pictures, but we know for sure that something is happening" (Crimp, 1979: 80).

Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's work uses the supposed factual data of the documentary to reveal its inefficiency as a medium, its incapacity to objectively reveal or preserve a "truth". Separated from the original narrative context in which

they were conceived, the images lose their specificity and fail to "divulge any-thing of the history they are meant to illustrate" (Crimp, 1979: 85). For Crimp, such mute images offer only a narrative of "simultaneous presence and absence, a narrative ambience stated but not fulfilled" (Crimp, 1979: 80). What the work does in part is focus on strategies of representation by putting into question the proposed impartiality of the original filmmaker, by drawing attention to the way that these fragments of material had in fact been partially staged. Patterns emerge in the way that emaciated children are pushed towards the camera, or how shell-shocked soldiers appear under orders to parade their injuries, forced to display their impotency and disposability. Recurring motifs play out within a relentless formula of devastation and manipulation, of orchestrated line-ups and performances to camera. Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi question the illusion of neu-trality afforded to documentary film practices, suggesting that there is always an agenda at play. The camera is presented as yet another intrusive mode of cap-ture or cataloguing used to establish control and assert authority. The artists painstakingly re-print and tint the individual frames of footage, subjecting the celluloid to a close material scrutiny, as though to attempt to reveal the hidden agenda therein. However, their attention to the material paradoxically makes the content all the more difficult to read. In one sense, Crimp might be referring to the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi when he states:

> Every operation to which (they) subject these pictures represents the du-ration of a fascinated, perplexed gaze, whose desire is that they disclose their secrets; but the result is only to make the pictures all the more pic-ture-like, to fix forever in an elegant object our distance from the history that produced these images. That distance is all that these pictures signify (Crimp, 1979: 85).

For Crimp, such close attention to the material object transforms it into a fetish. He argues that, "Such an elaborate manipulation of the image does not really transform it; it fetishizes it. The picture is an object of desire, the desire for the signification that is known to be absent" (Crimp, 1979: 83). However, rather than fetishising the material, Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi seem to be more con-cerned in preventing it from operating according to the terms of its original cap-ture, in order that it might actually "speak" of other narratives. Here, perhaps the speechlessness or silence of the image could be framed as a critical position, as the refusal to communicate or play according to the terms of existing power relations. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi appear to withhold the signifying properties of the image in order for it to operate through an asignifying register, in affec-tive rather than textual terms. Alternatively, the muteness or suspension of nar-rative -- the idea of being spellbound -- identified in Crimp's model of appropria-tion perhaps becomes an untenable position from the 1990s onwards. Wide-spread political upheaval (such as the implosion of the Soviet Union) forces im-ages from the past once again into the space-time of the present, where they can no longer be left mute. Inverting the terms of Crimp's declaration, we are *no longer* able to "distance (ourselves) from the history that produced these im-ages" (Crimp, 1979: 85). The images from the past have the capacity to operate as both reminders of what has been and also as portents of a potential future yet to come. They promise to speak of unspeakable horrors that had been ban-

ished to the past, but which have once again begun to emerge at the site of the present.

In his essay "Living with Ghosts: From Appropriation to Invocation in Contemporary Art" Jan Verwoert discusses the ways in which our conception of "history" has impacted upon the practice of appropriation or cultural borrowing. For him, "the cultural experience of the discourse of appropriation conveyed under the sign of postmodernity is that of a radical temporal incision. It is the experience of a sudden death of modernism and the momentary suspension of historical continuity" (Verwoert, 2007). He argues that during the Cold War years the notion of "history" had been abandoned in favour of a temporal standstill where time had been paused like "a film that has stopped mid motion" (Verwoert, 2006). However, during the political upheaval and violence of the 1990s (a period of interminable wars and political instability) the enforced stasis of the Cold War interregnum collapsed, and "the wheels of the projector started moving again" (Verwoert, 2006). History, Verwoert argues, is now no longer dead but rather "un-dead" -- "a scene of ghosts and spectres" (Verwoert, 2006) erupting along "the faultlines drawn by the geopolitical regimes of modernity" (Verwoert, 2007). Here, we no longer experience a loss of historicity or history; there has been a "shift from not enough to too much history or rather too many histories" (Verwoert, 2007). The past becomes looked to once more in order to learn from its mistakes, to craft new (rather than simply repeat old) strategies for approaching the future. For Verwoert, it is no longer possible to conceive of merely borrowing dead objects from the past, but rather it has become necessary to interrogate how the past might be invoked or conjured into dialogue with the present. A new form of appropriation is required, he argues, based on the practice of an ethics. For Verwoert, the act of appropriation is ultimately a political gesture which can be articulated through a Marxist materialist reading -- an operation of reclamation or of re-appropriation which takes back a cultural surplus that is already ow(n)ed -- or else it has the capacity to reveal or expose the latent conditions of exploitation or alienation within the stolen object itself. Alternatively a more utopian or redemptive reading can be gleaned where borrowed objects and pasts can be rescued from a process of commodification, where they are enabled to perform again once more (Verwoert, 2006).

Verwoert argues that there has been "a decisive shift in relation to the object of appropriation -- from the use of a dead commodity fetish to the invocation of something that lives through time" (Verwoert, 2007). Here, the act of appropriation or borrowing -- and the notion of property and possession therein -- becomes inscribed or haunted by spectral connotations, played out through the theoretical model of séance. Verwoert questions how it might be possible or indeed ethical to appropriate or possess an object that "has a history and thus a life of its own. Would the desire for possession then not inevitably be confronted by a force within that object which resists that very desire?" (Verwoert, 2007). Drawing on Derrida's *Spectres of Marx* (1994), he plays on the double meaning of possession, where the term might be read as the act or fact of possessing, or alternatively as the state of being possessed. Invoking Derrida he asks, "Is not to possess a spectre to be possessed by it, possessed period?" (Derrida, 1994: 11). The question for Derrida, Verwoert suggests, becomes one of meaningfully "learning to live with ghosts" (Derrida, 1994: xviii); of learning how "to let them

speak or how to give them back speech" (Derrida, 1994: 176). In these terms, the borrowed or possessed object can no longer be passively put to another's use but is seen to possess its own agency and wishes to speak back. This return to the site of the past should not be viewed as an attempt to simply work through and quieten the threat of a repressed history -- in the psychoanalytical sense -- but is rather marked by a sense of the past's promise. In ''The Archival Impulse'' Hal Foster speaks of this "promise" of the past as a site of "unfulfilled beginnings" (Foster, 2004: 15). This dual reading of possession seems especially resonant in relation to the appropriation of archival fragments in the work of Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi, whose practice appears then as one of "learning to live with ghosts", of attempting to give them back their speech.

The archival film fragment not only evokes past experiences but also acts as witness. Archival footage has an indexical relationship to a life lived, such that it might be read less as a found object and more like the trace of a missing person, an obituary card, an eerie memento-mori. The archive thus becomes a charged space of contestation and reinvention, a meeting place or site of séance in which artists and filmmakers gather to ask questions of the ways in which histories and memories become spoken or unspoken, authorised or unsanctioned, preserved or deemed disposable. The publication and exhibition, *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video* (2006) explicitly drew on the spectral associations of archival material. Josephine Lanyon reflects on how the term "ghosting":

> [...] alludes to the idea of an apparition, of articulating an authorial position in re-imagining or re-wakening ghosts of the past. Ghosting is a term used to describe the appearance of an overlapping secondary image on a television screen, but also refers to the 'ghost of acidification', the impact that the ravages of time have on nitrate film (Lanyon, 2006: 4).

In Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's work the process of negative-inversion blanches the bodies of soldiers making them appear ghost-like, dematerialised and spectral; or else the glance of children appear to stare out of the frame, imploring action from beyond the grave. These brief moments of individual "contact" rupture the illusion of anonymity proposed by the documentary reportage of any seemingly featureless crowd; clinical objectivity deteriorates or becomes unsettled in the presence of these singularised and specific existences. So, too, the work reflects on the deterioration of the material itself, where apparitions gather in the glitches and caesura of the film surface, a viral disturbance eating away at the content trapped within its celluloid host.

The archive offers a landscape of buried and layered sediments, in which some things remain close to the surface whilst others are left to sink. It serves as a space of both protection and repression where archiving the past can be understood as a gesture of care that places the valuable or vulnerable beyond the reach of harm. Or else it might speak of a more willful concealment or deception where certain facts or occurrences are deliberately hidden or corrupted so that they may never be brought to trial. The archaeological excavation of buried or forgotten archival fragments within artists' film and video thus has the capacity to serve a dual purpose: it attempts to rescue or recuperate value for lost frag-

ments and write them back into history, at the same time as expose moments of deliberate exclusion within the archive -- omissions, gaps and imbalances. Archival meanings are rarely lost to moments of individual forgetfulness, but rather selected histories are often strategically denied -- carefully eradicated by the slow creep of collective amnesia. For Foucault:

> The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events […] grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities (Foucault, 1969: 128/9).

Thus the rescued archival fragments of artists' film and video speak of a specifically political motivation, an attempt to sound the testimony of voices that had perhaps been deliberately silenced, or existences that may have been methodically cancelled out. In this context, the act of borrowing can be framed as a gesture of archaeology or excavation and of care, where objects are removed from one context (if only temporarily) in order that they can be examined in the light of the present (with the view to producing new ways for orienting the future). Here, the appropriation and re-use of archival material by artists -- often including unwanted remnants and discarded moments from the past -- presents a potential disruption of the official order of knowledge in favour of counter-hegemonic narratives capable of producing new (indeed dissenting or resistant) forms of cultural memory.

For Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi, archival fragments are used reflexively, where the work both contemplates and yet also critiques the recycled footage itself. It is a tactic developed over innumerable works: in *From the Pole to the Equator* (1986) the artists moulded footage of military parades and missionary schools in Africa and India -- which they borrowed from the archives of pioneering Italian filmmaker Luca Comerio (1874 -1940) -- into a filmic exquisite corpse that speaks back with a critique of colonial power. In *Prisoners of the War*(1995), they focused on the life of prisoners and refugees using footage shot during World War I by cameramen from Czarist Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In *On the Heights all is Peace* (1998) their attention shifts towards the Italian/Austrian war zone during World War I, whilst in *Balkan Inventory* (2000) fragments of old newsreels and amateur film offer up a collaged and makeshift history of Yugoslavia and the Danube River. *Oh, Man* draws on different orders of footage excavated from the archives of the Trento History Museum and the Italian History Museum of War of Rovereto. Images of power and military prowess (of Mussolini rising to power, of the devastating effects of his invading armies from the 1930s) are juxtaposed with images of maimed or starving children in an Austrian hospital from 1918; footage of the piled remains of dead infants in Russia during 1920; extracts showing the mutilated and impotent shells of veterans of the First World War subjected to makeshift plastic surgery, their individualised pain at times slowed down or in other moments accelerated, sped past. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi invert the chronological order of history such that the Fascist-era footage of the 1930s precedes the images of the victims of an earlier war. War and its inescapable horrors become a relentlessly cyclical concept, where the casualties of one war not only signal events that have al-

ready taken place, but also speak of the inevitability of future and further devastation.

When artists borrow from the archives they are also acting as a witness to the unspoken histories therein; their re-voicing of the past becomes a form of subjective testimony through which to articulate others' stories. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi reclaim archival footage that was originally intended to bear witness, but which failed because it was overburdened or even ventriloquised by the intentions of the original filmmaker. Material was inherently exploitative or propagandist in its focus, or alternatively its evidence has failed to be called to trial. Historical fragments are thus drawn to the surface such that they may be forced to account for their role within the events of the present, or in order that atrocities of the past are not forgotten (or repeated). For Lucy Reynolds, found footage is a "palimpsest onto which layers of different history are already written" (Reynolds, 2006: 18). She argues that whilst found footage can be decontextualised, the original meanings are never wholly erased or rewritten, but remain instead as insoluble layers (Reynolds, 2006: 18). In their excavation of the archive, the trespassing filmmaker inevitably disturbs the "sedimented histories and co-existing temporal spaces" (Reynolds, 2006: 18) of the film's archaeology, forcing it to give up its hidden meanings. The artists' wandering thus disturbs the surface of the archives, bringing things to the surface that had perhaps remained previously unseen or unsayable.

Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's partial and idiosyncratic form of reclamation retains and values the subjective or individual's experience of history (and especially the history of atrocity), whilst challenging or discarding more established or authoritative descriptions. Unlike the impervious logic of official histories, their presentation of the past is full of holes and appears porous. Theirs is a "sieve-order" to borrow a term from Michel de Certeau, which is "everywhere punched and torn open by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning" (De Certeau, 1984: 107). Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi present a dual commentary on the sieve-order of the historical archive: they reveal the stories of the past or of specific geographical loci to be partial or biased, exploitative or propagandist, at the same time as re-inscribing these narrative fragments within new frameworks of meaning that are equally open and incomplete. However their spacing or open-endedness in the narrative order is a device that is used to rupture any coherent sense of either spatial or temporal continuity. Such spacing performs in a similar manner to the grammatical procedure of asyndeton, which is a disruptive break in syntax that De Certeau describes as an act that, "opens gaps in the spatial continuum" and "retains only selected parts of it" (De Certeau, 1984: 101). The borrowing and reanimation of the archival fragment becomes a way of disturbing the smooth structure of an historical narrative, in order to reintroduce the possibility of other realities in the gaps and pauses. Artists using archival and amateur film footage often reveal an anti-archival tendency. They attempt to liberate images and individual pasts from their static relationship to linear history, to create spaces in the narrative. In ''Respect Des Fonds'' Erika Tan notes how the act of decontextualising or dislocating archival material "creates a gap, a void, a space. It leaves way for processes of interpretation and intervention" (Tan, 2006: 70). Here the "gap becomes a contested space" where it is possible to conceive of "new, changing and alternative purchases on 'truth'" (Tan, 2006: 70).

For Pierre Nora, "Modern memory is above all, archival […] the archive has become the deliberate and calculated secretion of lost memory. It adds to life […] a second memory, a prosthesis memory" (Nora, 1989: 13). Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's act of excavating material from the archive and re-inscribing it within new narrative orders within the present, echoes the manner in which memory itself is performed across temporal thresholds, as a live act provoked from within the terms of the present. In *Oh, Man* archival material appears in a manner that is closer to the personal logic of memory than the archival order of history; it unfolds as a palimpsest of blended, bleeding and overlapping inscriptions of information. Memory (like De Certeau's "sieve-order") might be described as "porous" or "beyond the archive" (Sutton, 1998: 1) where "remembering occurs in an inconstant world of "leaks, holes, escapes and unexpected resistances" (Sutton, 1998: 279). Memories might be understood as "dynamic patterns rather than static archives, fragmentary traces to be reconstructed rather than coherent things to be reproduced" (Sutton, 1998: xiii). It is a shifting system of knowledge and information, as much under construction as available for recollection: contingent, malleable and open to change, revision, and reworking. For Andreas Huyssen:

> The mode of memory is recherché rather than recuperation. The temporal status of any act of memory is always the present and not, as some naïve epistemology might have it, the past itself … a tenuous fissure (exists) between past and present that constitutes memory, making it powerfully alive and distinct from the archive or any other mere system of storage and retrieval (Huyssen, 1995: 3).

Similarly, perhaps, the appropriation of archival material by artists should be understood as recherché rather than recuperation, a process of meaning making in the present rather than simply a retrieval of meaning from the past. Artists such as Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi thus adopt a mode of research that is analogous to that of a memory procedure, violently dredging recollections of the past into a dialogue with the present, forcing that they are encountered affectively rather than according to a narrative logic. The artists' work functions as a way of reinstating the unsayable or unsaid, where they become witness to the unspeakable secrets of the archive and then attempt to rearticulate these through their own translations and testimony. Their witnessing takes the form of an enunciation, as they wander through the archives trying to make sense of what they find, trying perhaps to bring it into order. Like Bourriaud's "semionaut," Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi drift through the labyrinthine corridors of history producing new "original pathways", imagining the "links, the likely relations between disparate signs" (Bourriaud, 2002: 18).

Unlike the illusion of objectivity typically associated with documentary or even anthropological footage, Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's filmic work is impressionistic, even expressive, as though to assert the subjective and contingent nature of their encounter with the material. In her introduction to the publication *Ghosting*, Jane Connarty notes how editorial strategies such as re-photographing as well as the "interruption of narrative through montage and juxtaposition, extreme deceleration, or alteration of scale or colour of the image, permit new levels of scrutiny and engagement […] simultaneously drawing attention to the vo-

yeuristic relationship of the viewer/consumer to the material" (Connarty, 2006: 10). Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's use of colour tints and toning and the slowing down of the speed at which the damaged film stock plays out shifts the footage into the realm of the interpretative. The artists visibly declare their interventions and editing of the original material, making their presence (and their act of witnessing) known. Their "treatment" of the material is a mode of postproduction; a technical term borrowed by Bourriaud which "refers to the set of processes applied to recorded material: montage, the inclusion of other visual or audio sources, subtitle, voice-overs, and special effects" (Bourriaud, 2002: 13). Postproduction is the term that Bourriaud coins to describe the "new attitude" of appropriation and borrowing from the 1990s. For Bourriaud the challenge now for artists is to sample, remix and re-use pre-existing forms; to no longer ask "'what can we make that is new?', but 'how can we make do with what we have?'" (Bourriaud, 2002:17).

Bourriaud's conceptualisation of postproduction is influenced by the "twin figures of the DJ and the programmer, both of whom have the task of selecting cultural objects and inserting them into new contexts" (Bourriaud, 2002:13). The idea of grafting together fragments of existing material in the production of new assemblages emerges in response to the question of "how to find one's bearings in the cultural chaos and how to extract new modes of production from it" (Bourriaud, 2002:14). In one sense, Bourriaud's notion of postproduction can be traced back to earlier practices, where it is not only indebted to the "mash-up" and "scratch" methodology of emergent cultural practices like VJ-ing and programming but also to the "visceral collage techniques of experimental filmmaking" (Reynolds, 2006: 17). In her essay, ''Outside the Archive: The World in Fragments'', Lucy Reynolds points to Len Lye's film, *Trade Tattoo* (1937) which contains sequences from fellow documentary filmmakers including John Grierson's *The Drifters* (1929) and Alberto Cavalcanti's *Coal Face* (1935). Reynolds reflects on how the dislocation of material from its primary context provokes new speculation around the intentionality and purpose of the original material, or has the capacity to produce a host of subversive meanings and counter-narratives. She also discusses Bruce Conner's influential found footage film *A Movie* (1958), which juxtaposed footage from B-movies, newsreels and soft-core pornography: Conner "mixes" surfing footage or the image of a girl in a bikini, for example, with filmic fragments of an atomic explosion, in turn rendering the meaning of each dangerously equivocal. Such a practice can be seen as specifically experimental -- an attempt to subvert or play with meanings through juxtaposition, to subject the filmic fragment to various combinations and edits in order to excavate its latent potential.

For Bourriaud, the act of appropriation or postproduction is a way of productively or even critically inhabiting the conditions of capitalist culture, in a similar way to how Conner (and others) hijack specific filmic tropes in order to construct new assemblages. Bourriaud argues that the "ecstatic consumer of the eighties is fading out in favour of an intelligent and potentially subversive consumer: the user of forms" (Bourriaud, 2002: 39). Rather than simply passively and unquestioningly receiving the endless consumer products and constructed images of the capitalist regime, for Bourriaud the task is one of how to put them to use. He argues:

> It is a matter of seizing all the codes of culture, all the forms of everyday life, the works of global patrimony and making them function. To learn how to use forms … is above all to know how to make them one's own, to inhabit them (Bourriaud, 2002: 18).

This notion of "seizing" the object differs from the position advocated by Verwoert, for example, for whom the appropriated object should be "called forth" -- invoked rather than seized. However, the notion of seizure determinably emphasises the site of the present as a space of political agency where a decision is actively made to appropriate and in turn "interpret" an existing object from the past. Whilst Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's work does have a quality of séance and of the invocation of spectres, it is perhaps more useful to consider its politics of recuperation in more active or self-conscious terms. In his use of the term "seizing", Bourriaud perhaps builds on earlier models of scavenging such as Siegfried Kracauer's conception of the filmmaker as rag picker or gleaner. In *Oh, Man* recurring images of scavengers and gleaners, perhaps also refer self-referentially to the reclamation activities of the artists themselves. Reclamation is always a mode of interpretation or diversion. Bourriaud states:

> To use an object is necessarily to interpret it. To use a product is to betray its concept. To read, to view, to envision a work is to know how to divert it: use is an act of micropirating that constitutes postproduction (Bourriaud, 2002: 24).

Here, Bourriaud in turn appropriates the tenor of Michel de Certeau's concept of "creative consumption", the invisible and often unexplored ways in which individuals use "the products imposed by a dominant economic order" (De Certeau,1984: xiii). Rather than focusing on the "proper" or intended use of a consumer product, De Certeau suggests that we should instead attend to what the cultural consumer "makes" or "does" whilst they are perceived to be using it -- what is in fact "made of" a given situation. Both Bourriaud and De Certeau suggest that "consumption" has the capacity to be harnessed as a mode of production, perhaps even with the constitutive capacity to resist or subvert the terms of the capitalist systems whose products it consumes. In these terms, it is possible to assert that the act of appropriation not only functions critically as a site of critique or of revelation, but also might have the capacity to be productive of new assemblages, new experiences, even new forms of cultural memory.

Alison Landsberg argues that a form of production -- a progressive politics -- has the potential to emerge within the very terms set by the capitalist regimes of consumerism and mass culture. For Landsberg, certain forms of film have the potential to produce an affective rupture (or prosthetic memory) through which the habitually desensitised and alienated conditions of contemporary global capitalism might become challenged or disrupted. The need for a "new" form of memory politics emerges in response to the "unprecedented movement of people across the globe" (Landsberg, 2003: 146) brought about through forces including industrialisation, modernisation, globalisation, migration and exile, which in turn have radically ruptured or collapsed "traditional modes of cultural, ethnic and racial memory" (Landsberg, 2003: 145). At the same time, new technologies of memory and commodification have opened up new ways in which "visual

memories" might enter into circulation. Rather than strictly lamenting the impact of technology on both mnemonic and lived experience, Landsberg is interested in the positive potentiality offered by technology as a site and mode of memory making. She argues that the apparatus of mass cultural technologies make possible what she describes as a radical form of "prosthetic memory" with the capacity to both redeem and re-politicise the past, simultaneously releasing it from its servitude to the specificities of time and place and enabling it to be re-activated in other contexts. Landsberg suggests that the impact of filmic technologies upon memory might encourage a more empathetic understanding outside of an individual's immediate sensorial realm of experience. Cinema and mass cultural technologies, she asserts, are capable of developing "imagined communities" in which a transitory but shared social framework is created for and between different individuals who would otherwise occupy little geographical or cultural affinity, where "film (can be) imagined as an instrument with the power to 'suture' viewers into pasts they have not lived" (Landsberg, 2004: 14). In the space of the cinema, individuals construct a "portable, fluid and non-essentialist form of memory" (Landsberg, 2004:18), which is "neither purely individual nor entirely collective but emerge(s) at the interface of individual and collective experience" (Landsberg, 2004:19). Here, Landsberg argues that, "The person does not simply apprehend a historical narrative but takes on a more personal, deeply felt memory" which "has the ability to shape that person's subjectivity and politics" (Landsberg, 2004: 2).

Working on and through the body to create sensuous rather than purely scopic encounters, Landsberg's definition of prosthetic memories is underscored by a sense of their interchangeability and exchangeability; their use-value as commodified forms. Memory becomes a form of prosthetic that affords its "user" a closeness or proximity to hitherto inaccessible perspectives on both past and present. However, in a similar manner to Verwoert's model of appropriation, the prosthetic memory can only ever be borrowed, never wholly owned. Landsberg states that such memories could be read in Etienne Balibar's terms as "universal property". Balibar questions, "whether there are 'objects' that by nature cannot be appropriated, or more precisely that can be appropriated but not totally possessed" (Balibar, 1996: 205/6). Landsberg suggests that the "prosthetic memory" is one such object, which can never be owned, only shared. In these terms, the prosthetic memory is not a lifeless appendage or mask which is merely borrowed or inhabited, but is invested with its own agency or urgency. It is not simply talked through but also wishes to talk back. As Landsberg suggests, prosthetic memories are "not capsules of meaning that spectators swallow wholesale but are the grounds on which social meanings are negotiated, contested and sometimes constructed" (Landsberg, 2004: 21). She argues that prosthetic memories make possible a form of discursive encounter, based upon, rather than assimilating difference. Drawing on the ideas of Emmanuel Levinas, Landsberg asserts this ethical or empathetic connection is based on the "recognition of the profound difference and unknowability of the other, and a simultaneous sense of commitment and responsibility toward him/her even in the face of such differences" (Landsberg, 2003: 146/7). She suggests that whilst sympathy is based on a "presumption of sameness" (Landsberg, 2003: 146/7) -- an act of imperialising or colonising the feelings of another -- the experience of empathy

has a "cognitive component […] an intellectual coming-to-terms with the other's circumstances" (Landsberg, 2003: 147).

Landsberg's model of prosthetic memory appears to operate somewhere between the Verwoert / Derrida articulation of borrowing as a form of reciprocal possession and invocation and the Bourriaud / De Certeau paradigm of appropriation as "creative consumption" or postproduction (a practice of re-use and sharing). Hers is a useful construct through which to approach work by artists such as Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi because it (in a similar manner to Dyer) identifies a critical function for affect within the act of appropriation or pastiche, in turn demonstrating how "self-consciousness and emotional expression can co-exist, healing one of the great rifts in Western aesthetics and allowing us to contemplate the possibility of feeling historically" (Dyer, 2007: 4). By bringing the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi into the proximity of writing by theorists such as Landsberg, the intention is to explore whether the work might be capable of provoking the empathetic connection (and new forms of collective memory) that Landsberg suggests is made possible within feature film. However, Landsberg specifically identifies the process of cinematic identification as the means through which a form of prosthetic memory is made possible through the technologies of mass culture, the vehicle through which film operates affectively. Through our identification with a particular screen character, she suggests that, "we are enabled, for a short period of time, to see through different eyes, and think beyond our own social position" (Landsberg, 2003: 155). Character identification is part of the narrative order of filmmaking, which practices such as Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's often attempt to resist, even critique. Work such as *Oh, Man* rejects the stranglehold of linear or coherent narrative and its signifying regime; it is of an anti-narrative order. Any attempt to identify with the "characters" on screen proves futile; they remain mute and incommunicable.

Whilst practices such as that of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi might not produce those forms of cinematic identification capable of making possible a form of prosthetic memory or progressive politics, there are certainly alternative cinematic devices operating at an affective level within the work. Sound in particular functions as a dominant affective force; bespoke scores carefully manipulate how the viewer should respond to the visual material encountered. A wailing lamentation brings an emotive and melancholy intensity to selected scenes whilst at other times sustained silence leaves no guidance to how the images should be read, the absence of one sensory dimension serves to magnify the intensity and awkwardness of the gaze. Silence creates a vacuum, producing moments of quiet memorial against which to contemplate nothing except the pain of others. Sound is more overtly affective or indeed signifying but it is in these silences that the work really becomes charged. Rather than the viewer connecting with the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi through a process of identification or signification, certain types of image and the sensation of witnessing become experienced purely at a level of affect, where the viewer is not encouraged to identify with the images as such, but rather experience them as emotional or even shocking "blows" to the body. *Oh, Man* has an urgency and insistence that is both unsettling and mesmerising. At times the viewer might experience a guilty absorption in the macabre details, at other times feel numbed by the relentless exposure to the material in betrayal of the gravitas of the content.

Watching the film unfold necessitates an emotional or affective engagement as much as one of the critical faculties. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's critique of the supposed neutrality of the original footage can not be encountered wholly at an intellectual level, but instead seems to be wanting more from its audience -- a visceral response, a response performed through the body. The work functions as an anatomical inventory of the war-damaged body manipulated and edited in order to for it to be seen with fresh eyes. The artists try to create an affective experience in which the atrocity of war is encountered beyond the de-sensitised or anaestheticised glance habitually afforded to newsreel footage. Their work attempts to make us look again, look harder, look differently.

In the work of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi a suturing of different experiences takes place, yet it is one in which the seams remain critically visible. Here, the viewer is not spellbound by the illusory surface of a narrative order; rather their engagement is transformed by the discontinuous presence of archival footage. Reynolds asserts that the presence of found footage "requires the viewer to become an archivist, transforming a passive state of perception into an active process of restoration, by piecing together new meaning drawn from personal memory, association and imagination" (Reynolds, 2006: 22/23). Here, she claims, "it is possible for the sense of anxiety engendered by fragmentation to co-exist with other more intimate evocations of memory" (Reynolds, 2006: 23). For her the specifically "anti-narrative stance" and disparity between the images' content and the way that such content becomes ruptured through the editing process within the work of artists like Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi, produces a form of self-conscious attention, which "precipitates a heightened awareness of the underlying mechanisms and apparatus of the cinematic experience" (Reynolds, 2006: 17). Reynolds argues that the way that found footage is used within the work of contemporary artists -- such as Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi perhaps -- might be read as a "subversive realisation of Eisenstein's theory of dialectic montage, where the clash of two conflicting images create between them a new meaning" (Reynolds, 2006: 16). Certainly, in their editing Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi abruptly cut between incongruous images, disregarding continuity in favour of a form of overtonal or associational montage which they use to amplify the emotional potential of their selected footage, or a form of intellectual montage is used for example in their intercutting of images of dead animals with those of individuals maimed by war. Editing becomes a tool of insinuation, a device for provoking new meaning at the point where the pieces of footage meet. Film theorist Walter Murch has described how filmic editing can elicit an affective response (2001). He argues that the rapid cuts and edits in film might echo the rapid blinking of the eye associated with an affective experience. Rapid or abrupt forms of editing might then encourage or affect a more experiential encounter with the screen content beyond the purely visual spectacle or narrative content of the film. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi juxtapose moments of dialectic and affective editing, with episodes of decelerated motion or extremely enduring static shots, where the archival material is slowed down to the speed of relentless and unflinching attention. At one point within *Oh, Man* an extended and relentless length of footage presents a portrait of a black soldier grinning to reveal the horrendous extent of his facial injuries. In another scene, a gruesome eye operation is observed silently with unflinching persistence, provoking an involuntary reflex desire in the viewer to close their eyes or turn away from the ordeal. The action

of turning away or refusing to look, and the metaphors of "shielding one's eyes" or "turning a blind eye" have become synonymous with ignorance and with social or political irresponsibility. The work does not allow for such a gesture, however, as its images remain too long on the screen. Its visual persistence demands scrutiny, the images -- like a painful memory -- refuse to go away or be made to disappear.

In one sense, it might be possible to assert that the appropriation of found archival film footage within experimental filmic practices such as that of Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi produce a visual experience that operates analogously to a form of memory or traumatic experience. Here, the use of postproduction techniques produce a dreamlike -- or indeed nightmarish -- montage in which certain images appear like fragments whilst others seem insoluble or impossible to erase from memory. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's borrowing and re-activation of archival footage within anti-narrative film works such as *Oh, Man* produces both a rupturing strategy for revealing and decoding the striated conditions of representation, at the same time as building affective frameworks within which new empathetic connections might emerge. Their work critiques or challenges archival and documentary modes of representation by re-assembling their material into new narratives, which in turn might be capable of producing an affective or empathetic response. At the interstice of debates around appropriation and the archive it is possible to witness a conceptual renegotiation of meaning in play, within which the act of cultural borrowing has become articulated (once again) in re-politicised or ethical terms -- whether as a form of invocation, sharing, or prosthetic memory -- as a strategy through which to develop empathetic forms of meaning making and cultural memory for an increasingly fragmented world.

References

Agamben, Giorgio (1989/1999) *The Archive and Testimony in Remnants of Auschwitz*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, New York: Zone Books.

Balibar, Etienne (1996) What is a Politics of the Rights of Man, in *Masses, Classes, Ideas*, trans. James Swenson. New York: Routledge, pp.205-226.

Barthes, Roland (1957) *Mythologies*, New York: Vintage Press.

Barthes, Roland (1968), Death of the Author, in *Image Music Text* (1977) trans. Stephen Heath, London: Fontana Press, pp.142 - 148.

Bourriaud, Nicholas (2002) *Postproduction*. New York: Lukas and Sternberg.

Buchloh, Benjamin H. D (1999), Gerard Richter's Atlas: The Anomic Archive, *October* 88 (Spring) pp.117-145.

Connarty, Jane (2006) Introduction, in *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*. Bristol: Picture This Moving Image, pp. 6-11.

Crimp, Douglas (1979) Pictures, *October*, 8 (Spring), pp. 75-88.

De Certeau, Michel (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Derrida, Jacques (1994) *Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, The Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf. New York and London: Routledge.

Dyer, Richard (2007) *Pastiche*. New York and London: Routledge.

Evans, David (ed.) (2009), *Appropriation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Farquharson, Alex and Andrea Schlieker (eds.) (2005)*British Art Show 6*, London: Hayward Gallery Publishing.

Fisher, Morgan and Mark Nash, Lewandoska and Cummings, Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian, Elizabeth McAlpine (et al) (2006) unpublished presentations at ''Anticipating the Past: Artists: Archive: Film'', London: Tate Modern.

Foster, Hal (2004) An Archival Impulse, *October*, 110 (Fall), pp.3 - 22.

Foucault, Michel (1969/1972) ''The Historical A priori and the Archive'' in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan Sheridan Smith, London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, Michel (1975) Film and Popular Memory, in *Radical Philosophy*, 11 (Summer) pp. 24-29.

Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri (2001) *Empire*. Harvard University Press.

Huyssen, Andreas (2001) Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia, in Arjun Appadurai (ed), *Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp.55-77.

Huyssen, Andreas (1995) *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. New York and London: Routledge.

Jameson, Fredric (1988) Postmodernism and Consumer Society, in E Ann Kaplan (ed.), *Postmodernism and its Discontents*, London: Verso.

Landsberg, Alison, (2003) Prosthetic Memory: The Ethics and Politics of Memory in an Age of Mass Culture, in Paul Grainge (ed.) *Memory and Popular Film*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp.144-161.

Landsberg, Alison (2004) *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lanyon, Josephine (2006) Foreword, in *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*. Bristol: Picture This Moving Image, pp. 4-5.

Merewether, Charles (ed.) (2009) *The Archive*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Murch, Walter (2001) *In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing*, Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

Nora, Pierre (1989) Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire, in *Representations* 26 (Spring) pp7-24.

Reynolds, Lucy (2006) Outside the Archive: The World in Fragments, in *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*. Bristol: Picture This Moving Image, pp. 14-23.

Sutton, John, (1998) *Philosophy and Memory Traces*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tan, Erika (2006) 'Respect Des Fonds' in *Ghosting: Thge Role of the Archive within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video*. Bristol: Picture This Moving Image, pp.62-71.

Websites

Verwoert, Jan, (2006) conference paper, Tate Triennial. Available at: http://www.tate.org.uk/onlineevents/webcasts/tate_triennial_symposium_2006/ default.jsp [Accessed 14th May 2009]

Verwoert, Jan (2007) Living with Ghosts: From Appropriation to Invocation in Contemporary Art, in *Art & Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*. 1, (2), (Summer) Available at:
http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v1n2/verwoert.html [Accessed 14th May 2009]

Filmography

Balkan Inventory / Inventario balcanico. 2000. Dir. Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian.

The City of the Future. 2005. Dir. Patrick Keiller.

Coal Face. 1935. Dir. Alberto Cavalcanti. GPO Film Unit.

The Drifters. 1929. Dir. John Grierson. New Era Films.

From the Pole to the Equator / Dal Polo all'Equatore. 1986. Dir. Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian.

A Movie. 1958. Dir. Bruce Conner. Canyon Cinema.

Oh, Man / Oh, Uomo. 2004. Dir. Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian.

On the Heights All is Peace / Su tutte le vetta è pace. 1998. Dir. Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian.

Prisoners of War / Prigionieri delle Guerra. 1995. Dir. Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian.

Screen Tests. 2005. Dir. Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska.

Trade Tattoo. 1937. Dir. Len Lye. GPO Film Unit.

Music Videos and Reused Footage

By Sérgio Dias Branco, University of Kent

Music videos, like many other art works, are the result of a creative process of image creation that sometimes does not start from scratch. At times this process relies on visual material previously produced that is reused and recombined. The use and combination of pre-existing film footage is an example of this, an appropriation with the purpose of achieving various effects and of conveying different meanings. Such footage may be used as *stock footage* to contextualise or to provide a frame of reference for a discourse -- a common use in documentaries and television news. It may also be utilised as *found footage* to decontextualise -- a utilisation that has been associated with avant-garde film. Found footage is connected with the placement of images in a framework at odds with their original aim and context. It is this disparity that opens the possibility for the creation of novel signification. This kind of footage inherits its name from the usage of objects as ready-mades -- such as Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, a ceramic urinal that the artist signed "R. Mutt" and displayed as a work of art for the first time in 1917. Just like found objects, found footage may be either searched on purpose or found by chance; two complementary ways of construing the word "found". Within the history of art, the genealogy that includes Duchamp makes something else clear: what is *found* is not merely the object or the footage, but a new significance.

The following discussion will be centred on the use of found footage in music videos. It will also deal with cases in which the reframing of footage is not as radical -- or not completely in conflict with its original frame of reference. Consequently, the general term "reused footage" is more appropriate. It is able to encompass any type of reworking of images that already exist.

Almost no attention has been paid to the relation between reused footage and music videos. Carol Vernallis' *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context* (2003) successfully investigates the conventions of music video, but does not once mention the use of pre-existing footage. It does not, because this reuse is unusual and unconventional, an exception instead of a convention, and therefore it lies beyond the scope of the volume. Yet there is a theoretical connection to be made between music video and reused footage, which from the outset is a good justification for the study of their relation. The music always pre-exists the music video -- even when the video is not simply a promotional tool produced by a record label. In a similar fashion, reused footage already exists and is used after it has been sought or simply discovered. Such a theoretical claim does not fit into Vernallis's broader research project, but it is undeniably an aesthetic consequence of the ontology of music videos. Music videos are a conjunction of images and borrowed sounds, and the images may be appropriated from other works. Music may be defined as borrowed sounds, sometimes altered or supplemented, because they are used and then returned as part of an audiovisual work, a music video, usually presented under the name of the music artist. This feature is made salient in music videos that reutilise and recombine

images. The distinct forms that this reutilisation and recombination take are the focus of this essay. Instead of approaching music video as a uniform form, my analysis will consider music videos as plural, diverse works.

Despite some academic interest in music video, its reuse of footage has remained nearly unexamined. For that fact alone, Jason Middleton's essay "Audio-Vision of Found-Footage Film and Video" (2007: 59-82) is worth consideration. The author draws on Michel Chion's concept of *audio-vision* (1994: xxv-xxvi), a mode of cognition in which visual and aural perceptions are mutually influenced and transformed. He remarks that this happens in works like Julie Becker's *Suburban Legend* (1999) that screens *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) substituting its whole soundtrack with runs of Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*. Becker's video pairs a motion picture and a music album, two sources that were not originally intended to be audio-visually joined. Middleton argues that the resultant work causes a dual perception, generating two simultaneous and incongruous interpretations that add or create meanings that the two separate works do not express. According to him, some music videos create a similar effect. However, he does not devote his attention to music videos that *actually* use found footage, but to those that elicit audio-vision through newly produced images. In his analysis, found footage provides an analogical and conceptual framework. It is obvious however that a twofold perception and interpretation may also be achieved through found images -- in fact, more easily so. The value of Middleton's contribution to my discussion comes exactly from how he analyses music videos that subtly generate an effect that found footage works commonly produce. Indirectly, he therefore elucidates the possible relationship between music video and found footage. My approach will be more direct, tackling the reuse of footage in music videos as a concrete topic.

Middleton summarises that the music videos under his scrutiny:

> function similarly to found-footage films, but only at the level of the soundtrack. They do not allow for a palimpsestic reinscription of a second layer of meaning on the image track, but we do get a form of dual perception in relation to the song. We are able to simultaneously perceive the song's possible meanings both in conjunction with the image and independently of them. (2007: 81)

Radiohead's "Karma Police" (1997) is one of his examples. We are invited to read it dually because the song and the images are often at variance. The video does not visually illustrate the lyrics and at times Thom Yorke's lip-syncing is suspended. Middleton's detailed analysis is insightful in the way it lays out the enriched meanings suggested by videos with these structural characteristics. Relying on Andrew Goodwin, he sees them as instances of *amplification* (see Goodwin, 1992: 87-88), in which images add new layers of meaning to the words of the song. These ideas suggest further considerations. We do not interpret the music and the images as juxtaposed yet unrelated elements in music videos like "Karma Police". After all, we are invariably aware that the video was made after the song had been produced -- most of the time, with the intention of advertising the music so that more CDs are bought and more concerts sell out. We may not know a lot about the production of music videos, but we know

this much. As a consequence, we are conscious of how videos*intentionally* construct particular relations between music and images, even when these relations are as oblique as in "Karma Police". Thus, it is more accurate to say that, in a case like this, the music and the images are read, not as juxtaposed yet unrelated, but as related by juxtaposition. They are no longer separable within this one of a kind work, even though their outer origins are. Music and images are seen as parts of the unique work in which they are mixed.

The knowledge that music videos are produced after (and based on) the musical piece as well as the subsequent acknowledgement of their intentional nature is crucial regarding the reutilisation of footage. This knowledge and acknowledgement are complemented with the recognition that all or some of the images already existed before the production. Middleton's examples show that dual perception may be elicited without the reuse of footage. In contrast, this double awareness of the pre-existence of the music *and* of the images is specific to music videos with reused footage. It is an effect that found footage films frequently seek to prompt. As William C. Wees remarks:

> [w]hether they preserve the footage in its original form or present it in new and different ways, they invite us to recognize it as found footage, as recycled images, and due to that self-referentiality, they encourage a more analytical reading (which does not necessarily exclude a greater aesthetic appreciation) than the footage originally received. (1993: 11)

Understanding *montage* broadly, as the selection and arrangement of images, Wees distinguishes between three methods of found footage montage*. Compilation* is associated with reality, documentary film, and realism; *collage* with image, avant-garde film, and modernism; and *appropriation* with simulacrum, music video, and postmodernism. Michael Jackson's "Man in the Mirror" (1988) is to him a representative example of appropriation and post-modern superficiality. Footage of the Bikini atomic tests that took place in 1946 is used in the music video to mark the key change of the song when violence and hopelessness give way to peace and hope. The atomic explosion is "simply one image in a stream of recycled images presented with little, if any, concern for their historical specificity -- let alone logical or even chronological connection" (Wees, 1993: 44). For Wees, collage also decontextualises images, but promotes an analytical and critical attitude towards them that appropriation altogether avoids. He refers only in passing to the emotional resonance of Jackson's music (ibid.), but disregards the personal tone of the track. Goodwin, for his part, points out the disjuncture between lyrics and images in the video, concluding that the images of collective protest unintentionally undermine the lyrics (1992: 88). The private mood of the song is fundamental to make sense of a video that bridges the individual and the collective creating an opportunity for the self-examination mentioned in the lyrics, "I'm starting with the man in the mirror / I'm asking him to change his ways". The video confronts us with emblematic images that only regain significance when re-examined in the context of the song, connecting what is apparently disconnected. Activists like Martin Luther, Jr. are placed beside group demonstrations that can only be actualised by individuals acting together to achieve shared goals. Wees's analysis is not attentive to these details. More generally, the division into three methodologies derives from what are now over-

simplifications about relationships between signifier/signified, modes of cultural production, and aesthetic premises/practices. Within this framework, music video is viewed as invariably tied to post-modern ideas -- following, for instance, E. Ann Kaplan (1987). This view that sees MTV as a synonym for music video was challenged with vigour in 1993, the same year when Wees published his study on recycled images. *Sound and Vision*, a reader edited by Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, and Lawrence Grossberg, proposed a more thorough historical, sociological, and musicological approach that highlighted the complexity and variety of music videos.

The practices of reusing footage in music videos can be divided into three: montage, assemblage, and collage. This is not a direct response but an alternative to Wees's taxonomy -- specifically devised with music videos in mind. It will become clear that this author provides many valuable insights into the employment of found footage. However, his remarks on the three groups make it clear that he does not separate this classification from an evaluative scale with avant-garde (and collage) as the highest point and music video (and appropriation) as the lowest. My categorisation is indebted to Wees's, but aims at being more precise -- namely in how montage is defined. The identification of these three operations is the result of an effort to describe rather than to evaluate. This framework may be applied to make evaluative claims, but those would be claims about the value of particular uses of these practices not about the practices themselves. Pointing out the differences between the montage, the assemblage, and the collage of reused footage in music videos is the main purpose of what follows.

Montage

The aim of montage is to form a continuous whole out of separate footage. Images are selected, edited, and pieced together to create a connection between them that can be narrative or conceptual. True to its essence and Soviet origins, montage is based on a dialectic connection between images -- they collide to create meaning and to convey concepts. As pointed out before, Wees uses this term in a looser way. For him, it encompasses the processes of compilation, collage, and appropriation. He comments that this method exceeds the realm of avant-garde and that "the conjunction of montage and found footage also appears in other, more widely recognized forms, such as conventional compilation films and, at the opposite extreme, an increasing number of music videos" (1993: 33). As his words on "Man in the Mirror" demonstrate, Wees sees the popular use of montage as superficial because it is not critically informed or politically challenging (ibid.: 5). A more comprehensive knowledge of music video reveals that this is not always the case. The montage of reused images in many videos of the rap group Public Enemy is critically observant and politically thought-provoking -- "Fight the Power" (1989) is an admirable instance of this. Furthermore, as the unofficial Cat Power music video "Maybe Not" (2005) will show, music video is mostly but not necessarily a popular form.

Inspired by the lyrics and the singing of the song, "Maybe Not" constructs a narrative of a fall through various falls taken from various films, from well-known classics to contemporary blockbusters. The video explores the evocative quality

of the words that the singer sings: "We can all be free / Maybe not in words / Maybe not with a look". It associates this desire for freedom not simply with suicide, but with a jump towards death from on high that involves determination and slowness. The leap coincides with the first "maybe not" as Charlyn's voice expands and gains momentum. The song sounds like a slow elegy: she prolongs the "not" in every chorus and this is matched with the suspended fall -- a kind of release -- which is always cut before the collision. Frederik Geisler writes that "Pietsch visualizes the ambivalence between the terrible yearning for death and despairing liberation [...] the ambivalence of freedom" (2007). The original images were not cropped or distorted to fit the same aspect ratio. They preserve their shape and that serves as evidence that this is a work made of different pieces from different film works. The images are independent from the sounds, but they have been arranged and related. They retain their shapes and proportions, but the editing looks for graphic matches to generate a sense of fluidity of movement from one clip to the next. The division of the video further enhances this fluid movement. The first part shows the jump. But the second begins with the "yee-haw" from *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964). It is not the first time that the sound of a film clip is heard. In the beginning, before the song starts, the whistle of the wind and the man's respiration from the final sequence of *Shin jingi no hakaba* (*Graveyard of Honor*, 2002) function as a narrative introduction before his leap. The enthusiastic and exuberant "yee-haw" has another function: it celebrates the free fall that continues for some seconds until the video begins showing the crash of bodies -- from *Oldboy* (2003), among others. The replay of the opening clip, without interrupting the man's fall, marks the points from which the music video mixes the soundtrack of the films with the music track. The sounds made by the protagonist of *Die Unberührbare* (*No Place to Go*, 2000) are heard throughout: she climbs to the window, assumes a fetal position and then lets go of the sill. This is followed by a shot from *Lethal Weapon* (1987) captured from inside a car as a falling body smashes the top of the vehicle. The link between these two last shots from different films is one of cause-effect, a classical narrative pattern that closes the video violently -- yet curiously without showing the body.

In "Maybe Not", the German avant-garde video artist Oliver Pietsch uses montage to build the semblance of a narrative -- from the initial jump to the final collision, with a midsection that continually reiterates the fall. As Wees recalls, "Investing disparate shots with a kind of pseudo-continuity is one way of transforming found footage" (1993: 14). Another way is blending reused with original footage. Peter Schilling's "Major Tom (Coming Home)" (1983) recreates a space flight using footage of real space explorations. The song carries on the adventures of Major Tom, a depressed astronaut that first appeared in David Bowie's "Space Oddity" in 1969. The lyrics narrate Major Tom's fatal accident -- and the video closes with the superimposition of a falling space capsule over Schilling, gloomily backlit and with open arms. The space trip sequence is intertwined with images of the singer and cars -- linking two technological creations, space shuttles and automobiles, which inspire awe because they can take us beyond the boundaries of our natural confinements. The production design evokes the American car culture of the 1950s, the decade when spatial exploration officially began with the launching of Sputnik 1 from the USSR. The connection is therefore more intellectual than narrative -- intellectual, in the Eisensteinian sense of

a meaning that emerges from the combination of shots and that cannot be conveyed by them separately.

Assemblage

In assemblage, images are brought together based on their commonalties. This is similar to what Wees calls compilation. But for him compilation and also collage are types of montage. My definitions of these practices, by contrast, describe them as distinct from montage. In assemblage, the footage is not simply gathered or made to fit together like in montage: it fits together because of its origins and characteristics. Music videos that employ assemblage compile diverse images around a common theme, which is often the music artist. Bruce Springsteen's "Born to Run" (1987) is a case in point.

"Born to Run" is the title song of the album that Springsteen released in 1975. It was launched as a single in the same year, six years before the inception of MTV. After the Born in the USA Tour, a music video of the song was finally broadcast in 1987. It features a live performance from the singer with the E Street Band intercut with clips of other moments of the tour. The video starts with images from another concert with the singer moving his raised arms down, over the grand opening chords. Short sequences from other concerts return during the second instrumental bridge that includes a notable saxophone solo. They reappear, briefly, in the guitar solo of the next bridge. This pattern avoids the insertion of shots from other performances when Springsteen is singing, but the last part differs from this scheme. The last verse-refrain is the only one that includes images from multiple concerts. Musically, this closing segment is the climax of the song, with an extended vocal section after the refrain, and the video celebrates this visually, assembling images from various concerts. The footage is thus something in between archival and found footage. The images that are synchronous with this particular performance of the song are contextualised -- a kind of archival footage. Although the context of the music tour does not change, the images from other tour performances were not shot with the intention to be later combined with the synchronous images -- a kind of found footage. The shots of the second group are read in a new context that changes their status as recordings of particular moments. They come from different songs with different rhythms, but the video finds a similar energy and vigour of expression in these stage performances as well as in the rendering of "Born to Run". This is what links these diverse images.

The reuse of images in this music video is better understood when compared with another one produced in the following year. This second video is the record of an acoustic version of "Born to Run" that Springsteen performed during the Tunnel of Love Express tour. He sings alone with a guitar and a harmonica. The song is rendered in a slower mode and its tone becomes more sentimental, but not mawkish. The exuberant images from multiple concerts integrated in the first video would therefore be out of place. The way the first video reuses and recombines various images and moments is also related with the various contributions on stage from members of the band -- hence, for instance, the emphasis given to Clarence Clemons's saxophone solo. In the second video, Springsteen performs the song alone and the video preserves the sense of uniqueness of that

rendition by not averting our attention from that event, that performance. The first music video expresses the energy of rock music through the lively performances from the singer and the band of a song that became exemplary of exactly that powerful vibrancy. The second records a unique and intimate rendering of "Born to Run".

Assemblage is most commonly used in commemorative and compiled music videos included in video anthologies. More rarely, a video may provide a background for a flow of images from different eras of a music artist's career. Michael Jackson's "HIStory (Tony Moran remix)" (1997), for example, is not simply made of clips edited together from Jackson's musical and visual history. A girl lies down and puts on an electronic visor and headphones. The images of Jackson's career are introduced in a myriad of projections and screens situated in a celebratory music party that the girl sees and hears. Then, they are directly alternated with the shots of the party, and they lose their status as past images placed within present images.

Collage

Collage is a procedure that reuses miscellaneous and contrasting images that are chosen exactly because of how strikingly they differ. The footage is usually arranged in a frisky, playful manner. Wees contends that collage is the quintessential modern form, incorporating "disparate materials found, rather than made, by the artist," and dispensing "with long-respected principles of coherence and organic unity in art" (1993: 46). This is an accurate description. Although he does not make the distinction, these are also the features that distinguish collage from montage, which does aim for organic unity. New Order's "Turn" (2006) is one example of collage.

"Turn" was created by Thomas Draschan, an Austrian experimental video artist. It is an unofficial music video given that it was not produced or commissioned by London Recordings, the record label of the group. The video was made available on New Order's official website for a while, but it was later on taken off the internet. Nevertheless, it is undeniably a music video of the song -- and it was as such that it entered the competition for the MuVi-Award of the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen. "Turn" is a lively non-narrative work. The images are repeated and edited according to the metrics and forms of the music. The fragments of this collage establish visual motifs (the turning from someone) from key ideas of the lyrics (the chorus begins with "Turn your eyes from me"). The words mention leaves and a girl is shown turning a leaf in her hand. Later, an elephant carrying someone next to a hill and a naked girl swimming underwater accompany the phrase "across the hills and over the sea". This is close to what Goodwin disparagingly calls illustration in music video (1992: 86-87), when there is a literal or figurative synchrony between lyrics and visuals. However, this is part of a formal strategy that is not purely illustrative. Note how during the instrumental part, when the guitars substitute the voice, the images of a man and a boy in a moving car are suddenly intercut with shots from a military aircraft and of army officers -- as if these representations of authority existed *beneath* the first. The playfulness of the video is revealed in its conflation of an assortment of materials -- the use of animation is especially unexpected. It is

thus difficult to delimit its use of reused footage to a single coherent idea. "Turn" constantly turns, changing its course.

When discussing juxtaposition, Wees claims that "[t]he nature and degree of 'complexity and layering' depend upon two factors: the kind of images used and way they are juxtaposed" (1993: 12). Juxtaposition is characteristic of collage, a practice that arranges images to achieve a contrasting effect. Coldcut's "More Beats + Pieces" (1997) is a further example of collage in which reused footage is combined with images produced for the music video on purpose. The video gives visual form to the mix of electronic samples that comprise the music cut together by DJs Matt Black and Jonathan More. The musicians are depicted as two computer-generated round figures within a succession of mixed images selected because of their links with the music rhythm (drums and dance), their accompanying sounds (television commercials and programmes), and their impact (car crash tests and implosions). The jolting and fragmentary collage mirrors the disjoined mixture of the music track.

Reuse and Recombination

Given the lack of significant scholarship on this subject, my objective has been merely to consider the variety of reuses of footage in music videos. These three practices of reusing footage in music videos, montage, assemblage, and collage, were not defined solely by the combination of footage from different origins. My stress was on *purpose* rather than simply on *form*. The intentional formal structure of "Maybe Not" is more accurately described as opting for montage instead of assemblage. It may be argued that the footage fits and has visual and thematic commonalities -- like in assemblage. The artist did assemble various scenes of people falling, but the video rounds off the sequence with an inaugural plunge and a final crash. In addition, it must be pointed out that music videos may follow more than just one of the three practices. Since these are compatible methods and not irreconcilable types, they can be combined within the same video.

Wees's work on found footage was a starting point for this discussion, but it had to be reassessed. He talks about recycled images whereas the music videos analysed here were characterised as works that reuse (and, as a result, recombine) images. *Reused images* is a characterisation that does not imply an evaluative stance on them. *Recycled images*, as Wees defines and studies them, point towards another approach. Found footage is equated with waste that has been processed and converted into something critically valuable and politically meaningful. In other words, the meaning is not just new, but also of higher cultural value. However, the ascription of critical value and political meaning depends on the understanding of the images and their sources. These images played complex functions before their reuse and these functions are not simply supplanted by their role as part of the work that reuses them. Yet Wees believes that his point of view is warranted because:

> recycled images call attention to themselves as images, as products of the image-producing industries of film and television, and therefore as pieces of the vast and intricate mosaic of information, entertainment, and per-

suasion that constitute the media-saturated environment -- or many would say, postmodern – life. (1993: 32)

This position seems to stem from a bias against mass art forms that include popular film, television drama, as well as music videos. Wees over-generalises about these forms without the same serious attention that he devotes to avant-garde art [1]. It is undeniable that nowadays images circulate and become un-wanted and useless in an instant. In this sense, Wees's emphasis on *recycling* instead of *reusing* may seem justified. Yet the latter is a less disparaging and more neutral term. It is also more insightful regarding music videos and more in line with the present. It makes clear that music videos that reuse footage assert and emphasise practices related with their nature -- they reuse, if not pre-existing images, at least pre-existing music. It also reflects how images are re-peatedly utilised and shared through the internet.

As stated by Wees, there is a spectrum of use of found footage where montage -- editing, for him -- is in the middle, between films that use footage in its en-tirety and films that use footage whose appearance has been altered. This dis-tinction is very useful. These two opposite uses define two kinds of footage, *un-altered* and *altered*. Digital technologies, electronic archives of images, video sharing websites, and personal webpages have made it easier for artists and fans to create and to share music videos. A myriad of fan-made music videos is available on YouTube -- most of them made by synchronising the song with footage from sources like anime films without altering the original editing. Some official music videos already reflect this mode of appropriation, making use of digitally altered images of cult movies. The Chemical Brothers' "Get Yourself High" (2003), for instance, adds digital elements to scenes from the kung fu classic *Shao Lin yi wu dang* (*Two Champions of Shaolin*, 1978) and changes the actors' lip movements so that they lip-synch the song.

There are several examples of reuse and recombination of footage in music vid-eos in the past, but these contemporary trends underline the urgency of study-ing these practices more attentively.

Acknowledgements

Sérgio Dias Branco

Notes

[1] See Carroll, 1998, for a sustained defence of mass art.

References

Carroll, Noël (1998) *A Philosophy of Mass Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chion, Michel (1994) *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* [1990], ed. and trans. C. Gorbman. New York: Columbia University Press.

Frith, Simon, Andrew Goodwin, and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.) (1993) *Sound and Vision: The Music Video Reader*. London: Routledge.

Goodwin, Andrew (1992) *Dancing in the Distraction Factor: Music Television and Popular Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Kaplan, E. A. (1987) *Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism, and Consumer Culture*. London: Methuen.

Middleton, Jason (2007) The Audio-vision of Found-Footage Film and Video, in R. Beebe and J. Middleton (eds.), *Medium Cool: Music Videos from Soundies to Cellphones*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, pp. 59-82.

Vernallis, Carol (2003) *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wees, William C. (1993) *Recycled Images: The Art and Politics*. New York: Anthology Film Archives.

Website

Geisler, Frederik (2007) Maybe Not, *Videonale* 11. Available at: www.videonale.org/247.html?&L=1 [Accessed 15 January 2008].

Filmography

"Born to Run". 1987. [Music video: Bruce Springsteen] Dir. Arthur Rosato. Columbia.

"Born to Run". 1988. [Music video: Bruce Springsteen] Dir. Meiert Avis. Columbia.

Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. 1964. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. Columbia Pictures.

"Fight the Power". 1989. [Music video: Public Enemy] Dir. Spike Lee. Tamla.

"Get Yourself High". 2003. [Music video: The Chemical Brothers] Dir. Joseph Kahn. Virgin.

"HIStory (Tony Moran remix)". 1997. [Music video: Michael Jackson] Dir. Jim Gable. Epic.

"Karma Police". 1997. [Music video: Radiohead] Dir. Jonathan Glazer. Parlophone Records.

Lethal Weapon. 1987. Dir. Richard Donner. Warner Bros.

"Major Tom (Coming Home)". 1983. [Music video: Peter Schilling] Dir. Peter Sinclair. WEA.

"Man in the Mirror". 1988. [Music video: Michael Jackson] Dir. Don Wilson. Epic.

"Maybe Not". 2005. [Music video: Cat Power] By Oliver Pietsch.

"More Beats + Pieces". 1997. [Music video: Coldcut] Dir. Hexstatic (Stuart Warren Hill and Robin Brunson). Ninja Tune.

Oldboy. 2003. Dir. Park Chan-wook. Show East.

Shao Lin yi wu dang (*Two Champions of Shaolin*). 1978. Dir. Cheh Chang. Shaw Brothers.

Shin jingi no hakaba (*Graveyard of Honour*). 2002. Dir. Takashi Miike. Daiei Motion Picture Company.

Suburban Legend. 1999. [Video] By Julie Becker.

"Turn". 2006. [Music video: New Order] By Thomas Draschan.

Unberührbare, *Die* (*No Place to Go*). 2000. Dir. Oskar Roehler. ZDF/Distant Dreams.

Wizard of Oz, *The*. 1939. Dir. Victor Fleming. MGM.

Blank page

Part III:
Modes of Parody and Pastiche

From Cult to Subculture: Reimaginings of Cult Films in Alternative Music Video

Brigid Cherry, St Mary's University College, UK

Shortly after the inception of MTV in 1981 (a significant event that led to the ubiquity of the music video as an adjunct to a popular music track), Richard L. Baxter et al. described the music video as "a contemporary hybrid of rock music and film imagery" (1985: 333). It is interesting that they privilege the filmic image, rather than video or television -- its primary means of exhibition, as comprising the visual element of the music video. As John Mundy (1999) argues, a continuum between different screen and moving image forms is important in understanding the styles and contexts of the music video. He suggests that:

> music video and music television 'make sense' when they are seen as part of a larger continuity, a process of aesthetic, ideological, technological and industrial convergence between popular music and the screen which has been underway throughout the [twentieth] century. From this perspective, music video can be seen as a further development in the visual economy of popular music. (1999: 224)

Thus the music video, for Mundy, is culturally bound up with screen imagery of many kinds, film aesthetics being a large part of this continuum. The music video aesthetic that has developed since the arrival of MTV has also been borrowed by other screen forms and can be seen at work in a range of contemporary cultural texts (Mundy lists cinema, television and advertising). The music video aesthetic is used heavily in film; equally film styles and technical codes are employed in music videos. Such cultural exchanges to and fro between various media means that music video is less a distinct form in its own right than part of a larger body of screen texts. This can include not only visual and narrative conventions but also intertextual references to iconic characters or images, and even plots from specific film narratives. Nevertheless, the music video remains a televisual experience.

Whilst narrative in particular has grown in importance in the music video since the inception of MTV, narrative structure (or plot) is rarely coherent or spatially and temporally well organized. In likening the music video to a cinema of attractions and spectacle, Mundy argues that music video texts evoke rather than tell the story; the narratives are implicit and do not make clear the causal connections that classical narrative cinema, for example, demands (1999: 226). Nonetheless, some form of narrative, even where it is merely suggested or abbreviated, has come to dominate the music video form. In the words of Jim Collins, this entails a "narrativisation of non-narrative discourses" (1989: 120). For E. Ann Kaplan, such narrativisation in the music video exhibits a weak narrative chain: "we never know why certain things happen, or even precisely what *is* happening. We are forced to exist in a non-rational, haphazard universe where we cannot expect any 'closure' of the ordinary kind" (1987: 63). For Kaplan, this means that the music video makes a "gesture towards postmodernism", but

124

such claims for music television as a postmodern form are neither unproblematic nor uncontested. Andrew Goodwin, for example, questions Kaplan's account of the music video since her focus on film and postmodern theory leads to a privileging of the stylistics of the video that overlooks the meaning or tone of lyrics in the analytical process (1993: 47-48). This denies the experiences and the cultural competencies of the fan or the concert-goer. Even whilst postmodern hybridity and fragmentation may remain apparent in the music video, other contextual factors may be at play in the conjunctions of narrativity with lyrics, music and other visual elements. Goodwin, for example, opens up the debate around the "cluster of discourses" evident in MTV's programming and scheduling, thus moving the debate away from the ahistorical and apolitical account of postmodern music television (1993: 63).

This opens up a number of gaps in approaches to the music video that need to be addressed, not least that of what music videos might 'mean' for the audience. Postmodern accounts of music television do not, for example, take into account the audience and the ways in which fans consume, use and read both the music track and the music video. Many music videos make references to other narratives in order to strengthen the otherwise "weak narrative chain" and these may well depend upon the shared cultural competencies of the viewer in terms of the music and lyrics in combination with the image (potentially working against as much as with the music and lyrics). This paper, whilst not seeking to engage directly with the theoretical debate, therefore considers the ways in which the music video might incorporate cultural competencies shared between performer and viewer and thus strengthen the bond the fan has with the music. One way in which this might work is through references to a wider range of cult texts that are significant to subcultural groups (such as youth or identity subcultures). Whilst such references may be made in the song lyrics (The White Stripes quoting lines from *Citizen Kane* [1941] in 'The Union Forever') or as part of the music (sampling from *Cool Hand Luke* [1967] in 'Civil War' by Guns N' Roses), these are more often visual references on the accompanying music video. For this reason, attention still needs to be paid to the cinematic elements in readings of the music video, and the primary focus of this paper is, therefore, on the visual component of the music video. The primary intent here is to explore the mechanisms by which cultural and fan competencies in the area of cinema inform the production and reception of music video.

Intertextual references to genre and Hollywood films are common in the music video. This is particularly evident in videos containing narrative elements, those that Kaplan classes as belonging to the 'classical' form (1987: 55). Kaplan suggests that these narratives derive predominantly from Hollywood film genres (ibid: 62). The simultaneous emergence of pastiche (in the evolution of the music video from performance to narrative forms) and directorial recognition has, as Beebe notes, led to the post-1990 stage of music television mobilised by "the metageneric play of pastiche" (2007: 310-11). And alternative genres are significant since they are "the music of choice for the emergent MTV pastiche mode" (Beebe, 2007: 311). Such narrative borrowings can be both generic as in Ozzy Osbourne's pastiche of gothic horror -- including the werewolf and the Jekyll and Hyde figures, as well as a gothic mise-en-scène in general -- in 'Bark at the Moon', specific as in Madonna's re-enactment of Marilyn Monroe perform-

ing 'Diamond's Are a Girl's Best Friend' in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*(1953) for 'Material Girl', or original authored material as when Michael Jackson appears as a teen-movie werewolf in John Landis's video for 'Thriller'. Furthermore, Kaplan observes that the most prevalent genres music video borrows from are horror, suspense and science fiction (1987: 62). Whilst Kaplan is writing at a specific point in time (her observations are based on 'Thriller' and other videos made between 1982 and 1984, and -- bearing Goodwin's concerns in mind -- may therefore represent a dominant trend only at a particular cultural or historical moment), references to this same set of film genres can be observed in recent music videos in a number of popular music genres. Notably, these same genres are ones that have given birth to many cult films, and furthermore many music videos employed by alternative bands and performers (which can again be placed in Kaplan's classical category) employ various visual and narrative elements drawn from cult film. The key issues here involve not only how cult film contributes to and informs the alternative music video but also why it might be that cult films in particular are so significant for performers and creators of alternative music videos, and for their fans.

The significance of the cult film for alternative music genres is illustrated by the Beastie Boys video for the Fatboy Slim remix of 'Body Movin'' (1998), a track taken from their fifth album *Hello Nasty* [1], not least because it illustrates a range of contextual factors related to cult film. Although commonly recognised as hip-hop performers -- and thus perhaps relatively unproblematically classified as urban music, The Beastie Boys have also been acknowledged as part of the alternative music scene. They are one of a very few hip-hop acts that are shown on the alternative music networks, appearing regularly on the playlists of the alternative music channels (Kerrang!, Scuzz, and Rockworld, together with some strands of programming on MTV2 which focussed on the nu-metal and emo genres popular during the period of study). Furthermore, in MTV's Top Ten All-Time Alternative Music Videos in 1997, The Beastie Boys 'Sabotage' was at number five (see Beebe, 2007: 311), but more importantly the group's move from punk to hip-hop is key in this respect. The bands transition from a hardcore punk band to a hip-hop act is acknowledged as a starting point for the punk/rap hybrid genre rapcore and thence to nu-metal, although the members of The Beastie Boys now distance themselves from this subgenre (see McIver, 2002: 20). It is pertinent that such 'cult' genres should be linked with other cult tastes, including the cult film. The Beastie Boys are noted for their homages to cult film and television: for example, in the videos for 'Sabotage' and 'Intergalactic' they pastiche the 1970s cop show and the Japanese kaiju (strange beast or monster) and mecha (giant robot) movies respectively. The music video for 'Body Movin'' comprises a re-working of the 1968 Italian cult film by Mario Bava, *Danger: Diabolik,* itself an adaptation of the Italian cult fumetto (comic book) *Diabolik* that began in 1962 and is still being published in the 2000s. The character of Diabolik is a master thief; portrayed as an anti-hero, he mainly steals from other criminals. He is a master of disguise and a proficient scientist in many fields; he never uses a gun but is a highly skilled knife-thrower. He occupies a high-tech underground lair with the glamorous Eva Kant, drives a Jaguar E-type and is partly based upon other dashing anti-heroes such as Fantomas, Robin Hood and James Bond. The film version *Danger: Diabolik* recounts the exploits of the superthief as he steals a large quantity of government money, a priceless emerald

necklace and a huge gold ingot, all the while evading capture at the hands of the authorities and the boss of a crime syndicate. These texts, 1970s cop shows, Japanese monster movies and European cinefantasy, fit Kaplan's profile of inter-textual references predominantly being to fantasy and cult genres. *Danger: Diabolik* renders 'Body Movin'' as a particularly appropriate text for analysis of its cultural transformation: its niche audience, its European origins (and thus less well-known to wider audiences), and its association with both a cult director and the cult medium of comic books imbue it with the status of a 'cool' cult text.

In the 'Body Movin'' video, scenes taken directly from *Danger: Diabolik* are in-tercut with re-created and entirely original sequences starring the members of the Beastie Boys. It opens with a number of brief clips from the sequence in the film during which Diabolik climbs the exterior of the tower to steal a rare emer-ald necklace from the wife of a visiting dignitary, a trap set up by the police to capture him. The establishing shot of the guards on the beach and the tower, followed by long shots of Diabolik scaling the tower and close ups of his device used in the climb, give way to close-up inserts of Beastie Boys member Adam Horovitz in a Diabolik catsuit. Whilst the Beastie Boys create a homage to the original using these shots from the film (what is notable here in terms of the economics and scale of the music video is that the shots they use are those that would not be easy, quick or cheap to recreate for a music video) intercut with their own recreation of the sequences, these are clearly not a frame-by-frame remake and there is no attempt at continuity between the shots. In the original film, Diabolik is seen in his sleek tight-fitting white catsuit, appearing as the epitome of the cool anti-hero. Rather, the Beastie Boys bring their own brand of kitsch to the video -- here, for example, in the fact that Horovitz's catsuit is whiter, shinier and rather less formfitting across the face than John Phillip Law's, the wrinkles in Horovitz's being emphasised by the plasticky shine, a deliberate foregrounding of the kitsch. These discontinuities echo the lack of continuity and use of mismatched and clearly obvious stock footage typical of the 'trash aes-thetic' of cult films by, for example, Ed Wood and Roger Corman, or *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* (1956) that incorporated new scenes shot with American actors into the original Japanese film *Gojira* (1954). With the use of these in-serts, it quickly becomes clear how the originating text is being reworked. That this reworking goes further, leading to the film narrative being entirely sub-verted, becomes clear in the increasingly divergent details of the way Diabolik carries out the theft that follows. This re-imagining of the cult text becomes the first major sequence of the video.

Here, Horovitz playing Diabolik steals not emeralds but, randomly and bizarrely, a recipe for fondue. The incongruity of Diabolik stealing a recipe is again empha-sised by the fact that it is for a kitsch 1970s dish and that, unlike the emeralds in the original where they are lying in full view on a table in the dignitary's suite, they are ironically kept in a locked safe (where the invaluable was originally out in the open, now the inconsequential is securely hidden away). At this point in the video the significant divergence of the texts again enhances the parodic, camp tone. In the film, Diabolik uses a Polaroid photo of the room to fool the viewers of the hidden camera and sneaks out of the room with the necklace (only subsequently being spotted in the hallways of the castle and pursued). Horovitz-as-Diabolik on the other hand opens the safe (absent in the film, but

here hidden behind another picture) with explosives and wakes fellow band members Adam Yauch and Michael Diamond, playing the dignitary (though with the moustache and monocle he is playing a mixture of the dignitary and Terry-Thomas's Government minister) and a guard in footman's livery watching the closed-circuit video monitor of the room respectively. The Beastie Boys' Diabolik is thus not only disturbed in the act, but in perpetuating the crime in full view and noisily appears to be a highly inept burglar, at complete odds to the original depiction of a master thief. At this point in the video Horovitz and Yauch participate in a gratuitous sword fight which culminates in a comedy beheading for no discernible reason other than comic excess (an important point since this is a trait of their work which is discussed further below). In addition to the moustache and monocle, Yauch is dressed in a candy-striped nightshirt, nightcap and -- again to heighten the incongruous effect -- fluffy pink and white bunny rabbit slippers. The beheading is patently fake, with the head being clearly removed from a dummy and the blood spurting neck in the subsequent shots emerging from an obvious set of built up shoulders worn over the performer's head. Here again we see a deliberate creation of the so-bad-it's-good aesthetics of the Ed Wood-style cult film, and as Horovitz runs from the room, the over-acting Diamond further draws attention to the cheap effects by picking up the fake head. In the subsequent chase to the roof and in the insert shots of Yauch 'in' the helicopter, the lack of realism and verisimilitude is heightened as he appears wearing a foam surgical collar to signify the 'reattachment' of his head. Furthermore, the theft takes place on a set that is wholly unlike the sets from the film. In the video, this scene takes place in vibrantly coloured rooms -- the bedroom walls are sun yellow and the carpet bright blue -- with only slight nods to the neutral palette and neoclassical décor of the castle setting of the film, again adding to the absurd lack of continuity that is heightened when shots from the original of Diabolik's escape to the roof are cut in.

The video at this point takes up the narrative sequence from the film again, using footage from the original when Diabolik pretends to launch himself from the catapult in order to throw off his pursuers and escape. As before, the original shots are inter-cut with close-ups of Horovitz. However, in the Beastie Boys version, Horovitz-as-Diabolik escapes on the catapult rather than it being a decoy (this compresses the action for the shorter format) and the video proceeds to recreate the sequence when Diabolik, in his black Jaguar, is chased by the helicopter. Since these shots are taken from the first act of the film (after Diabolik has stolen the government's tax revenues), narrative structure is reworked in order to suit the compressed narrative of the music video. (In the film, the escape from the castle involves Eva Kant and an elaborate setup involving mirrors to throw off the police who are pursuing him -- both elements that would over-complicate a music video narrative). Accordingly, the shots of Horovitz in a car are intercut with the external shots from the original avoiding the necessity of filming more complicated and expensive setups -- the long shots of the helicopter, the car going over the cliff -- but this also has the effect of adding to the mismatched stock footage 'trash aesthetic' of the cult film. Further comic parody is employed when Horovitz recreates the facial expressions of John Phillip Law, as these seem exaggerated compared with the original and this furthers the camp tone.

The next sequence recreates the scenes on the plane and the parachute jump as seen in the original film. There is no narrative bridge in the video between the shot taken from the film of the black Jaguar going over the cliff (empty in the film as Diabolik makes his getaway in Eva's white Jaguar) and Horovitz-as-Diabolik with his hands tied behind his back on the plane. The shots are merely connected by a very brief segment of the film's opening titles whirlpool effect (in the film, Diabolik has been lured to the plane after Eva is kidnapped by syndicate boss, Valmont). This sequence further illustrates the kitsch re-imagining (beyond the necessary abbreviation of the full narrative) of the original that is going on. In the Beastie Boys plane sequence this again involves a luridly coloured camp seventies aesthetic with red seats and vivid orange curtains, in contrast with the film, which still uses a cool neutral 1960s palette for the interior of the plane. Against this backdrop, Horovitz-as-Diabolik looks less the suave anti-hero, than posturing seventies man.

The same contrasts can also be observed between the film and video shots of the parachute jump. The Beastie Boys' re-imagining has given up the pretence of day-for-night shooting which was achieved in the opening sequence with the dark blue filter used over the insert close-up shots of Horovitz. In this later sequence the contrast between the music video and the original film becomes much stronger, the sky is clearly a daylight sky in the music video. Economies of scale also mean the costume of the henchman has not changed -- Diamond is still wearing his footman's uniform, and Yauch's role as finance minister-come-visiting dignitary (he still sports the monocle and moustache, and has a red 'scar' drawn around his neck to signify the speedy recovery from his decapitation) now further encompasses the crime boss as he sits at the desk on the plane in suit and bow tie. So while the layout and framing of the shots remain very similar, its overall impact is again changed from stylish thriller to camp comedy.

The shortened form of the music video is one where scaling-down is a necessity. Music videos are normally made quickly ('Body Movin'' involved a two-day shoot) but shots and editing also have to match the pacing of the music and the length of the track. The scale of the music video means that the Beastie Boys' sampling of the original film is in order to retain the sense of scale in the effects and sets from the original. This particular use of a cult text allows for the breaking out from the limits of the music video, but repeatedly reverts back to the Beastie Boys' trademark kitsch. For instance, the final sequence of the 'Body Movin'' video makes use of the entrance to the underground lair and the huge carport from the original film (again taken from the first act of the film after Diabolik has escaped with the Government's money), only to undercut this in its final punch line as Horovitz-as-Diabolik gets to make his fondue. Horovitz again uses exaggerated facial expressions as he prepares the dish, this time with a knowing look to camera. The video concludes with another clip of the film's title sequence whirlpool effect and the name Diabolik appearing in the same font as used in the film. These elements are characteristic of Beastie Boys videos -- comic moments of excess, over-the-top tacky effects, knowing gags and in-jokes, all of which position the cult text as a loved object, but also one to be knowingly mocked. The larger continuities that Mundy discusses are here focussed on a specific set of contextual factors: the cult status of the text (1999: 224). A deep under-

standing of the video therefore requires the viewer to be familiar with the trademark Beastie Boys tone, to have an awareness, if not knowledge, of the original text in order to 'get the joke', recognise the trash aesthetic and absence of verisimilitude of the cult film, have an appreciation of camp seventies kitsch, and identify the individual characteristics of the members of the band and the appropriateness of the roles they play.

So, are there any clearly identifiable reasons for such choices of source material? The reworking of the cult text outlined above is purely visual -- there are no intertextual references to or sampling of the film in the lyrics or music. In one sense then, this referencing of the cult text is random. Randomness and eclecticism are typical of the music video. As Yauch says, for example, "It just seemed like a good idea, no particular reason why we chose fondue". [2] As Goodwin and others have argued, however, the music video and music television should not (or not only) be read as postmodern in form (1993: 46). Whilst re-imaginings of cult films such as that made of *Danger: Diabolik* by the Beastie Boys are in one sense, as we might expect of a postmodern text, decentered and fragmentary, they have another important function in terms of the cultural economy of fandom and subcultural identity. Whilst music video has fore-grounded image -- and to some extent made image more important than the experience of the music itself, as Will Straw (1993) argues, music videos are palimpsestic texts. The image component of the music video can thus be as significant in terms of reception as the music and lyrics. In the hip hop genre in particular, lyrics and music are determined by the beats and rhythms, the repetitions and rhymes of rapping, and the sampling of a wide range of other musical texts, as well as the employment of hip hop language -- as they are with 'Body Movin''. Furthermore, lyrics often 'float free', they can be nonsensical, banal, obscure, indistinct, incomprehensible, or ambiguous, or even rendered meaningless through repetition. This particular track refers to partying, dancing, rapping, DJing and music making itself; it is therefore especially open to the overwriting of alternative meanings as in a palimpsestic text. This verbal set of signifiers, along with the overarching notion of the body and movement ("body movin'" being the most repeated lyric), can be read in the context of the video encapsulating the themes of action cinema and comic book anti-heroes. As set out by Carol Vernalis, the image (Diabolik's -- and Horovitz's -- movements as he climbs the tower) "mimics the experiential qualities of sound" (the hip-beats and the repetition of the phrase "body movin'") (2004: 175). In Vernalis's categorisation of connections between music, image and lyric, these and other re-imaginings of shots or sequences from the film become sync points in relation to the music, adding meaning to the music through this use of the cult text. Polysemic proliferation can open up meaning, but this might be narrowed down again when linked to a set of images or narration.

In the case of 'Body Movin'' -- and the Beastie Boys' videos in general -- this is not so much about making sense of a narrative, but about recognising the outlandishness of the visuals as a set of signifying codes for the performer's identity, of which cult film and television tastes are an integral part. This is pastiche in the form that Beebe, after Adorno, discusses, one that displays the virtuosity of the practitioner, as opposed to the absurdity of the object (2007: 305). It is this that fans of the Beastie Boys will recognise, particularly in respect of Yauch's

input as director under his pseudonym 'Nathanial Hornblower'. Moreover, Mark Shevy (2008) suggests that a popular music genre can function as a culturally shared cognitive schema. Such a schema works by forging associations between the music and extra-musical concepts. For Shevy, such concepts define the genre, and can include identity factors such as ethnicity, rural-urban classification, and age, but also traits such as trustworthiness, friendliness and political ideology (all of which play an important role in communication and persuasion). Such cognitive schema could certainly include shared tastes for cult texts. The cult text is thus written over the formal or generic patterns of the music video, acting as a grid to anchor -- in this instance -- subcultural meaning.

As MySpace, YouTube and generic music television programming have become the central distribution mechanisms and site of discussion not just of music but also of cult texts, subcultural identity has been brought to the fore. The re-working of *Danger: Diabolik* came about primarily because Adam Yauch is himself -- if not an avowed fan -- then at least immersed in pop culture, particularly texts with cult and nostalgic value. [3] Yauch has said that, "One thing I really like about Diabolik is that he's a criminal, where in most comic books, the lead characters are all superheroes trying to save the world. It's like Italy's answer to Batman, but it's so much better".[4] The use of a cult text in this respect reflects the personal tastes of the performers (it is an important aspect of the methodology of this research that the chosen texts are those created and produced by the performers themselves). Furthermore, the choice of a cult text indicates that that set of personal tastes is in line with certain formations of cult appeal and thereby cult fandom, indicating a strong link to particular subcultural identities. On the DVD's documentary extra, Yauch discusses his taste for kitsch:

> It's campy in a way, but not in a bad way – the way that he moves, the acting is ridiculous, the direction is ridiculous, but the set design is so over the top the acting is appropriate -- especially Terry-Thomas's character -- it's definitely got that Commissioner Gordon vibe -- it's over the top. I wouldn't put it in the same class as Batman because it blows the original Batman off the map -- that stuff was corny whereas this is amazing. [5]

It is important to note that nostalgia is a strong element of certain kinds of cult appeal. The Beastie Boys -- and we might also expect a good segment of their fanbase -- are of an age and background where 1970s cop shows, comic books, the Batman TV series, Italian genre films, and Japanese monster movies were part of the pop culture landscape. So although choice of the cult text is ostensibly a random one, it can be linked to the performers' and the audiences' cultural competencies.

In his account of the 'wow factor', Henry Jenkins states that: "popular culture can generate a fair amount of effortless emotion by following well-tread formulae, but to make us go 'wow' it has to twist or transform those formulae into something marvellous and unexpected" (2007: 3). In taking the idea of the wow factor from vaudeville and applying it to popular culture Jenkins does not consider music television, but it is clear that in the way music television offers a 'bill' of 'acts' in endless succession it bears some similarities to a vaudeville programme. In fact, Mundy (1999) includes vaudeville in his continuum of popular

music on screen and Saul Austerlitz describes MTV as "television vaudeville" in his history of the music video (2007: 31-63). In the way it is consumed, music television is of course also very different from vaudeville: viewers do not so much 'watch' music television 'acts', as be occasionally drawn to individual acts as it forms a backdrop to other activities. It is this very difference, though, that makes the wow factor important. As McKee and Pardun point out, the "media landscape" -- and music television is a case in point here -- has become increasingly "cluttered with images vying for the viewer's attention" (1999: 110). They argue that "trying to understand how viewers interpret these images is growing increasingly important", and the wow moments of popular culture that Jenkins discusses are certainly key to understanding one of the ways in which a particular text might grab the viewer's attention. It is a wow moment in a music video that might attract the otherwise distracted viewer's attention. If the Beastie Boys (or Adam Yauch in particular) and their fans share a familiarity with a similar range of cult texts, the intertextual references, ironic re-imaginings and in-jokes are the 'wow' factor depending upon the cultural competencies of the audience to get them (though this is not to say that the videos cannot be enjoyed without this knowledge). Thus the references to cult texts familiar to both performer and viewer, whilst one part of the palimpsestic text of the music video as a whole, can provide a wow moment, drawing attention to that particular video within the endless stream of programming on the music networks.

Obviously, it cannot be said for certain that Beastie Boys fans are also cult film fans without empirical research, but such a hypothesis is not without foundation. There are, for example, many intersections between cult film, alternative music genres, and their associated subcultures. Research by Dunja Brill (2008) into the goth subculture and findings in Cadwallader and Campbell's (2007) study of musical tastes of gifted teenagers suggest that fans of alternative music genres are frequently marginalised, white, middle class, and well-educated -- a similar background to many fans of cult texts (and it is therefore perhaps significant that this profile in terms of race, class and education fits Yauch, Horovitz and Diamond who also began their musical careers in the late 1970s with hardcore punk bands The Young Aborigines, and The Young and the Useless). References to cult texts are therefore important wow factors in alternative genres because they form a bridge between the music and the associated subculture or cultural identity. Significant examples include, but are not limited to, vampire, neo-Victorian (or steampunk) and Gothic genres for the goth subculture, the gore film and splatterpunk's centrality for metal and gorecore fans, psychobilly's association with science fiction and horror B-movies, and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*' (1993) popularity with emos. The links can be seen emerging in various ways in the associated music of these subcultures; examples (and these are merely a representative sample) include visual references (emo favourites Bowling For Soup pastiche the teen gross-out comedy in their video for 'High School Never Ends'), aural borrowings (White Zombie -- who take their name from the 30s film starring Bela Lugosi -- sample dialogue from, amongst others, Russ Mayer's *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* (1965) in 'Black Sunshine' -- "I work on this baby the same way, trying to get maximum performance") and references in lyrics (pop-punks Blink 182 sing that "We can live like Jack and Sally […] We'll have Halloween on Christmas" in their nod to *The Nightmare Before Christmas* in

their track 'I Miss You'; drummer Travis Barker's wedding had a *Nightmare* theme, again underlining the subcultural links between band and fans).

A clear set of intertextual references can thus be identified within alternative music genres. The video for 'Body Movin'' is representative of a very small number, however, that incorporate material from the original film, and whilst in one respect this follows on from the aural sampling which is a central feature of rap and hip hop (and thus rapcore and nu-metal), there are also copyright issues that might prevent bands from making use of original footage. As with the aforementioned videos for 'Intergalactic' and 'Sabotage', the majority of cult film re-imaginings do not incorporate footage from the original texts. Examples of 'remakes' are more common both in videos made and directed by the performers themselves, and in those directed by outside filmmakers. Although the latter (examples include Howard Greenhalgh's reworking of *Fantastic Voyage* (1966) in the 'Special K' video for Placebo and John Hillcoat's recreation of the *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964) set for Muse's 'Time Is Running Out') also tap into shared subcultural competencies, those created by the artists themselves are rather more reflective of shared artist and fan tastes.

An example of this form can be seen in the re-imagining of *The Hunger* (1983) in the music video for 'Written in Blood' by Californian dark wave duo She Wants Revenge. [6] The band members Justin Warfield and Adam Bravin, like the Beastie Boys with *Danger: Diabolik,* include the film amongst their own set of cult tastes (which also include B movies, Bauhaus, Depeche Mode and Joy Division) on their website. *The Hunger* itself is a significant cult text in terms of meanings for specific subcultures. Obviously, it holds cult appeal for lesbian viewers, but it also has significance for the goth subculture, not least in the use of the iconic track 'Bela Lugosi's Dead' by Bauhaus, one of the original post-punk proto-goth bands. As lead singer of Bauhaus, Peter Murphy performs in the nightclub at the start of the film. This cult appeal has added value as one of the vampires who are stalking their latest victims is played by David Bowie, himself a cult star of alternative music genres and a performer who is influential within the goth scene, not least on Bauhaus themselves. The track used in the film is itself of course a reference to the Universal Horror vampire and the actor who played him. The cult value of this text is thus already multi-layered.

She Wants Revenge are drawing heavily on this cult status as they recreate Murphy's performance from the film at the start of the music video. Warfield and Bravin appear behind a metal grid replicating Murphy's poses, while the eighties costuming, framing of the shots and the occasional freeze frames reproduce the art design (or at least the temporal moment) and camerawork of the film. This adds a performative element to the narrative form, but it is one that re-creates a performance from the film that inspires that narrative. This performance of the music element continues throughout the video and, as in the film, is intercut with scenes in the club (in which the performance is taking place) while a couple (two actors recreating the Bowie and Catherine Deneuve roles, John and Miriam) pick up a woman sitting alone at the bar, and later in the car on the way to and then at the couples apartment. It is in this narrative element of the music video that it diverges from the film (where the vampires Miriam and John pick up an-

other couple as their victims). This is not a random change, nor one that is (as 'Body Movin'' was) only for economy of scale, rather it is specifically related to the representations of gender and sexuality being played out in the music video. It is the Miriam figure that picks up the woman sitting in the bar, and as she does so she intimately leans in close to whisper in her ear while the man stands behind her, merely watching. As in the film, the pick-up sequence is followed by the drive to the couple's apartment. Here again, the man sits alone on one bank of seats in the limousine whilst the two women sit opposite him. He sits back in the seat watches impassively and distractedly (at one point he turns to signal to the unseen driver), whilst the women laugh, leaning in towards each other and occasionally touching. Once the couple and their 'victim' enter the apartment this apparent lesbian fantasy for the male voyeur continues. The man, seated, watches as the two women (standing against a white wall under a spotlight as if on a stage or a screen) touch, kiss and begin to fondle each other (in the film, the man from the couple John and Miriam had picked up was shown looking at his girlfriend dancing suggestively against the wall, while Miriam and John stand back).

Although the music video recreates key moments from this sequence in the film, as with 'Body Movin'', the video increasingly diverges from the film text. The 'no ice' line that allows John to take the woman off into the kitchen, in the video becomes a shot that leads to the man getting up and going to the fridge alone, for instance. In these moments of action, the roles (again as in 'Body Movin'') become conflated or interchangable. In the film, John and Miriam go back to the couple's apartment. In the video it appears to be their own home that they go to; the man directs the driver and he then appears to be at home in the apartment (just as the man from the couple that were picked up in the film did). At this point, seated and watching, he is in the victim's role. He becomes both male characters combined -- vampire and victim. This is significant, and not only because it replaces the two heterosexual couplings of the film with a threesome again foregrounding a stereotypical male fantasy of lesbianism. When the man returns with a fresh drink, he interposes himself between the two women (the framing here literally depicts him standing facing into the camera with one woman either side looking in) and then seems about to perform cunnilingus on the woman they have picked up. He bodily moves her to a chair and kneels down before her as he pushes her knees apart -- the final shot here again exactly recreating the one in the film -- the man is clearly John again at this point. At the same time, in the music video, the woman leans over to kiss the 'victim'. In the film, Miriam and John each seemingly initiate sex with the opposite sex partner, John in the kitchen and Miriam on the sofa in the living area, before drinking their blood. In the re-enacting of this scene there is an identical shot of the grasping and pulling of the necklace. In the film, this shot depicts the ankhs that hide the blades with which the vampires bleed their victims and in the film therefore, it is Miriam and John who are shown doing the grasping and drawing of the blade. In the music video, however, it is the woman they picked up who re-enacts this sequence, thus reversing and subverting the cult text narrative. The vampires are not the sexually predatory couple as in the film, but the seeming victim. She turns on both of them with the blade concealed in her necklace, slashes their throats and feeds on their blood. This creates a narrative twist, just as 'Body Movin'' does -- though here it is not for comic effect but for shock

value. This turning of the tables is a wow moment in the finale of the 'act' that breaches the expectations of the cult fan picking up on the reference to *The Hunger,* and is thus a knowing re-imagining of the original.

This re-imagining, not just of the cult film but the cult goth band Bauhaus, again anchors meaning in terms of the profile and interests of the subculture as well as presenting aspects of performative identity. These include the lyrics that evoke colours, actions, emotional states, and events important to the subcultural style, and parallel the lyrics of the Bauhaus track. For example, "White on white, translucent black capes", "The victims have been bled", "Bereft in deathly bloom, alone in a darkened room", and "Virginal brides file past his tomb" in 'Bela Lugosi's Dead', are echoed by the lines "Blood red lips traced with a tongue they shine", "All or nothing, it's written in blood", "I'll take you down in the name of love", and "On the way to the wedding, dressed in black" in 'Written in Blood'. Aspects of dress and performative identity are represented in the ankh (which has been reproduced and sold by the alternative jewellery company Alchemy Gothic to the present day), the retro fashion items (which include goggles, aviator and 1950s cat eye style sunglasses, forage caps, and 1940s wide shouldered dresses), and the glamour of 1930s and 1940s, as well as 1980s, décor.

It could be argued here that rather than being an adjunct to the music (as it clearly was when MTV launched in 1981), the music video is now an integral and integrated part of the music track. Not only are DVDs of music videos available, but CDs of individual songs and albums now frequently contain the music video as well. More importantly in terms of increasing multi-media convergence, music videos are available, amongst others, via iTunes, YouTube, MySpace, Facebook and band's own websites (and are thus available instantaneously to fans and as often as desired, rather than having to wait for the video to be played on MTV).

The cultural convergences illustrated here underline the way in which the taste for cult texts, subcultural affiliation and performative identity can come together. As Mundy has outlined, music on screen employs "specific representational strategies which in part draw upon music and musical performance" (1999: 227). Whilst not all narrative music videos foreground the performance in the way that 'Written in Blood' does, even those that do not ('Body Movin'', for example) work to incorporate the music as an element of spectacle that is bound up with the re-imagining of the cult text. This maintains the synergy between cinema and popular music that Mundy describes, but in the specific contexts of the cult film, the alternative music genre and the intersections of the two come together in the subcultural identity. This addresses the question that Mundy raises, namely that if we are to "understand the ways in which texts work, we need analysis that connects texts to the material processes of their production and consumption" (1999: 240). In these re-imaginings of the cult film, the bands are expressly communicating their own set of generic and subcultural competencies directly to the viewer. This rearticulates, to borrow a phrase from Lawrence Grossberg, "the cultural investments" of the viewer, including the pleasures of consumption (1992: 209). The cult film can therefore be an extremely important part of the palimpsestic music video in providing a wow factor, anchoring meaning and tapping into subcultural identities that are central to many alternative music subcultures.

Brigid Cherry

Notes

[1] The video can be viewed at http://www.beastieboys.com/av/ (accessed 18/3/09) or as an extra on the 2007 DVD release of *Danger: Diabolik.*

[2] Quote taken from the music video commentary on the 2007 DVD release of *Danger: Diabolik.*

[3] See interview originally conducted for *Barnes and Nobel Review*, Aug 2005, available at http://dogra.tv/2005/08/11/interview-with-the-beastie-boys-adam-yauch/ [Accessed 25 April 2008]

[4] and [5] Quotes taken from the documentary extra *Diabolik: From Fumetti to Film* on the 2007 DVD release of *Danger: Diabolik*.

[6] This can be viewed at <http://www.shewantsrevenge.com/> [Accessed 18 March 2009]

References

Austerlitz, Saul (2007) *Money for Nothing: A History of the Music Video from the Beatles to the White Stripes*. London: Continuum.

Baxter, Richard L., Cynthia De Riemer, Ann Landini, Larry Leslie and Michael W. Singletary (1985) A Content Analysis of Music Videos, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 29 (3), (Summer), pp. 333-340.

Beebe, Roger (2007) Paradoxes of Pastiche: Spike Jonze, Hype Williams, and the Race of the Postmodern Auteur, in Roger Beebe and Jason Middleton (eds.), *Medium Cool: Music Videos From Soundies to Cellphones,* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, pp. 303-328.

Brill, Dunja (2008) *Goth Culture: Gender, Sexuality and Style*. Oxford: Berg.

Cadwallader, Stuart and Jim Campbell (2007) Gifted students beat the blues with Heavy Metal, *British Psychological Society's Annual Conference*, University of York, March 2007.

Collins, Jim (1989) *Uncommon Cultures: Popular Culture and Postmoderism*. London: Routledge.

Goodwin, Andrew (1993) Fatal Distractions: MTV Meets Postmodern Theory, in Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Sound and Vision: The Music Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 45-66.

Grossberg, Lawrence (1992) *We Gotta Get Out of this Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture*. London: Routledge.

Jenkins, Henry (2007) *The Wow Climax: Tracing the Emotional Impact of Popular Culture*. New York: New York University Press.

Kaplan, E. Ann (1987) *Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism and Consumer Culture*. London: Routledge.

McKee, Kathy B. and Carol J.Pardun (1999) Reading the Video: A Qualitative Study of Religious Images in Music Videos*, Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 43 (4), (Winter), pp. 110-122.

McIver, Joel (2002) *Nu-Metal: The Next Generation of Rock and Punk*. Omnibus: London.

Mundy, John (1999) *Popular Music on Screen: From Hollywood Musical to Music Video*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Shevy, Mark (2008) Music Genre as cognitive schema: extramusical associations with country and hip-hop music, *Psychology of Music*, 36 (4), pp. 477-498.

Straw, Will (1993) Popular Music and Postmodernism in the 1980s, in Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Sound and Vision: The Music Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 3-21.

Vernalis, Carol (2004) *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Filmography

Citizen Kane. 1941. Dir. Orson Welles. RKO Radio Pictures.

Cool Hand Luke. 1967. Dir. Stuart Rosenberg, Warner Bros.

Danger: Diabolik. 1968. Dir. Mario Bava. Dino De Lauretniis Cinematografica.

Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. 1964. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. Columbia Pictures.

Fantastic Voyage. 1966. Dir. Richard Fleischer. Twentieth Century Fox.

Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! 1965. Dir. Russ Meyer. Eve Productions.

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes. 1953. Dir. Howard Hawks. Twentieth Century Fox.

Godzilla, King of the Monsters. 1956. Dir. Ishiro Honda and Terry Morse. Toho Company and Embassy Pictures.

Gojira. 1954. Dir. Ishiro Honda. Toho Company.

The Hunger. 1983. Dir. Tony Scott. MGM.

The Nightmare Before Christmas. 1993. Dir. Henry Selick. Touchstone Pictures.

Queering the Cult of *Carrie:* Appropriations of a Horror Icon in Charles Lum's *Indelible*

Darren Elliott, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

The cult of *Carrie* (1976) from its origins in Stephen King's novel through to De Palma's initial cinematic interpretation, has accumulated a wealth of *queer* appropriations in both cinema and the theatre. Given Carrie's status as cultural icon, her simultaneous status as horror film victim and monster, alongside the narrative concerning her burgeoning sexuality and attraction to boys she may well be situated as a powerful figure of identification for gay male spectators. The very act of appropriating imagery and the iconography from mainstream and cult film works to reconfigure gendered subjectivities that are imposed upon subjects via ideological (and often heteronormative) narratives. However, despite the radical, queer potential of appropriation, the gay male subject's apparently understandable association with the horror genre's paradoxical passive/aggressive ingénue in fact masks a wealth of unease and anxiety that ultimately longs for her death. In this paper, I intend to discuss the various queer appropriations of Brian De Palma's film *Carrie,* considering the queer appeal of De Palma's original film, then by way of legitimate theatrical adaptations to camp musical parody on the US salon-art circuit, and finally to those in video art -- particularly Charles Lum's *Indelible* (2004) an experimental short that fuses De Palma's films with hypermasculine hardcore gay pornography. These adaptations, and *Indelible* in particular, will show how the act of appropriating imagery can work to challenge and reconfigure gendered subjectivities that ideological narratives impose upon spectators.

It is this notion of the shame felt by the ridiculed victim -- personified in Carrie White -- that the gay male subject (notably gay male fans of De Palma's film) forms a strong identification with. Shamed, ridiculed and embarrassed, yet radical in his vengeance, the gay male subject specifically identifies with the female protagonists of *Carrie*, for various reasons including an obvious association with persecuted sexuality and a fantasised empowerment in the vengeance wreaked out upon tormentors. The very same anxiety and trauma is 'worked through' via the perpetual repetition of images and appropriation of the *Carrie* cult phenomena and has given rise to a plethora of theatrical, film and video appropriations that range from drag stage Rocky-Horror style musical versions, horror and comic film references, to the film's assimilation and appropriation within video art. Queer homage, adaptations and interpretations of *Carrie* often read the source text as a malleable, satirical, critically acclaimed and now seminal work with a fragmentary template that invites ironic reading, re-assemblage and reinterpretation.

Why *Carrie?* What is it about this specific horror text that holds such strong appeal for the gay male spectator and for artists and performers who have assimilated it into queer culture?

Carrie's narrative is a variation on the 'coming out' tale, both sexually and socially and revolves around the awkwardness of revealing one's own sexuality to one's parents (especially one's mother) and the guilt or shame involved in doing so. The film also has both cult and camp allure for the gay male spectator deriving mainly from its use of excess, in the excessive style and form of De Palma's direction in terms of lighting, colour-coding, melodramatic use of music and score and in its exaggerated melodramatic acting (specifically from Piper Laurie and Nancy Allen). Like many horro films, *Carrie* solicits cross-gender identification for the (gay) male spectator but does so via its basic coming-of-age or teenage sexual awakening narrative and also with Carrie as a bullied or marginalised individual. Yet this strong pull of identification implies a similarity between femininity and gay male or queer sexuality and, in a sense, also provides the main source of tension for gay male spectators.

The gay male subject, while presenting an overwhelming identification with Carrie et al, is actually perfecting a desperate DIS-identification [1] with the feminine abject they come to represent via this inference. In this text that is arguably about women (*Carrie* is considered by its author Stephen King to be 'a feminist tale' (Clover, 1992: 3), the gay male subject in his assumed passivity appears to have been aligned and associated with female disempowerment within patriarchal society. But what is revealed in the queer reception and adaptations of*Carrie* is more of a subjective oscillation between a rejection of this shameful feminine association <u>and</u> a powerful identification with the female subject in terms of her repressed cultural place. In *Carrie's* excessive performances of femininity, the gay male subject seeks indications of his own socially constructed, performed and gendered subjectivity.

Drag *Carrie* parodies find their origins not only in De Palma's *Carrie*, but in a theatrical version of the text from the late 1980's. The cult of *Carrie* is such that it even inspired an ill-fated Broadway version; *Carrie -The Musical* was briefly staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1988. The musical became notorious in theatre circles for being one of the biggest financial flops ever. Despite its critical and public failure, the musical has achieved a similar (but perhaps more negative) indelibility. At the time of its reviews, it was already being heralded as a 'cult musical'. Other critics commented that it "ranks as one of the most misconceived in theatre history, often wildly off in tone and unintentionally comic" (Mandelbaum. 1998: 352). Such camp appeal was also enhanced, retrospectively, by the musical's astounding failure. The failure inherent in the show's appeal suggests specifically that a lack of success holds pleasure for the gay male spectator. *Carrie: The Musical* became a hot ticket for the 'flop connoisseur' its notoriety lay in its presentation of flawless failure.

This incongruity is the legacy of *Carrie: The Musical*, and conversely the basis for its cult success. Yet reveling in its awfulness, while protesting to revere the show and its stars, the gay male fan simultaneously encourages both the shows and its stars ridicule. In the same sense, the gay male subject is associated with an unsuccessful or a failed masculinity within patriarchal culture. The same valorizing of failure may appear to be at work in the gay male spectators identifications with the women of *Carrie,* particularly in the adoption of Carrie-drag*.* If the gay male subject performs exaggerated femininity then the subject regains a sense

of the socially constructed nature of their feminised subjectivity by ironically embracing his 'failed' masculinity in effeminate performance. The same problem occurs, however, in valorizing failure in a display of excessive femininity, the gay *male* subject similarly encourages its derision.

Subsequent theatrical versions of *Carrie* have vied to challenge *Carrie: The Musical's* camp value. All attempt to 'perfect failure' but, according to Ken Mandelbaum, none will ever reach its iconic status, for 'there's never been a musical like her [sic]' (Mandelbaum, 1998: 351). The gay male subject's trans-sex identification with the arguably empowered female protagonists of *Carrie* and *Carrie: The Musical*, is taken to its logical extreme in various stage performances that display increasingly explicit queer references, and in which various female characters are performed by (in many cases) gay men. The first drag-appropriation of *Carrie* was arguably staged by the now disbanded San Francisco-based The Sick and Twisted Players. Their renowned productions would often fuse cult feature films (usually horror) with TV serials and soaps to present 'cross-bred' variations such as: *Texas Chainsaw, 90210*, *The Exorcist: A Dance Macabre,* and a version of *Carrie* in the early 90s that encouraged audience participation. Its audience members were provided with Carrie Kits which included: "three tampons to throw at Carrie with cue cards to shout 'plug it up!' during the pivotal shower scene" (Ebenkamp, 1996).

In 2005, New Orleans-based theatre troupe Running With Scissors produced a similar drag musical entitled *A Very Special Facts Of Life/Carrie*. Their variation fuses the U.S. teen television soap *Facts of Life* (an NBC sitcom based on a maternal housekeeper of a girl's boarding school which ran from 1974-1988) with *Carrie*, introducing her as a new girl to the dormitories. Hell in a Handbag Productions' *Scarrie - The Musical* ran in Chicago in 2006. Their version of De Palma's film also involves drag performances of the triptych of female leads and is described as an "unauthorised parody of *Carrie* which features a rockin' 70's influenced score and lots of pig's blood."

Theatre Couture's production of *Carrie*, which was initially marketed with the sub-header *A Period Piece*, was staged in New York in December 2006. Writer Erik Jackson's version also features a drag performance of Carrie. The central blood shower sequence is played for laughs, and implicates the audience in the prom night glee, by dumping buckets and buckets of blood over Carrie - and most of the front rows of the audience. For Jackson the comedy is enhanced by gender play:

> There was no way that the part could be played by a woman, since there is nothing funny about girls throwing tampons at a real girl who's having a fake period. But you switch out the genders and something in the equation completely clicks. You have to have that distance in this instance. (Erik Jackson, personal interview, 2007)

Yet once again it is the *female* subject that is excluded from the performance of excessive femininity. In terms of comic excess, Jackson's 'man in a dress' is the 'better woman'. He is more able to achieve 'that distance', which further establishes distanciation between the gay male subject and femininity. The actors on-

stage are not simply simulating femininity, rather they are performing a comically unsuccessful masquerade of femininity. What *is* being performed on stage is a *failed woman*, highlighted by the simulation of a highly exaggerated menstruation. This deliberately *failed gender performance* offers a very strong point of identification for the gay male spectator. Is there a difference between patriarchal representations of femininity (associated with monstrousness or, at the very extreme, nothingness or a void) and the willing adoption of a camp parody of that representation?

There is an implicit misogyny in many of the drag appropriations of *Carrie.* Gynephobia is evident in the disgust shown towards menstruation encouraged by The Sick and Twisted Player's audience participation and in Theatre Couture's overblown gross-out explosion of blood onto audience members. In highlighting the monstrous otherness of women's bodies and, indeed, of femininity, the gay male transvestite performer seems to ridicule femininity by performing an excessive and desperate plea to be recognised as *not* woman, and thus paradoxically distances himself from femininity while 'safely disguised' *as* a woman. Cross-gender masquerade taken to the extreme of female impersonation offers a distancing effect, yet the radical and liberating potential of such ironic performance can also be made at the expense of those genders being performed. It must be noted that the parody or appropriation of monstrous femininity, represented by the various drag-Carries and Lum's *Indelible,* is not undertaken by its *objects* (women) but notably by its *subjects* (men) and, as such, cannot be separated from patriarchal influence.

Carrie's Indelible Images

Queer theatrical appropriations of *Carrie* highlight the imitative processes of dragging up as Carrie et al. It is in this very literal sense that these performers and fans of the film get under the layers of the filmic text and its performers via female impersonation. What happens then when the source film text is not imitated or modulated by new performers, but re-presented in an abstract sense? One particular experimental, avant-garde short film *Indelible* (2004) does exactly this, shifting '*Carrie* worship' to more extreme and explicit levels. The concept of indelibility and the impressionable or unforgettable event or image is at the centre of Charles Lum's fusional short film, where certain impressionable entertainment forms and events work to induce a traumatic effect upon Lum. This extends to the feature film form, queer theatrical parodies as well as the life-changing and traumatic event of discovering his own HIV positive status. All of these feed into Lum's visual contemplation of pleasure and mortality.

Indelible is a short video piece that brashly combines borrowed original feature film footage in a clash of the horrific and the erotic. The video is chiefly made up of Lum's own self described favourite films: *Carrie* is intercut with excerpts and frames from *The Fury* (1978) and is further cross cut, dissolved and juxtaposed with images and sounds from hardcore gay pornographic films, most notably from *LA Tool & Die* (1979). In titling his film so, Lum defines these film sources as significant personal experiences in his life. In his publicity synopsis for *Indelible* he explicitly stipulates how he wishes the film to be read:

> *Indelible* is a cavalcade and crescendo of appropriated images that suggest an aborted narrative about emasculated machismo, femininity, fear, shame, bloodlust, sexual desire, disease, retribution and death in an American pop cultural spray of blood and semen that builds to an explosive, cathartic climax.

The film is offered as a kind of cipher or cultural text which Lum reads across from his own subjective experience and socially constructed identity, and is projected outward as a piece of work which seems to reflects his own personal trauma and anxiety as a gay man living with AIDS. This is particularly reflected in his choice of source film texts which were all produced at a time in the late 70's, a period in time just prior to the onset of a global epidemic of HIV and AIDS. Lum's work also reveals the confining structures of and in reformulating feature film narratives, thereby critically revealing how they define and manipulate our comprehension of self and how subjectivities are culturally formed:

> I feel I am offering a strong voice to gay sexual investigations that are tactfully ignored by both the mainstream media and the art world. Confronting the graphic realities of sexuality and how it equates with understanding the roles of shame, repression, violence and power in our cultures…I am interested in the way we understand and live our lives through pre-conceived filmic narratives. My videos are attempts to both observe and then change those narrative conventions. (Charles Lum, personal interview, 2007)

Charles Lum is a photographer and filmmaker whose works often favour the short video form. Lum's digital videos concern themselves with ideas of gay sexuality in relation to his own HIV positive status. His moving image works are mainly presented on DV, VHS and DVD and are often either documentary in style or autobiographical pieces that feature the filmmaker himself on camera. *Indelible* clearly stands out from Lum's filmography in that it 'borrows' or 'samples' (that is he re-edits, re-configures and visually alters) scenes, images, shots and sounds from various other mainstream feature films and their narratives, in this sense it is (un)original.

Lum's films are all generally informed by the conviction that HIV alters the subject's personal experience on emotional, political and sexual levels, and *Indelible* passionately embraces these themes. With a choice of media that extends to poetry, still photographs, painted art works and installation pieces, his video pieces are generally exhibited in galleries - yet works like *Indelible* and other pieces that 'sample' clips from mainstream western cinema have had crossover appeal. Lum states of the exhibition spaces in which *Indelible* has been screened that: "some of these (most) are gallery shows, small art events, or my own lectures". The only major festivals to screen (to date 2009) have been LLGFF, Toronto & Mix Brazil. Although, *Indelible* has enjoyed a popular reception at film festivals and exhibitions on an international level, screening at such places as the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in 2005, the Inside/Out Festival in Toronto, Canada 2004, and the Dublin Film Festival in 2005 amongst others, it is a film that has been rejected from various independent film festivals and galleries due to its controversial imagery. Because of the film's explicit sexual content and the copy-

right issues that arise from borrowing clips and sounds without permission, *Indelible* continues to be limited to unrated distribution at festivals.

While not entirely denigrating of femininity, *Indelible* is influenced by the same gender play as drag Carries. It explicitly brings together the two genres of horror and pornography, to connect their conceptions of the monstrous, the threatening, the violent, the dangerous and the erotic. Lum fuses the generic, thematic and filmic conventions of each of the films by means of simple juxtaposition, superimposition, cross cutting, cutting on action, dissolving through imagery and soundtrack and -- taking De Palma's now clichéd and overblown use of split-screen to an extra-diegetic level -- he brings images from other films together in a frenzy of split-screen action.

The deconstructive aesthetic of *Indelible* allows us to explore the generic conventions of the horror film and the gay male pornographic film and draws parallels between them: of a connected eroticism, shared anxieties, shared imagery and notions of desire, shame, humiliation and trauma. By taking apart, reviewing and re-editing the horror film in this way, the genre takes on a new resonance and cultural meaning. Erotic elements that may have been implicit become foregrounded by association. The films become eroticised by the *penetration or insertion* of explicit sexual imagery into their narrative and, conversely, horrific elements are attributed to explicit erotic scenes of sex. Lum's eroticisation of horror is a means of revisiting, recollecting and replaying cultural notions of trauma. *Indelible* allows for a contemplation of Lum's eroticisation of horror as a metaphor for the (gay) male spectator's re-experience of the genre as a means of revisiting, recollecting and replaying cultural notions of trauma pertinent for the gay male subculture. These include: the defining or cultural imposition of subjectivity that is acknowledged by Lum and that is consequently rejected; the paralleling of homosexuality with HIV and AIDS and the effect this has upon homosexual culture and finally the conflation of a submissive femininity with gay men within heteronormative culture.

Lum's paradoxical consideration of the potentially threatening and, for him, liberating elements of gay male sexuality is shown in *Indelible's* uneasy and frenetic comedy of eroticism. I want also to briefly look at what happens to the comedy of De Palma's original in Lum's reworking and whether the humour of *Indelible* retains the same meaning. The film's presentation of a gay machismo as visually fascinated by the phallus, and the anxieties of heteronormative masculinity in light of the devastation caused by the AIDS virus, clearly invites a comparison with Leo Bersani's controversial article *'Is the Rectum a Grave?'*. I want to discuss points with which they concur, using Lum's *Indelible* as both a visual example of Bersani's ideas and moments where it provides a contradiction to Bersani's polemic which in particular posits gay male penetrative sex as traumatic (more specifically he refers to gay sex as having a subversive potential for 'self shattering'). For Bersani, anal sex provides a means through which the subject can achieve self-divestiture, therefore "self-shattering…disrupts the ego's coherence and dissolves its boundaries" (Bersani, 1996: 101). He later continues that what he refers to as shelf shattering 'jouissance…blocks the cultural discipline of identification' (Ibid.: 125). Initially, it appears likely that the method of appropriation that Lum implements shares similarities with Bersani's reconfigu-

ration of ecstatic anal sex, whereby 'this self-divestiture is enacted as a willful pursuit of abjection' (Ibid.: 126).

Carrie is a narrative and cultural text that is susceptible to such 'breakage' or a 'shattering' in an already fragmentary narrative structure, made visually fragmentary and 'fragile' by De Palma. Lum achieves this cinematic shattering and fragmentation by superimposing and layering various film sources (including *The Fury* (1978) which is also featured) creating one amorphous narrative, which is nevertheless always informed by the appropriation of its original visual materials. Lum's decision to juxtapose *Carrie* with *LA Tool & Die* (from Joe Gage, a director famed for his representations of 'hypermasculinity' both in terms of his macho 'Gage Men' performers and his blue collar and proletarian settings), paves the way for *his* main thematic and visual opposition and his analogy of what a heteronormative ideology defines as 'abject femininity' with 'abject masculinity'. In *Indelible*, the main film which stands in opposition/juxtaposition to *Carrie* is the third and final film in director Joe Gage's 'Working Man' trilogy of films. This begins with *Kansas City Trucking Company* (1976), moves onto *El Paso Wrecking Corp*. (1977), and ends with *LA Tool and Die* (1979). Indeed, alongside a nostalgic inclusion of scenes from more antiquated pornography from an earlier era -- prior to the trauma of AIDS -- *Indelible* includes several scenes from more contemporary porn films, including an untitled video directed by gay pornographer Paul Morris and his production company Treasure Island Media, which features scenes of fellatio, bareback sex and semen ingestion, and *The Final Link* (2000), featuring an sadomasochistic orgy scene. In summary, Lum, chooses to foreground scenes from gay pornography that involve either marginalised, unprotected sex either of a penetrative, oral or masturbatory nature.

As a text composed entirely of borrowed sources and footage 'ripped' from other films and videos (apart from Lum's superimposed titles), Lum draws attention to editing as a process designed to create narrative cohesion and diegesis. In rupturing both *LA Tool and Die*,*Carrie* and other source films, only to juxtapose and over/underlay them to combine both their narrative and spectacular scenes, Lum seems to take De Palma's excessive and overblown editing style and exaggerates it further to foreground the very 'material' elements of film itself. Lum's work, in its desire to fragment narrative and foreground the structures which interpellate its spectators into sexual subjectivity, would seem to offer a liberating, revelatory and challenging spectacle. However, as much as Lum's refashioning of the films in *Indelible*draws attention to the artifice of narrative, it also leaves stretches of narrative intact (the narrative of *Carrie's* prom night scene is shown in flash forward during the White's discussion/summary of events at the dinner table), narratives that may reveal masculinist essentialism.

Lum's films consider filmic narrative as a prescriptive method by which sexual identities are shaped and positioned within a dominant ideology and how this is blurred, confused and played out in terms of both feminine identification and masquerade and parade of gendered differences. Monstrous femininity and the various attempts to 'plug it up' by *Carrie's* previous authors, either by visual or literal means, are practiced in vain. King's original text makes plentiful use of parentheses in association with Carrie's interior monologue and the texts various

144

narrators (appearing in the form of textual stops and interruptions and abruptly switching narrative points of view) and De Palma's split-screen and excessive framing both fail to contain its seeping threat. The 'failure of repression' that Shelley Stamp Lindsay refers to in her discussion of De Palma's *Carrie*, to contain the feminine abject (in a patriarchal symbolic order) permits the continued flow of unchecked abject femininity. Failed repression of femininity is formally represented in *Indelible* by jarring juxtapositions and in the invisibly present super or sub impositions that slowly seep and bleed through the primary image. Fragmentation, multiple narratives or points of view cannot cut away or stop the relentlessly seeping threat of the abject feminine. *Indelible*'s final image is of Carrie's vengeful silent scream taken out of its original narrative order and replaced as the shorts resolution. In *Indelible*, too, *Carrie* always returns to us, underneath images, and in these final shots. For Lum, cutting away from *Carrie* will not prevent the indelible, irrepressible narrative from returning. He uses the techniques of juxtaposition and subversive super- and sub- imposition not to stem *Carrie's* flow of blood or flow of femininity, but to show that it continues to bleed across into his other source films. The parentheses and techniques of cutting serve to draw attention to cross-textual similarities, as both blood and semen intermingle across films. When one stream of bodily fluids (menses) stops, another (semen) flows freely with renewed vigour. This flow of consciousness or subjectivity that was until now so intrinsic to femininity (and is symbolised by blood) is shown to have its counterpart in Lum's male subjects (and is symbolised by semen). Lum re-reads *Carrie* by way of the enforced new-voices he introduces to the text and consequently enhances and restores its flow (of narrative, and of bodily fluids of blood and semen) with a renewed vigour.

The film's presentation of gay male subjectivity offers an opportunity to consider representations of (gay) male sexuality orally and phallicly, but not essentially *anally,* directed. This appears to be at odds with Leo Bersani's suggestion that all gay male sex culminates teleologically in anal penetration. [2] *Indelible* centres on oral sex, a more equivocal sexual act, which defies easy classification as active or passive. It can be received or given. Conversely, Bersani's argument revolves around a masculine subjectivity that he claims is 'shattered' in the penetrative act of anal sex and which he links by analogy to the feminine supine sexual position. For Bersani, 'to be penetrated is to abdicate power'. If the main sexual acts for consideration in *Indelible* are fellatio and masturbation, are these acts, like anal penetration, also paralleled with femininity in their penetrable and submissive connotations? Unlike Bersani, *Indelible* does not overtly conflate an *anally* receptive or penetrated sexual position with a subordinated cultural and political position.

Lum has produced short films that consider both the apathy within gay male sexual culture towards safe sex and more specifically the debate concerning the safety of oral sex. *Facts.suck* (2005) considers the statistical possibility of infection from unprotected oral sex. [3] In an interview, the director has described himself as:

> A longtime AIDS survivor who has NEVER had receptive anal sex. The content of my videos deal directly with that traumatic fear, its [the exclusive practice of oral sex] inability to protect me from the virus, and the

negotiations I have with myself, sex partners, and the public about the risks and responsibilities of oral sex in the current sexual arena in which HIV is (or should be) always invisibly present.' (Lum, personal interview, 2007)

The indelible effect that *Carrie* has had upon him is then paralleled with the traumatic effect of HIV and is made formally visible in the 'invisibly present' superimpositions and sub-impositions which perpetually interchange. *Indelible* is caught between a frenetic embrace of the oral act as an alternative and supposedly safer sex, and the unknown risks involved in contracting sexually transmitted diseases [4] through indulging in it, as Lum may have done. Lum's ambiguous desire to both defend and prosecute fellatio and masturbation as unsafe yet erotically alluring sexual practices (in this act the *flow* of semen is visible and externalised and therefore abject) is presented in the face of both heteronormative *and* homosexual views of anal sex as infectious.

Lum juxtaposes the abject menstrual flow of *Carrie*, with its connotations of marginalised sexuality and gender and its polluting potential, with the flow of semen, which too is specifically gendered and abject (in its association with fatally infectious sexually transmitted disease in unprotected sex). However, he seems to offer semen as more powerful, more forceful and perhaps more abject flow than that of the seeping feminine menses. The usage of the term abject here is taken from Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror*. Kristeva posits the term abjection as the expulsion of a part of the self in the pursuit of identity and subjectivity. The primary border separating the subject, the 'I' from the 'other' is the body itself. Kristeva, and subsequently Barbara Creed in her book *The Monstrous Feminine – Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*, focus upon the abjection of the body's own fluids - waste, blood, urine, saliva and excrement:

> Such waste drops so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit, cadere, Cadaver…The body's inside shows up in order to compensate for the collapse of the border between inside and outside…Urine, blood, sperm, excrement then show up in order to reassure a subject that it is lacking its own and clean self. (Kristeva, 1982: 63)

Kristeva defines menses, excrement, urine and also sperm as abject bodily fluids. Viewed externally, they represent potential infection. It is the *visibility* of such fluids that indicate their status as expelled or wasted, as polluting or toxic. Visible sperm, rather than that which is located inside the male body or secreted into another's in penetrative sex, would suggest its 'abjection' from the subject. But having already defined sperm, among other objects, in particular bodily fluids, as that which symbolises a 'pollutant' in opposition to the body's pure and 'clean self', Kristeva later retracts the potent and polluting power of sperm that she earlier attributed to it. In defining the abject in relation to objects that pollute, she goes on to point out that:

> Polluting objects fall, schematically, into two types: excremental and menstrual. Neither tears nor sperm, for instance, although they belong to the borders of the body, have any polluting value. (Kristeva, 1982: 71)

Confusingly then sperm seems to represent abjectivity but without any *polluting* power. If Kristeva is correct, what makes sperm so explicitly abject in *Indelible*?

Semen is the bodily fluid that is most strangely absent from both Kristeva and Creed's discussions of the abject; generally Kristeva tends to identify abjection with women and, more specifically, with the maternal which is in opposition to patriarchal law. Creed offers a close study of the menstrual pollutant in *Carrie*:

> woman is specifically related to polluting objects which fall into two cate-gories: excremental and menstrual… [The Abject] is that which crosses or threatens to cross the border. (Creed, 1996: 10-11)

The 'border' in question may be, that between normal and abnormal, man and beast, human and inhuman, good and evil. Creed observes that blood is of ex-treme symbolic importance in *Carrie* and takes the form not only of menses but also pig's blood, identifying woman with two religiously proscribed fluids. This blood ties Carrie to her mother (who describes her daughter's first period as a 'Curse of Blood', women's punishment by God for the 'original sin of intercourse') and the deadly blood spilled in the film's denouement. It is blood that is the main metaphor for struggle, pain, femininity, infection and evil in *Carrie* and, to some extent, in *The Fury*. How then can semen be positioned as abject in terms of Kristeva and Creed's theories? Following Creed's argument, semen not ejacu-lated in the act of reproduction but in masturbation, oral and anal sex becomes waste, and therefore abject. Moreover, the onset of AIDS as visually symbolised in *Indelible* would seem to suggest that *semen*, as the fluid medium of infection, is not only 'abject' when wasted. In the wake of the AIDS crisis, semen can be-come fatally infectious.

Semen: A New Abjection

Both *Carrie* and *LA Tool and Die* were made prior to the early 1980s hysteria surrounding the AIDS pandemic, and before the promotion of safe sex became widespread. Combining scenes from both, Lum's post AIDS perspective in *In-delible* can be seen to give credence to the anxiety symbolically associated with blood, but also perhaps to represent semen as a source of infection. Lum clearly equates menstrual blood with semen in *Indelible*. It is questionable, however, how he views semen. Does he see it as a cause for revelry in its potency or as source of anxiety in its potential for lethal infection? Lum's own ambivalence to-wards semen is exemplified in his consideration of the fluid in *Indelible* in its jux-taposition and relationship to menses:

> I am asking whether it is the sight of semen what makes it an abject, more humiliating than within fucking, where the ejaculate is hidden, seeded, planted in a more natural, more normal hidden place, (that 'other' - vagina, anus, condom). Is basking and bathing in semen a contraceptive waste of the greatest magnitude? Does safe sex itself indicate the greater more absolute rejection of infection? Is eating the stuff even worse, a will-ful defiance of safety or the sanctity of procreation? Is it just gross? (Charles Lum, personal interview, 2007)

It is not the actual spermatozoa that Lum renders abject in *Indelible* but its visible, viscous *flow* (as paralleled with the flow of menses). It is the liquid medium of sperm, in other words *semen* (particularly in subjects with HIV where it becomes a carrier of the disease), that is deemed a source of abjection. The appropriated sequence of *Carrie's* shower of pigs' blood is visually paused in *Indelible,* for it is not a shower of blood that Lum wants as his spectacular release but showers of semen. By analogy then, these torrents of semen, and their ingestion, temporarily replace the Mrs White's configuration of the 'curse of blood' associated with feminine sexuality, with a 'curse' of semen in a display of potentially infectious unprotected sex. In turn, the juxtaposition also highlights the potential infectiousness of blood as much as semen in the transmission of HIV. Lum sees the liberating jouissance in *Indelible* as only possible because of the pre-requisite existence of guilt: "If there were no guilt or anxiety, ecstatic frenzy would not be liberating or spectacular." (Lum, personal interview, 2007). It is worth noting here Leo Bersani's claim that 'there is a big secret about sex: most people don't like it' (Bersani, 1987: 197). Lum's self-confessed ambiguous aversion to sex (as represented in *Indelible)* seems to confer with Bersani's dictum, as previously debated in the viscous appearance of semen as itself 'gross' and in representing the 'gross-ness' of sex in its messiness. *Indelible's* presentation of unprotected sex and potentially infectious semen, provides a jouissance born out of the anxiety and thrill associated with such sexual acts, but also from the re-empowerment gained in putting oneself in such a position or by vicariously experiencing it via memory or re-presentation.

Julia Kristeva argues that it is not uncleanliness or illness that is the source of abjection, rather, it is a symbolic representation of that which "disturbs identity, system, order. The abject is that what does not respect borders, positions, rules, it is the in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (Kristeva: 4). Flowing across borders, ambiguity and the idea of the *composite* are given a visual treatment in Lum's consideration of semen as abject and in his editing of *Carrie* with its own abject bodily fluid, menses. *Indelible's* bareback pornography reveals the border that the abject bodily fluid, semen, encroaches upon is that of the condom, and further still the body itself. When the border is transgressed, semen can become potentially dangerous and abject. For Lum, semen becomes abject in its ambiguous symbolic form as representative of ecstatic sexual and phallic intimacy yet laced with anxiety and danger as a potential carrier of lethal infection.

If abjection is only possible if it straddles a border between two distinct entities and territories, what are the two distinct areas at play here? Are the entities that of the socially constructed ideals of the feminine and the masculine as symbolised by (menstrual) blood and (gay man's) semen? Does he want to tie a heterosexist (and homosexual) fear of gay men as specifically represented by their potentially HIV- infected semen, with the same heterosexist and homosexual male fear of menses and the abjection it connotes for women? Does he wish to access its terrifying potency? Should menses as an abject bodily fluid cross the border between men and women, it would operate, according to Kristeva, to threaten 'the identity of each sex in the face of sexual difference'. Can semen, and more specifically HIV infected semen in its juxtaposition with menstrual blood also offer the same threat?

148

The central visual motif of *Indelible* intermingles *Carrie's* shower of blood with *LA Tool's* shower of semen, combining not only blood and semen, but the culturally determined and gendered connotations that are projected onto them via colour codings. The colour codings and mise-en-scène of De Palma's *Carrie* are re-presented in *Indelible* and begin to form one of the film's basic binary oppositions of red (representing blood and by extension, femininity) and white (symbolically representing semen and masculinity). *Indelible* merely picks up on an idea present in De Palma's original source text and develops it. In one significant scene, Carrie's mother enters her daughter's room in a final attempt to dissuade her from attending the prom. She curses Carrie's choice of dress, again prefiguring the excess of colour in the blood shower that is to follow: "Red! I might have known it would be red!", suggesting the colour's cultural connotations of wanton sexuality. As Carrie protests, the dress's actual colour is pink, combining red and white. Pink, with its cultural connotations of homosexuality, further supports both De Palma's and Lum's films' queer appeal. *Indelible* develops this symbolic intermingling of red and white via their symbolic and colour coded referents to create a queer text. Blood (red) and semen (white) intermingle to make pink and with it fuse the gendered cultural connotations of the aforementioned bodily fluids.

Red vs White: Gendered Colour Coding in Indelible

The opening scene of Lum's film sets up the colour coding that is to follow. The film's title appears repeatedly in the opening shots, changing from red bold type on a red tinted background image from the prom night in *Carrie*, to a white type of a slightly translucent quality, before appearing in bold white type flashing intermittently as the frame cuts to black. Dissolving over the fading white titles from *LA Tool and Die*, the shot tracks back into a scene from *Carrie*. The frame slowly reveals the Whites' tapestry representation of Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, and then an altar-like dinner table at which Carrie and her mother Margaret White now sit eating an evening meal. Carrie's family name, 'White', now also forms part of a colour-coded opposition within *Indelible* as a whole. Three small red candles are centred at the lower portion of the frame, flanked either side by two taller white candles.

The scene at the dinner table continues from *Carrie*, but superimposed over and running concurrently are images of a rough, wooden garage or workshop connoting labour and masculinity. A man's shadow is framed approaching the door of the garage and continues to follow his movements inside the warehouse. The reverse shot is a man's silhouette in low angle medium close-up, filling the doorframe with the glaring sun setting behind him. Throughout this melding of images, the domesticated dinner conversation between Carrie and her mother continues. The films play in composite layers under/over each other in a dream-like synchronicity, where images of hairy, male legs shadow the wooden walls of the garage underneath the dinner in *Carrie*.

As the Whites' conversation turns from apple pie and pimples to that of a prospective date at the prom, the images from *LA Tool and Die* become more visible. Out of focus, extreme close-ups reveal hands, legs and what appears to be a penis. Mrs. White's shock and disapproval at Carrie's suggestion -- "Prom?!" --

is pronounced at precisely the same time that images of sexual acts become more apparent under this domestic scene. A hand fleetingly comes down over the penis at bottom centre of the frame, and a mouth follows; fellatio is being performed. Mrs. White's face becomes aghast in disbelief, and under the image again is a sub-imposed wide shot of three or four torsos of burly, muscled men, standing partly in shadow, masturbating. The formation of men across the frame parallels the position of candles in *Carrie*, linking them as phallic symbols.

Cut to a medium close up of Carrie pleading with her mother: "Please see that I'm not like you, momma. I'm funny – all the kids think I'm funny and I wanna be, I wanna be normal…" Their arguments continue, with Mrs. White ranting wildly, over shots of more men, indulging in barely visible anal sex and fellatio. Mrs. White cries out for her daughter to "run to your closet!", which the knowledgeable viewer of *Carrie* will understand as the room under the stairs into which Carrie is thrust to pray for her sins. The closet in *Indelible* then, like Carrie's plea to be 'normal' and her declaration that she is 'funny' (as in peculiar), becomes a representative symbol for clandestine homosexuality or queerness. Mrs. White's order is directly linked to the heteronormativity that would condemn gay sex.

Other instances of this opposition of red and white occur in *Indelible*. The first scenes of the prom stage at the high school in *Carrie* are represented in high angle wide shot with the bucket of pig's blood positioned precariously on a girder which hovers over the school stage. The girder serves to split the image between stage (the place of spectacle, stars, dreamlike fantasy and eroticised imagery) and the dancehall (the audience, the place from which the spectacle is to be viewed). The palette of colours on stage from De Palma's original is of a decidedly whiter, silvery shade, whereas the audience appears redder, warmer and darker. To further the colour motif, scenes from De Palma's film's denouement included later in *Indelible* show Carrie attempting to wash herself of the sticky, bright red blood in her bright white bath tub. However it is the explicit fusion of (red) blood with (white) semen at the film's centre that demands discussion.

Suddenly, 'Jim' is introduced to the viewer in a startling cut in the midst of Carrie and Mrs. White's argument about the prom. In contrast to the dreamlike dissolves to gay male sexuality that have gone before and continue underneath this scene, there is an abrupt cut from *Carrie's* domestic setting to an opaque, medium close-up of a man bathed in a yellowish/amber light. In the lower portion of the frame the groin and penis of another man is shown, his chest and lower legs cut by the frame, fragmenting and objectifying him. 'Jim' pumps the erect penis, while directly gazing at the camera. A male voice addresses him from off camera and renders the shot subjective: "Don't let me stop you, Jim", to which he replies "Nothing could." Proceeding to plunge down and fellate the erect penis, he announces, "This guy's real hot...he's just about ready to pop!". It is Jim, the fellator, who is the main scene of spectacle, rather than the recipient (who is deliberately cut out of the frame). Jim is clearly the active party and yet is the object of our gaze as spectacle. Similarly, his aggressive demands are to be rendered passive, as he commands the diegetic and extra-diegetic voyeur, 'Why don't you jack that dick off "till you cum in my face?".

After introducing us to Jim in this scene of phallic and oral obsession from *LA Tool and Die*, *Indelible* speeds through dissolves, flash cuts and shots from *Carrie*: Carrie meeting Tommy; her prom date; the rigged voting at the prom; Carrie and Tommy's dizzily romantic dancing; the announcement of their victory, their procession to the stage and Chris's plot to humiliate her. Lum includes most of De Palma's editing of these proceedings, while adding his own jump cuts and dissolves to the build-up to the seminal climax of *LA Tool and Die.*The original sequence replays extreme close ups of Chris's hands and fingers teasing at the rope from under the stage, her eyes blinking. In several close-ups, her moist tongue darts out to lick her full lips. However, Lum supplements this implicit eroticism with scenes of literal masturbation and fellatio. He juxtaposes the feminine imagery of Chris's lips and her teasing of the phallic rope with an erect penis and Jim's gaping mouth. The succession of cuts to and from *Carrie* and *LA Tool and Die* speed up as the former film approaches its humiliating climax.

Cut to Chris in close up, pulling down on the cord attached to the bucket. The shot is orgasmic in suggestion, with Chris closing her eyes and convulsing as she pulls the bucket onto Carrie. Her ecstatic release is shown as the action cuts to the high angle shot of the bucket, falling from the rafter in slow motion, to the sounds of sexual groans from *LA Tool and Die* (later mixed with Mrs. White's orgasmic death cries throughout the ejaculation). Lum cuts to a visually matching expression from *LA Tool and Die*. Jim's eyes are closed in pleasure as a voice from off screen warns 'I'm gonna cum', and we see the first, almost subliminal, spurt of semen.

It is interesting to notice at this point that the object of spectacle *crosses genders*, but it is the fact that it is the initiator of the sexual act that is the centre of attention, not the victim or passive object of spectacle. Carrie does not pull the bucket of blood onto herself, but Jim willingly exposes himself to the shower of semen. By this, Lum offers an alternative to gender stereotyping and arguably a 'de-gendering' or 're-gendering' of the conventions of the horror genre by crossing traditional boundaries of who is deemed the object of spectacle. He plays with these gender connotations and reverses them, by positing Jim as a very aggressive, demanding fellator and paralleling him with Chris from *Carrie*. As a sexually objectified but aggressive, manipulative and demanding female character, she links the two gender types and blurs their conventions. Lum's film cuts the blood descending from the bucket in slow motion as a medium close-up shows Carrie, centre frame, looking out to the audience at the prom. The blood falls into the extreme top of the frame, but *Indelible* freezes it in mid-air with the words, 'gonna cum' from *LA Tool and Die* repeated in quick succession. The downward cascade of red blood is paused, instead focusing on an upward spurting fountain of white semen - with the symbolic effect of blurring the gendered connotations of genital fluids and the spectacular objectification.

Lum cuts to *LA Tool and Die*, where a penis emits a torrent of semen in slow motion, showering Jim's face, with the initial spurt replayed over and over. All the while, the blood splash from the soundtrack of *Carrie* is layered underneath these images. In *Indelible* semen is even more visible in the multiplicity of replayed images and scenes. The spurts are synchronised to the amplified sound of screeching violins used in *Carrie*, suggesting a link between her psychokinetic

powers and the potency of ejaculation. The note held by the strings slides down in musical scale in a glissando effect - suggesting an almost vertiginous decline to a mood of foreboding and seriousness, in contrast to the upward ejaculation. Lum is perhaps suggesting, in his underscoring of the seminal spectacle with a typical horror score from*Carrie*, that Jim's unprotected ingestion of the man's ejaculate is a cause for concern rather than frenetic pleasure, or indeed perhaps a thrill that is derived from the potential danger of such an act. There is an ambivalent tension between pleasure and revulsion that ties the films together at this point, in representing ejaculation as a spectacular liberation and visceral pleasure but also as dirty and dangerous. Is the moralizing suggestion that unprotected gay sex is threatening influenced by the hysterical heteronormative anxiety about gay sex and gay male sexuality as paralleled with HIV and AIDS? It seems more likely that it is precisely *this* danger that provides the jouissance for Lum, and a dangerous act that provides another means of disavowing passivity and femininity.

Indelible serves to show a continuation or a *flowing* of the homosexual sex act in the face of these castrating and repressive threats. Just as Carrie ignores her mother and goes to the prom, the gay pornography carries on, perhaps in a mania of 'unstoppable sex'. Lum not only wishes to gain access to the potent flow that is attributed to menses in De Palma's *Carrie*, but hopes to supercede it in his presentation of a more powerful ejaculation. *His* flow is shown issuing forth with a more concentrated force than Carrie's seeping menstruation. The inclusion of powerfully spraying hoses of water in *Carrie's* prom sequence, juxtaposed in *Indelible* with almost comically powerful ejaculations, support the apparent conclusion that male fluids are more powerful and (more abject) than feminine ones. The power represented by these forceful bodily emissions progresses to a literal masculine explosion in *Indelible's* final images.

Indelible represents a desperate reaffirmation of phallic power as a response to the threat of femininity. Lum and other gay male fans of De Palma's *Carrie,* are drawn to her as both victim and powerfully phallic woman, but in their consequent representation of her they reveal a desire to be dissociated with a femininity that compromises their masculine aspirations. While identification with the abject woman has the potential to shatter male subjectivity, the female impersonator and the identification implied in that act, as Carole-Anne Tyler suggests, can also *perpetuate* phallocracy, "When the active, desiring woman still reflects man's desire, the mirrors of the patriarchal imaginary cannot have been shattered." (Tyler, 1991: 48) *Indelible* paradoxically reveres and disavows femininity both in the female subject and in the effeminate and, by extension, penetrable gay male subject. While not overtly misogynistic in its discussion of "emasculated machismo, femininity, fear, shame", *Indelible* recognises a negatively coded and powerful femininity as something to be adulated yet feared and ashamed of. Yet the abject potency of femininity is surpassed by the explosive potency of gay masculinity.

The bodily fluids from *Indelible* are allegories not only of layered clothing, but represent the performative nature of gender as socially constructed, by way of Judith Butler, but especially in the masquerade theory discussed by Joan Riviere [5] and Mary Anne Doane [6] (in terms of the cinematic spectator). Riviere and

Doane both posit the feminine masquerade as an exaggeration of gender, done as a means of defence against heterosexual male reprisals towards them should they display traits of empowered masculinity in certain social contexts. The masquerading female subject achieves a distance from her own image then by ironically performing an excessive femininity. If to masquerade or parade is to perform an 'excess of gender' this is echoed in both *Indelible's* display of excessive bodily fluids, and in the parodic excesses of camp female impersonations of Carrie. Ultimately the macho hypermasculinity of the Gage Men via *Indelible* is represented as just as camp and ironic as *Carrie's* theatrical transvestite performances. Both excessive presentations of gender do the *same thing*; they both work to disavow femininity one way or another. However, the female impersonator and the gay male spectator in his culturally imposed identification with the feminine, is unlike the masquerading female subject. He cannot effectively appease or disarm the anxiety evoked in heterosexual male spectators by performing femininity, unless the femininity performed is exaggerated to the point where it is made obvious. Then it is precisely femininity and, arguably, effeminate gay men that are the *butt* of the joke.

The final sequence of *Indelible* gives rise to yet another contradictory image: that of male subjectivity literally blown apart, inside out. Lum's inclusion of scenes from *The Fury*, in the final, rapidly paced and cut denouement of *Indelible*, show two images of apparently feminised and shattered masculinity that perhaps links Lum's visual discussion of gay masculinity with Leo Bersani's. Lum furthers the narrative of *Carrie* within *Indelible* by including scenes and images that foreground the female gaze and, in turn, the potent telekinetic power of Carrie. The return of the gaze from the normally objectified woman, by force of juxtaposition across films, objectifies and fragments the male. Its threat is shown in spectacular form as Lum cross-cuts from a fragmented jump-cut [7] which acts as a zoom into Carrie's eyes (originally in *Carrie* this telekinetically forces a car from the road) which, via juxtaposition with *Indelible*, serves to cause the following images of the exploding male from *The Fury*. In another example, a similar 'zip-zoom' technique moves in close up to focus on the eyes of Childress (John Cassavetes) from *The Fury,* the film's villain being telekinetically manipulated by his captive female prisoner, Gillian, who enacts telekinetic revenge upon kissing him, making him weep tears of blood. The feminine act of weeping is rendered even more so by its association with the menstrual blood. Femininity makes itself known by crossing the border of the body and externally presenting itself, forcing its way out. It is the externalizing of bodily fluids, here semen and blood, which suggests the inability of the body as the primary border to contain its own fluids. The visible bodily fluid has passed through the border of the body (which represents the self) and is externalized (representing Other) and its visible return 'threatens ones own and clean self'.

More startlingly then, Lum's gradual climactic finale, which rises to an erotic peak with the torrents of ejaculate, now cuts to a paralleled crescendo in the reflow of blood. The symbolic and sexual explosions of the masculine in the scenes from *LA Tool and Die* become intermingled when the feminine flow of blood continues. The central scene of humiliation from *Carrie* is reintroduced and chants of 'plug it up!' become fused with the explosion of masculinity as a source of both humiliation and jouissance. Yet the film's final images reveal an explos*ive* rather

than explod*ed* masculinity. The explosive male seems to perpetuate the concept of the powerfully ejaculating and explosive male power, rather than the Bersanian 'shattering' of 'proud' heteronormative masculine potency. In *Indelible*, Lum retains the glowing eyed feminine catalyst for Childress's explosion, yet in following the increasingly powerful ejaculations from the juxtaposed segments of pornography, the *potency* of Childress's explosion seems to resonate with the viewer as radiating from *within* the male as if his flesh is intrinsically vulnerable to disintegration. Childress is shown standing in a living room in mid shot and he seems to explode from within in extreme slow motion. Solid flesh seems to erupt from him in contrast to the liquid semen and blood that has been a central motif until now. There is a cut on action during the explosion to an extreme high angle shot. His head flies up into the frame, literally decapitated (castrated) and his body explodes with such force that its liquids are evaporated. Internal bodily fluids appear now to have all been externalised and there is no longer any flow here.

I would argue that *Indelible* literalizes Lum's paradoxical concerns regarding the contraction of the HIV virus and AIDS through sexual practices like the ones previously considered, the very same practices that provide an erotic thrill and appeal. In the face of such determined suicidal sex, Bersani's symbolic 'shattering of the self' is negligible compared to the consequences of the unchecked explosion of fatally infectious bodily fluids. The excessive display of bodily fluids can only be surpassed and satisfied by the ultimate explosion of the subject himself. The entire body is abjected to the point where its borders cease to exist and it is completely destroyed. In reviewing the film and, perhaps vicariously, the memories of anonymous sexual acts from the director's past, the initial jouissance felt in indulging in such exploits is replaced by a pang of guilt and shame when returning to such images from a new perspective. Shattered masculinity is of a different form here, leading us to question what exactly is being exploded. Is it a visual representation of the death of 'proud male subjectivity' (Bersani, Homos, 1996: 281), or the idea of the passive, penetrated male? Is Lum's idea of invigorating, liberating and orgasmic self-shattering, in the face of the cultural anxiety that surrounds AIDS and safe sex? Above all it is perhaps the ambiguous appeal of a gay masculinity that is perpetually conflated with femininity that provides both a means of transgression and access to an abject potency that, in a heteronormative culture, also serves to associate gay masculinity with femininity, the connotations of which will be perpetually mapped onto it.

Notes

[1] Jose Munoz defines disidentification as a practice by which subjects outside of a racial or sexual majority negotiate with dominant culture by transforming, reworking and appropriating ideological impositions from the mainstream. From *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

[2] Leo Bersani dismisses the pluralism and sexual liberation of Foucault's multiplicity of sexual acts, cultural and physical positions enjoyed by gay men, includ-

ing sadomasochistic role play as 'lies' to the inevitable truth of penetrability in Is the Rectum a Grave? *October* 43 (Winter, 1987) pp. 219 – 220.

[3] In *Facts.suck* (2005), Lum presents titles and captions over filmed footage and coloured backgrounds, of the conflicting statistical potential of contraction of the HIV virus from unprotected oral sex. They highlight cautionary statistics, but remain undecided as to their credence and offer no final statement as to the dangers of unprotected oral sex.

[4] Documented evidence from studies and theoretical evidence is published on the website of www.avert.org and are based on the Centers for Disease Control Fact sheet: Annabel Kannabus and Ben Hills-Jones (2000) Preventing the Sexual Transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS: What you should know about Oral Sex (December). The study reveals that in 2000 a study of gay men in San Francisco who had recently acquired HIV infection, where 7.8 percent of infections were attributed to oral sex.

[5] Joan Riviere discusses the non-cinematic female masquerade in 'Womanliness as Masquerade' in Hendrick M. Ruitenbeck (ed.) *Psychoanalysis and Female Sexuality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

[6] Mary Anne Doane applies Riviere's theory of feminine masquerade to the cinematic spectator and the representation of women on screen in her article Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator, in Mandy Merck (ed.) *The Sexual Subject: A Screen Reader in Sexuality*. London: Routledge, pp. 227-242

[7] The extreme close up and gradual zoom into Carrie's pained face is fragmented by multiple jump cuts which cut closer into Carrie's eyes in a kind of fragmented, high speed, zip-zoom.

References

Bersani, Leo (1987) Is the Rectum a Grave? *October* 43 (Winter)

Bersani, Leo (1996) *Homos*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butler, Judith (1993) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.

Creed, Barbara (1993) *The Monstrous Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge.

Doane, Mary Ann (1992) Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator, in Mandy Merck (ed.) *The Sexual Subject: A Screen Reader in Sexuality*. London: Routledge, pp. 227-242

King, Stephen (1974) *Carrie*. London: New English Library.

Kristeva, Julia (1982) *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: New York University Press.

Darren Elliott

Lindsey, Shelley Stamp (1996) Horror, Femininity and Carrie's Monstrous Puberty, in Barry Keith Grant (ed.) *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 279-293

Mandelbaum, Ken (1998) *Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops*. New York: St. Martins Press.

Munoz, Jose Esteban, (1999) *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Riviere, Joan (1966) Womanliness as Masquerade, in Hendrick M. Ruitenbeck (ed.) *Psychoanalysis and Female Sexuality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Tyler, Carole-Anne (1991) Boys Will Be Girls: The Politics of Gay Drag, in Diana Fuss (ed.) *Inside/Out : Lesbian Theories and Gay Theories*. London: Routledge, pp. 32

Websites

Ebenkamp, Becky (1996) You Make Me Sick! in *The Prism: San Francisco Fashion and Culture* (June) Available at:
http://www.journalism.sfsu.edu/www/pubs/prism/jun96/29.html [Accessed 11 June 2009]

Filmography

Carrie. 1976. Dir. Brian De Palma. United Artists.

El Paso Wrecking Corp. 1977. Dir. Joe Gage.

The Final Link. 2000. Dir. Chi Chi La Rue. All Worlds Video.

The Fury. 1978. Dir. Brian De Palma. Twentieth Century Fox.

Indelible. 2005. Dir. Charles Lum.

Kansas City Trucking Company. 1976. Dir. Joe Gage.

LA Tool and Die. 1979. Dir. Joe Gage.

Irony Inc.: Parodic-Doc Horror and *The Blair Witch Project*

Jordan Lavender-Smith, City University of New York, USA

Though parody may once have been regarded as a destabilizing, progressive mode of expression, recent work on the subject by Linda Hutcheon, Frederic Jameson, and Margaret Rose points to parody's political flexibility, its potential -- both intrinsically and practically -- to substantiate as much as subvert its targeted text. Additionally, parody has conventionally been understood as an elitist genre, one that requires both a familiarity with cultural texts and a well-honed receptiveness towards irony and gaps in signification. As both a film and a marketing event, *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) doesn't simply challenge or question these traditional assumptions about parody; rather, it provides a striking example of how far parody might go towards reestablishing authority, both formally and socially, in popular culture. Unlike those of comedic mock-documentaries, audiences of fake-documentary horror films are not necessarily required to delineate between the film's 'fact' and 'fiction'. If viewers decode the movie as fake, they are 'in on the joke'; if they accept the film as real, they actualize the genre's claim to 'horror'. Beginning with the assessment that horror has proven a viable genre for the fake-documentary to flourish, I argue that we should avoid the misleading moniker 'mock-documentary' to describe this recent cycle of films. If we instead consider them*parodic* documentaries (or 'parodic-docs'), we do them more descriptive justice, both in terms of genre and social significance. After reviewing Linda Hutcheon's theory of parody, I explore the formal and social implications of *The Blair Witch Project*, the most critically and commercially successful horror fake-documentary to date [1]. This success, I contend, indicates audiences' desire for a new, self-reflexive form of realism. Furthermore, just as the film parodies documentary, Artisan's marketing campaign parodies traditional approaches to selling cinema, underscoring an uneasy relationship between consumers and commercial culture. If the movie resembles great works of postmodern fiction and film, the marketing materials highlight the "culture's state of 'ironic supersaturation'" (Harries, 2000: 3), and though the corporate co-opting of "progressive" ironic distance is not especially new, the success of *The Blair Witch Project* exemplifies this tendency to such a degree, and in such a new genre, that the event shouldn't go unnoticed. The fake-documentary's most recent manifestations in horror point to the fundamental distinction between satire and parody, ridicule and weaponry, outlined by Hutcheon. The dangers of conflating satire and parody, or 'mock-' and 'parodic', correspond to the hazards of assuming that change initiated by self-reflection is necessarily socially progressive.

In *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms*, Hutcheon challenges conventional conceptions of parody, suggesting that "parody changes with culture" and that the term's connotative attachment to ridicule fails to account for the critical attitudes modern parodists often convey (2000: xi-xii). Hutcheon promotes a broad definition of parody that can account for the genre's myriad attitudes, [2] or what Hutcheon calls parody's 'ethos', in actual artistic

practice. Parody is a "form of repetition with ironic critical distance, marking difference rather than similarity" (2000: xii). A "bitextual synthesis," parody is "not parasitic in any way," though its inherent "critical distance" has "always permitted satire to be so effectively deployed through [parody's] textual forms" (2000: xiii, xiv). Satire's target is located outside of what we traditionally consider textuality (social and political reality), whereas parody's target is textual, "less an aggressive than a conciliatory rhetorical strategy, building upon more than attacking its other, while still retaining its critical distance" (2000: 43; 1985: xiv). [3] For Frederic Jameson, this tendency to "build upon" is a shortcoming of contemporary art; devoid of satire, postmodern parody is 'blank,' and it's better characterized as pastiche -- imitative and neutral (1991: 17). In both the film and event, the various parodic agendas of *The Blair Witch Project* challenge Jameson's conclusions. The film itself is thoroughly imitative of documentary, and yet the effect of this imitation is horror -- a gesture Jameson might appreciate. The marketing of the film, however, spotlights Hutcheon's more expansive (though perhaps more theoretically modest) proposal of parody-in-practice, in which parody is the "inscription of continuity and change" (1985: 36), "endowed with the power to renew", though "it need not do so" (1985: 115). Parody is inherently a "double-voiced discourse" (Bakhtin, 1981: 324), and total subversion of its subject is always elusive; after all, "parodic art both deviates from an aesthetic norm and includes that norm within itself as backgrounded material. Any real attack would be self-destructive" (Hutcheon, 1985: 44). Even if Hutcheon's description accounts for parody's elasticity, *A Theory of Parody* doesn't go far enough in emphasizing how corporatized parody is today, or how mainstream the 'subversive' rhetorical mode of irony has become. Still, Hutcheon provides a conceptual framework with which we can sort out the film and event's simultaneously progressive and regressive impulses.

Hutcheon's theory and definition of parody corresponds to a descriptive theory and definition of the fake-documentary, when we consider the genre's modern practices. Situated within the ever-expanding field of 'mockumentary studies', I hope to provide a critical addition to Craig Hight and Jane Roscoe's valuable 2001 study, *Faking It: Mock-Documentary and the Subversion of Factuality*, in which the authors defend the prefix 'mock-' to describe these films. For Hight and Roscoe, the term "mock-documentary" underscores the genre's "origins in copying a pre-existing form, in an effort to construct (or more accurately, reconstruct) a screen form with which the audience is assumed to be familiar" (2001: 1). Moreover, they contend that the prefix is especially appropriate considering

> the other meaning of the word 'mock' (to subvert or ridicule by imitation) suggests something of this screen form's parodic agenda towards the documentary genre. This is an agenda which . . . is inevitably constructed (however inadvertently by some filmmakers) from mock-documentary's increasingly sophisticated appropriation of documentary codes and conventions. (Ibid.)

However, as Hutcheon clarifies, a "parodic agenda" would not call for "subversion" or "ridicule," but rather, critical distance. It is, therefore, important to note that the fictional documentary does not necessitate mockery or condescension

towards documentary film. In practice, the parodic documentary might borrow, imitate, and incorporate documentary for entertainment's sake or to appropriate its presupposed veracity (*Cloverfield* [2008]); or, it might challenge documentary's presumed factuality without necessarily *mocking* the tradition (*The Blair Witch Project*). In practice, the fake-documentary corresponds to the ethos of parody, to parody's full "range of intent -- from the ironic and playful to the scornful and ridiculing" -- as well as to parody's function as "imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text" (Hutcheon, 1985: 6). Of course, this genre's fictional status accounts for the 'inversion' parody requires. Hight and Roscoe's "*subversion* of factuality" suggests, according to the *OED*, the "demolition" of factuality, as opposed to the "reversal of relations" between "fact" and "fiction." In parodic-doc practice, the aesthetics and conventions of "fact" are not necessarily "mocked" or dismissed, but rather transgressed (in a variety of ways), while always reauthorized.

Granted, the prefix 'mock-' fits the attitude towards television documentaries and the newsreel footage permeating a film like Woody Allen's *Zelig* (1983). Though we probably wouldn't read Allen's film as derisive towards Zelig, we might appreciate the film as a satiric parody of media practices. Whether Christopher Guest is mocking people who take dog shows seriously, or whether he is denigrating a director and industry that would cater to such people (or perhaps doing both), the term 'mock-' certainly helps describe the critical attitude towards the subjects of *Best in Show* (2000), as it does for nearly all of Guest's work [4]. But again, as Hutcheon points out, "criticism need not be present in the form of ridiculing laughter for this to be called parody", and the parodic-doc need not mock its targeted text or subject (1985: 6). *Man Bites Dog* (1992) is a parody of documentary -- probably even a satiric parody -- but the film's tone is hardly the 'mocking' ethos of much of Guest's oeuvre. When we consider *Cloverfield*, a film even less concerned with 'subverting' documentaries' claims of verisimilitude, the 'mock-' prefix is counter-productive and falsely suggests a mocking ethos; the term misrepresents the effects of sustained imitation in *Cloverfield*, and it trivializes the serious critical positions in *Man Bites Dog* and *The Blair Witch Project*.

Recently, horror films have rivaled comedies' commercial success at incorporating the fictional documentary and the aesthetics often associated with documentary into their generic economy. [5] Similar to the conflation between satire and parody, the connotative baggage of the prefix 'mock-' to describe this new class of horror film (and this new species of "fictional documentary") mischaracterizes directors' critical attitudes towards their targeted sets of conventions. Gerd Bayer writes that "mockumentaries should be thought of as meta-documentaries that criticize the generic conventions and discursive expectations viewers bring to the question of truthfulness in visual media" (2006: 171). Though Bayer's suggestion that all 'mockumentaries' are essentially meta-documentaries goes far towards expanding the connotative field for these parodic-docs, in *The Blair Witch Project* and *Cloverfield* the parodic ethos is more obviously incorporation, imitation, and reverence for documentary aesthetics than a critical denunciation of "truthfulness in visual media". These films are essentially parodic because of their inherent fictionality, but they also bank on the audience's tendency to associate documentary aesthetics with reality, thus undermining critics' suggestion

that parody has "an inevitable satiric impulse" (Harries, 2000: 6). Some parodies "use the parodied text as a target" and some "use it as a weapon" (Yunck as cited in Hutcheon, 1985: 52). [6] The *Mondo Cane* (1962) and *Faces of Death* (1978) series imitate documentaries' "look of truth" to penetrate the desensitized minds of viewers capable of watching "any evisceration disinterestedly" (Banash, 2004: 121, 112).

Likewise, decoding procedures are often effectually different for viewers of parodic-doc horror than they are for the comedic mock-doc. The viewer who fails to recognize the consistently perfect camera placement in *Mondo Cane* and *Faces of Death* isn't 'in on the joke'. However, unlike the comedic mock-doc, this unsophisticated witness is, in many ways, the genre's *ideal* viewer. That is, the viewer who believes the images are real is the viewer most likely terrified and for whom the film is best characterized as 'horrific'. Though the naïve viewer ("who probably never existed") would find little humor in *Best in Show*, this same "mark" would find a lot of horror, perhaps even a call to action, in *The Blair Witch Project*: "for several months after the film's release, Burkittsville, the town in which its opening sequences are set, regularly received visitors and callers volunteering to join search parties looking for the missing students" (Kleinhans, 2007: 108; Walker, 2004: 164). Parodic-doc horror, in which the ideal viewer is the one that doesn't recognize the parody as such, devastates the sense that parody is an elitist genre. However, it's safe to assume that the majority of ticket-buyers (and certainly video-renters) were not naïve to *The Blair Witch Project*'s fictionality, to its being a *fake* documentary. In fact, horror fans make for famously sophisticated audiences. Nonetheless, *The Blair Witch Project*'s 'dummy' audience is just as capable of enjoying the film as the most erudite of horror fans. Although the film does contain a 'double-voiced discourse', all audiences can still take pleasure, regardless of whether or not they recognize the plurality.

Though reviewers in the popular press were often quick to claim that *The Blair Witch Project* revived the horror genre, Andrew Schopp reminds us that it was in fact the formal and commercial success of *Scream* (1996) a few years earlier that primed mass audiences for many of *The Blair Witch Project*'s self-reflexive experiments: "*Scream* also revitalized the genre by making the very conventions of the genre the subject of the film" (2004: 133). In the decade that preceded *Scream*, almost none of the fifteen most commercially successful horror films were marketed to teenagers. None of these films could rightly be called meta-cinematic, self-reflexive, or in any way radical in their narrative procedures. [7] From 1996 to 2005, however, at least thirteen of the fifteen most successful horror films were marketed directly toward teenagers (all but *Hannibal* (2001) and, perhaps, *What Lies Beneath* (2000)). Nine of the fifteen were in someway self-reflexive or narratively experimental. [8] Dimension's *Scream* paved the way for these narrative experiments; like 'mockumentary', "[meta-]films are predominately interested in questions of narrative, that is, in film's power of framing a story" (Bayer, 2006: 172). [9] I mention this not only to historicize *The Blair Witch Project*'s success, but also to underline how the low budgets and low expectations of the genre spur quick imitation and turnaround. Further, the list of the top-earning horror films from 1996-2005 highlights the studios' successes in transforming the marginal-grossers of the 1980s (the slasher film, the

horror-comedy, the meta-film) into the mainstream blockbusters of the 1990s and 2000s. *Scream* and *The Blair Witch Project* illustrated horror's proclivity for formal innovation, but they also proved to studio executives that such innovations can be very profitable, especially in a culture in which younger audiences are increasingly cynical about any realism that isn't self-reflexive.

In *Scream*, horror's "formulaic conventions that allow the viewer to experience a sense of safety become the subject of the film and the means by which the killers claim victims" (Schopp, 2004: 125). The film's parodic double-coding allows *Scream* to be both a horror-film-proper and a meta-film *about* horror films, seeking to "incorporate" the text's first "critical commentary" within its narrative structure (Hutcheon, 1985: 1). Hutcheon writes that "in the optimal situation, the sophisticated subject would know the backgrounded work(s) well and would bring about a superimposition of texts" (1985: 94). This, as Hutcheon points out, "leaves both irony and parody open to accusations of elitism" (1985: 94). However, as mentioned above, horror is an especially functional genre for self-reflexivity and parody: either the viewer isn't aware of the backgrounded texts (the tropes of the slasher film in *Scream*; the *aesthetics* as opposed to *reality* of documentary in *The Blair Witch Project*) and so enjoys the film as horror/horrific (slasher film / horrific documentary), or the viewer is aware and appreciates the film for its absorption and critical commentary of the targeted text. Again, this isn't true for most comedic mock-docs. It's unlikely that Christopher Guest's 'mockumentaries' would be funny for viewers who are unaware that the films are fictional; after all, the subjects of the films' humor are often the clueless and un-ironic. Thus, horror widens parodic-docs' *demographic* appeal; speaking directly to both the horror-obsessed (whose sophistication allows a "smarty-pants pleasure") (Kleinhans, 2007: 108) and to "dummy" audiences (who, in this case, really *do* exist, and whose innocence is enviable), parodic-doc horror can be both sophisticated *and* non-elitist. Even if some horror fans have come to resent the success of *Scream* and *The Blair Witch Project*, the films still sold tickets, spawned imitations, and changed the genre and industry.

Schopp writes that the successes of *Scream* and *The Blair Witch Project* refute the reductive, old-fashioned critical depiction of horror films as "safe spaces to experience and then defuse individual or collective fears" (2004: 125). In *Scream*, the killers "date their victims, throw parties for them, sleep with them, and have no motive for killing them other than a desire to create a horror narrative that ultimately thwarts the conventions of safety by stripping away any mediation" (2004: 133). In *The Blair Witch Project*, the "cultural narratives that mediate our experience" provide a "sense of safety that loses its potency when one loses control over the mediating device" (2004: 126-127). While Schopp doesn't go quite so far as to describe these movies as real-life killer-videos like in *Videodrome* (1983)*, The Ring*(2002), or *Infinite Jest*, he does conclude that both films problematize our relationship to mediation -- that we failingly "cling to forms and conventions" and live in "a world and culture in which safe spaces simply no longer exist" (2004: 137, 140). David Foster Wallace writes that metafiction is "really nothing more than a single-order expansion of its own great theoretical nemesis, Realism: if Realism called it like it saw it, Metafiction simply called it as it saw itself see it" (1997: 34). While I don't want to discount Schopp's important conclusions (in fact, I return to a few of his

themes below), I do believe Wallace's description of metafiction accounts for these films' success with greater efficiency. In a world in which "culture has replaced nature as the subject of art" (Hughes, 1980: 324), our best form of realism is a parodic or self-reflexive realism. In the opening scene of *House on Haunted Hill* (1999), Stephen H. Price (Geoffrey Rush) shows off the newest ride at his amusement park. The thrill-seekers must take an elevator -- the new rollercoaster supposedly starts at the top. On its way up, the elevator begins shaking, speeding up and slowing down, and then plummets, finally decelerating and landing safely at its starting place. This scene emphasizes how the most potent scares for contemporary audiences are amusements that mimic typically safe spaces, such as an elevator or documentary, only to parodically *become* the sites of horror themselves.

The Blair Witch Project's artistic and commercial success speaks to this condition. Largely masquerading as a news story, Artisan's marketing campaign is just as parodic as Myrick and Sánchez's film. Like the film and the irony of its genre (the 'fictional documentary'), the marketing abounds with ironies and paradoxes as the tools and platforms of traditional advertising are utilized (TV) and expanded (Web) in very parodic and non-traditional ways. Hip to televisual sophisticates, the success of the *The Blair Witch Project* as both film and product reveals how urbane audiences don't necessarily make radical consumers. They do, however, respond to (that is, purchase) an evolved, parodic realism in both art and advertising. Parody, then, even if its strong connection to satire has historically proven politically progressive, might just as readily be a 'weapon' studios use to sell 'independent' cinema. I return to this theme below, after a reading of *The Blair Witch Project*'s formal, thematic, and parodic structures.

As *The Blair Witch Project* begins, the logo for the film's distributor and marketer, Artisan Entertainment, appears. It is followed by the logo for the production company, Haxan Films. Next comes the title of the film and then the paratext,

> In October of 1994, three student filmmakers disappeared in the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland while shooting a documentary.
>
> A year later their footage was found.

The movie's opening titles index the movie as 'found footage'. The first shot is of Heather, the director of a documentary project intent on uncovering the truth behind the 'Blair Witch legend'. We learn that Heather, Josh, and Mike have two cameras for recording their documentary, one black-and-white 16mm and one color video camcorder. The film's first four cuts all contain camcorder footage and seem to be the result of Mike or Heather pushing the record or pause button. However, the fifth and sixth cuts alternate between cameras -- introducing a new editing presence. Considering Heather, Mike, and Josh all end up missing or dead, nothing in the narrative accounts for these cuts, unless we assume the opening titles are part of the diegesis, not a separated preface -- whoever wrote the titles must also be constructing this found footage.

From this point on, the presence-absence of this diegetic editor is pervasive. Schopp writes that "the film contains footage from two cameras, one color and one black and white; therefore, someone has clearly edited the footage to-gether" (2004: 136). He continues, "this may seem like a minor point," and "the average viewer" probably doesn't "consider this fact" (Ibid.). Though I clearly don't consider this a 'minor point' (and judging from the rest of his chapter, nei-ther does Schopp), I feel safe sharing the assumption that the average viewer might not be cognizant of the film's inscribed editor. However, this editing pres-ence-absence haunts the film's most fertile ground for parody. Soon after the crew enters the woods, Heather sits on a rock, opens a book, faces the 16mm, and begins reading a report about the Blair Witch. As she reads, the film cuts to the trees and then to Coffin Rock (where many have disappeared). The editor seems to be making a good-will effort to guess Heather's documentarian aes-thetics -- the aesthetics of voice-over and establishing shots. It helps Heather construct her documentary, but this editor knows the crew will die and that the finished product will not be the conventional voiced-over documentary Heather intends, but rather a behind-the-scenes 'making-of' account. The editor still re-lies on Heather's mediations and employs them as she intended (to build sus-pense about the Blair Witch), anticipating that the aesthetics affect the audi-ence: the voice-over and establishing shots perform the "epistephilic" function Bill Nichols characterizes as one of documentaries' attractions, actualizing "a dy-namic empirical 'reality' that is culturally validated" (Bayer, 2006: 167). How-ever, the editor *re*codes these conventions, thereby offering a narrative position superior to Heather's -- one that is invisible, unknowable, and inextricably linked to the deaths of the student filmmakers. Thus, the editor borrows Heather's con-servative cinematic aesthetics ironically, and it replaces the traditional documen-tary of voice-over (there are titles, why couldn't there be a voice-over?) with an 'immediate' meta-documentary about the crew's breakdown. However, even in the absence of voice-over and the more representational mediated aesthetics, this editor still cuts the footage and presents the text at the beginning of the film. On the one hand, this outside editing transgresses Heather's methods of mediation; yet, on the other hand, by including its *own* forms of mediation -- the cuts and titles alongside Heather's original failed-documentary footage -- the editor also reinforces the inevitability of mediation. For Hutcheon, this character-izes the formal paradox of parody (as opposed to the social paradox, which I discuss below):

> the recognition of the inverted world still requires a knowledge of the or-der of the world which it inverts and, in a sense, incorporates. The moti-vation and the form of the carnivalesque are both derived from authority: the second life of the carnival has meaning only in relation to the official first life. (1985: 74)

Similarly, the subversive ethos of the editor (the 'second life') are only discerni-ble after the editor constructs Heather's epistephilic ethos (the 'first life').

During the film's climax, as Heather and Mike come across a dilapidated house from which they believe they hear Josh's screams (and in which we all assume the Blair Witch resides), the presence-absence of the editor becomes pervasive. Of course, both Heather and Mike are recording the experience: as they enter

the house and hurriedly search for Josh, the footage frantically vacillates between the two cameras. By imposing this drama, the editor transforms the trauma into spectacle, cinematically metaphorizing Heather and Mike's "found" fright in the name of verisimilitude. Here, the editor parodies *horror*, where previously it had parodied Heather's conceptions of *documentary*. That this is ostensibly *real* footage manufactures the critical distance of parody. Leaving it more sensationalistic than they found it, the editor simultaneously distantiates the film from horror (it's real) while authorizing its existence (it's effective). Conversely, *The Blair Witch Project* is nevertheless fiction and must, therefore, be indexed as a horror film, thereby distancing itself from documentary and 'snuff' (it isn't real) while authorizing its existence (it's effective).

As many critics have pointed out, *The Blair Witch Project* seems to endorse the idea that representational forms and technologies are incapable of generating totalizing meaning. The crew's compass, map, and written legends prove fatally insufficient. Even the cameras -- functioning properly until the film's end -- fail to capture the 'money shot' of the witch, and thus the 'making-of' and Heather's documentary are both lacking. Far from a mocking ethos, *The Blair Witch Project*'s various levels of distantiation and incorporation offer a *horrific* account of our mediated postmodern condition. The film *enacts* (as much as it *depicts*) the shortcomings of our "mimetic technologies" (Banash, 2004: 114). The simultaneous presence and absence of the editor suggests that these communicative technologies are similarly omnipotent and omni-impotent -- that we live in "a world and culture in which safe spaces simply no longer exist" (Schopp, 2004: 140). In this way, the film thematically resembles much of postmodern U.S. fiction, as characterized by contemporary novelist and essayist David Foster Wallace: "Pynchon reoriented our view of paranoia from deviant psychic fringe to central thread in the corporo-bureacratic weave; DeLillo exposed image, signal, data and tech as agents of spiritual chaos and not social order" (1997: 66). The film's success and popular reception are emblematic of another 'double-voiced discourse': the "indie-blockbuster," which offers a "false impression of the film as counter-hegemonic" (Castonguay, 2004: 66); the film's advertising campaign, promotiong the 'event' of the film, points to media conglomerations' "institutionalization of hip irony" (Wallace, 1997: 63). The distinction between *The Blair Witch Project* and the works of Guest or Allen sheds light on parody's (and thus, the fake-documentary's) range of intent. Similarly, the distinction between the film and its marketing illuminates parody's political flexibility, showcasing Wallace's premise that:

> television has pulled the old dynamic of reference and redemption inside-out: it is now *television* that takes elements of the *postmodern* -- the involution, the absurdity, the sardonic fatigue, the iconoclasm and rebellion -- and bends them to the ends of spectation and consumption. (1997: 64)

Even if *The Blair Witch Project* "is virtually unprecedented in its organization and coordination" of marketing materials (Walker, 2004: 173), I make the traditional assumption that advertising campaigns are auxiliary and that audiences aren't required to consume such materials in order to appreciate the film. Consider, for example, this brief chronicle of the film's success: *The Blair Witch Project* has the greatest revenue-to-budget ratio of any movie in U.S. film history; produced

for approximately $35,000-$60,000, the film grossed $140 million domestically and $108 million in non-U.S. markets; Artisan bought Myrick and Sánchez's film at Sundance for $1.1 million. Before being swallowed up by Lionsgate, Artisan was an 'independent' studio -- not one of the majors -- though the nomenclature may be misleading. The company had acquired thousands of films from several established independent studios and production companies and had the corporate bearings to launch a $25 million multimedia marketing blitz. On July 30, 1999, *The Blair Witch Project* opened wide on 1,100 screens and doubled that number the following weekend. Though the film was produced entirely outside of the Hollywood studio system, once it was picked up at Sundance it certainly enjoyed studio-level marketing and distribution. As Castonguay points out, "it is telling in this regard that Sánchez and Myrick told the *Austin Chronicle* that they were more concerned with the film's being 'cheesed out' rather than 'sold out' by the distributor" (2004: 77). This reminds readers that the "hegemonic forces" of conglomerated media are made up of real people. They may be individuals armed with mountains of research, collectively trying to bolster the bottom-line, but we can safely assume that their consumerist aesthetics were conditioned in ways similar to those of the culture at large. The independent mavericks Myrick and Sánchez may have made a film that makes a horror out of our poly-mediated web, but that clearly doesn't prevent them from actively plugging into the network. If we read the 'found footage' disclaimer at the beginning of the film as representative of Myrick and Sánchez's radical creation, then the film's final text should be read as iconic of Artisan's ironic marketing campaign, to which Myrick and Sánchez willingly attached their film. The film's closing credits concede:

> The content of this motion picture, including all characters and elements hereof is entirely fictional, and is not based upon any actual individual or other legal entity. Any similarity to actual persons or other entities is unintended and entirely coincidental.

> For more:

> www.blairwitch.com

This text is followed by the Haxan Films logo. Finally, the Artisan logo appears. With this in mind, the 'news story' frame of the marketing campaign -- the website, missing-persons fliers, and fake-documentaries on cable television furthering the notion that this is 'found footage' --undermines the text at the end of the film ("all characters and elements hereof is entirely fictional"). Disavowing the disclaimer of fictitiousness, the diegetic editor's expansion into the film's marketing indexes the movie from horror back to documentary, further suggesting that "real" horror has no bounds. Contrarily (and I return to this irony below), it *re*-indexes the film as horror by airing the 'documentary' -- *Curse of the Blair Witch* (1999) -- not on PBS or Discovery, but on the Sci-Fi Channel. Artisan's 'news-story' frame transgresses the traditional marketing procedures of 'behind-the-scenes exclusives', while still clearly registering as a creative way to simply sell more tickets.

Citing Isuzu's irreverent "Joe Isuzu" ad campaign from the late 80s in which an "oily, Satanic-looking salesman who told whoppers about Isuzu's genuine llama-skin upholstery and ability to run on tapwater" invited consumers to "drive an Isuzu as some sort of anti-advertising statement", David Foster Wallace observes that "you can now find successful television ads that mock TV-ad conventions almost anywhere you look" (1997: 61). While Artisan's parodic marketing campaign supports Wallace's claim, and while the company's underlying motives are identical to Isuzu's, the studio also adds parodic layers to the pitch: not only does the campaign incorporate heavy doses of irony (the "educational" 'fake' documentary), but it also parodies the structure of the internet, as well as *The Blair Witch Project*'s very theme -- the center-less, shape-shifting organization of meaning in postmodern landscapes. Unlike the transparently parodic Isuzu ads, which are "utterly up-front about what TV ads are popularly despised for doing", the *Blair Witch* campaign's parodic ethos is more concerned with imitation and incorporation, requiring its viewers to be even more televisually sophisticated (Wallace, 1997: 60). The Isuzu ads invite the viewer "into an in-joke the Audience is the butt of" (1997: 61). In *The Blair Witch Project*'s marketing, hip audiences are still in on the joke; the joke is just more complicated. If the Isuzu ads are the Rodney Dangerfield of advertising, then *The Blair Witch* event is Andy Kauffman -- it carries the joke past its presumed parameters.

The Web site, Sci-Fi Channel documentary, television ads, 'missing person' fliers, and books that extend the diegetic editor's narrative; the interviews with Myrick and Sánchez that acknowledge the film as fiction; the journalistic accounts of the 'indie blockbuster' picked up by Artisan at Sundance -- all compose what Joseph Walker calls the "Blair Witch metatext", each "further fragmented by multiple perspectives, none of which can claim ultimate authority or primacy. There is no center and no predetermined point of entry" (2004: 166). In this way, the event corresponds to Bahktin's notion of heteroglossia, as well as to Deleuze's conception of the rhizome. Scholars seem to agree that Artisan's campaign created "a cultural phenomenon reminiscent of the structure of the Internet" (Keller, 2004: 55). The meta-text "is a heteroglossic space, a multimedia version of collaborative hyptertext. It is fitting that the film has been very successful on DVD, a format that allows entry at any point" (Walker, 2004: 166). Moreover, the *Blair Witch* event "recalls the nature of the typical electronic document, the hypertext, which consists of a series of documents connected to one another by links; that is, it is a text of many fragments but no whole, no master text" (Telotte, 2001: 39). Keller claims the heteroglossic event prevents the film from generating meaning on its own: "traditionally, one could count on a movie's remaining a self-contained whole. The audience is not generally required to supplement its experience in order to attain a satisfactory viewing" (2004: 54). Anecdotally, I recall attending the film during its opening weekend with three friends. Arriving after the trailers had already begun to find the theater at near capacity, we had to spread out and sit separately. My brother, a very perceptive filmgoer, knew nothing about the movie, and unlike the rest of us, hadn't noticed that the terms 'horror', 'hoax', and 'mockumentary' were being tossed around the press to describe the film; he was completely unaware that the film was fiction. After the movie, the three of us in the know were envious of my brother's naïveté: 'not being in on the joke' made for a more terrifying viewing experience. Again, this appeal to 'dummy' audiences often makes horror a per-

fect match for the fake-documentary. Nonetheless, even from radically different spectatorial positions, we all enjoyed the film as a *self-contained whole*. The inability of mimetic technologies to generate totalizing meaning, ironically, became the film's totalizing meaning. And so we understood the auxiliary texts to be just that, auxiliary, even if they're more playful and parodic than those we were accustomed to.

For Chuck Kleinhans, sleaze masquerading as documentary (think *Mondo Cane* and *Faces of Death*) is appealing because documentary's educational indeces "give us the gratification of naughty transgression in the mocking guise of epistephilic discovery" (2007: 106). Artisan provoked a much different dynamic for decoders of *The Blair Witch* event: we acted as sincere consumers under the guise of naughty transgression. We watched the documentary on the Sci-Fi Channel and deduced it as fiction from subtle cues; we scoured the online message boards and painstakingly separated the 'fact' from the 'fiction'. We were in a heteroglossic playground. We were invited "into an in-joke the Audience" was the "butt of." We were praised for "transcending the very crowd that defines" us (Wallace, 1997: 61). Castonguay concludes that, "instead of viewing these uses of the Web by *Blair Witch* fans as examples of progressive interactivity", they should be interpreted as "forms of inter-*passivity* in which Internet users actively embrace the pleasures of consumerism and celebrate the profit-driven practices of Hollywood film production and distribution" (2004: 72). Irony aside, Artisan's campaign was undeniably successful. It meta-textualized the film's horror, turning the elevator into the ride for naïve audiences, while allowing the rest of us to purchase the deconstruction of advertising.

The profit motive behind Artisan's parodies shouldn't just be read as "never far from the surface" (Walker, 2004: 174). Rather, we should interpret the economic intentions as *the* structuring order behind this 'heteroglossic' event. Considering the historical ebbs and flows of parody in art and literature, Hutcheon writes: "the Romantic rejection of parodic forms as parasitic reflected a growing capitalist ethic that made literature into a commodity to be owned by an individual" (1985: 4). Even though "culture has replaced nature as the subject of art," and even though our best form of realism today is a parodic or self-referential realism, the "capitalist ethic" of artistic copyright saves us from boundless intertextuality. A corporate body's metaphorical rendering of internet landscapes is certain to have broken links. PBS or the Discovery Channel would never air a 'documentary' like *Curse of the Blair Witch*. To prevent lawsuits, Artisan is all but required to include the disclaimer at the end of the film ("all characters and elements hereof is entirely fictional"). As much as the Blair Witch's stick-insignia comes to represent dread and fatal finality for the student filmmakers, the film's studio logos and legal-textual anchor come to symbolize the event's unifying order, the very cohesion of meaning many critics suggest doesn't exist. In the case of cross-platform, multi-million dollar marketing, we must note that even the most complexly constructed meta-textual hall of mirrors eventually meets the stone walls of legality and corporate copyright. Meta-allegorically, *we* may be lost in the woods, but we're certainly not lost to the witch. Beyond Artisan's parody of traditional marketing campaigns, the studio doesn't *embody* postmodern, heteroglossic, rhizomic, or internet states as much as it *parodies* these sets of conventions. Artisan authorizes a postmodern playground; ironically, the het-

eroglossia is born from a transparent organizing principle ($). In Deleuzian and Hutcheonian terms, the *Blair Witch* event is a tree parodying a rhizome.

"The history of media institutions" is "one of conglomeration and convergence" rather than the "supplanting of one medium by another" (Castonguay, 2004: 80). As prone to reauthorization as the most rebellious form of parody automatically is, an ad-campaign ironically distancing itself from ad-campaigns is transparently reauthorizing; it is a way of building resistance, synthesis, and evolution into the market. Artisan's commercial performance, as a parody, *did* contain a critical distance from its targeted set of conventions, and so the promotion *was* transgressive to a certain degree. But the parody's purpose is very clearly the "convergence" and "conglomeration" of irony and advertising and not the subversion or destruction of marketing. This corresponds to much of contemporary parodic practice, in which modern artists often "signal less an acknowledgement of the 'inadequacy of the definable forms' of their predecessors than their own desire to 'refunction' those forms to their own needs" (Martin as cited in Hutcheon, 1985: 4). Hutcheon contests the Russian formalist conception that parody's transformative capacity, its facility of creating new literary syntheses, entails literary improvement: even "if the forms of art *change*," Hutcheon asks, "do they really *evolve* or get better in any way?" (1985: 36). For Artisan, they absolutely do. Wallace writes that irony is "not a rhetorical mode that wears well . . . this is because irony, entertaining as it is, serves an almost exclusively negative function. It's critical and destructive, a ground-clearing" (1997: 67). Again, Artisan would probably disagree. Wallace is making the larger point that corporate interests have hijacked irony and that this spells trouble for U.S. fiction. But he sheds light on how irony, or self-reflexivity, or parody, might perform myriad social and political functions -- including hegemonic interests. The satiric ameliorations of Swift have been replaced in contemporary usage largely by corporate bodies selling, not only a deconstruction of advertising, but, as the *Blair Witch* phenomenon illustrates, a parody of postmodernism.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] *The Blair Witch Project* grossed 140M, making it the 10th-highest earner of 1999 (*Boxofficemojo.com*). Additionally, the film was very well-received by critics, earning an 85% on *Rottentomatoes.com* and 81% on *Metacritic.com* (putting it in *Metacritic*'s range of "Universal Acclaim"). Both sites are devoted to gathering various mass-media reviews of films, music, etc., scoring these productions from 1 to 100 based on the review, and then aggregating the results.

[2] Parody is "an extended form, probably a genre, rather than a technique (cf. Chambers 1974), for it has its own structural identity and its own hermeneutic function" (Hutcheon, 19)

[3] In relation to other intertextual genres and techniques, parody is "unlike more monotextual forms like pastiche that stress similarity rather than difference . . . pastiche usually has to remain within the same genre as its model, whereas parody allows for adaptation" (Hutcheon, 1985: 33, 38). Pastiche, then, will often completely absorb a set of conventions without necessarily forcing a critical distance, as opposed to parody's simultaneous distantiating-reauthorizing impulse. Further still, "unlike imitation, quotation, or even allusion, parody requires critical ironic distance" (34).

[4] Though Guest himself disdains the term: "I don't enjoy the 'mock' part of the 'mentary' . . . I think it's done in a documentary form, which allows us to work in this way, but [the designation 'mock-documentary']. . . is just a cheap way . . . to describe something" (Guest, 2003). Successively, Guest's films have moved further away from conveying what might be justifiably labeled a "mocking" ethos. The band of folk singers in *A Mighty Wind* (2003) are treated far more sentimentally and tenderly than the ridiculous and pathetic small-town theater group of *Waiting for Guffman* (1996). In this way, even Guest's films warrant a reassessment of the term "mock-documentary."

 [5] *The Village Voice* makes an off-handed reference to the "cooling trend" of the "comic mock-doc" (Ridley, 66).

[6] Hutcheon continues: "The latter is closer to the truth of modern, extended, ironic parody, while the former is what has more traditionally been considered parody" (52).

[7] The 15 most successful horror movies at the U.S. Box-Office, 1986-1995 (I'm sure some of these films might not qualify as "horror" for some readers, which only further emphasizes the paucity of viable product prior to *Scream*. In other words, the list of the fifteen most successful horror movies from 1996-2005 highlights how—after *Scream*—the industry began taking teens' reverence for horror, and experimental / self-reflexive narratives, much more seriously): 1) *Fatal Attraction* (1987), 156 Million, MPAA Rating: R. 2) *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), 130M, R. 3) *Basic Instinct* (1992), 117M, R. 4) *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), 105M, R. 5) *Sleeping with the Enemy* (1991), 101M, R. 6) *Seven* (1995), 100M, R 7) *The Hand that Rocks the Cradle* (1992), 88M, R. 8) *Aliens* (1986), 85M, R. 9) *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), 82M, R. 10) *Cape Fear* (1991), 79M, R. 11) *Wolf* (1994), 65M, R. 12) *The Witches of Eastwick* (1987), 63M, R. 13) *Flatliners* (1990), 61M, R. 14) *Misery* (1990), 61M, R. 15) *Species* (1995), 60M, R (*Boxofficemojo.com*).

[8] The fifteen most successful horror movies at the U.S. Box-Office, 1996-2005: 1) *The Sixth Sense* (1999), 293M, PG-13 (experimental narrative). 2) *The Mummy Returns* (2001), 202M, PG-13. 3) *Hannibal* (2001), 165M, R. 4) *Scary Movie* (2000), 157M, R (certainly better labeled 'comedy', I include it because it descends directly from *Scream*) (self-reflexive). 5) *What Lies Beneath* (2000),

155M, PG-13. 6) *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) (self-reflexive), 140M, R. 7) *The Ring* (2002), 129M, PG-13 (about a video that kills). 8) *Van Helsing* (2004), 120M, PG-13. 9) *Scary Movie 3* (2003) (self-reflexive), 110M, PG-13. 10) *The Grudge* (2004), 110M, PG-13. 11) *Scream* (1996) (self-reflexive), 103M, R. 12) *Scream 2* (1997) (self-reflexive), 101M, R. 13) *Sleepy Hollow* (1999), 101M, R. 14) *The Others* (2001), 96M, PG-13 (experimental narrative). 15) *Unbreakable* (2000), 95M, PG-13 (experimental narrative) (*Boxofficemojo.com*).

[9] Though we shouldn't discount the additional influences of *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and *The Usual Suspects* (1995) on recent narrative experimentation. (For more on 90's narrative experimentation, see Barker, 2008.)

References

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) Discourse in the Novel, in Michael Holquist (ed., trans.) and Caryl Emerson (trans.), *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 259-422.

Banash, David (2004) *The Blair Witch Project*: Technology, Repression, and the Evisceration of Mimesis, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 111-124.

Barker, Martin (2008) The Pleasures of Watching an 'Off-beat' Film: the Case of *Being John Malkovich*. *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and TV Studies* 11. Available at:
http://www.scope.nottingham.ac.uk/article.php?issue=11&id=1020   [Accessed on March 9, 2009]

Bayer, Gerd (2006) Artifice and Artificiality in Mockumentaries, in Gary Don Rhodes and John Parris Springer (eds.), *Docufictions: Essays on the Intersection of Documentary and Fictional Filmmaking.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co, pp. 164-178.

Castonguay, James (2004) The Political Economy of the Indie Blockbuster: Fandom, Intermediality, and *The Blair Witch Project*, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 65-85.

Guest, Christopher (2003) Interview by Charlie Rose, May 12, 2003.

Harries, Dan (2000) *Film Parody*. London: BFI.

Hight, Craig and Jane Roscoe (2001) *Faking It: Mock-Documentary and the Subversion of Factuality.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hughes, Robert (1980) *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change.* London: BBC (Quoted from Hutcheon, 1985).

Hutcheon, Linda (1985) *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Hutcheon, Linda (2000) A New Introduction, an Old Concern, Preface to the 2000 Edition of *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, pp. xi-xx.

Jameson, Frederic (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Keller, James (2004) 'Nothing That Is Not There and the Nothing That Is': Language and the Blair Witch Phenomenon, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 53-63.

Kleinhans, Chuck (2007) Pornography and Documentary: Narrating the Alibi, in Jeffrey Sconce (ed.), *Sleaze Artists: Cinema at the Margins of Taste, Style, and Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 96-120.

Martin, J.H. (1972) *Love's Fools: Aucassin, Troilus, Calisto and the Parody of the Courtly Lover*. London: Tamesis (Quoted from Hutcheon, 1985).

Moss, Stephanie (2004) *Dracula* and *The Blair Witch Project*: The Problem with Scientific Empiricism, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 197-215.

Ridley, Jim (2008) Worth the Gamble: Forget *The Grand's* Mockumentary Poker Face, *The Village Voice*, March 19-25.

Schopp, Andrew (2004) Transgressing the Safe Space: Generation X Horror in *The Blair Witch Project* and *Scream*, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 125-143.

Telotte, J.P. (2001) The *Blair Witch Project* Project: Film and the Internet. *Film Quarterly* 54 (3), pp. 32-39.

Walker, Joseph S. (2004) Mom and the Blair Witch: Narrative, Form, and the Feminine, in Sarah Lynn Higley and Andrew Weinstock (eds.), *Nothing That Is: Millennial Cinema and the Blair Witch Controversies.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 163-180.

Wallace, David Foster (1996) *Infinite Jest*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

Wallace, David Foster (1997) E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction in *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., pp. 21-82.

Yunck, J. A. (1963) The Two Faces of Parody. Iowa English Yearbook 8, pp. 29-37

Websites

Box-Office Mojo. http://www.boxofficemojo.com [Accessed March 9 2009]

Metacritic. http://www.metacritic.com [Accessed March 9 2009]

Rotten Tomatoes. http://www.rottentomatoes.com [Accessed March 9 2009]

Filmography

8MM. 1999. Dir. Joel Schumacher. Columbia Pictures.

Aliens. 1986. Dir. James Cameron. 20th Century Fox.

Basic Instinct. 1992. Dir. Paul Verhoeven. Carolco Pictures.

Best in Show. 2000. Dir. Christopher Guest. Castle Rock Entertainment.

The Blair Witch Project. 1999. Dir. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. Haxan Films.

Bram Stoker's Dracula. 1992. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. American Zoetrope / Columbia Pictures.

Cape Fear. 1991. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Amblin Entertainment.

Cloverfield. 2008. Dir. Matt Reeves. Paramount Pictures.

C'est arrivé près de chez vous (*Man Bites Dog*). 1992. Dir. Rémy Belvaux, André Bonzel, and Benoit Poelvoorde. Les Artistes Anonymes.

Curse of the Blair Witch. 1999. Dir. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. Haxan Films / Artisan Entertainment.

Faces of Death. 1978. Dir. John Alan Schwartz. F. O. D. Productions.

Fatal Attraction. 1987. Dir. Adrian Lyne. Paramount Pictures.

Flatliners. 1990. Dir. Joel Schumacher. Columbia Pictures.

The Grudge. 2004. Takashi Shimizu. Senator International / Sony Pictures.

The Hand That Rocks the Cradle. 1992. Dir. Curtis Hanson. Hollywood Pictures.

Hannibal. 2001. Ridley Scott. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM).

House on Haunted Hill. 1999. Dir. William Malone. Warner Bros.

Interview with the Vampire. 1994. Dir. Neil Jordan. Geffen Pictures.

A Mighty Wind. 2003. Dir. Christopher Guest. Castle Rock Entertainment.

Misery. 1990. Dir. Rob Reiner. Castle Rock Entertainment.

Mondo Cane. 1962. Dir. Paolo Cavara, Gualtiero Jacopetti, and Franco Prosperi. Cineriz.

The Mummy Returns. 2001. Dir. Stephen Sommers. Universal Pictures.

The Others. 2001. Dir. Alejandro Amenábar. Cruise-Wagner Productions / Dimension Films.

Pulp Fiction. 1994. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. Miramax Films.

The Ring. 2002. Dir. Gore Verbinski. DreamWorks SKG.

Scary Movie. 2000. Dir. Keenan Ivory Wayans. Dimension Films.

Scary Movie 3. 2003. Dir. David Zucker. Dimension Films.

Scream. 1996. Dir. Wes Craven. Dimension Films.

Scream 2. 1997. Dir. Wes Craven. Dimension Films.

Seven. 1995. Dir. David Fincher. New Line Cinema.

The Silence of the Lambs. 1991. Dir. Jonathan Demme. Orion Pictures.

The Sixth Sense. 1999. Dir. M. Night Shyamalan. Hollywood Pictures.

Sleeping with the Enemy. 1991. Dir. Joseph Ruben. 20th Century Fox.

Sleepy Hollow. 1999. Dir. Tim Burton. Paramount Pictures.

Species. 1995. Dir. Roger Donaldson. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM).

Unbreakable. 2000. Dir. M. Night Shyamalan. Touchstone Pictures.

The Usual Suspects. 1995. Dir. Bryan Singer. PolyGram Filmed Entertainment.

Vacancy. 2007. Dir. Nimród Antal. Screen Gems.

Van Helsing. 2004. Stephen Sommers. Universal Pictures.

Videodrome. 1983. Dir. David Cronenberg. Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC).

Waiting for Guffman. 1996. Dir. Christopher Guest. Castle Rock Entertainment.

What Lies Beneath. 2000. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. DreamWorks SKG.

The Witches of Eastwick. 1987. Dir. George Miller. Warner Bros. Pictures.

Wolf. 1994. Dir. Mike Nichols. Columbia Pictures.

Zelig. 1983. Dir. Woody Allen. Orion Pictures Corporation.

Blank page

Part IV:
Transnational Screen Cultures

A Marxist's Gotta Do What a Marxist's Gotta Do: Political Violence on the Italian Frontier

Austin Fisher, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

"Words are of no use to us any more", announces a student revolutionary, armed to the teeth. "The time has come to respond to violence with violence. To respond any other way is cowardice". Though the narrative of Sergio Corbucci's *Vamos a matar, compañeros* (1970, henceforth *Compañeros*) places us amidst the turmoil of the 1910-1920 Mexican Revolution, both the political subtext and the authorial voice arise resolutely from the aftermath of 1968. Amidst the remains of a shelled church, an impromptu debating chamber unmasks this contemporaneity in conspicuous terms as a student guerrilla cell assesses the efficacy of armed insurrection. For all its comic-book exuberance, slapstick humour and far-from-subtle allegory, *Compañeros* fuses oppositions and preoccupations at the heart of New Left politics towards the end of the 1960s, which are articulated and symbolised in the sequence cited above. Indeed, the film's subtext, debates but ultimately endorses political violence.

Far from a lone voice, *Compañeros* was the culmination of a militant trend arising from within the Italian (or "Spaghetti") Western genre, beginning with Damiano Damiani's *Quien sabe?* (1966), and continuing through Sergio Sollima's *La resa dei conti* (1967) and *Corri, uomo, corri* (1968), Corbucci's own *Il mercenario* (1968) and Giulio Petroni's *Tepepa* (1969). Four of these originated from the celebrated militant screenwriter of *The Battle of Algiers* (1966), Franco Solinas. As we shall see, his committed adherence to key tenets of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) imbues this sub-genre with a militant anti-imperialism and a bravura rejection of US hegemony. Each of these films engages with a turbulent Mexico of the popular imagination, and each narrates the politicisation of a peasant hero who realises that intervention by the West in native affairs must be rejected with violence. In both of Sollima's contributions, for example, the knife-wielding Mexican peon Cuchillo Sanchez (played with vaudevillian panache by Tomas Milian) kills gun-toting gringos in symbolic duels enacting the revenge of the oppressed peasant on the Western world. The use of revolutionary Mexico gives these film-makers free reign to engage with the cult of Third Worldism: one of a precious few reference points uniting the disparate factions of the New Left in the late 1960s.

Overlaid directly onto these narratives are arguments preoccupying contemporary New Left thought pertaining to armed insurrection and responses to state violence. This group of films was released in a period both encompassing the rise and fall of the international student movement, and immediately preceding the outbreak of terrorism from within factions of the extra-parliamentary Italian Left. Accordingly, echoes of Fanon, Debray, Mao and Guevara merge with overt references to ongoing social tensions throughout the West. It is no coincidence, for example, that the proclamation by Corbucci's armed students with which this paper opens bears a striking resemblance to West German insurgent Gudrun Ensslin's declaration from 1967: "This fascist state means to kill us all [...] vio-

lence is the only way to answer violence" (Varon, 2004: 39). Equally, the cognitive paradigm of Third World insurrection provided a key legitimating context for violence amongst the more extreme New Left factions: a preoccupation reflected in the militant rejection of Occidental capitalism running through the films already discussed, and ostensibly placing them at odds with the very concept of the "West". Nowhere, it would seem, could the appellation "Western" be more incongruously employed.

It is, however, my contention in this paper that these films are ineluctably entwined with the traditions of Hollywood's hallowed founding text. I shall argue that this militant sub-genre's engagement with the Western's pre-existing codes is characterised, not by a reductive process of rejection, but by a complex one of cross-cultural semantic negotiation. The filmmakers appropriate and utilise the inherent preoccupations of the Hollywood paradigm, identifying therein apposite means through which to disseminate their insurrectionary polemics. In so re-inscribing the received signifiers of mass culture, their films reflect processes of creative participation in the meanings of transatlantic artefacts which characterised much Italian cultural discourse of this era. Most specifically, we shall see that a preoccupation with the ethical and moral implications of lethal force was the foremost point of contact between the Western genre and the Italian New Left of the late 1960s.

A Serious Orientation to the Problem of Violence

"A non-violent western", writes Philip French, "is as odd, as unthinkable, as a vegetarian steakhouse" (French, 2005: 69). From the bar-room brawl to the lynch mob, the bank robbery to the showdown, the burnt-out homestead to the cavalry charge, the genre has retained throughout its development memorable, spectacular and characteristic imagery overwhelmingly dominated by wounding, trauma and death. The earliest iconic sequence in the cinematic Western is a close-up from Edwin S. Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), of an outlaw shooting his six-gun directly at the camera. Narratively extraneous, the shot serves exclusively to emphasise both the visceral excitement of cinema, and the suitability of dime novel Western action for the medium. In this genre violence acts variously as a locus for regeneration, a moral touchstone and a rite of passage. In short, it is the single most consistent and defining preoccupation informing the heart of the Western.

When Robert Warshow helped to initiate scholarly criticism of the genre in 1954, he identified its appeal as lying in its "serious orientation to the problem of violence such as can be found almost nowhere else in [American] culture" (Warshow, 1954: 121). In contrast to the amoral brutality of the gangster film, Warshow maintains that the Western offers both a solution to the modern world's obfuscation of the ethics of violence, and an outlet for audiences' desire for violent action, while expounding values of honour and self-discipline. The Western hero, though inhabiting a morally ambiguous position as a killer, only resorts to violence when all other avenues are exhausted; in other words, when he's "gotta do what he's gotta do":

> The gun tells us that he lives in a world of violence, and even that he 'be-
> lieves in violence'. But the drama is one of self-restraint: the moment of
> violence must come in its own time and according to its special laws, or
> else it is valueless (Warshow, 1954: 123).

In 1954, this version of the Western's ethical standpoint, handed down from
Owen Wister, William S. Hart and Zane Grey, remained broadly true. Though
Warshow expressed distaste for the recently-released films *High Noon* (1952)
and *Shane* (1952), both adhere to this archetype whereby latent violence is
barely contained until the explosive finale.

Running through the Western from its inception, indeed, is a dialectic debating
the ethics of violence. In Owen Wister's 1902 novel *The Virginian* (commonly
viewed as a founding text of the cinematic genre), for example, Judge Henry
justifies lynching as "the fundamental assertion of self-governing men" (Wister,
1949: 436). In John Ford's *Stagecoach* (1939), the Ringo Kid's act of triple
homicide is deemed legitimate by a higher moral code than institutional law,
while Ethan Edwards confronts his own lust for vengeance when pursuing Chief
Scar in *The Searchers* (1955). This preoccupation with the moral implications of
lethal force can be seen in its clearest terms in an early scene from Henry King's
Jesse James (1939). Here, upon hearing that their mother has been killed by a
railroad agent, Jesse and Frank James are impassive. After exchanging a brief
look with his younger brother, Frank (Henry Fonda) calmly exclaims: "Well, let's
go". Jesse (Tyrone Power), equally composed, rejects his fiancée's plea for him
not to follow. "I've got to", he declares, before riding into Liberty, Missouri and
gunning down the man responsible in broad daylight. In that brief, understated
exchange is distilled a moral code so self-evident and so ubiquitous to the West-
ern that is does not warrant articulation: since institutional law cannot be
trusted, such an outrage must be avenged with violence, and no feminine pleas
for pacifism can deter the Western hero from this masculine duty.

The genre frequently debates the legitimacy of violence, but it is notable that,
exceptions such as *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1943) and *Johnny Guitar* (1954) not-
withstanding, Hollywood Westerns rarely conclude that it is something to be
condemned prior to the 1960s. Where institutional justice fails, the individual
hero is duty-bound to take the law into his own hands, and use violence of equal
or greater force than that of his enemy. Moreover, each of the above examples
of "justified" violence is committed against the wishes of a woman who stands
for love, forgiveness and compassion. Jane Tompkins identifies in the literary
West handed down from Wister and Grey a debunking of the femininity and paci-
fism which proliferated in evangelical popular fiction in the mid nineteenth cen-
tury. As a re-assertion of masculine identity in a world increasingly dominated by
emasculating modern ethics, "the Western hero commits murder [...] in the
name of making his town/ranch/mining claim safe for women and children. But
the discourse of love and peace which women articulate is never listened to"
(Tompkins, 1992: 41). Jim Kitses disputes Tompkins's claim that women are
marginalised in the Western, since the films of John Ford frequently subsume
motifs of melodrama, positioning women at the genre's centre (Kitses, 2004:
17). Though Ford's films perhaps complicate Tompkins's argument, however, the
fact remains that in each of *Stagecoach* (1939), *My Darling Clementine* (1946),

Fort Apache (1948), *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949), *The Searchers* (1955) and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), women operate as domesticated, peaceful counterpoints to men who understand the necessity of violence in the West.

Both Warshow (1954) and Lee Clark Mitchell (1996) similarly assert the genre's central preoccupation to be that of defining and constructing masculinity through violent trauma. Jenni Calder also highlights a common link between violence and virility in Western fiction, citing the phallic symbolism of the sidearm in Jack Schaefer's 1953 novel *Shane*: "Belt and holster and gun […] these were not things he was wearing or carrying. They were part of him, part of the man, of the full sum of that integrate force that was Shane" (Schaefer, 1967: 61). "The Western would fail in its appeal", writes Calder, "if it were not continually suggesting a creative force […] The frontier must not only be tamed but be populated. The man must not only be skilful with his weapons he must be virile" (Calder, 1974: 114). Masculine violence is therefore frequently located as a cleansing entity, while pacifism, though morally pure, is shown to be naive and feminine. When Marian objects to the violent ways of the hero in George Stevens's cinematic version of *Shane* (1953), he counters that "a gun is a tool… no better, no worse than any other tool -- an axe, a shovel, or anything". The six-gun therefore works for the same ends as do the film's sharecroppers to whom Joe Starrett proclaims: "What we want to grow up is families, to grow 'em good and grow 'em up strong".

As is indicated by this progressive entity, however, the genre's engagement with the ethics of brute force runs far deeper than a mere appeal to restraint and masculine duty. From the founding of the nation, the American West had been imbued with valorised notions of national identity pertaining to a regenerative formulation of US exceptionalism. Violence had long acted as the touchstone for this purgative ideological function: an agent of renewal continually reinventing the American imaginary. As the Puritan "errand" to shine a light into the wilderness evolved into a narrative of inexorable progress, the destruction of savagery in the name of the infant nation became a dominant tenor of the Frontier myth. The West became, in the words of John Cawelti, the place where "civilized man once again encountered his savage and barbarian roots and after engaging in violence recovered the original potency that he had somehow lost in the development of civilization" (Cawelti, 1999: 63). On the very eve of cinema's appropriation of the myth, so too Wister's *The Virginian* synthesises themes established by dime novels and historical romances towards the end of the nineteenth century to assert a personally and socially regenerative force for Eastern sensibilities. Wister, like his friend Theodore Roosevelt, diagnosed *fin de siècle* social ills through an appeal to the rugged individualism which "won the West" for white America. At every turn, and in varying guises, it was violence which provided the myth with its moral elixir.

Richard Slotkin demonstrates that this progressive imperative attached to the genre's violence found a singular pertinence in the post-war era, when the Western became co-opted into the task of redefining the USA's global status amidst the tensions of the Cold War. The motif of regeneration through violence -- long presented as "an essential and necessary part of the process through

which American society was established and through which its democratic values are defended and enforced" (Slotkin, 1992: 352) -- here offered a rationalisation for the nation's emergence as superpower, bastion of freedom, and "global sheriff". It was specifically in the context of US involvement in Korea and Vietnam, for example, that skirmishes south of the Mexican border (and the crossing of that border by white adventurers) took on their foremost allegorical inflection, in such films as *Rio Grande* (1950), *Vera Cruz* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (1960). These last two films in particular display key features of what Slotkin dubs the "counterinsurgency scenario" (Slotkin, 1992: 405): benighted peasants in an underdeveloped foreign land relying upon US technical and military expertise to overthrow native tyranny. As America sought to come to terms with a changing international landscape, morally regenerative, proportionate violence exercised in the name of freedom was not to be restricted to its internal Frontier.

Yet the self-confidence of America's most hallowed popular myth was not long for this world. In the course of the 1960s, while violence continued to proliferate throughout the genre, it was precisely this sense of moral certitude in its regenerative value that was steadily evacuated from the Hollywood Western. By the decade's end, what Richard Schickel dubbed the "dirty Western" (Beale, 1972: 27) had become a dominant trend in the genre's dynamics, in such films as *The Wild Bunch* (1969), *Doc* (1971) and *The Hunting Party* (1971). No longer a last resort, in these films violence became a means of survival in an unforgiving world, as the Western's position as a paragon of regeneration and self-restraint became increasingly ambiguous. Pauline Kael was unequivocal in identifying a key factor in these transformations:

> It was the spaghetti Westerns… that first eliminated the morality-play dimension and turned the Western into pure violent reverie [...] What made these [...] popular was that they stripped the Western form of its cultural burden of morality. They discarded its civility along with its hypocrisy. In a sense, they liberated the form: what the Western hero stood for was left out, and what he embodied (strength and gun power) was retained. Abroad, that was probably what he had represented all along (Kael, 1974: 172).

Throughout the second half of the 1960s, Rome's Cinecittà and Elios studios produced their own Western films on a truly industrial scale, peaking at seventy three pictures in the year 1968 alone. Only a fraction of these often gleefully violent imports were released on the US market (the peak year, again 1968, saw fifteen arrive on American shores) [1], the most visible of which indeed empty the Western of its ideological imperative in the fostering of a US-oriented polity. Duccio Tessari's *Una pistola per Ringo* (1965), for example, presents a "West" whose narrative, imagery and central oppositions are entirely in keeping with cinematic traditions handed down from Hollywood, yet whose sardonic tenor robs these of their received ideological purpose. In a clear nod to *Shane*, a peaceful community finds itself in need of assistance from a deadly gunfighter whose lifestyle places him outside that society's accepted morality. In Tessari's West, however, there is no "serious orientation to the problem of violence". Indeed, violence is not a "problem" at all. Unlike Shane, Ringo sees shooting people in the back to be common sense, while his role-model is his father, who

switched sides in the Civil War when the South started losing. Kael's take on this Italian genre's predilection for evacuating the Western of its moral weight is a critical cliché, but is not entirely without foundation. In the majority of these films, aspects of the Hollywood genre with appeal to local tastes -- banditry, stylish gunfighters, disrespect for authority, explosive violence -- are enlarged, while their ideological accompaniments -- the winning of the West, the Manifest Destiny of a nation -- are jettisoned. There can, moreover, be no doubt that this paradigm exerted a considerable stylistic and cultural transatlantic impact. Sergio Leone's "Dollars" trilogy in particular displayed the internationally lucrative potential of this baroque, nihilistic Roman "West".

The implication behind Kael's argument, however -- that the removal of violence's moral imperative in the Hollywood Western was largely a result of the Italian influx -- is questionable to say the least. Firstly, a considerably broader shift in the genre's narrative and ideological trajectory was evident long before the Roman conveyor belt reached America. In a cycle of earlier Westerns, such as *The Naked Spur* (1953), *Man of the West* (1958) and *One-Eyed Jacks* (1960), violence was brutal, degrading, and unlikely to provide a force for redemption or regeneration. Furthermore, the steady erosion of the genre's traditional validation of violent acts which took place in the 1960s cannot be separated from the crises in US self-righteousness which characterised the later Vietnam War era. Tom Engelhardt (1995) writes that in the course of this conflict the ubiquitous "victory culture", which had informed US identity since the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, evaporated in the moral quagmire of escalation, napalm and the My Lai massacre. That this narrative of righteousness had changed hands is at its most palpable in the counterculture's appropriation of the Western genre itself. Such acerbic condemnations of white America as Ralph Nelson's *Soldier Blue* (1970) and Arthur Penn's *Little Big Man* (1970) debunk hitherto dominant mythologies of regenerative violence, substituting them with radical notions of genocidal impulses amongst the ruling elite. So too, with his literally blood-soaked depictions of slaughter in *The Wild Bunch*, Sam Peckinpah attempted to expose the innate brutality of technocratic advanced capitalism. Though Western violence increased markedly in volume and intensity in 1960s Hollywood, and was emancipated from its traditionally progressive function, by no means therefore was it emptied of moral significance.

Building on Warshow's seminal hypothesis of 1954, Mitchell asserts that the Western's inherent concern with testing the legitimacy of violence, far from being rendered meaningless, took on added significance in 1960s America (Mitchell, 1996: 226). As television relayed the repression of civil rights activists, urban riots, assassinations and the carnage of Vietnam into American homes, violence rose to the top of political and ethical agendas. Films which confronted the genre's traditional celebration of violent spectacle directly, through increased brutality or parody, Mitchell holds, resonated with this new context. What is most interesting in Mitchell's hypothesis, for the purposes of this paper, is the source material from which he extrapolates this argument concerning American society: *The Wild Bunch* and Sergio Leone's *Per un pugno di dollari* (1964). Leone's film was released in America in February 1967, as tensions over Vietnam were taking on an ever greater intensity, and around the corner lay the campus occupations and increasing political violence of the late 1960s. Given the inter-

nationally-facing nature of Leone's output, it should perhaps come as no surprise to find his films being discussed in such a context, and Mitchell's emphasis is quite properly on the appeal of such films' violence to an American public.

What Mitchell largely disregards, however, is the Italian context from which Leone's film emerged. When he does address this, the argument becomes strained: "Leone adopts (as one might have imagined from an Italian leftist) a fiercely liberal position" (Mitchell, 1996: 252). There are two suspect claims here, neither of which should be taken at face value. Firstly, though he had grown up in a left-wing household and described himself as "a disillusioned socialist" (Frayling, 2005: 82), Leone was not, beyond offering the occasional platitude in interviews [2], a politically-committed "leftist" director. He was in fact scathing in his contempt for "so-called 'political' or 'intelligent' Westerns" (Frayling, 1993: 29), accusing such politicisation to be "typical of the European mentality; our false intellectualising" (De Fornari, 1997: 23). Furthermore, Mitchell's statement presupposes that Italian leftists would be inclined to adopt a liberal position concerning the issue of violence in society [3]. This, as will become clear, is far from the truth.

If the Western's innate engagement with the issue of violence found a new relevance in 1960s America, it follows that a similar process of identification might occur in countries whose awareness of US culture had grown exponentially but whose political traditions were divergent. Contemporaneous and equivalent social tensions in Italy to those in America increasingly elevated issues surrounding violence in the public eye as the 1960s progressed. In both nations, students revolted in 1968 while a militant New Left debated the efficacy of armed insurrection against the state; in both too, outrage would eventually spill over into violence culminating in the formation of clandestine terrorist cells; and in both, the innate preoccupations of the Western genre became co-opted into this larger discourse by filmmakers with radical sympathies. Slotkin writes that a mystique of regenerative violence akin to that traditionally expounded by the Western found an enthusiastic, if ideologically contrary, audience amongst the more revolutionary factions of the American New Left (Slotkin, 1992: 618). Though the incendiary rhetoric of the "Weathermen" lent the US counterculture a confrontational appearance from 1969 onwards, however, the polemics of Penn, Nelson and Peckinpah are of pacifism and disgust at the violence perpetrated in the name of white America. They do not offer programmatic statements that such imperialist violence should be met with insurgent violence, and here Damiani, Sollima, Petroni and Corbucci depart radically from Hollywood's revisionism. Insurgent violence in Italy, when it broke out in the early 1970s, was of an altogether more extreme nature than that of the Weathermen. Analogously, and portentously, so too the preceding sub-genre of countercultural Italian Westerns endorsed ideologies of a considerably more brutal temperament than did its US counterpart.

Terrorist Parables Way out West

Both Damiani's *Quien sabe?* (1966) and Petroni's *Tepepa* (1969) end on bravura, triumphalist assertions of ascendant Third World militancy. The hallmarks of screenwriter Franco Solinas [4] are conspicuous in the parallels with his later,

more revered, work *Queimada*(1969). Each film narrates the presumptuous intrusion into a Third World revolution of a Western interloper, who befriends then betrays the native hero. Each also adheres meticulously to the central tenets of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), in particular by affirming Fanon's thesis that "violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction" (Fanon, 2001: 74). When Chuncho, the Mexican hero of *Quien sabe?*, finally decides to kill North American counterinsurgent Bill Tate, the act of violence effects a jubilant political awakening. He strips from his newly-acquired Western clothes and implores a beggar to "buy dynamite". The parallel denouement of *Tepepa* posits an even more explicitly regenerative force to lie behind native violence. The infant Paquito kills his erstwhile companion, arrogant Briton Dr. Henry Price, and the scene cuts to a battalion of Mexicans led by this now politicised child insurgent. The smiling face of the martyred revolutionary Tepepa becomes superimposed over the triumphant scene, affirming both his posthumous apotheosis and the rebirth of the insurrection under a new generation. Paquito's stern-faced explanation for his revelatory act of violence signals the confrontational tenor towards the industrial West evident throughout these films: "That gringo didn't like Mexico".

By replicating the gringo-in-Mexico schema and switching the narrative point-of-view to the Mexican subaltern, the militant sub-genre of which *Quien sabe?* and *Tepepa* are key players directly and antagonistically reverses the Hollywood trend dubbed by Slotkin the "counterinsurgency scenario" (Slotkin, 1992: 405). The allegorical uses of revolutionary Mexico and of Westerners' adventures south of the border, as symbols for Third World insurgency and US interventionism respectively, are here appropriated to offer an acerbic riposte to the ideological assumptions of contemporary Hollywood. The engagement with the Western genre's normative dynamics which infuses these films, however, is not so reductive as to constitute mere "rejection" or "subversion". Their ideological disquisitions, indeed, identify in the pre-existing paradigm of the Hollywood Western an apt arena for contemporary radical discourse. It is in the genre's innate capacity as a forum for debate over the ethics of violence that the foremost point of contact with these countercultural communities emerges, and in the postcolonial theses of Frantz Fanon the Western's traditional validation of regenerative, ennobling killing finds an incongruous bedfellow. *Quien sabe?* presents Chuncho's brutal rejection of Bill Tate as a necessary step towards freeing the community from outside interference, and the outlaw's insistence that his action is necessary distils the film's political agenda. In attempting to articulate this imperative, however, the echo of *Jesse James* attests to the generic fluidity of the transposition: "I must hurry up and kill you… I must… I must". A Fanonist, it would appear, has got to do what a Fanonist has got to do.

When Jean-Pierre Gorin looked back at the international student movement, he identified it as an era when "every Marxist on the block wanted to make a Western" (Frayling, 1993: 27) (Gorin and Jean-Luc Godard themselves steered the genre's motifs down a considerably less populist route with their collaboration *Vent d'Est* [1970]). That this genre above all others was identified as an apt receptacle for such discourse in the Vietnam era is intimately related, firstly, to the Western's central role in defining US identity, but equally to its preoccupation with the legitimacy of violence. As we shall see, the cycle of radicalised Italian

Westerns which emerged in the second half of the 1960s offers a collective thesis on the merits of political violence. In so doing it reflects equivalent, and increasingly fraught, debates within nascent protest movements running parallel to these films' releases. When students in Trento, Milan and Turin occupied campus buildings in late 1967, they perhaps did not foresee the extremes to which the radical extra-parliamentary Left would go in the ensuing decade, yet both their rhetoric and their ideologies employed violent idioms borrowed from an international amalgam of revolutionary thought. Acolytes of Lenin, Mao, Guevara, Fanon, Marcuse, Debray and Trotsky jostled for position in defining the student movement's aims and, along with the legacies of Resistance and anti-fascism, provided ample space for a discourse on the merits of violent insurrection. In February 1968, campus demonstrations in Rome sparked rioting and running battles with police. By the summer, inspired by similar events across the advanced industrial world, students were joining picket lines alongside striking workers in a wave of spontaneous militancy in the north of Italy. Among the Turin student demonstrations of June 1968, favoured slogans included: "No to social peace in the factories!" and "Only violence helps where violence reigns" (Judt, 2005: 415).

The transition from the Italian student movement of 1967-8 to the armed insurrections of the 1970s has been the subject of much debate and disagreement. Rossana Rossanda described the insurgent groups as the "unwanted children" of 1968 (Della Porta, 1995: 23), while Joseph La Palombara (1987) draws a direct relationship of cause and effect from the student movement to the outbreak of terrorism. Indeed, Renato Curcio and Margherita Cagol -- founder members of the Red Brigades (henceforth, BR [*Brigate rosse*]) -- studied at Trento University, becoming involved in campus occupations before turning to violence. On the other hand, only 11% of the membership of terrorist cells which emerged in the early 1970s were students, and only a third of the activists subsequently convicted of terrorist acts were veterans of the student movement (Tarrow, 1991: 52, 54). Both Sidney Tarrow (1991) and Donatella Della Porta (1995) emphasise that, despite the confrontational rhetoric, the student movement's demonstrations were no more prone to descend into physical conflict than were any other protests [5]. Neither a direct graduation from campus occupation to armed insurrection nor a rupture from the student movement, Tarrow asserts the turn to violence to be the progeny of clashing ideologies within the extra-parliamentary Left:

> Violence developed not in a linear fashion out of the movements in the universities in 1967-8 but as part of a competitive process of tactical innovation within the social-movement sector that led some groups into the party of armed struggle but forced others to reject it and to join the institutional system (Tarrow, 1991: 42-43).

Tarrow's hypothesis underlines the extent to which the use of violence was at once the most divisive and the most pressing issue within the Italian New Left of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Virtually all of the disparate revolutionary groups which emerged from the ferment of the student movement were either riven by disputes over the legitimacy of armed insurrection, or were founded as the direct result of such splits. Born from the union between student protesters

and striking factory workers, such extra-parliamentary groups emerging in 1968-9 as *Potere operaio* and *Lotta continua* coordinated protest around a "workerist" philosophy, continuing Marxist-Leninist objectives abandoned by mainstream left-wing institutions (the Italian Communist Party [PCI] and the trade unions). This adoption of a revolutionary vanguard ethos, however, coincided with a narrowing of political options for these groups. The "Hot Autumn" of 1969, for example, saw more widespread labour agitation than at any time since the War (Ginsborg, 1990: 318-319), yet the trade unions directed this, re-asserting their dominance over the working-class movement. The PCI, mean-while, were steering themselves down the path of parliamentary democracy, winning over a larger electorate than before but alienating extreme Marxist factions. As the option of productive legitimate action became perceived as more remote, violence, which during the student movement had mostly broken out spontaneously and in self-defence against police batons or neo-fascists, became ever more premeditated. Extremist wings of these revolutionary organisations competed for kudos with increasingly aggressive tactics, while other factions steered towards electoral legitimacy. By 1973 both *Potere operaio* and *Lotta continua* had split irrevocably over arguments concerning the use of violence, with "autonomist" factions forming clandestine cells such as *Rosso*, *Prima linea*, *Senza tregua* and the BR. If direct links can be drawn from the New Left's late 1960s mass mobilisation to the outbreak of armed insurgency in the early 1970s, they lie in this very relationship. Activists in the earlier movement were engaged in fierce debates concerning the legitimacy of the same tactics which would later be taken up by the BR and similar organisations.

These debates are dramatised in remarkably direct and populist tones through-out the contemporaneous trend of militant Italian Westerns here under consid-eration. The ideological trajectory of extremist New Left factions in particular is reflected in the intertextual development of the Mexican peasant persona played by Cuban actor Tomas Milian. Sergio Sollima's *La resa dei conti* (which again originated from the pen of Franco Solinas) introduces him in the roguish form of Cuchillo Sanchez, paying perfunctory lip-service to countercultural sentiments in its final reel. As our hero stands facing his gringo tormentor, rapidly cross-cut shots are punctuated by Ennio Morricone's majestic score building to a climax. The Spanish desert set, the baroque cinematography and the prolonged show-down place us firmly in the generic conventions of the Italian Western, but the weaponry on display is curiously ill-matched. Here was a genre enthralled by in-creasingly ingenious machinery of death. Colonel Mortimer's plethora of firearms in Leone's *Per qualche dollaro in più* (1965), *Johnny Oro*'s golden pistol (Cor-bucci, 1966), *Django*'s machine gun (Corbucci, 1966), *Sabata*'s customised Der-ringer (Parolini, 1969): this list barely scratches the surface of a fascination throughout the Roman West. It is, therefore, a curious sight to behold that Cuchillo faces his enemy's six-gun with nothing more than a throwing-knife. The intended symbolism is hardly subtle, but director Sollima saw fit to offer guid-ance all the same: "It could be the story of an American Green Beret against a member of the Viet Cong" (Faldini and Fofi, 1981: 302). Clearly, the technologi-cal superiority of the American interloper in the Third World here counts for little when faced with native ingenuity. So ends *La resa dei conti*, and so perishes the villainous gringo, Cuchillo's knife protruding from his forehead.

Christopher Frayling applies Umberto Eco's theory concerning the comic-book hero Superman to the development (or lack of it) of the "Django" persona, which proliferated in the aftermath of Sergio Corbucci's international success of 1966. By breaking down the sense that time has passed between episodes, writes Eco, and by denying the character permanent relationships or changes in outlook, a new story is started afresh each week. In order to maintain a readership's interest, the comic book writer instead bestows this "inconsumable hero" with "recognisable personality traits, idiosyncrasies, or 'tics', which 'permit us to find an old friend in the character portrayed'" (Frayling, 1998: 76). When Cuchillo resurfaces in Sollima's sequel -- *Corri, uomo, corri* (1968) -- he adheres to this formula. Milian's extrovert clowning, the white peon garments and the unerring ability to find himself in the wrong place at the wrong time all signify the return of the charming vagabond we last saw in *La resa dei conti*. Foremost among his "tics" is his predilection for throwing knives, and in this respect, too, our "old friend" does not disappoint. While the ritual established in the first film is repeated, however, it is now self-consciously analysed, openly drawing attention to its symbolic mechanisms while exposing its narrative illogicality. In a remarkably extra-diegetic sequence prior to the duel, the characters engage in a debate over the imbalance inherent to Cuchillo's chosen method of fighting. "This isn't the right distance for a knife fight", the peon complains. "It's you who chose the knife", quips French counterinsurgent Jean-Paul. "I chose the gun". The process is comically exaggerated as they take time out to debate the precise distance Jean-Paul should be moved for a fair fight to ensue. Eco's theorem remains pertinent, but the Brechtian unmasking of this "tic" alienates the audience from any passive acceptance of its inevitability. Furthermore, though Cuchillo was not to reappear by name, the next outing for Milian's peon persona displays a narrative development precluding any further application of the "inconsumable hero" model.

As the Englishman abroad drives his motorcar into the Mexican countryside near the beginning of *Tepepa*, the man sitting next to him is conspicuously familiar. Milian's carefree clown, dressed in peon whites, grins at his narrow escape from trouble with the law. All the visual signifiers point to the fact that this is our "old friend" Cuchillo continuing his adventures under the assumed name "Tepepa". When governmental troops appear behind the vehicle, however, the character does something which Cuchillo, throughout the course of his two previous films, refuses to do even once: he fires a gun. No longer is this the "inconsumable hero", for he has learned, as Superman cannot, a valuable lesson. When next we see Tepepa, indeed, he has transformed from Cuchillo to Zapata. Dressed in black, carrying a rifle and adorned with cartridge-belts and sombrero, this is a considerably more ruthless and virile breed of Third World hero, who feels no compunction in executing his oppressors and raping their womenfolk. Moreover, Tepepa self-consciously interrogates, and rejects, the romantic primitivism of Cuchillo's insistence on knife-fighting. When he recalls the army slaughtering his fellow peasants, he comments bitterly that "all those peons are dead, because the machete is one thing; the rifle is another". Cuchillo's propensity for symbolic revenge on corrupt Westerners is renounced, his fighting only with knives shown to be absurd in the face of such force. The persona's progression from knife to gun heralds his parallel graduation from the clownish peon of *La resa dei conti*

and *Corri, uomo, corri* to the virile bandit Tepepa, implicitly linking firearms with masculine vitality.

The transformation of this oppressed peasant and petty thief into a brutal Third World pragmatist clearly illustrates this sub-genre's engagement with counter-cultural discourse, registering contemporaneous arguments preoccupying the New Left concerning uneven development and responses to state violence. The national congress of the Italian student movement in September 1968 was, according to Luigi Bobbio, "the last moment in which the debate was open and the common participation in the student movement was a shared assumption" (Della Porta, 1995: 87). As New Left groups became increasingly centralised, exclusive and isolated, what Tarrow dubs the "spiral of competitive tactical innovation" (Tarrow, 1991: 43) began to take root amongst radical groups. *Tepepa* was released in Italy in January 1969, at precisely this turning point in the counterculture's outlook. Only a month previously police had fired on a labourer demonstration in Avola, Sicily. The "workerist" movement was in its infancy as student demonstrators joined factory picket lines, and in the ensuing twelve months working-class militancy would steadily increase. The confluence of reference points to be found in *Tepepa* both reflects the disputes amidst contemporary radicals and anticipates the tactical and ideological premises upon which clandestine insurgent groupings would be built. Amongst the more extreme factions, the symbolism of armed resistance in the Third World provided both a legitimating structure for domestic violence and a locus for machismo. Moreover, state responses to the revolutionary movements arising in these years fostered the notion that armed struggle was necessary "self defence" against a new form of fascism. To cite only the most infamous of these extremist groups, the BR would emulate the Uruguayan Tupamaros and the Viet Cong amidst precisely this ethos that the firepower of the enemy must be matched. Equally, they would exploit fascination with firearms and the masculinising revitalisation of violence to appeal to young activists.

By the time *Compañeros* was released in December 1970, Milan's Piazza Fontana had been bombed by neo-fascists, unarmed American students had been killed by police at Kent and Jackson States, and the BR had formed only a couple of months previously. This sub-genre therefore traversed the very period during which debates over the legitimacy of violent tactics were preoccupying the New Left, and lasted into the early 1970s, when tensions were spilling over into terrorism. It is in this cultural "moment", as advocates of armed insurgency were breaking away from the protest movements, that *Compañeros* sees Tomas Milian's peon appear once more, and his chosen method of fighting is again dwelt upon by the filmmaker. As the impromptu student debate concludes, the camera zooms in on his guns, earlier discarded at the request of the pacifist Professor Xantos but soon to be taken up once more. Again adorned in cartridge-belts, this time at the head of a militant student battalion and sporting a "Guevara chic" beret, Milian's now macho persona has indeed followed the ideological arc of the New Left's more extreme factions.

It is to this scene that I now return, for here we find the sub-genre's most overtly contemporary intervention. Ernest Mandel envisioned the international student movement as a "new, young revolutionary vanguard" on whom the

hopes of Trotskyism could be pinned (Wistrich, 1979: 207). Herbert Marcuse similarly identified in the students a revolutionary force, free from absorption into the capitalist system. Notions emerging from 1968 such as the "red bases in the colleges", meanwhile, sought to adapt Régis Debray's *foco* theory to the university campus, forming compact cells of activists to bring about the conditions for revolution. Corbucci's guerrilla unit of student insurgents is a crude, yet explicit, enactment of these contemporary countercultural vogues. Moreover, *Compañeros* actively proffers a resolution to the debate it dramatises. No sooner have the pacifist sentiments of Professor Xantos left his lips than his outlook is exposed as naive. The students, defiantly gripping their firearms, respond as one that his forgiveness is futile and that, faced with a violent enemy, lethal force is the only adequate response: "The others have rifles [...] and when they have killed us all our principles and our ideals will be dead too". Xantos is forced to admit that the argument is lost. Turning towards the camera's low-angle shot, he partially exits the diegesis, addressing his students and the viewer simultaneously to admit that his outlook is outmoded. "I have become too old, and you are too young, all of you", he states; "it could very well be that this way of thinking is more in keeping with the times that we live in than mine". At both the Trento and Turin campus occupations, students emulated the Chinese Cultural Revolution to interrupt lectures and force professors to confront the ideologies of the movement (Ginsborg, 1990: 303). While Xantos is not exactly denounced, he is similarly impelled to question his own beliefs, and ultimately to "confess" his ideological failings. Palpably, "the times" to which Xantos refers are closer to home than the narrative's ostensible setting.

What is immediately striking about these films' subtexts is that, in reworking the hegemonic text of the Hollywood Western into a radical polemic, they do not rob it of its foremost ideological function. As we have seen, the burden of assessing the value of violent confrontation was always one borne by the Western myth. Incongruously, by restoring the moral imperative of lethal force to the genre these films are, in the context of late 1960s cinema, retrospective applications of the Western's normative dynamics. While *The Wild Bunch*, *Little Big Man* and *Soldier Blue*, amongst numerous examples, show the progressive function of Western violence becoming increasingly archaic to contemporary mores, virile banditry, the fetishising of firearms and debates over the validity of violent acts would find singular relevance amongst sections of the Italian far Left as the 1970s dawned. What Warshow termed the genre's "serious orientation to the problem of violence" (Warshow, 1954: 121) is emphatically restored.

Pauline Kael's assertion that Italian Westerns "eliminated the morality-play dimension and turned the Western into pure violent reverie [...] they stripped the Western form of its cultural burden of morality" (Kael, 1974: 172) overlooks the complex processes by which disparate audiences appropriate and adapt cultural artefacts. The most internationally visible of these films, it is true, amplify and embellish certain features of the Hollywood genre such as "strength and gun-power" (Kael, 1974: 172), while largely jettisoning their US-oriented ideological accompaniments. "Liberating the form" and evacuating it of all moral content, however, are not necessarily one and the same. If the Italian Western as a whole indeed decoupled the Western genre from its ideological home in the formulation of US national identity, it also opened up the form for a variety of audi-

ence constituencies to re-interpret it yet further, as a forum for heterogeneous political discourse.

Dimitris Eleftheriotis adopts a more nuanced approach to this genre's negotiation with Hollywood signifiers when he identifies "a phenomenon closely linked to the process of globalization [which] highlights the accelerated mobility of cultural products around the world and their increasing detachment from national contexts" (Eleftheriotis, 2001: 97-98). While it is clear that this transatlantic cultural relationship was not one of linear imitation, we must equally reject notions that it was simply one of ideological rejection. Tropes, motifs and allegorical inflections whose appearance in the American genre carried distinctive local significance are re-inscribed, not emptied, upon contact with an Italian political milieu. When Shane insists that a gun is a progressive tool and when Jesse James affirms the necessity of rebellion against the coercive mechanisms of corporate America, each speaks to a variety of audiences as their respective texts connect with the global marketplace. In the context of 1968, My Lai and the BR, these open signifiers resonated indeed.

Notes

[1] These figures are based on my own statistical research, collated from the *Catalogo generale dei film italiani dal 1956 al 1975* (Associazione Generale Italiana dello Spettacolo, 1975) and contemporary film reviews in the pages of *Bianco e nero*, *Variety* and the *New York Times*.

[2] Leone stated that *Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo*'s pacifistic stance was influenced by Chaplin's *Monsieur Verdoux* (1947) (Frayling, 2005: 82), and that *C'era una volta il West* depicted "the relentless force of capitalism, at whatever the cost" (Frayling, 2005: 78).

[3] Especially revealing in this context is Leone's posturing that: "I'm a *moderate* anarchist who doesn't go around throwing bombs" (Frayling, 2000: 306). Perhaps it is this comment that occupied Mitchell's train of thought.

[4] Solinas later insisted that he played no part in the actual writing of *Tepepa*, only offering assistance to credited co-writer Ivan Della Mea (Faldini and Fofi, 1981: 300). The influence, if not necessarily the hand, of *Quien sabe?*'s and *Queimada*'s author is nevertheless palpable in the narrative and ideological parallels with Solinas's contemporaneous work.

[5] The *Corriere della sera* recorded that 19% of student demonstrations involved violence, compared to 23% of protests as a whole (Tarrow, 1991: 50).

References

Associazione Generale Italiana dello Spettacolo (1975) *Catalogo generale dei film italiani dal 1956 al 1975*. Rome: Associazione Generale Italiana dello Spettacolo.

Beale, Lewis (1972) The American Way West, *Films and Filming* 18, pp. 24-30.

Calder, Jenni (1974) *There Must be a Lone Ranger*. Gateshead: Northumberland Press.

Cawelti, John G. (1999) *The Six-Gun Mystique Sequel*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Press.

De Fornari, Oreste (1997) *Sergio Leone: The Great Italian Dream of Legendary America*, trans. Charles Nopar. Rome: Gremese.

Della Porta, Donatella (1995) *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eleftheriotis, Dimitris (2001) *Popular Cinemas of Europe: Studies of Texts, Contexts and Frameworks*. London: Continuum.

Engelhardt, Tom (1995) *The End of Victory Culture*. New York: BasicBooks.

Faldini, Franca and Goffredo Fofi (1981) *L'avventurosa storia del cinema italiano raccontata dai suoi protagonisti 1935-1959*. Milan: Mondadori.

Fanon, Frantz (2001) *The Wretched of the Earth*. London: Penguin.

Frayling, Christopher (1993) The Wretched of the Earth, *Sight and Sound* 3 (6), pp. 26-29.

Frayling, Christopher (1998) *Spaghetti Westerns: Cowboys and Europeans From Karl May to Sergio Leone*. London: I.B.Tauris.

Frayling, Christopher (2000) *Sergio Leone: Something To Do With Death*. London: Faber and Faber.

Frayling, Christopher (2005) *Sergio Leone: Once Upon a Time in Italy*. London: Thames and Hudson.

French, Philip (2005) *Westerns*. Manchester: Carcanet.

Ginsborg, Paul (1990) *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1980*. London : Penguin.

Judt, Tony (2005) *Postwar*. London: William Heinemann.

Kael, Pauline (1974) Killing Time, in Karl French (ed.), *Screen Violence*. London: Bloomsbury, pp. 171-178.

Kitses, Jim (2004) *Horizons West: Directing the Western from John Ford to Clint Eastwood*. London: BFI.

La Palombara, Joseph (1987) *Democracy, Italian Style*. London: Yale University Press.

Marcuse, Herbert (1986) *One Dimensional Man. London: Ark.*

Mitchell, Lee Clark (1996) *Westerns: Making the Man in Fiction and Film*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Schaefer, Jack (1967) *Shane*. London: Heinemann.

Slotkin, Richard (1992) *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: Atheneum.

Tarrow, Sidney (1991) Violence and Institutionalisation After the Italian Protest Cycle, in Raimondo Catanzaro (ed.), *The Red Brigades and Left-Wing Terrorism in Italy*. London: Pinter Publishers, pp. 41-69.

Tompkins, Jane (1992) *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Varon, Jeremy (2004) *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies*. London: University of California Press.

Warshow, Robert (1954) Movie Chronicle: The Westerner, in Robert Warshow, *The Immediate Experience: Movies, Comics, Theatre and Other Aspects of Popular Culture*. London: Harvard University Press, pp. 105-124.

Wister, Owen (1949) *The Virginian*. London: MacMillan.

Wistrich, Robert (1979) Trotsky: Fate of a Revolutionary. London: Robson Books.

Wright, Will (1977) *Sixguns and Society: A Structural Study of the Western*. London: University of California Press.

Filmography

The Alamo. 1960. Dir. John Wayne. United Artists.

La battaglia di Algeri / The Battle of Algiers. 1966. Dir. Gillo Pontecorvo. Igor Film.

Bellissima. 1951. Dir. Luchino Visconti. CEI Incom.

Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo / The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. 1966. Dir. Sergio Leone. Constantin Film.

C'era una volta il West / Once Upon a Time in the West. 1968. Dir. Sergio Leone. Paramount Pictures.

Corri, uomo, corri / Run, Man, Run. 1968. Dir. Sergio Sollima. Mancori.

Django. 1966. Dir. Sergio Corbucci. B.R.C. Produzione.

Doc. 1971. Dir. Frank Perry. United Artists.

Fort Apache. 1948. Dir. John Ford. RKO Radio Pictures.

The Great Train Robbery. 1902. Dir. Edwin S. Porter. Edison.

High Noon. 1952. Dir. Fred Zinnemann. Stanley Kramer Productions.

The Hunting Party. 1971. Dir. Don Medford. Brighton Pictures.

Jesse James. 1939. Dir. Henry King. Twentieth Century Fox.

Johnny Guitar. 1954. Dir. Nicholas Ray. Republic Pictures.

Johnny Oro / Ringo and His Golden Pistol. 1966. Dir. Sergio Corbucci. Sanson Film.

Little Big Man. 1970. Dir. Arthur Penn. Cinema Center Films.

The Magnificent Seven. 1960. Dir. John Sturges. United Artists.

Man of the West. 1958. Dir. Anthony Mann. Ashton Productions.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. 1962. Dir. John Ford. Paramount Pictures.

Il mercenario / The mercenary. 1968. Dir. Sergio Corbucci. Produzioni Europee Associate.

Monsieur Verdoux. 1947. Dir. Charles Chaplin. United Artists.

My Darling Clementine. 1946. Dir. John Ford. Twentieth Century Fox.

The Naked Spur. 1953. Dir. Anthony Mann. MGM.

One-Eyed Jacks. 1960. Dir. Marlon Brando. Paramount Pictures.

The Ox-Bow Incident. 1943. Dir. William Wellman. Twentieth Century Fox.

Per qualche dollaro in più / For a Few Dollars More. 1965. Dir. Sergio Leone. Produzioni Europee Associate.

Per un pugno di dollari / A Fistful of Dollars. 1964. Dir. Sergio Leone. Constantin Film.

Una pistola per Ringo / A Pistol for Ringo. 1965. Dir. Duccio Tessari. Produzioni Cinematografiche Mediterranee.

The Professionals. 1966. Dir. Richard Brooks. Columbia Pictures.

Queimada/ Burn!. 1969. Dir. Gillo Pontecorvo. Produzioni Europee Associate.

Quien sabe? / A Bullet for the General. 1966. Dir. Damiano Damiani. MCM.

La resa dei conti / The Big Gundown. 1967. Dir. Sergio Sollima. Produzioni Europee Associate.

Rio Grande. 1950. Dir. John Ford. Republic Pictures.

Sabata. 1969. Dir. Gianfranco Parolini. Produzioni Europee Associate.

The Searchers. 1955. Dir. John Ford. Warner Bros.

Shane. 1952. Dir. George Stevens. Paramount Pictures.

She Wore a Yellow Ribbon. 1949. Dir. John Ford. RKO Radio Pictures.

Soldier Blue. 1970. Dir. Ralph Nelson. Avco Embassy Pictures.

Stagecoach.1939. Dir. John Ford. United Artists.

Tepepa. 1969. Dir. Giulio Petroni. Società Italiana Attuazione Progetti.

Vamos a matar, compañeros / Compañeros. 1970. Dir. Sergio Corbucci. Tritone Filmindustria Roma.

Vent d'Est / Wind From the East. 1970. Dir. Groupe Dziga Vertov. Anouchka Films.

Vera Cruz. 1954. Dir. Robert Aldrich. United Artists.

The Wild Bunch. 1969. Dir. Sam Peckinpah. Warner Bros.

"Tom Cruise? Tarantino? E.T.? …Indian!": Innovation through imitation in the Cross-cultural Bollywood Re-make

Neelam Sidhar Wright, University of Sussex, UK

In one of the most memorable series of sketches from the BBC television comedy show *Goodness Gracious Me* (1998-2001) an Indian man, known only as Mr "Everything Comes From India", repeatedly persists to persuade others of how various well-known Western texts and cultural figures are in fact all of Indian origin. The sketch unabashedly pokes fun at the Indian stereotype of obstinately conceptualising, defining and narrating everything in relation to an Indian cultural context. In the case of cinema however, this social stigma has since become a reality as dozens of high-profile popular Hindi filmmakers endeavour to mask Western cultural icons, tropes and conventions behind the face of the Indian through (often unacknowledged) film adaptations. Within the last decade, the Bombay (Mumbai) based film industry known as "Bollywood" has experienced a surge of remake films like never before. Since the year 2000, over seventy of the industry's major commercial film releases were remakes, with the majority of these being directly influenced by or lifted from American cinema. But to what extent does this act of appropriation impact on the conventions of popular Hindi cinema? What are the reasons behind this national cinema's impulse to reproduce, manipulate, and efface foreign conventions? And what is the overall impact and effect of such a form of cross-cultural intertextuality? In order to offer some answers to these questions, this article analyses key instances of contemporary Bollywood remaking, revealing in particular how aesthetic conventions and representations are reconfigured through cultural borrowing.

Let us begin by considering a scene from Farah Khan's 2004 action blockbuster *Main Hoon Na*. In this film, we see Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan play Major Ram Prasad Sharma, an Indian commando who has gone undercover as a college student in order to foil a terroristic plot to sabotage a peace pact between India and Pakistan. During his mission, Ram finds himself chasing a gang of terrorist henchman with only the aid of a rickshaw. We watch him exit a road tunnel in slow-motion, narrowly escaping the explosions from a CGI petrol tank that bursts out from behind him. The chase sequence is accompanied by a musical score of frantic beating drums and classical raag (Indian vocal percussion). However, as we watch the Rickshaw hurtle down a hill, rebound off a rock, and launch into the sky, we hear this music suddenly merge into a parodic rendition of the theme tune to *Mission: Impossible* (1996). The camera encircles this hyper-real moment of action, prolonging and intensifying it as the henchmen (and cinema audience) gasp in amazement at Ram's stretched out body, now frozen in mid-air, shooting his gun in Matrix-esque bullet-time; handgun in one hand, rickshaw in the other.

How are we to read this intertextual moment? Is this popular Hindi cinema unashamedly hijacking the Hollywood action-film aesthetic on account of its own lack of imagination and innovation? Perhaps. Or perhaps, as I would argue,

there is more to this moment of pastiche beyond cinematic referencing for dramatic effect. Consider issues of star persona or "celebrity textuality" (Verevis: 2005: 20): The known fact that actor Shah Rukh Khan is widely referred to as the "Tom Cruise of Indian cinema" allows/suggests that the relationship between Cruise's special agent Ethan Hunt and Khan's Major Ram Sharma functions self-referentially beyond the film text, commenting instead on questions of stardom and casting. In addition, if this is a case of pure plagiarism, why does filmmaker Khan choose the rickety Rickshaw as the hero's vehicle of choice, and not a motorbike as in the case of the Hollywood original, or other successful Bollywood action blockbusters such as *Dhoom* (2004)? Having screened this particular film sequence to numerous film students, I have found it interesting that the reaction is always particularly one of laughter at the sight of the Rickshaw - a symbolic icon of the underprivileged, technologically inferior third-world. By placing Khan/Ram on the Rickshaw, the director makes a conscious effort to ironicise the substitute transport, encouraging Hollywood film-literate members of the audience to reflect upon this deliberate juxtaposition with the American Blockbusters of Cruise. In both the Bollywood and Hollywood action genre, the power of the grunting motorbike or sports car engine is often used as a sign of machismo, accessorising and enhancing the masculinity of the heroes. Khan/Ram's masculinity is therefore oddly compromised by his tinsel tasselled cart and frenzied cycling, indicating an Indian cinema that would rather reflect upon and ridicule its own aesthetics than straightforwardly present an action sequence for dramatic effect.

The Fate of the Remake: Adaptation Theory

In Bollywood, cultural borrowing and textual remaking manifest in a variety different forms; from shot-for-shot reconstructions and mirroring homage movies, to more subtle and temporary moments of quotation, citation and intertextuality, as exemplified above. Few have paused to contemplate the complexity behind such forms of textual play in Hindi films, instead abandoning it to the bottomless pit of empty pastiche. Sequences like the one described above are seen to offer nothing more than a verification of the films' (and indeed, the Indian film industry's) perpetual inferiority to popular American cinema. Remake texts, in general, inevitably fall victim to the laws of fidelity and the defenders of the film/literary canons they often allude to. For example, concerns surrounding a remake's loyalty to its original have proven to fuel and dominate much of the critical discourse on remakes and adaptations. In his survey of pre-1980s Hollywood movie remakes, Michael B Druxman comments on the danger that fidelity holds for the remake: "people cling to their precious memories of a grander cinema in days gone by and…almost no remake – despite its quality – can shatter the fondness a spectator might hold for the original version he saw in his youth. It's called nostalgia" (Druxman, 1975: 24). However, such discussions distract us from other more positive traits of remake cinema. As Brian Macfarlane notes, the fidelity argument prevents the drawing of attention to "adaptation as inevitable artistic (and culturally rich) progress; the more interesting process of transference and adaptation; [and] the powerfully influential production determinants in the film remake which may be irrelevant to the original" (Macfarlane, 1996: 10). Thankfully, later adaptation theorists have attempted to shift the focus away from comparative quality-analysis, and towards interpretation. For ex-

ample, Robert Stam has proposed that we look at remakes/adaptations as "translations" (Stam, 2000: 62), encouraging a study of the way in which original texts are manipulated and altered to produce new meanings, perspectives and experiences.

The scholarly work produced on film remaking is itself diverse in its approaches and perspectives. For example, some theorists argue that remaking is a fundamental part of all cinemas, and that all texts are applicable to the term since every film is guilty of re-presentation or prior conception. As Stam comments: "All texts are tissues of anonymous formulae… conscious and unconscious quotations, and, conflations and inversions of other texts" (Stam, 2000: 64). Others however have tried to classify and order the term - see Druxman (1975); Harry Roy Greenberg cited in Verevis (2006: 8-9); Thomas Leitch (2002: 45-49); and Robert Eberwein in Horton and McDougal (1998: 15-33). Gerard Genette (1982/1997) first used the term "transtextuality" to refer to special/unique instances of repetition, and attempted to divide, organise and group these instances into multiple sub-genres; whilst Stam later confirmed the complexity of the remake-adaptation as a subject of study by noting its many tropes and transformation processes (Stam, 2000: 62-68). But despite the varied work done on adaptation and textual appropriation, some areas still remain relatively under-explored.

A handful of scholars have produced interesting accounts on textual boundary crossing between various national cinemas, including studies of remakes from Hong Kong (Bordwell, 2000; Aufderheide, 1995); Eastern Europe (Horton, 1995) and France (Willis, 1995; Mazdon, 2000). In her book Encore Hollywood: Remaking French cinema, Lucy Mazdon focuses on the ways in which the aesthetic cross-fertilisation of French and American cinema questions cultural identity and interrogates or interrupts the formation of French or American national identity. Mazdon highlights the importance of determining how the signifying structures of the original text are replaced by those of the target culture in the remake, arguing that remakes do not simply copy, but that they remake and produce new identities (Mazdon, 2000: 26). Thus, to paraphrase an important question posed by Genette, there is an urgent need to investigate cross-cultural adaptations and ask what dynamics and dimensions are involved in such films where language, cultural traditions, psychology, and even narrative sense may differ greatly (Genette cited in Horton and McDougal, 1998: 4). Such discussions have almost denounced discourse on textual fidelity in favour of studying the way in which remakes "resist" and perform in opposition to their originals (Dika, 2003: 20).

Undeniably, the majority of theoretical work on film remaking has focused on Western and specifically American cinema. Particularly in the case of mainstream Hollywood, the remake text is associated with the following distinctive characteristics: the pre-sold text, the reiterated formula, a bigger budget, updated technical effects, extensive marketing and publicity campaigns, blatant commercial film-making methods; as well as often explicit incentives: guaranteed financial gain, cultural imperialism and "defensive production", where a popular foreign text may threaten to compete with or steal its inland box office spots (Verevis, 2005: 3). Remakes have offered Hollywood studios hit-guarantees via recyclable plots, economic-efficiency by recycling studio-owned material (Druxman,

1975: 14), quick profit through non-remakes (films simply bearing the same title and author of previous films); plus the chance to re-package old texts success-fully with the help of nothing more than updated dialogue, star casts and techni-cal advancements in sound, colour and ratio-format (Druxman, 1975: 15).

Introducing the Bollywood Remake

Although the aforementioned appraisals may certainly be relevant to scholars investigating, say, the commercial filmic adaptations of William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, or the Batman franchise; they do not suffice to explain the phe-nomenon of all other forms of remake cinema – such as the Bollywood remake. While American cinema has several decades of official movie remaking behind it, the same cannot be said of Bollywood, to whom the concept is arguably more of an abrupt millennia-phenomenon rather than a natural progression. Since the Indian film Industry's economic liberalisation in 2001, mainstream Hindi cinema has gone through major changes – particularly in terms of its formal aesthetics. This has included increased experimentations with special effects (*Krrish* [2006], *Love Story: 2050*[2008], *Drona* [2008]), narrative chronology (*Saathiya* [2002]), new genres (vis-à-vis the rise of horror, sci-fi, heist and super-hero movies), as well as its high-profiled appearance in international award festivals - *Devdas* (2002) at Cannes, *Lagaan* (2001) at the 2002 Oscars. It has also given birth to a booming series of foreign film adaptations, such as *Kaante* (2002) (*Reservoir Dogs* [1992]), *Koi…Mil Gaya* (2003) (*E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial* [1982]), *Krishna Cottage* (2004) (*Ringu* [1998]), *Sarkar* (2005) (*The Godfather* [1972]), *Fight Club: Members Only* (2006) (*Fight Club* [1999]), *Partner* (2007) (*Hitch* [2005]) and *Ghajini* (2008) (*Memento* [2000]). In addition, this phe-nomenon has also lead to the production of several direct remakes of successful Hindi films - such as *Ram Gopal Varma Ki Aag* (2007), a remake of *Sholay* (1975) and *Don* (2006), a remake of the 1978 film by the same name – as well as several film sequels, such as *Dhoom: 2* (2006), *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* (2006) and *Sarkar Raj* (2008) [1]. And for those wondering, despite the genre and subject matter of their originals, the majority of the above mentioned re-makes do still feature several musical song and dance numbers.

But what has sparked the Bollywood film industry's sudden wholehearted and extensive investment in this special form of repetition, having previously con-formed to more familiar and traditional methods of Hindi movie making? Before addressing the ways in which Bollywood remakes can operate as a form of resis-tance and innovation, it is best to begin with a brief account explaining Indian cinema's inherent hunger for textual appropriation.

Indian Cinema: A History of Repetition

The remake, in its various forms, is not wholly unfamiliar territory to Hindi cin-ema. On the contrary, the act of repetition has been considered fundamental to Hindi cinematic tradition. Film historians have revealed how today's Bollywood industry evolved from the dramatics of Sanskrit Drama, Parsi theatre, folk myths and ancient religious texts. One particular religious myth, the Ramayana, has been repeatedly looked upon as a framework for almost every commercial "ma-sala movie" ever produced vis-à-vis its Proppian stock characters, including the

gallant hero who must rescue an endangered damsel from an evil demon-baddie (Propp, 1968). Criticisms of Hindi cinema have thrived on this compulsive custom to repeat the same clichéd and repetitive stories, characters and outcomes. For example, whilst tracing Western criticisms of Hindi cinema, Rosie Thomas comments that "the story-line will be almost totally predictable to the Indian audience, being a repetition, or rather, an unmistakable transformation of many other Hindi films, and… it will be recognized by them as a "ridiculous" pretext for spectacle and emotion" (Thomas, 1985: 122).

Many have outwardly denied the possibility for change or development within Indian cinema. According to Vinay Lal the Indian film medium, like its nation's culture, is trapped in past traditions; each time inevitably reproducing the same old ideas and conclusions:

> Whereas the Western concept of continuity construes it as "only a special case of change", in Indic traditions the language of continuity, which assumes that all changes can be seen, discussed or analysed as aspects of deeper continuities, occupies a predominant place. Change, in other words, is only a special case of continuity – and this is best exemplified in the Hindi film (Lal, 1998: 232).

Although the Hindi film industry has long been in the business of recycling narratives and formulas, it has rarely resorted to such blatant repetitions for it to fall under the category of Druxman's "direct" or Thomas Leitch's "true" remakes (Verevis: 7-12) which carry the same title and character names – with the exception of cross-regional remakes (such as the equally under-explored numerous Bollywood Hindi-language adaptations of South Indian films), movie versions of religious classics (the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*), and filmic adaptations of Saratchandra Chattopadhyaya's literary classics, *Parineeta* and *Devdas*.

In the case of *Devdas*, the story of the lovesick and doomed alcoholic has been remade nine times: in 1928 by Naresh Mitra as a silent movie; 1935 by P.C. Barua in Bengali (and redone in Hindi a year after); 1953 in Tamil and Telugu by Vedantam Raghavaiah; 1955 by Bimal Roy; 1974 in Telugu by Vijaya Nirmala; 1979 in Bengali by Dilip Roy. More recently, 2002 saw the release of two more versions – by Bengal's Shakti Samanta and the high-profile Bollywood blockbuster by Sanjay Leela Bhansali - whilst Anurag Kashyap attempted to update the story with his modern-day rendition *Dev.D* (2009). However, it is important to remember that these remakes are literary adaptations and not copies or sequels of original film screenplays, the latter of which have only emerged in paucity over the past 20 years.*Nigahen* (1989) the follow up to *Nagina* (1986) and *Return of the Jewel Thief* (1996), a sequel to *Jewel Thief* (1967) stand as two rare examples, and are incidentally both regarded as critically disenchanting financial flops [2]. With this track record of failure in mind, why then should there be a sudden urge to invest in remakes now?

Motives behind the Bollywood Remake

Bollywood's remaking incentives have been stirred as the industry has recently shifted away from the confines of the native Indian viewing public and instead

towards a global audience. In the era of globalization, Hindi cinema's increasing desire for world-wide appeal and its attempts to reel-in Indian diasporic audiences can been considered primary catalysts for the cinema's increased modernisation and experimentation. But despite this motive, some still see this act of borrowing from or copying foreign cinema as symptomatic of the sheer lack of good writers in Bollywood - inevitably leading to the artistic theft of Western stories with more depth and substance than the average recycled masala movie. As Bollywood film director and remake-connoisseur Vikram Bhatt confesses:

> If you hide the source you're a genius [...]There is no such thing as originality in the creative sphere [...] When you begin creating a work, you look around for inspiration [...] something that you wish to replicate [...] If the Indian market begins to invest in writers, more people will see it as a career option and you'll have fresh ideas rolling in [...] Till that happens, I would rather trust the process of reverse engineering [remaking a film] rather than doing something indigenous (Bhatt cited in Banerjee: 2003).

From a more positive perspective, others have considered this process of "reverse engineering" as a sign of Hindi cinema finally nurturing a conscious desire to improve/update itself, now aware of its "backwardness" in comparison to its Western (and Eastern) cinematic rivals. This opportunity for creative extension is particularly evident through the way in which Hindi remakes have brought about technical progression vis-à-vis special effects. With its recent discovery and employment of special effects aesthetics in the form of CGI, time-slicing/bullet-timing and green-screening [3], Bollywood has been inspired to produce a wide range of action movies which often allude to sequences from Hollywood blockbusters such as *Mission: Impossible* and *The Matrix*, as demonstrated in the case of *Main Hoon Na*. In addition, the aforementioned boom in self-remakes of classic Hindi films from the 1970s and 80s could also be viewed as an active formation of a Hindi film canon, indicating a nostalgic Indian cinema endeavouring to eternalise itself.

Furthermore, in reference to spectatorship, it is also important to acknowledge, to a certain degree, the Indian film audience's potential incompatibility with non-Indian film texts, having been used to forms of textual/narrative coding that are unique to popular Hindi cinema. Thus the remake offers such audiences a way of enjoying, understanding and accessing these foreign texts, whilst conforming to a specifically Indian filmic language.

Once it has borrowed from and indigenised external foreign cinematic modes, the remake potentially promises Bollywood a status akin to Hollywood. At times it can offer a false sense of empowerment through a seeming act of "reverse-colonialism" (a concept which I will return to later); at others it stands as a symptom of the collapse of Indian identity in the wake of globalisation, making cross-cultural mixing a possibility, if not a necessity. It can be a terroristic device, mutating and sabotaging employed Hollywood codes; it represents the frustration of a cinema wanting to escape from itself, lead by a new generation of filmmakers; and it is the perfect platform for a newer "cooler" global Bollywood, where previously non-Indian filmic forms, styles and characters can flourish and fuse with the familiar.

Finally, the recent boom in Hindi remakes could also be seen as a "historically specific response to the postmodern circulation/recirculation of images" (Verevis, 2005: 23) and hence a product and vehicle of modernisation, globalisation and global postmodernism. Writers such as Jean Baudrillard (1983) and Frederic Jameson (1991) have proposed how, within today's postmodern era, in a world starved of new ideas the obvious choice is to attempt to recreate and reinvent the "past", even if this "past" is not our own. Bollywood's urge to reinvent Western texts under its own banner could be seen as an example of this postmodern impulse to rewrite pasts, indulge in the mass-reproduction and simulation of images, blur boundaries and engage in cultural eclecticism. But whatever the reasons behind this new genre of Hindi films, the consequences of this current phase of Bollywood cinema could prove to not only problematise Hollywood codes and conventions once they have become wholly indigenised, but perhaps even prove apocalyptic for Bollywood's own genre, authenticity and identity.

Hijacking Hollywood: Fragmented Identity and Reverse-Colonialism in *Kaante* and *Koi... Mil Gaya*

In considering the above possible reasons for the emergence of the Bollywood remake, it is also important to consider the impact and consequences of this particular species of contemporary Hindi cinema. Contemporary Bollywood remake films not only encourage the indigenisation of foreign film styles, but as a result, they can often problematise notions of Indian identity. Authentic notions of Indian identity can become confused, fragmented, mutated, or in some extreme cases, lost all together. Indian cinema has had to compromise and sacrifice some of its traditional conventions in order to appeal to a wider audience and compete on a global scale. However, as a consequence, it simultaneously strives to find new ways in which to re-assert its Indianness and preserve its cultural heritage. As Mira Reym Binford comments:

> The present day Indian commercial film is the end result of a lengthy process of imitation, adaptation, and indigenization. Confronted with challenges from abroad, Indian society has often responded by indigenizing invasive foreign cultural elements and creating a new synthesis that is fundamentally Indian […] Hollywood is one of its parents, but this effectively indigenized hybrid form functions on its own terms, continuing to absorb and transform the foreign fertilizer fed to it (Binford, 1998: 78,82).

Some see the recent surge of Bollywood remakes as the end of traditional Indian cinema as more and more filmmakers adopt a Western look and feel to their movies. However, I would argue that this Western influence can also be an effective form of internal critique. For example, in *Kaante* we see how Hollywood cinematic conventions are employed and simultaneously exposed.

In his remake of *Reservoir Dogs*, director Sanjay Gupta unusually takes an American low-budget independent film and presents it as a Bollywood film through using stylistic techniques better accustomed to a Hollywood blockbuster. But these Hollywood conventions are unable to customarily function or achieve affect when applied to a semi-Bollywood regime of story-telling. Equally, although the film still adheres to the Hindi song-sequence formula, its musical se-

quences are distorted via the film's Western cinematic style. For example, the song "Mahi Ve" (My beloved) is sung in traditional Punjabi-Urdu style, yet it is visually presented in an American nightclub in the mode of a Westernised music video. The sequence follows in the style of a contemporary MTV pop video, almost contradicting and undermining the folk song music track it accompanies. In *Kaante*'s song sequences, conventional Bollywood images of hip-swinging chaste Indian women in traditional outfits are replaced with close-up shots of the bottoms of multi-racial dancers in tight hot pants, whilst images of women dancing sexually with other women or muscular black men almost subliminally flash onto the screen. The effect of merging traditional folk songs and Bollywood choreography with a glamorised, carefree and controversial American lifestyle (striptease and drinking culture) is extremely disorientating - producing a cinematic style that altogether deviates from both Western and Indian modes of film making.

Kaante's opening title sequence also helps expose cinematic conventions. The sequence mimics the famous *Reservoir Dogs* shot of a gang of black suited men walking in slow motion - only this time, the scene is further dramatised by large bold green title-credits that flash onto the screen in Hollywood blockbuster-style. A loud, dramatic, fast-paced action movie-style soundtrack is laid over the image of the six protagonists who are dressed in designer sunglasses, suits and leather jackets; wearing twinkling gold jewellery, swinging chains, smoking cigarettes and chewing gum in slow motion. This two minute sequence repeatedly uses the same rapid zooms and panning shots to an extent that the scene eventually becomes almost monotonous. Such a moment of cinematic quotation can be read on two levels: firstly, as an act of pastiche simply for the sake of heightening dramatic action via an aesthetic of "American coolness", or secondly, as a moment of semi-parodic play (humour aside) with Hollywood's own forms of overt-dramatic stylisation. The very techniques that American cinema would hope to disguise in order to achieve verisimilitude, *Kaante* uses to bring artistic construct to the fore. Thus, likewise, the film's climactic bank robbery shoot-out sequence is shot in a style familiar to the Hollywood action blockbuster (slow motion gun-play, loud rapid gun-fire, fast-paced action music, high-rigged explosions). However, each element of this style, from the sound of gunfire to explosions and plausibility of stunts, is exaggerated [4]. The sequence is padded with repetitively recycled shots and sound effects lasting so long that it can almost be read as a parody of the style itself. What's more, the scene consists of cameras positioned everywhere but at eye level; several different images overlap and occupy the frame at one time; diagonal tilts, rapid zooms and distorted camera angles are used to follow the action, as well as several shots taken at floor-level, inviting characters to jump directly over the camera. The intended effect is not of realism, but of a drawing attention to the stylistic techniques of the action movie.

When viewed at surface level, *Kaante* can appear a cheapened blank pastiche of its acclaimed pseudo-original, which is itself a remake of Ringo Lam's *City on Fire* (1987) [5]. But at a deeper level, one can also find opportunity for critical appreciation. By playing with Quentin Tarantino's trademark "coolness" in such a way, *Kaante* becomes a mocking caricature. As the film text's mode of presentation is revealed as performative, it exposes itself as a cinematic construct for the

sake of spectacle and sensationalism. In *Kaante* we witness independent American cinema collapse into Bollywood, which effectively collapses into Hollywood, until it soon becomes difficult to distinguish between the opposing styles and to shoe-horn the text into film categories bound simply by nation or status (commercial cinema, experimental cinema etc). *Kaante* thus succeeds in producing a commercially successful Bollywood hit whilst de-authenticating and deconstructing American cinema in the process.

Kaante is also interesting with regards to how it constructs Western identity. Despite being entirely set in Los Angeles, the film appears to refute any accurate portrayal of America. The L.A. portrayed in this Bollywood remake is an America without Americans; it is never quite allowed to represent itself as a "real" place with "real" American people. Cityscape shots consist of empty sky scrapers and deserted office blocks. American extras often have their backs to the camera, are blurred out entirely, or appear as caricatures - such as a bald, fat, tattooed, thuggish American drug-dealer with a comic moustache who appears at the start of the film. Ironically, it is instead the film's Indian actors and lead protagonists who are set up to represent Americanness more genuinely in the film: they speak and dress American; they effortlessly occupy an American lifestyle; and in effect, they simultaneously overwrite authentic Americanness in the process.

Rather than Otherising the West and placing it in opposition to Indianness, in *Kaante* American identity and Hollywood are hijacked and swallowed up by Bollywood in a process of "reverse-colonialism" per se. Through such films, India fulfils a secret fantasy of switching places with its "white-man" colonizer. In many contemporary Bollywood films, it is now often the Indians who teach the Westerners how to live; the Indians who represent and evoke the "American cool"; the Indians who run American businesses; and the Indians who are called to rescue the West from external threats. To take this point a little further, one may also argue that, in aspiring to beat American cinema at its own game, these Bollywood remakes seek to resist Hollywood hegemony by dismantling it in the process. Admittedly, a film like *Kaante* could easily be dismissed for simply adopting and endorsing American culture as a universal concern. However, to paraphrase Richard Dyer, the act of pastiching can also affirm the position of the pasticheur and may consequently form part of a politics of undermining and overthrowing the original (Dyer, 2006: 157). The sheer excess of appropriating Hollywood aesthetics in such a way can end up weakening their very impact and power; cross-cultural copycatting thus allows Western power to be "translated" or transferred into the Indian context (Dudrah, 2006: 144). Thus, as Thomas Leitch comments: "The true remake admires its original so much it wants to annihilate it" (Leitch cited in Mazdon, 2000: 4).

Modernization versus Cultural Authenticity

Despite the industry's endeavours to modernise and liberate itself through adopting Western aesthetics, the Bollywood remake also reveals how contemporary Hindi cinema cannot or will not escape its origins so easily. In *Koi…Mil Gaya*, the unofficial Bollywood remake of Steven Spielberg's *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial*) [6] there is a willing adaptation of a Hollywood narrative logic and the stylistic conventions of the science fiction genre (previously a genre literally "alien" to

Bollywood), using sophisticated modern special effects technology never before seen in the history of Hindi cinema. The film story deals with a young mentally-premature man (Rohit) who befriends an alien called Jadoo, who has been left behind on earth by his mothership and needs to get back home. However, despite this innovative style and subject matter, we can tell simply from the way in which Jadoo's character is constructed and presented in the film that Bollywood, despite surrendering to modernity, cannot let go of its past. Jadoo appears not as the wrinkled, pale, dough eyed creature of Steven Spielberg's original. Instead, he is blue, with leaf like Indian eyes, and adorns something closely resembling the tilak (or urdhva pundra - the Brahman marking of a half-moon and three horizontal lines) which is worn on the forehead in the Hindu religion. Jadoo is in fact the cinematic incarnation of the Hindu God Lord Krishna, and comparisons between the two are made throughout the film.

Despite its noted science fiction narrative, stylistic, and thematic continuities, *Koi… Mil Gaya* - unlike its original - does not opt to achieve narrative plausibility through scientific rational. Diegetic realism is instead unusually sought after through a narrative rooted in religious superstition and mythology. Here, religion becomes the vessel through which one can observe, contemplate and conceptualise science. This affinity for a "Vedic science" rather than atheistic science (Alessio and Langer, 2007: 227) is evident in the film in several ways. Firstly, we can consider the importance of magic in the film in relation to the classical Hindu mythological folktale. The magical is associated with Godly powers; each of the many Hindu deities are known for their individual super-powers and ability to perform magic. Both the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* include moments of magic such as levitation, disappearing, shape shifting, and the ability to fly. *Koi… Mil Gaya*'s similar emphasis on the spectacular and miraculous is generated through the character of the alien, who is appropriately named after the Hindi word for magic. In the context of Rohit's mental handicap, Jadoo's powers to heal him are not presented as an extra terrestrial advanced super ability, but rather as a "divine miracle", implying that the sublime wonder in this film is not so much the CGI spaceship or the animatronic alien, but rather the "mysterious and magical work of God".

The impingement of the religious upon conventional scientific contexts can also be seen to impact on certain cause-effect elements of *Koi… Mil Gaya*'s narrative. In *E.T.* the aliens come to planet Earth in order to collect plants, but in *Koi… Mil Gaya*, it is the Sanskrit "Om" chant created by Rohit's father's computer (accidentally re-activated by Rohit) which originally calls the aliens to Earth. At the start of the film, Rohit's father describes the Hindu word Om as a universal code which transcends language (and apparently spatial) boundaries, and contains "the vibrations of the universe" [7]. Jadoo's rescue spaceship is also subsequently summoned by the Om computer, whilst E.T.'s spaceship is signalled through his self-assembled satellite transmission device This conversion of a technical device into a religious symbol serving a religious function (the Om computer is literally made to sing the Hindu prayer) is interesting in relation to issues regarding the constant negotiation between modernism/technical advancement and tradition/primitivism in Indian culture. Religion has a particular significance and centrality in *Koi… Mil Gaya*, serving a purpose or function above and beyond genre conformity. It can be strategically used to attack the master

narrative of Western science, to dissolve scientific rational into mythical superstition, and most significantly, to help regulate if not challenge modernity.

Ultimately, film production within a reactionary or culturally conservative Indian society continues to create a particular dilemma for the Bollywood science fiction text. As *Koi…Mil Gaya* reveals, it is equally tied to modernisation and its obligation to tradition; torn between its need to adjust to the tastes of a global or Western audience and its obligations to maintain a sense of Indian identity.

Some Conclusions

Bollywood's urge to remake foreign films can be explained through notions of accessibility and translation. As André Bazin explains, the adaptation text as "digest" makes its original more accessible to its audience not by simplifying it, but by presenting it through a different mode of expression. In Bollywood's case, the remake text alters the original film lingo to better suit the Indian audience. As Bazin puts it, it is "as if the aesthetic fat, differently emulsified, were better tolerated by the consumer's mind" (Bazin, 1948: 26). But what is it about Indian viewing strategies that require such a process of the translation or "digestion" of Western texts? It is not enough to assume this process as solely an issue of language or cultural-incoherencies (though, no doubt this would be the argument of many a sociologist). Rather, I believe Bollywood cross-cultural remakes also spring from the Indian audience's need for different methods of enunciation, and henceforth, greater levels of emotion and sensation. Additionally, there appears to be a need to transfer what is literal into the figural. Images and symbolism seem to elicit more pleasure than merely discursive storytelling, which would explain why Bollywood remakes tend to appropriate Western cinematic imagery more frequently than film scripts. It is this heightened sensation and figural excess that most significantly marks the moment of translation between the Bollywood remake and its foreign original, and both are in need of further investigation and analysis.

There is also a particular kind of gratification to be found in the act and experience of cross-cultural translation itself. This unique pleasure is evident through my prior examples of reverse-colonialism, and through the fact that Indian audiences thrive on seeing Bollywood film stars hybridise with those in the West. They enjoy seeing Amitabh Bachchan as Marlon Brando (*Sarkar* [2005]); or Shah Rukh Khan as Tom Cruise. Just as we would imaginarily superimpose ourselves onto our on-screen heroes, Indian audiences take pleasure in viewing the superimposition of their national heroes onto global heroes. In considering this method of inter-referential "star-crossing" it becomes clear that the Hindi remake film offers its audiences a unique pleasure that it could not produce, were it an original. With respect to the international audience however, the opposite effect is achieved. Despite their attempt to employ an iconography and aesthetic that is more accessible and appealing to foreign markets, Bollywood remakes have yet to successfully capture the interests of the non-Indian audience [8]. The resemblance of the Hindi remake to its original is often uncanny – familiar, yet very different. It is this uncanniness, coupled with the aforementioned internal critique/parody of adopted foreign film traits, that makes the Bollywood re-

make all the more unsettling and perhaps contributes to the negative reactions of non-indigenous audiences towards this particular mode of Hindi film making.

Specifically with regards to its inability to ever straightforwardly and substantially stage the content of its foreign original, there is a certain sense of failure that accompanies the Bollywood-Hollywood remake. Changes to an original text's storyline often occur in order to accommodate Indian ethics and censorship [9], and this is one way in which cross-cultural remaking proves problematic. For example, one could argue that a film such as Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) can never really be remade in Bollywood due to the fundamental sensibilities which Hindi cinema and its audience rely upon: dishonest/sinful heroes must repent; the anti-heroes motives must be morally justified; and the favoured-protagonists must live. Thus, in the Bollywood pseudo-remake *Bunty aur Babli* (2005), the realist and gritty style that lay at Penn's original text's core is transformed into a colourful tongue-in-cheek Rom-Com caper, to an extent at which the film bares little or no resemblance to its original and becomes an as-good-as-original in its own right. As Horton and McDougal observe, film remakes "constitute a particular territory existing somewhere between unabashed larceny and subtle originality" and even "problematize the very notion of originality" (Horton and McDougal, 1998: 4).

The very fact that Bollywood is rarely held back by copyright laws has allowed the remake to flourish and cross-cultural referencing to penetrate a high number of recent Hindi film releases. This lack of policing has enabled remaking to form part of modern day Hindi cinema's standard practice, at times even making it difficult to separate or differentiate borrowed foreign-styles from the normative or "authentic" style of contemporary Bollywood. Copying, it seems, is now intrinsic to the identity and generic form of the globalised/international Hindi film. Once Hollywood aesthetics become confused with Bollywood conventions, Mr "Everything comes from India's" presumptions are realised: John Woo's action stunts, bullet-time technology, Tarantino-esque masculinity, and aliens from outer space are now as much a fundamental part of the memory and (hyper) reality of contemporary Bollywood as any other cinema. As to the question of whether these copycat films should be regarded as quotation or plagiarism, I would argue that they are at once both and neither. A postmodern perspective might instead suggest that they enter as plagerisations, but later become reinventions and innovations.

Once translated by Bollywood, an original text may face a certain level of loss of affect. As *The Matrix* (1999), *Mission: Impossible 2* (2000) and *Reservoir Dogs* are manipulated and exposed through remaking, a certain level of lost-aura (Benjamin, 1970) takes place as a consequence. In some extreme cases, the original text's autonomy and authenticity may be threatened, particularly with regard to the so-called Indian multiplex audience's [10] relationship to it after having viewed its remake. Hollywood codes, once consumed by the remake, are no longer as monolithic; Tarantino's aesthetic coolness no longer has the same effect once we see it in exaggerated form in a film like *Kaante*. As the Bollywood remakes reveal, intertextuality can be at once seductive and destructive.

Contemporary Bollywood is in a state of flux where a bricolage of multiple styles and genres continue to cancel out and invalidate one another. The remake is the prime example of the current identity-collapse of Bollywood cinema. However it also paradoxically signals the beginnings of a new form of cinema. The film remake should therefore never be underestimated, for it too, as Leo Braudy comments, is a "species of interpretation" (Braudy, 1998: 327). It is only in its self-destructive state (as a remake) that the Bollywood text can begin to critically pull apart not only its own, but other more universalised cinematic techniques, such as those of Hollywood. In the contemporary Hindi remake, Hollywood cinema is "recast to fit the nuances and developments in the cultural landscape of popular Hindi cinema's audiences" (Dudrah, 2006: 146). However, simultaneously, Bollywood too is being recast and remoulded to fit the international market. This circular process has resulted in producing a confused, fragmented and schizophrenic form of Hindi cinema. Ultimately, it seems that the cross-cultural Bollywood remake's agenda sits and shifts simultaneously between five things: profit and capital (multiplex, global and Diasporic appeal), exploitation, cultural-political commentary, a postmodern art-for-arts sake sensibility, and accident. Most ironically, it shows itself to be an example of Indian cinema at its most inventive and innovative – a classic case of art renewing itself through creative mistranslation (Stam, 2000: 62).

Notes

[1] Although I mainly cite Bollywood remakes produced over the past eight years, I do not intend to fix a date-period to this phenomenon. Hollywood narrative adaptations in 1990s Bollywood cinema have been partly explored by Sheila J. Nayar (1997). Also, we can find earlier evidence of such appropriation in films such as *Mr India* (1987), which works almost as a cultural inversion of Steven Spielberg's *Indian Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984), and in the 1950s with screen legend Raj Kapoor's involvement in reworkings of Charlie Chaplin films, Frank Capra's *It happened One night* (1934), and Vittorio De Sica's *Shoeshine* (1946). But what I wish to emphasise is the shift in remaking from being previously something occasional and cursory, to a now much larger-scale investment and cultural trend that is being recognised the Indian film media and embraced by the industry and its audiences like never before.

[2] It should be noted that South Indian director Satyajit Ray's sequels in his Apu Trilogy predate these films. However, as Ray's films do not form part of the mass-consumed popular cinema that Indian audiences identify with, I have excluded his work from my account of popular Hindi film remake-series.

[3] Most notably established in the Hollywood sci-fi film *The Matrix*.

[4] At one point in the film, the audience is presented with an assortment of over 35 consecutive shots of guns being seamlessly loaded and fired independently of the narrative context.

[5] It is also important to note that although *Kaante*'s director has refused to openly acknowledge the film's origins, Tarantino has himself praised the film for being one of the best foreign adaptations he has seen of his film. See Srinivas (2007).

[6] *E.T.* was itself accused of being a plagiarism of Bengali filmmaker Satyajit Ray's unmade film *The Alien*. The production was abandoned by Columbia pictures, the same studio that produced *E.T.* See Ray cited in Andrew Robinson (2004: 295).

[7] This chant is also a reference to the musical motif used in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), although there the music is arguably somewhat stripped of its spirituality and religious origins.

[8] Indeed, through my own experiences of screening these films to Western film studies students, the films tend to be met with an almost instant disregard, insult, ridicule or rejection.

[9] For example, in *Zinda* (2006) the oedipal sexual theme of the original Korean film *Oldboy* (2003), seen as too controversial for the Indian audience, is replaced with an insight into the 'immorality' of the Bangkok virgin sex trade.

[10] The 'multiplex audience' refers to modern Indian spectators who have knowledge of and consume a wider repertoire of cinema, incorporating both Hollywood and Bollywood films. The term comes from the growing number of cinema multiplexes in India which now simultaneously offer screenings of both national and foreign/international films.

Bibliography

Alessio, Dominic and Jessica Langer (2007) Hindu Nationalism and Post colonialism in Indian Science Fiction: *Koi... Mil Gaya (2003)*, *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 5 (3), pp. 217-229.

Aufderheide, Patricia (1998) Made in Hong Kong: Translation and transmutation, *Play it again, Sam: retakes on remakes*. Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press.

Baudrillard, Jean (1983) The evil demon of images/The precession of simulacra, *Simulations*. Semiotext: New York.

Bazin, Andre (1948/2000) Adaptation, or the cinema as digest, *Film adaptation*. London: Athlone Press.

Benjamin, Walter (1999 [1970]) The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction, in Hannah Arendt (ed), *Illuminations*. London: Pimlico, pp. 219-253.

Binford, Mira Reym (1998) Innovation and Imitation in the contemporary Indian cinema, in Wimal Dissanayake (ed), *Cinema and Cultural identity: Reflections on films from Japan, India and China*. University press of America: USA.

Braudy, Leo (1998) Afterword: rethinking remakes, *Play it again, Sam: retakes on remakes*. Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press.

Chattopadhyaya, Saratchandra (2005) *Parineeta*, translated by Malobika Chaudhuri. Penguin Books India.

Chattopadhyaya, Saratchandra (2002) *Devdas*. Penguin Books India.

Dika, Vera (2003) *Recycled culture in Contemporary art and film: the uses of nostalgia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Druxman, Michael B (1975) *Make it again Sam: A survey of movie remakes*. A.S. Barnes.

Dudrah, Rajinder Kumar (2006) *Bollywood: Sociology goes to the movies*. New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London: Sage.

Dyer, Richard (2006) *Pastiche*. London: Routledge.

Genette, Gerard (1997) *Palimpsests : literature in the second degree*, translated by Channa Newman & Claude Doubinsky. London, Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.

Horton, Andrew (1998) Cinematic makeovers and cultural border crossings: Kusturica's Time of the Gypsies and Coppola's Godfather and Godfather 2, *Play it again, Sam: retakes on remakes*. Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press.

Horton, Andrew and Stuart Y. McDougal (1998) *Play it again, Sam: retakes on remakes*. Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press.

Jameson, Fredric (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The cultural logic of late capitalism*. Verso: London.

Lal, Vinay (1998) The impossibility of the outsider in modern Hindi film, in Ashis Nandy (ed), *The secret politics of our desires: Innocence, culpability and Indian popular cinema*. London: Zed Books.

Leitch, Thomas (2002) Twice-told tales: disavowal and the rhetoric of the remake, in Jennifer Forrest and Leonard Koos (eds.), *Dead Ringers: The remake in theory and practice*. USA (Albany): State University of New York.

Mazdon, Lucy (2000) *Encore Hollywood: remaking French cinema*. London: BFI.

McFarlane, Brian (1996) *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Nayar, Sheila J. (1997) The values of fantasy: Indian popular cinema through Western scripts, *Journal of Popular Culture*, 31 (2), (Summer), pp.73-90.

Propp, Vladimir (1968) *Morphology of the folktale*, L.A. Wagner (ed), 2nd edition, University of Texas.

Robinson, Andrew (2004) *Satyajit Ray: The Inner Eye: the Biography of a Master Film-maker*. London and New York: I.B Tauris.

Stam, Robert (2000) Beyond Fidelity: The dialogics of adaptation, *Film adaptation*. London: Athlone Press.

Thomas, Rosie (1985) Indian cinema: Pleasures & popularity, *Screen*, 26 (3-4), pp.116-131.

Verevis, Constantine (2005) *Film remakes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Willis, David (1998) The French remark: Breathless and Cinematic Citationality, *Play it again, Sam: retakes on remakes*. Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press.

Websites

Banerjee, Kanchana (2003) Cloning Hollywood, *The Hindu* (August 3rd) Available at:
http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/mag/2003/08/03/stories/2003080300090400.htm [Accessed 1st March 2009].

Srinivas (2007) The Quentin Conversation, *Passion for Cinema*. Available at: http://passionforcinema.com/the-quentin-conversation [Accessed 1st March 2009].

Filmography

Bonnie and Clyde. 1967. Dir. Arthur Penn. Warner Bros.

Bunty aur Babli. 2005. Dir. Shaad Ali. Yash Raj Films.

City on Fire. 1987. Dir. Ringo Lam. Cinema City.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind. 1977. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Columbia Pictures.

Devdas. 2002. Dir. Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Mega Bollywood.

Dev.D. 2009. Dir. Anurag Kashyap. UTV Motion Pictures.

Dhoom. 2004. Dir. Sanjay Gadhvi. Yash Raj Films.

Dhoom: 2. 2006. Dir. Sanjay Gadhvi. Yash Raj Films.

Don. 2006. Dir. Farhan Akhtar. Excel Entertainment.

Don. 1978. Dir. Chandra Barot. Nariman Films.

Drona. 2008. Dir. Goldie Behl. Eros International.

E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial. 1982. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Universal Pictures.

Fight Club: Members Only. 2006. Dir. Vikram Chopra. Rising Star Entertainment.

Fight Club. 1999. Dir. David Fincher. Twentieth Century Fox.

Ghajini. 2008. Dir. A.R. Murugadoss. Geetha Arts.

The Godfather. 1972. Dir, Francis Ford Coppola. Paramount Pictures.

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. 1984. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Paramount Pictures.

Jewel Thief. 1967. Dir. Vijay Anand. Kapurchand and Co.

Kaante. 2002. Dir. Sanjay Gupta. Pritish Nandy Communications.

Koi…Mil Gaya. 2003. Dir. Rakesh Roshan. Yash Raj Films.

Krishna Cottage. 2004. Dir. Santram Varma. Balaji Films.

Krrish. 2006. Dir. Rakesh Roshan. Filmkraft Productions.

Lagaan: Once upon a time in India. 2001. Dir. Ashutosh Gowarikar. Aamir Khan Productions.

Lage Raho Munna Bhai. 2006. Dir. Rajkumar Hirani. Vinod Chopra Productions.

Love Story: 2050. 2008. Dir. Harry Baweja. Baweja Movies.

Main Hoon Na. 2004. Dir. Farah Khan. Venus Films.

The Matrix. 1999. Dir. Andy and Larry Wachowski. Warner Bros.

Memento. 2000. Dir. Christopher Nolan. Team Todd.

Mission: Impossible. 1996. Dir. Brian De Palma. Paramount Pictures.

Mission: Impossible 2. 2000. Dir. John Woo. Paramount Pictures.

Mr India. 1987. Dir. Shekar Kapur. Narsimha Enterprises.

Nagina. 1986. Dir. Harmesh Malhotra. Eastern Films.

Nigahen: Nagina Part 2. 1989. Dir. Harmesh Malhotra. Eastern Films.

Oldboy. 2003. Dir. Chan-wook Park. Show East.

Ram Gopal Varma Ki Aag. 2007. Dir. Ram Gopal Varma. Adlabs Films.

Raaz. 2002. Dir. Vikram Bhatt. Vishesh Films.

Reservoir Dogs. 1992. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. Miramax Films.

Return of the Jewel Thief. 1996. Dir. Ashok Tyagi. Arshee Films.

Ringu. 1998. Dir. Hideo Nakata. Imagica.

Saathiya. 2002. Dir. Shaad Ali. Yash Raj Films.

Sarkar. 2005. Dir. Ram Gopal Varma. K Sera Sera.

Sarkar Raj. 2008. Dir. Ram Gopal Varma. K Sera Sera.

What lies beneath. 2000. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. Twentieth Century Fox.

Zinda. 2006. Dir. Sanjay Gupta. White Feather Films.

"La Television des Professeurs?": Charles Dickens, French Public Service Television and Olivier Twist

Pamela Atzori, Aberystwyth University, UK

Introduction

If film adaptations found some aesthetic recognition thanks to the elevation of cinema to the rank of "art" in recent years, TV programmes of this kind are still being largely disregarded by scholars. According to Sarah Cardwell, there has not been to date "any sustained attempt to distinguish television adaptations as a distinct form or genre [and] 'Television aesthetics' have been neglected, brushed aside or reviled in the field of television studies for too long" (Cardwell, 2002: 1-4). Moreover, even when British and American television adaptations of "classic" novels composed by writers such as Charles Dickens and Jane Austen have received attention from such scholarship as Sue Parrill's *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (2002) and Robert Giddings's *The Classic Novel from Page to Screen*(2000), international TV adaptations of the same kind have not been studied at all. This is a great pity as the study of these programmes could contribute in a major way to tracing the origins of television as a medium, and literary adaptations with it.

This is why I ahve chosen to examine a programme of this type despite the enormous amount of TV adaptations made over the years in several different languages all over the world. European adaptations seemed a logical choice for practical reasons (access to materials, for instance) and linguistic reasons. [1] This article focuses on the French adaptation of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, entitled *Olivier Twist*, aired in 1962 by the French channel TF1 (*Télévision Française* 1). RTF, which was created in 1949 (but later known as ORTF*Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française* from 1964), was one of those European TV companies which chose to follow the BBC's Public Service Broadcasting-style plan. Originally the company could only count on two public national channels, *La Première Chaîne*(First Channel, today TF1) and *La Deuxième Chaîne* (Second Channel, today *France 2*) which, "like radio, had three main objectives: to inform, to entertain, to educate" (Hughes, 1973: 41). A combination of these three aims characterized the programs produced by ORTF until the Liberalization Law in 1986, when the privatization of the first TV channel was authorized (TF1 was officially privatized in 1987). The production of literary adaptations in particular was encouraged and this is evident in the number of programmes of this kind broadcast in France between 1949 (when TV resumed its programs after the war) and 1972 (when the third channel *Chaîne 3* was launched). [2]

The success and proliferation of adaptations in France in a time of consolidation for the new medium (the 1960s) was due to one person in particular, the literature graduate and theatre devotee Claude Santelli, one of the most influential pioneers of RTF -- and later ORTF -- of his time. Santelli, who was also among the most productive scriptwriters of that period, believed that the best way to familiarize its viewers with television and the "arts" (particularly literature) was

to adapt popular novels from all over the world for the small screen. [3] He was aware that many French had probably never completed their formal education, or that there were people who did not have the time or the will to spend their free hours after work reading or discussing art. Put simply, it would seem that he was convinced that television had the duty "to make elitist culture, books and other works accessible to everyone" (Veyrat-Masson, 2002: 592). Particularly during the 1960s, an era of great experimentation in European TV, Santelli was aware that the enjoyment of more "cultured" pastimes was often limited to a few, educated people. As a TV innovator, he worked on two fronts: firstly, he attempted to improve the programming of television in France by making "cultivated" programmes available to all. Secondly, he was also trying to silence the accusations directed at the new medium, among these being the claim that the televisual medium was "an infamous 'box', which distracts and exhausts people, who are passively settled in front of the small screen" (Fabre, 2004: 2).

Of course Santelli's literary background influenced his choice of attempting to elevate the cultural status of his viewers by producing mainly literary adaptations for them. [4] However, he was also genuinely convinced that television was a medium that could open people's minds, positively influence he viewers and encourage them to reflect and learn at the same time. Santelli thought the greatness of TV rested in its ability to tell stories, to make them accessible, no matter what subject was being treated. As Geneviève Piejut put it:

> The powerful way in which television maintains the continuity of a narration tradition, of a story and its storyteller [...] The power of television rests in its ability to portray our desires and our ghosts, to represent the imaginary, to generate pleasure. At any time, at any age, stories are always adored! (Piejut, 1987: 10)

Between 1960 and 1966 Santelli produced a popular series, entitled *Le Théâtre de la Jeunesse* which was comprised of adaptations of fifty literature "classics" from all over the (Western) world. Among these were five adaptations from Dickens, including *Little Dorrit* (filmed in 1961 and entitled *La Petite Dorrit*), *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* (which aired in 1965). Dickens had the highest number of works adapted (more so than any French novelists). My choice of *Olivier Twist* over the other adaptations is motivated by the fact that, in my view, it is the one that most distinctly reworks the novel in an original way, including the sketching of the main characters and the general settings of the story.

In this context it is of particular importance to consider the way in which Santelli, who also wrote the *Olivier* teleplay, decided to move away from merely reproducing the novel's plot, with its emphasis on denouncing Victorian society and its shortcomings, to representing the emotional voyage of the characters. What is most innovative in *Olivier Twist* is the characterization and subsequent "humanization" of the protagonists. This last issue was somewhat a secondary matter for Dickens who was instead interested "in the progress of innocence through a world in itself totally corrupt", where Oliver is "a means of setting society in perspective. He acts as an emblem rather than a character" (Hobsbaum, 1998: 38). Olivier maintains, in this adaptation, the role of link, the thread which

connects all the other characters without becoming -- paradoxically -- the un-mistakable key figure of the narrative. As most of Olivier's hardships are not shown (for example, the fact that Olivier asks for more is only hinted at, there is no scene that visually confirms it) the young boy fails to become the main pro-tagonist of the story, and ends up sharing this position with other characters represented in the programme.

Another important journey is the one that transforms Oliver (the book character) into *Olivier* (its TV equivalent). *Olivier Twist* was made to suit viewers of all ages, and, to satisfy all these different categories of viewers, much had to change in this transition from literature to television. [5] The diverse locations, the number of characters, the intricate and somewhat complicated sub-plots de-scribed in the novel had to be simplified and tailored to a different type of audi-ence who would still enjoy *Olivier Twist* in instalments (the format by which the novel had first been published), but via a different type of "page", the glass screen of a "magic" box.

In summary, I will briefly attempt to show not only how television can success-fully adapt a book, but also how it is inevitably influenced by the background of its makers (namely Santelli), the country in which it was made (France) and the reputation of the televisual medium itself in the period considered (the 1960s). To be able to explain this point more clearly a comparison will be made between *Olivier Twist* "the adaptation" and *Oliver Twist* "the written text". This compari-son -- far from being a celebration of the novel, or even the TV series -- will hopefully show how adaptations are not harmful to their sources, but how they can often enrich them, and add new elements which make the story intelligible and attractive to audiences across different countries, as well as across the boundaries of time.

Television is a product of its time, a mirror which reflects the contemporary cli-mate that surrounds it. *Olivier Twist* is a prime example of how TV can "actual-ize" and "popularize" a work of literature otherwise destined to be known only by few readers or else remain hidden in dusty library shelves. Small screen adapta-tions such as *Olivier Twist* allowed vast numbers of people to become familiar with literature, and issues and subjects they might never have been otherwise exposed to.

Charles Dickens and France: A Long Story

Dickens conquered the sympathies of the French much earlier than the appear-ance of television. During his life, Dickens was fascinated by France, and Paris in particular; he had resided in this country many times during his life, and was full of praise for it. On this matter, his son Henry Fielding Dickens remarked that "he [Dickens] himself used to say, laughingly, that his sympathies were so much with the French that he ought to have been born a Frenchman" (H.F. Dickens, 1928: 28). This attachment is proved in other letters written by Dickens, such as the one sent to his friend John Forster in which he described himself as "a natu-ralized French, and a citizen of Paris" (Forster, 1876: 5). In return, Dickens en-joyed a good degree of popularity in France (particularly in Paris), where (alleg-

edly) he was often saluted with cries such as "the famous writer!" everywhere he went, even in ordinary shops (Ackroyd, 1990: 788).

This may partially explain why French TV pioneers were so familiar and so fond of Dickens' works, which became a popular choice for early French cinematic and radio adaptations. The supposed suitability of the author's works (many of them were published serially) to be adapted for television even earned him on more than one occasion the title of "best television writer in the world" (Leulliot, 1972: 76). [6] It was only well into the 1950s that TV started to attract a significant number of spectators. According to the statistics provided by the French Television Licence Fees institution:

> in 1950 there were only 3.794 TV sets. In 1955, their number had risen to 260.500, and to over 1.902.000 in 1960! This success was directly dependent to the growth of the national coverage: this had increased from 10% of the national territory in 1953, to 70% in 1959 (Hervé, 1989: 28-29).

The creation of a very successful series such as the *Théâtre de la Jeunesse* (1960-1966) included many adaptations of foreign works of literature. But why would French TV adapt these specific novels as one might argue that it would have been easier, for example, to adapt mainly local, so-called "classic" novels? According to Santelli, one reason could be that adaptations of "favourite' literature classics" added the gravitas of literary tradition, and validated not only new television initiatives such as that of the *Théâtre*, but the new medium itself. It was as if there was a belief that the prestige enjoyed by these novels within the field of literature, could make the new medium television as prestigious by merely showing their adaptations. In Britain:

> Circumstances and tradition combined at the BBC to sustain a notion of planned and mixed viewing in which as large and as natural an audience as possible would be persuaded to accept an evening package in which music-hall comedy and entertainment would lead on to serious drama and current affairs analysis (Stead, 1993: 45).

In France, State television had, at its initial stage, a precise plan of public service broadcasting, which acknowledged that "TV had an educational role, and had set itself the duty of making culture widely available [...] Public television was particularly interested in allowing any aspect of culture to reach larger numbers of users" (Chaniac, 1996: 29), especially those users which had previously been excluded from it, for different reasons (because these viewers had a limited educational background, had very little spare time to read or, in general, because they were people who simply were not traditionally interested in art and cultural matters). In other words, television was becoming "an agent of the common culture", an instrumental medium for the democratization of knowledge (Stead, 1993: 46).

In some ways, French television found it almost "natural" to transpose Dickens' novels on screen. In the past, the country had already claimed the figure of the writer for itself. Now television did the same, and in the attempt to establish it-

self started a process of ingestion, or appropriation if you like, of a varied number of his works. *Oliver Twist*, however -- like the majority of Dickens' works -- runs over five hundred pages, and choices would have to be made by producers and writers regarding which storylines and characters to include/exclude, how to modify the dialogue to suit a teleplay, how to construct the sets, and so on. Some of the adaptations shown on *Théâtre de la Jeunesse*, like *The Pickwick Papers,* and *Olivier Twist*, were broadcasted in multiple episodes, while others were screened as one-off made-for-TV films.

The Birth of *Olivier Twist*: From the Page to its Televisual Dimension across the Channel

Olivier Twist was produced in an experimental era for French television. As elsewhere in Europe, producers within the medium did not, at first, possess big budgets, and everyone involved in making television at this stage (directors, actors, operators) was relatively new to the process. This adaptation, albeit interpreted by actors who had previously worked for cinema (Marcel Dalio, André Oumansky) was no exception. *Olivier* is shot in fill light (which rendered the use of lanterns by the characters perhaps superfluous) while the settings were very bare, and the scenes that were supposed to represent external locations were filmed inside a TV studio. Also, with the exclusion of the paved roads, the outside world was painted over huge panels, with the illusion of creating an outdoor feeling. The fairly static television cameras were also limited in their ability to experiment with different filming techniques: most scenes are filmed in medium and long shots, and close ups are rare. Music is limited to the opening and closing credits, and the only sounds that can be detected within the adaptation are the voices of the protagonists and a bell which, from time to time, signals the executions held in the prison located nearby Fagin's place.

Given its contents and the dark climate that permeates its narrative, *Oliver Twist* (the novel) was sometimes accused of being an unsuitable choice for young readers. This suspicion could, in return, be applied to adaptations of the same book and their suitability to young viewers (Siclier, 1962: 13). Yet, it is often offered as a "classic" reader even for young pupils in schools, and its many adaptations have proved successful among spectators of all ages. In the 1960s, French television consisted of only one, publicly owned channel (TF1) with the mandate to produce quality television, which could entertain as well as educate (Monier, 2001: 35). Following this, the epitome of this way of making television was also known in France as "la télévision des professeurs", the professors' television (Veyrat-Masson, 2002: 592).

From the beginning, French television had started to experiment with different genres, such as documentaries, news programmes and coverage of cultural events. Santelli was quick to identify a gap in the market for children and young people's programmes. He first inaugurated *Livre Mon Ami*, the first broadcast of which specialized in suggesting books to read to children and adolescents, following which he took control of *Le Théâtre de la Jeunesse*. Within the series, Santelli was officially asked by RTF to create a repertoire of literary adaptations based on important works of literature from all over the world (*Gargantua*, *Oliver Twist* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* being such examples). In addition to this, he

undertook the task of purging these works of their most controversial and unsettling elements, in order to make the transpositions accessible to the greatest number of viewers (educated and uneducated, young and old alike).

This created an obvious complication. The chosen novels not only had to be adapted from one medium to another but the adaptation also had to take into account the needs and the impressionability of a heterogeneous set of viewers (particularly children). In the case of Dickens' adaptations (and in this instance *Olivier Twist*), this obstacle was overcome by losing some of the well-known characteristics of the book. Thus, the component of London as a dirty, sinister city is lost (even Fagin's place, albeit untidy, is not filthy), and the social message supported by the narrative -- the denunciation of violated childhood, the unveiling of the extreme poverty caused by industrialisation -- is only weakly hinted at. What was transferred from the original to the TV series were those messages labelled as "universal", or suitable to all viewers. In Santelli's view, for instance, very small children had the ability to understand and sympathise with the unfortunate and badly treated characters, but contrary to their parents they could not fully comprehend the socio-political reasons behind phenomena such as poverty or discrimination. However, such complicated issues were often hinted at within the dialogues, in order to be easily acknowledged by the more alert viewers.

Instead of maintaining a dividing line between programmes tailored specifically for adults and others produced with children in mind, here is an attempt to converge all categories of spectators with universally suitable broadcasts. In *Olivier Twist,* the focus is on the emotional relationships which developed among the characters overtime (love, Nancy and Bill; hate, Nancy and Fagin; compassion, between the Mayles and Olivier, etc.) and the ironic twists which were created from this. The French *Olivier*, seemingly unable (or unwilling) to dress the characters shabbily, shows us Olivier not merely well fed but smartly clothed in his impeccably clean school uniform. Even the Artful Dodger (*Renard*, interpreted by Philippe Ogouz) is dressed in immaculate, respectable clothes. The "*noir*" climate of the novel disappears almost from the beginning, and so do the images of dying children, starvation, the filth of the Thames and the streets of London: all the evident signs of this do not find a place in this transposition.

The study of the emotional development of the main characters emphasizes a common dichotomy between good and evil nature among (as well as within) the protagonists. A deep, psychological analysis of some of the most "passionate" characters of this novel allowed the good-evil dichotomy to emerge even more forcefully. In some ways, the treatment given to Olivier and companions is, here, positively anti-Dickensian. This is particularly apparent in the treatment of Nancy's character. Nancy's character is contradictory: she warms up to Olivier straight away, but betrays him and takes him back to Fagin after Oliver has taken refuge at Mr Brownlow's for the first time.

Nancy (Alice Reichen) is undeniably an example of how poverty could destroy a person, but she is not only this. Nancy is a woman who has emotions, and in this adaptation she is not destroyed by her social marginality, but by her emotions, along with her capability to love unreservedly. To make her more appealing to

the public, Nancy changes from being "not exactly pretty" (Charles Dickens, 1997 [1838]: 77) to a beautiful girl who is untidy and poorly dressed, but she does not look hopelessly destitute. In the series, no mention is made of the fact she is a prostitute as well as a thief. Nancy works for Fagin (Marcel Dalio), she is a thief's lover, but she is also sensitive to other people's misfortunes. This quality, which will lead her to show compassion towards Olivier, proves fatal for her.

When, for Olivier's sake, Nancy meets Miss Rose Maylie (one of Olivier's protectors, interpreted by Janine Vila) and tells her all she knows about Olivier's past, she betrays her own lover, her environment, her acquired nature: thus, she has to die. Nancy's criminal past is not used as a "sin" for which Nancy deserves to be killed: her sin is being a selfless, emotional catalyst. The contrast between the two women, Rose and Nancy (so destitute she doesn't have a surname) represents the two faces of the same coin: Nancy, with her old, grey dress represents the fallen woman, a character "feared" by Victorians (albeit she redeems herself by helping Olivier). Meanwhile Rose, with her tidy white dress, and perfect composure, is the "ideal" woman (according to Dickens and Victorian standards alike). Rose tries to convince Nancy to abandon Fagin's group or even denounce him and his accomplices. She, for the love of Bill (André Oumansky), refuses. Nancy's generosity towards Olivier is, however, rewarded with a ring adorned with precious gems (but in the book she only accepted a white handkerchief), which in a way symbolizes Nancy's inner beauty. This ring also becomes, for her lover Bill, the symbol of her betrayal.

Nancy and Bill had a bond in the novel, but that attachment is stronger in the series. To show that Nancy and Bill were not only united by their unfortunate circumstances, but by love, the series provides the viewers with many close-ups of the two characters. These close-ups are particularly effective when the pair are framed close to one another. Bill, her lover, is fighting against good and evil too: only Nancy can pacify his tantrums, she is his good part. In this adaptation, Bill himself is depicted as a handsome man, neatly dressed, good humoured, but hopelessly impulsive. His heavily (verbally and physically) mistreated "white, shaggy dog" is not depicted, perhaps another symptom that this adaptation is attempting to show Bill as a more humane character than the novel. Sykes is never gratuitously cruel, nor is he the perennially drunk individual described by Dickens. On TV, he becomes something other than socially inept: this adaptation depicts him as emotionally confused and incompetent, rather than stressing his criminal nature, or his social isolation. Even after Fagin presents the evidence against Nancy, Bill gives her the benefit of the doubt and listens to her justifications:

> Bill: Nancy, we know everything. The kid has followed you and heard everything.
>
> Nancy: If he followed me he knows what I said and that I didn't betray you
>
> Bill: All you said, all you've done is known, do you understand? You sold us and *me* with them!

> Nancy: But think about it! If it were true, why would I come back? I went out in secret tonight, it's true, I will explain it to you, I wanted to save the boy, that's all. They offered me a way out, without you I said no, I came back, I can't leave *you* Bill! [7]

From the emphasis (mine) on the *you* and *me*, it can be noted how this conversation, albeit carried out in Fagin's place, is very much a private exchange between Bill and Nancy. When Nancy claims that "I never betrayed *you*, Bill, this is true as it is my faith in God" and "If I'm lying, he'll punish me before *you*", Bill is touched and silences Fagin's who instead protests Nancy is a liar and that "Unfortunately I have a feeling that God may be deaf". He eventually succumbs to evil when, after noticing she is wearing Rose's ring, he doubts Nancy's faithfulness to him, and impulsively stabs her once, almost by mistake (in the book she is gruesomely murdered, stabbed several times). She dies while proclaiming her undying, faithful love for him. In death, Nancy is restored to love, purity, innocence. She becomes "Rose".

The pathos in this scene is well illustrated by a clever use of the camera throughout the proceedings. First we see two lingering long shots of Nancy and Bill individually, then, as they grow closer, we are shown the characters in a medium shot (Bill threatens Nancy), then a close-up (Bill asks for an explanation of Nancy's behaviour), and finally through an extreme close-up (Nancy defends her position but Bill notices Rose's ring on her finger). This was done in order to show how emotionally and physically close the two lovers are. Following this the camera slowly pulls back, showing the characters through a medium and a long shot (Bill has just stabbed Nancy, who is lying lifeless on the floor). In this way, the camerawork illustrates how the bond between Bill and Nancy is broken, as Bill runs away and the camera rests on Nancy -- dead and alone -- for a few seconds. The lighting further reinforces this sense of "broken bonds": Bill and Nancy are first shot with strong backlighting, but the brightness of the scene slowly increases until the two characters are shown in an extreme close-up. At this point front lighting is used to emphasize Bill and Nancy's facial expressions (anger; pain or love). The intensity of the lighting is lowered again so that Nancy's body is barely lit.

The way Fagin's character was treated in this adaptation is also worth analysing. Fagin, the "very old, shrivelled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair" (Dickens, 1997 [1838]: 70) does not become any more sympathetic in this adaptation (but viewers are spared the details of his imprisonment and execution). What is more interesting though, in this programme produced less than twenty years after the end of World War Two, is the absence of references towards the fact that he is, in effect, of Jewish descent. He claims to be "a miser, that is all" (*Olivier Twist*): and yet, this is *not* all. Fagin is interpreted in this adaptation by Marcel Dalio, a very popular French actor who was, in fact, Jewish. Members of his family had been deported and exterminated in various concentration camps, while he had been fortunate to emigrate to the USA and lived there as a refugee for several years. It could be argued that, sinceDalio was universally recognized as a Jewish actor, this solved the issue of having to stress, within the dialogue or with additional physical evidence, Fagin's ethnic background. Thus, those who had read the book would be

satisfied that Fagin's ethnicity was faithfully portrayed, while other viewers would enjoy a famous, Hollywood actor impersonating a key character on French TV, regardless of preoccupations over Fagin's upbringing.

The thorough descriptions of the locations represented in the novel often correspond to the inner qualities of its occupants, hence the absence of long, exhaustive physical depictions of Dickens' characters. Santelli constantly made references to the written works while discussing the TV series which adapted them. However, one can hardly detect that either television or literature are preferred over the other. In several interviews, Santelli professed himself a keen reader of Dickens, but in talking about *Olivier Twist* he explained that several changes had been necessary for a coherent and successful transposition of this novel onto the screen. The TV series was designed for young viewers as well as adults, who may or may not be familiar with the history of London in Victorian Britain. By comparing the narrative of the novel with that of the series, one could understand why such changes were made, and how they enriched (and possibly made memorable) the storyline. In commenting upon the vicissitudes of central characters such as Olivier and Nancy, Santelli clarified in what way *Olivier Twist* differs but also resembles the source novel. Each represents the reverse of the same medal:

> It is possible to offer a representation of Oliver Twist that will reach young viewers without scaring them. It would be enough to avoid the mistake made by British television, which focused on violent scenes [...] According to Dickens, Nancy's death had, in some way, the purpose of redeeming Bill the crook, who feels remorseful just moments before his horrible death. It's the Christian principle of Grace. We have developed the episode in this sense [...] We have brought back upon the characters and the psychological analysis the lighting that cinema had directed towards space and setting (Siclier, 1962: 13).

The value of this adaptation, and all the elements which influenced its production, are strictly linked to the novel. Could they be discovered without a comparison with it? Can it be desirable? TV adaptations often start with opening credits such as "Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*" or "*Bleak House* by Charles Dickens". The adaptation considered here is no different, as it starts with "*Olivier Twist*" followed by "après Charles Dickens". Measuring literary works against their adaptations is sometimes, I would agree, a repetitive or even sterile exercise. However, in cases such as *Olivier Twist*, when a work of literature is adapted outside its country of origin, making a reference towards the inspiring work would not only be useful, but good practice. This is particularly true in the case of adaptations which were advertised and promoted by explicitly using the book's reputation to corroborate the respectability and the high standards portrayed by the TV series.

As a scriptwriter, Santelli acknowledged that he used to work in strict contact with the novels he adapted for television, and that the changes made were related to what he believed was in this instance the "essence" of *Oliver Twist*, along with a careful reflection over the requirements of the new medium and its spectators. Adaptations made by French TV in the early 1960s could be analysed

by solely taking into account the technological and aesthetic elements, including pronunciation and elocution. But it is not clear how this type of study could be classified under the category of adaptation studies in the strict sense. Arguably, it could be claimed that, in this way, transpositions are not being studied as adaptations at all, because the elements which are identified in this way (that is, the components they shared with the work that inspired them) are lost or systematically ignored.

In conclusion, I hope to have shown that comparison does not have to be a synonym of negative "criticism", because comparisons can show how the book metamorphosed within its screen representation, how TV popularized Oliver's story, actualizing and consequently, in some cases, enriching the novel's "original" structure by emphasizing certain aspects of the book, or even by developing plotlines otherwise left behind, or barely mentioned within the book (the passionate and loving relationship between Nancy and Bill). As John Style states:

> when assessing the fidelity of an adaptation in terms of the extent to which these ideas survive the transformation into film, we may find that the adaptation reveals ways of expressing them in visual ways that are paradoxically more faithful to the "original" than the "original novel" itself (Style, 2005: 71).

This was shown, for example, in the second opening scene of the adaptation, where Olivier is brought before the administrator of the orphanage by Mr Bumble, after having "asked for more". The novel described in great length what deprivations and abuse Oliver and his young companions were subjected to, and what form of protest they devised in order to receive better treatment from their "patrons". That is, they drew lots to choose one of the group who would dare "ask for more gruel" to the officers during mealtime. This episode added pathos and emphasized the unjust and poor way in which the child Oliver and his friends were treated.

The adaptation does not have a scene in which Olivier is shown "asking for more". This may give the impression that the original importance and meaning of such a crucial event in Twist's existence (i.e. the denunciation of starvation and the sense of desperation among the orphans) is lost or simply ignored. However, this is not the case. The same results are obtained when, in the scene where Olivier is put before the administrator, at the accusation of "How dare you ask for more? This child will be hanged!" Olivier innocently replies "Well… I was hungry, sir!". [8] Thus, the adaptation, without showing all the gritty details of Olivier's condition and lack of well-being, highlights to its viewers the same message Dickens suggested to the novel's readers more than a century before. That is, both Oliver and Olivier are malnourished children whose asking for more is a symptom of their lives led in unsuitable environments populated by unscrupulous and inadequate "benefactors", with little chance of improving their prospects without the indulgence or the generous help of more sensitive patrons.

Conclusion

Olivier Twist has its roots only partially set on Dickens' novel. In fact, its physiognomy is, in my view, unmistakably televisual and "Santelli-an", and reflects well the line of action chosen by RTF at the time: TV had to educate as well as entertain its viewers. It represents the need for television to be original and find its own meta-language in an era where its reputation as a relevant mass medium was all but established. Santelli was very fond of literature, as well as the new medium of television, and these two passions were equally important to him. By making changes to the structure of the novels that he adapted he reaffirmed the importance of literature classics and their role of diffusers of culture, but he also stressed that television was a medium with great story-telling potential and with its meta-language and its own integrity. In this way, he allowed television to free itself from the common assumption that adaptations should be faithful and reverential towards their original sources. *Olivier Twist* does not venerate *Oliver Twist*, although the similarities are undeniable.

Olivier the adaptation provided more images in which the audience could lose itslef than *Oliver Twist*'s original illustrator George Cruikshank could ever have drawn in 1838, and that use of different camera angles (the close-ups of the main characters' faces being of particular significance) emphasized the immediate visual potential of the new medium in relation to literature's ability to inspire visions through the power of imagination. *Le Théâtre de la Jeunesse* exploited this ability to its full advantage, and by also making *Olivier Twist* a simple narrative fit for virtually all ages and sexes, ensured its success. Santelli made *Olivier Twist* appealing to different categories of viewers by eliminating certain aspects of Dickens' story that could trouble younger viewers (the illness of young Dick, the appearance of the chimney sweeper, Fagin's death) or adding elements of melodrama which elaborated on partially explored issues (Nancy and Bill's romance). The language of the novel was actualized within the script to render it intelligible to the vastest number of viewers. Although the typically Dickensian social message is lost, as is the importance of London as a symbol of social distress, the adaptation elevates the story to a greater emotional level, a deeper exploration of the characters' psychology, their emotional struggles, their weaknesses and strengths.

If it is true, as Christine Geraghty claimed in her *Now a Major Motion Picture: Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama* in 2008, that the "child himself and his situation of extreme vulnerability remain central" (Geraghty, 2008: 28), it is also true that this centrality is heavily reassessed. Olivier moves around this adaptation more as an adhesive to keep the other characters in existence, than as the hero of the narrative. Also, the claim that "the second factor that gives some stability to adaptations of *Oliver Twist* is London" (Geraghty, 2008: 28) cannot be applied in this case. Dickens provided his readers with an atmosphere, a sense of place which made London -- and any other locations that manifest within his novels -- a character in its own right. In *Olivier Twist* the place component becomes less important, while the characters acquire the full status of protagonists of the narrative. If it were not for the fact that the name of "London" is pronounced in a few occasions, and that the shops' signs are written in

English, it could be claimed that this version of Oliver's story could have happened almost anywhere.

In the 1960s, French television had at its disposal meagre budgets and locations with which to produce its programmes. Furthermore, the technology was limited, with filming done *en direct*, making editing and re-enacting the scenes a long, painful process. Nonetheless,*Olivier Twist* remains a well crafted adaptation, which owed plenty to the novel -- particularly the dialogue, almost entirely extracted from the novel. The new medium, which could reach finally reach millions of people at the same time and, which contrary to cinema, had the chance to present *Olivier Twist* in a serialised form, played its part. In this adaptation, the ingestion, the appropriation by television of a true *roman picaresque* such as *Oliver Twist* consisted into transforming the story from a journey through London -- and its socio-political inadequacies -- to a *voyage* through the inner self. Olivier and the other characters are free from the constraints of Dickens' genius, and they are finally free to exist as protagonists in their own right, for once actors of their own -- televisual -- destiny.

Notes

[1] All the translations from the French original materials are my own.

[2] More information on this matter can be found in Chaniac, 1996: 31.

[3] Santelli explained his vision regarding the potential of a fruitful collaboration between TV and literature -- *Le Théâtre de la Jeunesse* being a successful example -- in a series of interviews stored in the INA (*Institut National de l'Audiovisuel*) archives and available for downloading from the website www.ina.fr.

[4] In this sense he created different TV series to support and carry on with his vision. The first series was *Livre mon Ami* (aimed at children, which ran from 1958-1968), followed by *Le Théâtre de la Jeunesse* (with fifty adaptations between 1960-1966 for the young "of all ages") and *Les Cents Livres des Hommes* (thirty-three episodes produced between 1969- 1973 for more "mature" viewers). He also created many documentaries and dramas of different kinds throughout his career (for instance, the series *La Légende du Siècle - André Malraux* in 1972*, L'An 40* in 1982 and *L'Héritage* in 1986).

[5] More information on this can be found in Pierre Monier (2001).

[6] This in an extract taken from the dialogue of *Olivier Twist*, episode 2. The translation of the lines from French to English is mine.

[7] This in an extract taken from the dialogue of *Olivier Twist*, episode 1. The translation of the lines from French to English is mine.

[8] This view was expressed in a video interview released by Santelli in September 1966 to the magazine *Micro et Caméras* and available for viewing on the website www.ina.fr.

References

Ackroyd, Peter (1990) *Dickens*. London: Vintage-Random House.

Barthes, Roland (1977) *Image, Music, Text*. London: Fontana Press.

Benjamin, Walter (2003) The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility: Third Version, in Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (eds.), *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings* IV. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, pp. 250-270.

Bluestone, George (1957) *Novels into Film: The Metamorphosis of Fiction into Cinema*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Cardwell, Sarah (2002) *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Caughie, John (2000) *Television Drama. Realism, Modernism and British Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chaniac, Régine (1996) Au Commencement Était l'Adaptation, *Cinémaction* 79, (March), pp. 28-36.

Chaniac, Régine (1998) *Le Feuilleton Français à la Télévision Française de 1956 à 1980*. INA: Paris.

Dickens, Charles (1838/1997) *Oliver Twist*, Bath: The Bath Press.

Dickens, Henry Fielding (1928) *Memories of My Father*. London: Victor Gollancz.

Fabre, Denise (2004) *Vivre Aux Eclats*. Hauts-de-Seine: M.Lafon.

Forster, John (1876) *The Life of Charles Dickens*. London: Chapman and Hall.

Foucalt, Michel (1990) *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*. London: The Penguin Press.

Geraghty, Christine (2008) *Now a Major Motion Picture. Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Giddings, Robert (2000) *The Classic Novel from Page to Screen.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hervé, Michel (1989) *La Télévision en France et dans le Monde*. Paris: PUF.

Hobsbaum, Philip (1998) *A Reader's Guide to Charles Dickens*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Hughes, Griffith Rees (1973) *Les Mass Media en France*. Oliver and Boyd: Edinburgh.

Leulliot, Jacqueline (1972) Dickens c'Est le Meilleur Écrivain de Télévision au Monde, *Télémagazine* 894 (Dec. 9/15), pp. 76-77.

Monier, Pierre (2001) Télévision: Claude Santelli est Mort Vendredi à Soixante-Dix-Huit Ans, *L'Humanité*, (Dec. 17).

Parrill, Sue (2002) *Jane Austen on Film and Television*. North Carolina: McFarland.

Piejut, Geneviève (1987) *Les Dossiers De L'Audiovisuel*. Paris: Institut National De L'Audiovisuel.

Siclier, Jacques (1962), Au Théàtre de la Jeunesse: Olivier Twist vu par Claude Santelli, *TéléRama* 642 (6/12 May), 13.

Stead, Peter (1993) *Dennis Potter*. Bridgend: Seren Books.

Style, John (2005) Dick Bogarde's Sidney Carton More Faithful to the Character than

Dickens Himself?, in Mirella Aragay (ed.), *Books in Motion: Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 69-86.

Veyrat-Masson, Isabelle (2000) *Quand la Télévision Explore le Temps. L'Histoire au Petit Écran 1953-2000*. La Flèche: Fayard.

Websites

Claude Santelli (1962) Claude Santelli sur le Théâtre de la Jeunesse, in *Au Delà de l'Écran*, aired by ORTF - 18 February, Available at: www.ina.fr [Accessed in July 2008]

Claude Santelli (1966) Claude Santelli sur le Théâtre de la Jeunesse, in *Micros et Caméras*, aired by ORTF - 17 September, Available at: www.ina.fr [Accessed in July 2008]

Claude Santelli (1972) Claude Santelli sur Charles Dickens, in *Italiques*, aired by ORTF - 15 December, Available at: www.ina.fr [Accessed in July 2008]

Les Amis de Claude Santelli. Available at: http://claude-santelli.org/ [accessed in January 2009]