Discourses recognizing aesthetic innovation in cinema : Bonnie and Clyde : A case study.

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Discourses recognizing aesthetic innovation in cinema – *Bonnie and Clyde*, a case study

Walter Paul Jason Scott

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 2004

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Discourses recognizing aesthetic innovation in cinema – *Bonnie and Clyde*, a case study

W. P. Jason Scott

Submitted for Ph.D. Film Studies

The Abstract

Within this thesis I primarily explore the notion of aesthetic innovation in the cinema. Whilst I initially intended to develop two case studies, considering films associated with two cinematic trends - the Hollywood Renaissance and Dogme 95 -the finished thesis concentrates on *Bonnie and Clyde*, which exemplifies the first of these. The focus entails an elaboration of the concept of innovation, adopted from economic approaches, in terms of the implications of the concept for how innovation should be analysed. In particular, this informs my focus upon the articulation of recognition of innovation, and hence discourses of innovation. In investigating the recognition of innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, I provide a detailed critical reception study, analysing the contemporary and retrospective reviews and critical accounts of the film. I develop the functional and systemic linguistic analysis of M.A.K. Halliday to underpin a workable discourse analysis approach to the contemporary reviews. I also consider the wider reception of the film, particularly in relation to the dialogues around the reviews of the film by Bosley Crowther in the *New York Times*. Thus, I consider the significance of the contestation around the film - in terms of its evaluation, classification and description. I consider this 'event' of the widespread contestation around the film, and the turnaround by several noted critics, and contrast the conclusions of my analysis of the event with the conventional narrativization of it.

In order to consider the aesthetic characteristics of the film, I provide definitions of cinema aesthetics, adapting the notions of aesthetic norm, function and value from Jan Mukarovsky. I also develop these in relation to the concept of aestheticization, which I relate to *Bonnie and Clyde* and other films of the Hollywood Renaissance.

The thesis constitutes an original elucidation of the notion of innovation, and an innovative application of discourse analysis to reception study.

Chapter 1: What is innovation? What is aestheticization?

Introduction

This thesis explores the concept of aesthetic innovation in cinema, focussing attention on a single case study, *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967). This film was selected as being an exemplary instance of aesthetic innovation, which provides a paradigmatic case study for investigating innovation. The exemplary status of *Bonnie and Clyde* results from the status of the film in conventional film history, in relation to the historical tendency variously called New Hollywood or the Hollywood Renaissance. Alongside a handful of other films, most notably *The Graduate* (1967) and *Easy Rider* (1969), *Bonnie and Clyde* provides a clichéd example of a film exemplifying the Hollywood Renaissance, and in this case is widely characterised as initiating this trend. *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly given its commercial success, corresponds to the emergence of a new, younger, cine-literate and educated audience; it marks shifts in cultural values commonly identified with the Sixties social revolution(s); and it also signals Hollywood's adoption of stylistic and narrative techniques from the flourishing art house cinema sector, in a bid to exploit the commercial success of more 'offbeat' product. However, *Bonnie and Clyde* was not immediately successful at the box-office, and the initial critical reception of the film was contested. Only after several years did the film gain more widespread acceptance, and with the diminishing of the controversy that heralded its theatrical release it gradually gained canonical status. *Bonnie and Clyde* can be conceived as indicative of a wider aesthetic development or innovation in relation to its significance to the Hollywood Renaissance. In addition, from the time of its contemporary critical reception the film was specifically identified with a distinctive treatment of violence, retrospectively identified as an innovation in relation to the aestheticized depiction of violence.

The initial chapter of this thesis develops two key notions that will underpin the remainder of the thesis, and particularly the case study on *Bonnie and Clyde*. In order to address aesthetic innovation in cinema I will elaborate the concepts of innovation and cinema aesthetics respectively. These sections will provide a conceptual framework for considering aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and particularly for analysing aestheticization in the film. Hence, I will consider how innovation is constituted, as well as the methodological implications of this, in respect of how innovation can be studied. In addition I will develop the concept of cinema aesthetics, initially drawing upon a wider theorisation of aesthetics and culminating in a specific theorisation of aestheticization in cinema. This chapter, then, provides the theoretical framework for the specific case study of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and will inform the choice of the object of study and the methodology for the subsequent chapters. My thesis title emphasises not only aesthetic innovation, in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but also the discourses of recognition of aesthetic innovation. I will explain this discursive focus, and how this determines the choice of methodology to be applied in chapters two and three, in the conclusion to this chapter.

Aims and Objectives

Aims

To explore the notion of innovation, particularly aesthetic innovation not dependent upon technological change, in relation to specific films.

To develop a discourse analytic approach to consider the reception of case study films, particularly in relation to analysing the recognition of aesthetic innovation and discourses of (and around) innovation.

To consider the diachronic critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, noting shifts in the critical characterisation and status of the film. *Bonnie and Clyde*, and its critical reception, will thus provide the paradigmatic case study of the recognition of aesthetic innovation in critical and other discourses.

To provide an answer to the question; 'What is aesthetic innovation in Cinema?"

To elaborate cinematic aesthetics and aestheticization, how they are constituted, their associated historically specific norms and values, and how these shift.

Objectives

To apply a discourse analytic approach to a wide range of contemporary reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and to retrospective criticism.

Cinematic innovation?

How can the notion of innovation contribute to our understanding of films and the cinematic experience? By innovation I do not simply mean technological change except in the broadest sense, in which technological innovation has been previously considered in relation to Early Cinema and the adoption of synchronised sound for instance. Instead I intend to consider innovation in respect of the films themselves, their formal, aesthetic, generic and other characteristics, as well as their associated production and reception practices. I wish to outline the potential benefits of the notion of innovation in providing a model to understand cinematic development which complements existing textual approaches such as historical genre studies. I will begin by developing the implications of innovation, with particular attention to its relevance to film as an industrial art, and subsequently address its critical value.

An innovation is a novel product or production or management process that gains widespread adoption within a specific industry sector or more general industry due to recognition of its commercial advantage. Whilst the dictionary definition of innovation simply stresses the aspect of novelty, as an economic concept innovation is distinguished from invention by the necessary condition of recognition of advantage and consequent diffusion within the sector. A clichéd example of the distinction between invention and innovation would be the Ford Model T, which enabled the innovation of Fordist production practices, while not necessarily being otherwise significantly different from other early motorcars. A further example, VHS as a format popularised through the availability of pre-recorded software, as against the technologically superior Betamax, suggests both the intrinsic importance of reception, or consumer response, in relation to an innovation, and the significance of historical analysis in determining the element of innovation[1]. Both these examples also highlight the complex space in which innovation occurs. Bridging adoption by consumers and imitation or influence within production by competitors, innovation encompasses various and multiple spheres of activity, perception and discourse.

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[1] See John Edgar Sayce *The Economics of innovation: the national and multinational enterprise in technological change* (Longman, London, 1974) for this conception of innovation. Also Stephen Prince *A New Pot of Gold: Hollywood under the electronic rainbow, 1980-9* (History of American cinema series)(University of California Press, Berkeley, 2000) p102 on the connection between VHS and MCA/Universal, and the lawsuit against Sony and Betamax in respect of hometaping.

Innovation in film, then, can be associated with several necessary conditions. Innovation implies novelty, success associated with this novelty, recognition of such, and subsequently influence or imitation as adoption of the novelty within, or associated with, other films. I shall develop each of these conditions before relating them more specifically to a historical and critical approach to filmic development.

Novelty implies that the aspect of innovation is original, or new to the product in question. However, novelty does not connote any particular significance to this aspect, nor the degree of difference from the prevailing product(s). Hence, this concept of novelty can encompass minor modifications or improvements to existing products.

Success at its most basic level equates with improved profits or profitability, whether through increased sales or reduced costs. Below, I will expand the conception of cinematic success beyond box office returns.

Recognition of the innovation, including its success and potential for further success requires both a perception and the conceptualisation of this. Additionally for the recognition to be manifest it will be evidenced by activity associated with this conceptual stance, including discursive acts.

Finally, adoption of the innovation by the industry or sector will be achieved by imitation and influence, with the incorporation of the innovative element in different products, and the superseding of the pre-innovative form. It is worth noting that the simple model of innovation suggests gradual and complete supercession of the previous product or process, whereas historical instances would suggest resistance to this.

This all seems very dry and abstract, relevant to old-fashioned economic theories about industrial change, but not particularly illuminating for the study of films and cinema. I want to suggest, however, that the concept of innovation, and these hypothetical conditions of innovation, can facilitate a productive approach to film and cinema in relation to art and industry. In particular, innovation can provide an open model for understanding cinematic change or evolution (in a non-teleological sense). This model can both complement existing approaches which focus on stability and similarity, and encompass a variety of perspectives on film, as potential elements of change. For instance, possible innovations and novelties in film include aesthetic, narrative or generic elements, yet also encompass performance (acting styles, and specific characteristics or qualities of speech, music, gesture, movement and dance) and stars (individual personas and star clusters). This non-exhaustive list, at least as I have developed several abstract categories, hopefully illustrates the relevance of innovation to film as 'artistic product', that is recognizing, whilst not essentialising, cinema's status as art, medium and industry.

I am suggesting innovation can be applied to film as art, to film as a popular medium and experience, and to the apparatus of cinema, the complex configuration of production, distribution, exhibition and reception, incorporating the cinematic industries. Innovation provides a model for understanding both intertextual and industrial relations of films, and groupings of films. These intertextual and industrial relationships between individual films include chains of generic influence, and additional ways of conceiving of individual films as similar but different. Innovation, then, constitutes a significant concern within approaching films in terms of genres, cycles and production trends. Furthermore, whilst being readily applicable to cinema with its industrial nature, I suggest that it is equally relevant to other arts, providing an alternative to romantic and 'great biographical' approaches to art history and literature, and complementing a movement historical approach.

In proposing the salience of the concept of innovation to art it is clearly necessary to address paradigmatic notions associated with the artistic sphere that have conventionally distinguished it from the industrial. Art as an elevated sphere, either in its particularly modern and modernist identification of the artistic with creativity, originality and lack of use value, or additionally in its ritualistic identification of the artistic with the sublime, and potential spiritual or religious value has conventionally been divorced from its wider context of production. More specifically, consideration of art has been delimited to personal and communal expression, extending to the national or cultural level, but often separated from commercial or industrial expression. The Frankfurt school, and Benjamin's writings on 'aura', are but one symptom of this dominant conceptual and discursive tendency in popular and critical thought.[2] I do not have the space here to address this divorcement, but should address the conceptual overlap and variance of terminology inherent in industrial as against artistic frameworks. I should also, albeit briefly, relate the advantage of an industrial conception of novelty, say, in relation to innovation, above novelty as a creative, singular, characteristic of an art work when considered according to an artistic framework.

Novelty is valorised by a modernist conception of art. In particular, the avant-garde, and indeed the very notion of the avant-garde, is concerned primarily with the new, both formally and thematically, breaking boundaries, transgressing conventions, and, as it were "authoring the future."[3] Of course, this notion occludes the critical response to particular instances of novelty that might be deemed simply different, even perverse, and not valued (novelty invariably carries a positive connotation in post-Enlightenment contexts, though this might be minimised in association with consumer items). It similarly occludes the relation of the novel aspect to the prevailing conventions, the context within which the novelty is marked out. Within a romantic conception of the genius of the individual artist, or alternatively of the artist's connection to the *zeitgeist*, this is not problematic – the novelty, the act of originality, is simply channelled or plucked from out there, the noosphere or the cosmos. Further, the novelty is then used up, and its subsequent influence restricted to the unoriginal. Yet if the novelty is to be understood within its historical context, this type of approach is not particularly useful – we can identify the novelty, evaluate it (canonise it), but cannot formulate how it fits with what went before or after. An industrial conception, however, as foregrounding the context of production might be commensurable with claims about the provenance of the novelty, and furthermore about its currency and continued use. Whilst an industrial conception that nevertheless accommodates transcendent sources of creativity is possible (the genius of the system)[4], it is not inevitable. Novelty, in respect of the conception of innovation, is defined as an aspect of the product that is new to that product, and does not require a substantive difference from the prevailing product. Insofar as the novelty is solely new to the product in question, it might be copied or transposed from a different product. In fact, the majority of innovations might be considered to be minor modifications of products, adopting aspects or characteristics from other sectors or other types (genera) of products within the sector. This conception of adaptive novelty corresponds, at least by analogy, to biological evolutionary models. When applied to art, I suggest this sense of novelty, and hence of innovation, more suitably facilitates a historical materialist account of change, rather than, say, a historical poetics[5]. Novelty, by this conception, is both anchored in the contemporary, the moment of its activation, and whilst sourced in the past also flows into its future. "But there is always something in the work of art which is bound to the past and something which points to the future."[6] The mixed metaphors highlight the elasticity of the conception, in contrast to the singularity that is the artistic novelty. Novelty is relative and related to the historically specific context of the production of both the work and the novel aspect. David Bordwell has effectively outlined the 'innovation' of the jump cut in Godard's *A bout de Soufflé* (1959),[7] but in this article and his wider historical poetics the recognition and interpretation of the distinctive stylistic figure by critics requires the conception of an author or individual film artist, who the critics deem responsible for the artistic novelty. I would suggest innovation is not predicated upon the social construction of the author, but rather upon the social construction of films, as it were the distinct persona by which films are characterized, and the interrelations between these, and their family resemblances and differences (irrespective of their 'parentage'). Hence, a historical materialist account of innovation would consider the contexts of production in terms of the discourses characterizing related films, the related films themselves, and the characterization of the novel aspect itself.

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[2] Walter Benjamin 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' from Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen and Leo Braudy (ed.s) *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings* (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1992) originally from Walter Benjamin *Illuminations* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Frankfurt, 1955), p217. "It is significant that the existence of the work of art with reference to its ritual function is never entirely separated from its ritual function."

[3] Sandy Flitterman-Lewis *To Desire Differently: Feminism and the French cinema* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1996) p81.

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[4] For instance see Thomas Schatz '*The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (Faber and Faber, London, 1998).

[5] See Noel King 'Hermeneutics, reception aesthetics and film interpretation' chapter 23 in Pamela Church Gibson and John Hill (eds.) *Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1998). Neo-formalism is seen to be concerned with the analysis of conventions to note deviations, p215.

[6] Jan Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1970), p35.

[7] David Bordwell 'Jump cuts and blind spots' *Wide Angle* vol.6 no.1. See also his *On the History of Film Style* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997), and Richard Raskin 'Five explanations for the jumpcuts in Godard's *Breathless*' http://imv.au.dk/publikationer/pov/Issue_06

If my conception of novelty within innovation is accepted, what is the implication upon the necessary condition of success? Two significant points are worth making here about what constitutes success for a film, or success for the film's innovation. As a notion success is vague or problematic, suggesting an either/or connotation of aesthetic success or commercial success. Aesthetic success can be understood with regard to critical or canonical acceptance, whereas commercial success relates to box office returns or gross profits for the production companies. In both these respects it is useful to consider that success is relative, that success for the innovation is understood as improving the critical or commercial success of the film relative to its likely success without the innovation. This is particularly significant in analysing innovations, recognizing that widespread adoption might follow from small-scale success. The innovations of low or medium budget films might be adopted by many other such films, or ultimately by higher budget studio productions. The condition of recognition of success primarily requires a perception of the relative advantage of the novelty. The perception might predominantly develop with widespread success for the film, but that is not necessary. All that is required, in the first instance, is that in relation to the aspect of innovation, the novelty is perceived as advantageous. That is, it is perceived as generically advantageous, aesthetically advantageous for instance, with the advantage being relative to this particular film and those of its type (budget, production context, genre.)

Emanuel Levy, in his wide-ranging discussion of the development of American Independent Film suggests an analogous conception of such localised innovations, with their dependence on particular audience groups, discursive frameworks and networks of potential support and dissemination:

> Artistic innovation occurs when existing conventions are violated, when artists make – and audiences appreciate – new kinds of film. The film world provokes some members – often from ethnic minorities – to innovate. Some innovations develop worlds of their own, others remain dormant for a while and then find acceptance from a larger world, and still others remain curiosities.[8]

Clearly, this account corresponds to, for instance, aesthetic specificity, and potentially innovation, in Queer cinema or the New African-American cinema. It also provides a foundation for historical consideration of Independent film in general, in connection with the network of support for independent film located most evidently in festivals and a tendency in criticism utilising specialised discourses.[9] Another instance of an innovation perceived as advantageous, at least in a specific context is the case of Dogme95, particularly *Dogme#1: Festen* (1998). The Dogme manifesto, with its rules for film production, ostensibly motivated by a desire for 'truth' in film and disdain for 'illusion' and 'glamour', received wider discussion with the heralded success of the first film made according to the rules, *Festen*. In particular, the critical success of this film at Cannes led to both increased awareness and international distribution deals. In the context of its most wide-ranging reception, the international art house network of exhibition and promotion, *Festen* and concomitantly Dogme evidence a distinctive or novel aspect in relation to the conjunction of aesthetic and mimetic characteristics. This novelty relates to the films engagement with the conventions of the realist tendency in art cinema, but also its technological innovation in the use of digital video within production. In respect of realism, the films both conform to certain conventions of the realist tendency in art cinema, yet also markedly deviate in foregrounding the filmmaking process. However in another sense, the significant innovation of Dogme, in the examples of *Festen* and *Dogme#2: The Idiots* (1998), is to establish a recognisable, distinct, transgressive realist aesthetic, at least for a select audience. For Mads Egmont Christensen this is "more than anything the result of overall excellent film marketing, of how the branding of a specific family or type of films can be achieved; and of how a carefully constructed set of creative rules of limitation can be utilized not only as a strong foundation for artistic endeavours but also as a true concept for the promoting of an entire range of specific films."[10] Dogme's innovation, then, is not limited to its aesthetic characteristics, but extends to a novel method for constructing a distinct and appealing brand identity associated with low or medium budget Danish films. This branding then enables their international distribution. I would suggest, however, that the innovation of Dogme ultimately synthesizes aesthetics and promotional strategy, with the foregrounding of the films' aestheticized non-aesthetic [or variously its aesthetic of renunciation, or anti-aesthetic, or mistakeist aesthetic], both formally within the films, and in combination with the discourses around the film, particularly for a select audience aware of the rules for their production (notably being shot on location, with hand held camera, utilizing natural or available light and synchronous sound).

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[8] Emanuel Levy *Cinema of Outsiders: The Rise of American Independent Film* (New York University Press, New York and London, 1999), p54.

[9] See E. Diedre Pribram *Cinema & Culture: Independent film in the United States, 1980-2001* (Peter Lang, New York, 2002) p xiii on the discursive formation of independent film. See also Chuck Kleinhans 'Independent features: hopes and dreams' p321 in Jon Lewis (ed.) *The New American Cinema* (Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1998).

Proceeding to the condition of influence, or adoption, it is possible to begin to outline how innovation constitutes a model for understanding industrial and intertextual relations between films. Beginning with recognizable groupings of films, I would suggest that both cycles and movements are examples of the adoption of advantageous industrial and textual strategies across individual films within a particular sector of the industry even if movements are not ordinarily narrativized as such.[11] Cycles immediately conform to the industrial conception of innovation, and constitute distinct groupings of films, that exhibit significant industrial and intertextual similarities. The influence of one film upon others, or conversely the aspect of imitation as it were, constitutes the key intertextual relation between individual films, particularly in respect of the originating film, if one is accepted as such. The degree of similarity is determined in respect of the imitated element. This element might spread across genre boundaries, or might simply constitute a short-lived characteristic of the sub-genre. Movements are similarly cycles by another name, with the assumed distinction that they are not industrial in nature, meaning simply that their production context is more marginal, at least for a global, mainstream market.[12] The significance of the French New Wave, Neorealism, or the New German cinema to the art sectors of these national cinemas cannot be denied, even if they succeeded to varying degrees in influencing the dominant industries. Innovation, as one aspect of the process of differentiation that marks out a movement, or distinguishes a 'national' cinema at a particular historical juncture, again corresponds to both the industrial and intertextual relations of this grouping of films. Conversely, an example of Hollywood cinema distinguished at a specific point in history, the New Hollywood or Hollywood Renaissance originating in the period 1967-9, illustrates the possibility of innovation in this context. Levy notes the significance of *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *Easy Rider* which he argues enabled the entry of a new generation of film directors, and suggests "[t]hese filmmakers established their reputations by making innovative films *within* the studio system."[13] Variously, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* have been perceived as being responsible for: demonstrating an audience for "films that were visually arresting, thematically challenging, and stylistically individualized"[14]; initiating a shift in Hollywood film form that corresponded to changes to its economic structure and target audience[15]; in the case of *Bonnie and Clyde*, for instigating a succession of generic transformations to the Gangster and Western genres[16]; and as the beginning of Hollywood's artistic renaissance[17]. Given the contested significance of these films, particularly *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* it is useful to consider them in relation to Levy's conception of innovation.

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[10] Mads Egmont Christensen 'Dogma & Marketing' in P.O.V. 10 Aspects of Dogma http://imv.au.dk/publikationaer/pov/Issue_10/section_4/artc1A.html

[11] As the examples in the note below attest, movements are commonly narrativized as a group of filmmakers, who develop a shared style or ethos, rather than individual filmmakers and their respective production companies adopting the successful aesthetic and economic strategies of their immediate forebears.

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[12] In film histories movements are predominantly treated as groups of filmmakers aligned by their shared artistic or political values, and dissociated from their economic or industrial context. Examples of studies in which Neorealism, the French New Wave or New German Cinema are considered in this way include: Gerald Mast *A short history of the movies* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984); Morando Morandini 'Italy from Fascism to Neo-Realism' in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.) *Oxford History of World Cinema*; Anton Kaes 'The New German Cinema' in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.) *Oxford History of World Cinema*; Eric Rhode *A History of the Cinema: From its origins to 1970* (Allen Lane/Penguin, London, 1976); Jack C. Ellis *A History of Film* (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1979) and Arthur Knight *The Liveliest Art: A panoramic history of the movies* (Mentor/New American Library, New York, 1957). Exceptions where connections with the industry are noted, in relation to production financing or distribution are: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson *Film Art: An introduction* (3rd Edition) (McGraw-Hill Publishing Co, University of Wisconsin, New York etc, 1990); Peter Graham 'New Directions in French Cinema' in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.) *Oxford History of World Cinema*; and David A. Cook *History of Narrative Film* in the cases of the *nouvelle vague* and New German Cinema.

[13] Emanuel Levy *Cinema of Outsiders*, p21.

[14] David Cook ' 'Auteur cinema' and the 'Film Generation' in 1970s Hollywood' in Jon Lewis (ed.) *The New American Cinema*, p12.

[15] Calvin Pryluck 'Front Office, Box Office and Artistic Freedom: An aspect of the film industry 1945-69' in *Journal of Popular Film* vol. 3 no 4 (1974). Also note Calvin Pryluck 'The Aesthetic Relevance of the Organization of Film Production' in *Cinema Journal* vol. XV, no 2 (Spring 1976) in which he suggests "The development of film forms is the result of individuals working with a confluence of forces which constrain and facilitate the production of certain kinds of films at particular moments in history."

> How does innovation occur? Films as art works require elaborate collaboration among specialized personnel. The terms of co-operation have been established and routinized by Hollywood in conventions that dictate the concepts, forms, and materials to be used. Conventions also regulate the relations between filmmakers and audiences, specifying their rights and obligations. Because filmmakers and audiences share similar norms and conventions, most films evoke predictable emotional effects. Arguably, the most important element in innovation is playing *against* audience expectations, since most American filmmakers go out of their way to fulfil those expectations.[18]

Innovation that incorporates play *against* audiences might necessarily engender resistance. Furthermore, the success of innovations depends "on the degree of acceptance from audiences"[19], or both finding an audience, and overcoming resistance from older practitioners, critics and conservative audiences. *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* stand out as the clearest examples of films adopting aestheticization as a general aesthetic approach, as I shall elaborate in my chapter six, influenced by films of the French New Wave, but within a Hollywood narrative form, and finding box office success, critical recognition[20], albeit with certain difficulties, and an appreciative younger, educated

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[16] John Cawelti 'Tradition and Transformation' intro to Cawelti (ed.) *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1973) and also 'Chinatown and generic transformation in recent American cinema' reprinted in Mast, Braudy and Cohen (eds) *Film theory and criticism*, p498.

[17] Glenn Man *Radical Visions: American film renaissance 1967-76* (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1994). Mann suggests *Bonnie and Clyde* "wedded modernist narrative techniques with the classical style, demystified and transformed traditional genres, and foregrounded a consciousness of the cinematic process." See also Diane Jacobs *Hollywood Renaissance* (A.S. Barnes and Co, South Brunswick and New York, 1977) and Peter Kramer 'Post-classical Hollywood' chapter 26 in Joanne Hollows, Peter Hutchings and Mark Jancovich (eds.) *The film studies reader* (Arnold, London, 2000).

[18] Emanuel Levy *Cinema of Outsiders*, p53-4.

[19] Ibid, p54.

[20] See Janet Staiger 'With the compliments of the auteur' chapter 9 in Janet Staiger *Interpreting Films: Studies in the historical reception of American cinema* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992). Some criticism of both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* characterizes them by an expressive approach, emphasising the director.

audience segment. As Steven Alan Carr has put it, *Bonnie and Clyde* "stood established film criticism on its head and passionately divided its audience."[21]

Beyond cycles and movements we have genre and productions trends, alternative and complementary understandings of how to group films and bear in mind their contexts of production. Needless to say, I suggest that the notion of innovation enhances the capacity for each of these approaches to model cinematic development. However, from my list of possible aspects of innovation, and the necessary condition of adoption, I would suggest by implication that innovation is also a useful concept for 'genre-like' groupings of films, industrially based and recognized, configurations of films which might share similarities beyond those ordinarily recognized as genres and movements. Hence, these similarities, which originate with innovation, might encompass aesthetics, stars, performances and narrative types or modes. To justify the validity and value of such 'genre-like' groupings I shall elaborate upon the process of recognition of influence, that is of similarity and innovation. Industry practices, as well as the dominant critical heuristic, characterize individual films in relation to, or by association with, other familiar films. I suggest that these connections, or perceptions, constitute significant intertextual relations, and discursively developed industrial relations, and provide a key to complement existing approaches to film such as genre, stars and auteurism.

How is innovation recognized? Critics or the trade press might rarely characterize films as innovative upon theatrical release. Or the notion of 'innovation' might only be deemed appropriate to technological change and kinds of spectacle. For instance, the photorealistic 3-D animation of Pixar's *Toy Story* (1995) or the Omaha beach sequence in *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) exemplify divergent kinds of spectacle that are readily considered in terms of novelty, either in terms of the application of Computer Graphic Imagery in a feature film, or in the case of Spielberg's film the graphic representation of battle violence in the context of a World War 2 epic. However, with the continued dominance of popular criticism by a combination of humanist, auteurist and modernist

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[21] Steven Alan Carr ' "From fucking cops! to Fucking Media!": Bonnie and Clyde for a Sixties America' in Lester Friedman (ed.) *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000), p86.

frameworks, novelty is valued as providing fresh insight, as the genius of the auteur or as creativity itself. If innovation is not explicitly recognized, in critical or industrial discourses, how is it recognized? If innovation is not initially recognized explicitly, how is it recognized implicitly? Again, I would propose certain necessary conditions that might aid the identification of such recognition. Whether the novelty of the innovation is recognized as such is less significant than that this aspect is perceived as distinct. Further, the distinct aspect, the novelty, is necessarily associated either with success, or some improvement in the film. This improvement, or addition in value, is clearly relative and subjective, but industrial or critical discourses might explicitly valorise the novelty without characterising the novelty in relation to innovation. Recognition of this distinct aspect and value is sufficient for imitation or influence to occur. It is not necessary for recognition to be universally manifested, or even evidenced amongst a majority of critics and filmgoers. If a particular audience segment express a response that recognizes innovation or value in a novel aspect, and alongside this, or subsequently, a particular sector of the film industry adopts or imitates the novel aspect, then innovation has been recognized as such. Diffusion of this recognition need not spread to everyone. In fact innovations might be most apparent to the audience associated with the particular genre or cycle of film in which the innovative film exists, and likewise in the sector of the industry similarly associated with this type of film. Innovation is relative and specific to a sector or film type. Recognition of a distinct aspect and value is not sufficient in itself to constitute innovation. Only when imitation or adoption of the distinct aspect follows is innovation marked. As such what is significant to the analysis of innovation is the industry recognition of public recognition of innovation, traces of which might be found in trade press discourses as well as less tangibly in the influence in films. Traces of this industry recognition and imitation might include references in marketing epiphenomena for individual films, although not often verbally explicit.[22] Alternative indexes of recognition and influence might include equivalence or imitation in the graphics and iconography of promotional material, posters, trailers and the like. Further, films which display the influence of innovative films often share more fundamental characteristics, such as particular stars, and will selectively invoke associations of the imitated film in their discourses of self-promotion, at all levels, from the biographical details given about stars and directors in press packs to the vocabulary of hyperbole in print ads. One such example is the intertextual relationship between *Se7en* (1995) and *Silence of the Lambs* (1990). Whilst the Press Release for *Se7en*, the later film, only referenced *Silence of the Lambs* incidentally in relation to Howard Shore, the composer for both, a majority of reviews made this generic connection explicit. This was utilized within the promotion of *Se7en* in its opening week ads, quoting from reviews favourably comparing their film with *Silence of the Lambs*, in terms of affect and connotations of quality.[23] Subsequently, a cycle of police procedural thrillers traded on their similarity with *Se7en*, sharing stars, notably Morgan Freeman in *Kiss the Girls* (1997), and graphic strategies for promotional posters, dark or murky compositions with contrasted, distinctively type set titles (additionally *8 mm*, 1999).[24]

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[22] Specific examples of films that are cited as being imitated by a range of reviews include *Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment* (1966) in reviews of *The Graduate*, or *Bonnie and Clyde* in reviews of *In Cold Blood* (1967), as I shall develop in chapter five.

The examples I have elaborated so far touch on what might be developed as the methodological implications of innovation analysis. Since the object of study is to be the mediated traces of recognition as well as textual evidence of influence or adoption, innovation as a model most readily corresponds to a historical reception approach which combines attention to the intertwined discourses of popular and industry reception. Industry and popular reception are particularly articulated in the intermediate sphere of popular criticism, with reviews in the trade press providing a proxy for the reception of the film amongst exhibitors. Popular reception is also significantly evidenced, albeit in mediated fashion, in box office figures, favourite star and film polls, and in the minutiae of popular film culture and media coverage. Industry approbation is similarly evidenced in annual awards, particularly the Academy Awards. More explicitly, but commonly less available to the researcher, industry and popular receptions are conjoined by mechanisms of feedback, after exhibition, but also pre- and post-production market research and concept, title and audience testing.[25] This further indicates the compatibility of innovation analysis with case studies and piecemeal approaches. As David Bordwell's work on the history of film style has suggested, overarching and ostensibly exhaustive historical accounts of developments in film are prone to reduction and to fitting their analyses to their wider interpretations. A piecemeal approach, in contrast, allows for historical knowledge to be built up from individual studies which each adopt varying approaches and emphases, that are nonetheless suitable to their distinct object of study.[26]

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[23] See my paper 'The Persona of *Se7en*' which elaborates this, and further my unpublished M.A. thesis '*Se7en*: A case study in economic reception'. The review blurbs in the quote ads that ran the week before the U.S. release of *Se7en* emphasised comments "comparing the film favourably to '*The Silence of the Lambs*'" to complement the Siskel and Ebert two-thumbs-up evaluation. See Maria Matzer 'Selling Seven' in *Hollywood Reporter* (1996) Case Study on the marketing of New Line's *Se7en,* Movies and the Media Special Issue, vol. 342, no. 42, 18 June S13-15.

[24] Reviews for *Kiss the Girls* referred to *Se7en* and *Silence of the Lambs*, the former in relation to Morgan Freeman. Examples include *Empire* 4/1998, whilst John Wrathal *Sight and Sound* vol.8, issue 3, March 1998, p52, solely referenced similarities to *Silence of the Lambs*. Mark Kermode's review of *8mm* in *Sight and Sound* vol. 9, issue 5, May 1999, p45 suggests this film tries to 'recreate *Se7en*'s visual style' as well as sharing its screenwriter.

Another significant factor elided by my identification of the recognition of innovation by a select audience is that innovation is a value-laden term. As such the element of innovation will be valued or not in relation to tastes. We might, hence, associate the recognition of innovation with both discourses of recognition and discourses of misrecognition. "Two critics might hold antithetical views regarding the relative aesthetic merits of a film, and yet both serve to define the same terms by which this debate is concluded."[27] Likewise, the distinctive aspect, the novelty in the innovative film might be characterized as possessing merit. Alternatively this element might be deemed as a failing, or more specifically seen as corresponding to a lack in credibility, or a mistake in terms of production values. David Bordwell and Janet Staiger have both emphasised the need for an at least nascent auteurist approach to enable critics to recognize distinctive stylistic figures or effects as valuable, or even to recognize them at all.[28] This last suggestion also problematizes my identification of recognition with discourses – the recognition of innovation might not be articulated, or it might not be fully articulable.

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[25] See Justin Wyatt *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in Hollywood* (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1994). Also in relation to title testing and feedback see Olen J. Earnest '*Star Wars*: A case study in motion picture marketing' in Bruce Austin *Current Research in Film: Audience, economics and the law* Vol. 1 (Ablex Publishing Corporation, Norwood, New Jersey, 1983) and Thomas Simonet 'Market Research: Beyond the Fanny of the Cohn' in *Film Comment* Jan./Feb. 1980.

[26] See David Bordwell *On the History of Film Style*, pp6-7, on 'revisionist' approaches to the history of film which benefit from 'fine grained' research.

[27] Douglas Gomery and Robert Allen *Film History: Theory and Practice* (Knopf, London, 1985) p94

[28] David Bordwell 'Jump cuts and blind spots'. See also Janet Staiger *Interpreting Films*, chapter 9 'With the complements of the auteur', p198.

The innovation, if sufficient, might exceed the scope of the critical vocabulary. If the innovation is sufficiently novel it might correspond to a rupture in the critical vocabulary required to articulate it, or to a parallel innovation in criticism. Conversely, the innovation might only be recognizable as such in one of two or more contested or competing critical frameworks, as I explore at great length in the case of *Bonnie and Clyde* in chapters two and three. However, contested or competing critical frameworks also bear a more significant relation to wider shifts in value frameworks, and tastes in films. Contestation around innovation in films also corresponds to non-cinematic value frameworks (particularly relevant to avant-garde or oppositional films which transgress thematic boundaries as well as formal conventions).[29]

Innovation, as I have outlined it, provides an open model. Individual instances of innovation may vary in kind, the mechanisms or processes of recognition and adoption, the extent or sphere of diffusion of adoption all might differ from case to case. Similarly, the evidence of innovation will differ in relation to broader changes to the film industries and popular film culture, but as the industry is not static so the notion of innovation is applicable throughout cinematic history. In chapter two I develop a detailed case study of the critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and relate this to the contestation and recognition of aesthetic innovation associated with the film. However, I will first explore the notion of cinema aesthetics, and more specifically aestheticization.

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[29] On the relation between responses to films and more general value frameworks see Torben Grodal *Moving Pictures: A new theory of film genres, feelings and cognition* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997). Specifically he elaborates 'cognitive' or emotional filters, p209-210, the notion of saliency, p219, and extradiegetic motivation, pp220-222.

Aestheticization in cinema

In order to address the notion of aestheticization, and relate it to particular instances in cinema, I wish to initially introduce a consideration of aesthetics. I shall refer to a variety of conceptions of the aesthetic, but primarily draw upon the discussion of aesthetic function, aesthetic norms and aesthetic values found in the work of Czech post-formalist Jan Mukarovsky. I shall depart from Mukarovsky in considering aesthetic norms in the cinema. In proceeding to define aestheticization, I draw upon Wolfgang Welsch, and outline arguments around the recognition of aestheticization, as well as developing a speculative typology of aestheticization. I shall relate this typology to instances of aestheticization in particular films, concentrating upon *Bonnie and Clyde* and other films from the Hollywood Renaissance.

Aesthetics can be defined both as a sphere of knowledge (most commonly a field of philosophy) concerned with the artistic and notions of beauty, or conversely as the realm of art, beauty and associated sensuous responses. Alternatively, aesthetics has been identified with a mode of perception or attitude, primarily, but not necessarily, applied in appreciation of art and beauty, but given expanded significance within the German philosophical tradition. Welsch notes the multiplicity of connotations of the aesthetic, and following Wittgenstein, suggests aesthetics cannot be fully elucidated. Aesthetics is not amenable to strict definition, for instance by identifying shared characteristics common to multiple and various applications of the concept, but rather is governed by 'family resemblances',[30] an aggregation (or evolution) of relationships, whether connections or associations. Whilst in the Platonist tradition aesthetics is identified with the investigation of the ideals of beauty, of form and composition, and these ideals themselves, post-Enlightenment scholars have admitted the potential subjectivity, relativity (at least in terms of historico-culturally specific contexts) and more generally pluralism of aesthetic ideals. [31] This has clearly contributed to the expansive conception of the aesthetic.

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[30] Wolfgang Welsch 'Aestheticization Processes: Phenomena, Prospects and Distinctions' in *Theory, Culture & Society* (Sage, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, 1996) vol. 13 (1), p5-6.

[31] Ibid. Aesthetics as a term originates with Baumgarten but the study of art and beauty, and artistic ideals and values precedes this.

'Sometimes it related to things beautiful, or merely pretty, sometimes to styling, sometimes to virtualization and so on. Furthermore, its point of reference also varied: sometimes it was concerned with the characteristics of objects, sometimes with associative dimensions, sometimes with the manner of reality's being.'[32] Welsch argues that the ambiguity of the term does not invalidate the usability of the concept. He suggests the concept is workable provided that in its use the 'family resemblance structure' is acknowledged and there is 'attention to the position of a usage within the complete field of meanings'[33]. Hence, 'one can then not only precisely determine singular usages, but also do justice to the diversity of meaning of the aesthetic.'[34] Consequently I shall focus on Mukarovsky's concepts of aesthetic function, aesthetic norm, and aesthetic value. These notions will anchor my discussion in terms of precise usage, not simply in respect of their suffix qualifiers, but also in respect of exactly how Mukarovsky defines each in relation to the realm of art (and wider sensuous realm), collective understandings, and a wider framework of systems of language, science, religion and politics. Furthermore, I shall subsume under the aesthetic all its possible meanings, but situate them in relation to particular discursive formations, attempting to maintain precision and clarity. Hence, before elaborating Mukarovsky's particular concepts, I shall address a variety of key issues from the conceptual field of the aesthetic.

Aesthetics is not definitively demarcated – 'there is no definite border between the aesthetic and the extra-aesthetic'.[35] I suggest a corollary of this is that the aesthetic is not exclusively located in the material, experiential or epistemological realms. The aesthetic element is not restricted to the physical embodiment of the work of art. Nor is it simply constituted by the phenomenological aspect, the response to the work, or the attitude necessary to engage with the work. Finally, whilst the notions of aesthetic norms or conventions, as well as aesthetic value, might suggest the aesthetic encompasses a sphere of knowledge, it is not limited to this. Since the aesthetic can be considered in relation to any one of, or any combination of these realms there is further diversity of meanings of the aesthetic. Hence, whilst the aesthetic might frequently be treated as synonymous with the material realm of artistic production, it both exceeds available notions of art, and also participates in expanding what is accepted as art. Yet the aesthetic might also be considered as a quality of the individual work of art, and so have a reduced, as it were secondary, status. Similarly, where aesthetics is located in the perceptual or experiential realm, it might be considered as governing all responses to art, and all other objects of perception that might be perceived in a corresponding fashion. However, the aesthetic might also be restricted to a particular, and subjective, attitude towards the art object. Again, this might be an attitude of secondary order, which heeds certain characteristics of the individual art object and excludes others.

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[32] Ibid, p5.

[33] Ibid, p6 and p8 on ambiguity.

[34] Ibid. See also Barbara Hernstein Smith *Contingencies of Value: Alternative perspectives for Critical Theory* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1988), pp34-36 on the variety of definitions or meanings of 'aesthetic'.

[35] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p1.

One reason to limit consideration of the aesthetic to the material realm of art is the avoidance of an unrestrained subjectivity permissible if aesthetics is situated in the phenomenological realm. The potential consequences of allowing unrestrained subjectivity are manifold, but can be reduced to two main objections – firstly, art works are reduced to the contingencies of their reception, and secondarily, an aesthetic attitude can change any object 'into an aesthetic object'. I will elaborate upon each of these consequences in due course.

Another way in which the aesthetic has been limited in respect of the phenomenological realm is to distinguish between direct sensation, and a higher, reflexive response, and to propose that aesthetics involves the sublimation of the former by the latter. Welsch, summarizing Kant, suggests: 'This is the birthplace of the aesthetic sense: of taste. This evaluates objects not according to vital interests (as alluring, pleasant-tasting, nauseous or the like) but rather in terms of a higher reflexive pleasure or displeasure: as beautiful, harmonic, ugly or disturbed.'[36] This response, which I shall later reconsider in relation to aesthetic function, aesthetic norms and aesthetic values, particularly the interplay between these latter two notions, by which aesthetic evaluation is dependent on acquired tastes informed by collectively constituted criteria and awareness of norms, might be associated with the disinterested and selective character of the aesthetic attitude. The 'disinterested' aesthetic attitude is a consequence of this characterisation of aesthetic responses as second order: "Aesthetic reactions ... 'are value judgements *of the second order* which are derived from a centrally dominant value, they consider the useful and harmful in a purely affective mode and are therefore absolutely volatile and dependent.'"[37] This 'disinterested' attitude can be associated with Nietzsche, and the post Kantian German tradition within aesthetic philosophy. Whilst being disinterested the aesthetic attitude remains selective, and exclusionary: "Reflected aesthetics always encourages one to be aware of the twofold relationship between heeding and excluding. To see something is constantly to overlook something else."[38] The aesthetic response, or attitude, is distinguished from the non-aesthetic, due to its reflexive, learnt and selective nature. Similarly Virgil Aldrich marks the differentiation between the 'aesthetic mode of perception', defined as 'prehension', from the non-aesthetic mode of perception, straightforward 'observation'.[39] If the aesthetic attitude is evoked by the individual work or art, then it is reasonable to consider this evocation in relation to the aesthetic function, aesthetic norm, and aesthetic values. I shall also resume consideration of the potential subjectivity of aesthetic response, and individual, or indeed individualist, aesthetics, when I engage with recognition of aestheticization.

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[36] Welsch 'Aestheticization..' p7.

Mukarovsky defines the aesthetic function in respect of several examples, and in contrast to various extra-aesthetic functions, for instance the symbolic, communicative and commercial functions. The aesthetic function corresponds with the artistic sphere in that the dominance of the aesthetic function in the art object is "'unmarked', whereas domination by another function is marked."[40] It is normative that the aesthetic function dominates in the art object. "But an active capacity for the aesthetic function is not a real property of an object, even if the object has been deliberately composed with the aesthetic function in mind. Rather, the aesthetic function manifests itself only under certain conditions, i.e. in a certain social context."[41] In summarizing the nature of the aesthetic function, Mukarovsky draws three conclusions that further outline its specific distribution and characteristics: "1. The aesthetic is, in itself, neither a real property of an object, nor is it explicitly connected to some of its properties. 2. The aesthetic function of an object is likewise not totally under the control of an individual, although from a purely subjective standpoint the aesthetic function may be acquired (or, conversely, lost) by anything regardless of its organization. 3. Stabilizing the aesthetic function is thus a matter for the collective and is a component in the relationship between the human collective and the world."[42] Hence, for Mukarovsky the aesthetic function is not immanent, but is rather regulated by discourses, or in Mukarovsky's terms, the systems of language, science, religion, politics and so on. In this respect, the aesthetic function is historically, as well as socially and culturally, variable. Additionally, the aesthetic function might be evidenced in connection with the properties of the whole, or of particular elements, of the work of art, but these properties will be similarly variable – the "aesthetic function causes maximal focus of attention on any given object", isolating those properties deemed aesthetic or artistic in the specific context,[43] in relation to aesthetic norms. The aesthetic function is constituted, then, by the mediation, or organisation, of extra-aesthetic elements, including meanings or content.

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[37] Paul de Man in his intro to Hans Robert Jauss *Toward an aesthetic of redemption* (Trans. Timothy Bahti) (Harvester, Brighton, 1982), p xix. This quote is related to Nietzsche.
[38] Welsch 'Aestheticization..' p18.
[39] This concept is cited in George Dickie *Aesthetics: An Introduction (Pegasus traditions in philosophy)* (Pegasus, New York, 1971), p57. See also Abraham Kaplan 'The Aesthetics of the Popular Arts' *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* Spring 1966, p355 on the distinction between perception and recognition in relation to aesthetics.
[40] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p7.

Jauss, following the Prague school, suggests "the aesthetic is defined as a principle of mediation and a mode of organisation for extra-aesthetic meanings."[44] In a similar sense Marcuse designates the aesthetic as being systemic. But rather than associating it with the organisation of the extra-aesthetic he identifies the aesthetic with the transformation or extra-aesthetic elements. Referring to the traditional distinction between form and content, Marcuse argues: "Aesthetic form is not opposed to content, not even dialectically. In the work of art, form becomes content and vice versa."[45] It is in the transformation inherent in this 'becoming' that the work of art is both a work and art.[46]

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[41] Ibid, p3.
[42] Ibid, p18.
[43] Ibid, p21.
[44] Jauss *Toward an aesthetic of redemption*, p108.

Whilst the aesthetic function is characterized by variability, aesthetic norms serve to provide stability to aesthetics. This stability is partial and relative, since aesthetics and aesthetic values are not reducible to a single, fixed set of properties and criteria. Instead, the aesthetic norm is open to violation and superseding. "The norm is thus based on a fundamental dialectical antinomy between universal validity and mere regulative or even orientational potential which implies the conceivability of its violation."[47] The norm is thus "a mere background to constant violation," at least within modern art. Each work of art might be considered to observe the norm in certain respects, and to transgress the norm in others. However, it should be added that there is never a single dominant aesthetic norm. Furthermore, no single aesthetic norm is exhaustive, governing all aspects of the art work. Rather, Mukarovsky emphasises the "multiplicity of aesthetic norms (the co-existence of mutually competing norms)"[48] Furthermore, any aesthetic norm is historically specific, a historical fact as Mukarovsky notes, which changes through time. "This is a necessary result of its dialectical nature which was noted earlier. The aesthetic norm undergoes temporal change simultaneously with other types of norms. Every norm changes by virtue of the fact that it is constantly being reapplied, and it must adjust itself to new circumstances which arise as a result of these new applications."[49] Aesthetic norms shift alongside other norms, moral and intellectual for instance, but it is in respect of the new work of art, these 'new applications' that aesthetic norms are called into question, or violated. Each work of art is bound to the norms of the past and present in certain ways, in respect of particular elements or properties, but might also contain elements, or feature properties that do not conform. "A work of art is always an imperfect application of aesthetic norms. It destroys their previous form not through involuntary necessity but deliberately and hence, as a rule, very perceptibly. The norm is constantly being violated."[50] This constant violation corresponds to art in certain historical and cultural contexts, particularly modern art, but cannot necessarily be attributed as an essential characteristic of art. Yet the potential for violation of aesthetic norms, and the collective recognition of norms which enables the observation of these violations, is inherent in the notion of norm, however strong the tendency to "revolts against reigning norms."[51] Mukarovsky specifies that violation is not simply non-adherence, but "the relation between a chronologically prior norm and a new norm which is different from it, and which is in the process of being formed."[52] Violations might be distinguished from singularities, elements or properties of the work of art that do not conform to the aesthetic norm, but do not presage an alternative norm, i.e. elements or properties that cannot be associated with an aesthetic function. Rather, violations arise, and are observed, in respect of competing aesthetic norms, and the mutual intolerance of competing norms.[53]

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[45] Herbert Marcuse *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a critique of Marxist aesthetics* (Papermac, Macmillan, London, 1979), p41.

[46] This notion of the work of art as both work and art is discussed by Jauss in relation to the ideas of Kosik and Marx in *Toward an aesthetic of redemption*, p15.

[47] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p26.

[48] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p31. In contrast to Mukarovsky, Abraham Kaplan 'The Aesthetics of the Popular Arts' pp363-364 associates all aesthetic innovation with the repudiation of standards, as it were norms and values.

[49] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p31.

The novel work of art will be considered primarily in terms of its violation(s), rather than those aspects which observe the established norm. "When a work of art first appears in public it can happen that only those aspects will stand out which differ from the past. Later, we always become aware of connections with that which preceded the work in the evolution of art."[54] I previously alluded to Jauss's notion of aesthetic distance, "the disparity between the given horizon of expectations and the appearance of a new work, whose reception can result in a 'change of horizons' through negation of familiar experiences or through raising newly articulated experiences to the level of consciousness."[55] Jauss's concept of the horizon of expectations encompasses the range of aesthetic possibilities given the background of aesthetic norms, aesthetic values, and the accumulated body of aesthetic works; " 'perceived against the background of other works of art and in association with them' as Viktor Shklovsky formulates it."[56] Whilst Jauss extends the notion of horizon of expectations beyond the aesthetic (or rather literary) possibilities of the context of production, with an equal emphasis upon hermeneutics, and the possible meanings or understandings of a work at a given time, he recognizes the importance to literary history of "whether this horizon of expectations can be objectified."[57] While Mukarovsky's definition requires that aesthetic norms and values are collectively constituted, I shall consider how this collective constitution occurs and how it might be analysed by the historian. I shall develop how violations are recognized. I also elaborate aesthetic value in more detail below. It is in respect of the competing and mutually incompatible aesthetic norms, and additionally the mutual alienation of different aesthetic values, that aesthetics and the realm of art can be characterized as an essentially contested concept.

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[50] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p33.
[51] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p33.
[52] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p33.
[53] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p27.
[54] Mukarovsky relates this observation to Manet's 'Dejeuner sur l'herbe' with its parallels to Courbet which were less perceptible at its unveiling, *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p35.
[55] Jauss *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value* p25, his Thesis 3.

I previously discussed the ambiguity of the term 'aesthetics', unified only in terms of family resemblances. I should also account for the contested nature of aesthetic norms and values, which contribute to the shifting of the point of reference of 'aesthetics'. Gallie's notion of an 'essentially contested concept' is useful, in this respect, and Gallie does apply his notion to aesthetics, at least under the rubric 'art'. Gallie suggests certain key concepts, including art and religion, are inherently open to rational dispute concerning their definition and use. Such disputes "although not resolvable by argument of any kind, are nevertheless sustained by perfectly respectable arguments and evidence. This is what I mean by saying that there are concepts which are essentially contested, concepts the proper use of which inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users."[58] Gallie further posits four key characteristics for an essentially contested concept (beside other criteria that are not relevant in this instance), and these might be useful in accounting for the contested state of aesthetics. Additionally, these characteristics might provide a viable model for understanding the relation of competing contemporaneous aesthetic norms and values, and how these are observed by

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[56] Jauss *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p17.
[57] Jauss *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p22.
[58] W. B. Gallie 'Essentially contested concepts' in *The Importance of Language* Max Black (ed.) (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, initial publication 1962), p123.

the collective, or segments of it. The characteristics are: "it must be *appraisive* in the sense that it signifies or accredits some kind of valued achievement. (2) This achievement must be of an internally complex character for all that its worth is attributed to it as a whole. (3) Any explanation of its worth must therefore include reference to the respective contributions of its various parts or features; yet prior to experimentation there is nothing absurd or contradictory in any one of a number of possible rival descriptions of its total worth, one such description setting its component parts or features in one order of importance, a second setting them in a second order, and so on. In fine, the accredited achievement is *initially* variously describable. (4) The accredited achievement must be of a kind that admits of considerable modifications in the light of changing circumstances; and such modification cannot be prescribed or predicted in advance."[59] Mukarovsky relates shifting aesthetic norms to fashion, an economic phenomenon, and in relation to this provides a further explanation of the way in which aesthetic norms both stabilise aesthetics, whilst also shifting and being contested. "Fashion has a levelling effect on the aesthetic norm in the sense that it eliminates the diverse competition of concurrent norms to the advantage of a single norm." "[O]n the other hand, the levelling is compensated by the rapid temporal alternation of norms which are due to fashion."[60]

Aesthetic value, whilst being complexly related to the aesthetic function "(the force which creates value)" and the aesthetic norm "(the rule by which it is measured)",[61] requires further description. Within any aesthetic evaluation the work shall be considered in respect of its aesthetic function, its fulfilment or violation of the aesthetic norm. However "all extra-aesthetic functions and values are important as components of aesthetic value."[62] As with the aesthetic norm, the notion of aesthetic value provided by Mukarovsky insists on its mutability; "aesthetic value, which is a process and not a state, *energeia* and not *ergon*. Thus even without a change in time and space aesthetic value appears as a varied and complex activity which is expressed in the divergent opinions of critics about newly created works of art, the inconstancy of consumer demand in the book and art markets, etc."[63] Further examples of the institutions and bodies which influence aesthetic value through regulation or evaluation of art works include institutions of criticism, artistic training, marketing and advertising, surveys to determine 'most valuable' art works, shows, competitions, prizes, museums, subsidy bodies and censorship.[64] These various institutions might have conflicting interests in maintaining, and stabilising, particular aesthetic norms and aesthetic values, to the detriment of others. However, individuals within these institutions, or institutions less hierarchically privileged, might have interests in promoting new norms and values.

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[59] Ibid, p125.
[60] Mukarovsky *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value*, p41.
[61] Ibid, p59.
[62] Ibid, p60.

Beyond these institutions and bodies, Mukarovsky adds "that the collective nature and character of aesthetic evaluation is also reflected in individual aesthetic judgements."[65] Hence he rejects the possible relativity of such an individual evaluation. For Mukarovsky as individual aesthetic evaluation is situated in a specific time and place, and social milieu, with concomitant dependence on the aesthetic values associated with this context. I would rather stress that the context determines the 'background set' for an aesthetic judgement, yet clearly doesn't determine the exact evaluation. This allows for both individual aesthetic preferences, and the capacity for wider shifts in aesthetic value. Mukarovsky details particularly the hypothetical case of a dispute between the extra-aesthetic values perceived in a work, and those held by the perceiver. Thus, in the extreme, "[an] insuperable mutual alienation of values held by the viewer *versus* those contained in a work of art may bring about a situation in which the work loses all meaning for the viewer and is not even seen as a work of art."[66] Yet aesthetic value necessarily dominates these extra-aesthetic values perceived in the work, joining them in the unified work, this being "the dynamic totality of their mutual interrelationships."[67] Aesthetic value, whilst collectively constituted, is changeable, although a degree of stability might still be associated with aesthetic canons. Mukarovsky suggests that differences in generations will also cause aesthetic revolutions, with shifts or changes to canons,[68] but canons gain a certain stability from what he terms 'name-value', wherein the "name of the artist who created it is a label of generally recognized value" [for the work].[69] Canonised works, as such, endure, but the aesthetic values by which they are judged valuable nonetheless shift.

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[63] Ibid, p64.
[64] Ibid, p64-65.
[65] Ibid, p66.
[66] Ibid, p86, footnote 68 in Mukarovsky.
[67] Ibid, pp96 and 88.

Mukarovsky's notions of aesthetic function, aesthetic norm and aesthetic value, are valuable in stressing the social, collectively constituted nature of aesthetics, whilst both distinguishing and combining the spheres of production, evaluation and consumption. This conception allows for changeable and contested aesthetics, multiple definitions of art distinguished by different emphases on shared properties and characteristics, which are themselves open to change. I will now use these notions, and my foregoing discussion of aesthetics, as a basis for considering aesthetics in the cinema, and most specifically to develop my conception of aestheticization. However, it is worth addressing initially the problem of cinema aesthetics for Mukarovsky as well as others. In particular, what are the aesthetic norms associated with film, in specific historical and cultural contexts?

Mukarovsky makes a distinction between motion pictures and art in two ways. Whilst cinema strives to be art, the aesthetic function is not universally dominant, with the commercial imperative privileging the commercial and communicative functions.[70] Additionally he questions the existence of aesthetic norms in cinema, "film needs a norm both in a positive sense (something to observe) and in a negative sense (something to violate)."[71] This sense of cinema's aesthetic lack, and specifically its lack of aesthetic norms, has been effectively countered, and it is worth noting that 'film aesthetics' now has a widespread currency and viability.[72] In a cursory check of recent journal and newspaper references, film aesthetics was alternatively associated with the sphere of criticism, or to individual films, and less commonly to groups of films, grouped according to author, movement or nationality. However, this perhaps indicates that film aesthetics are still more readily associated with the exceptional rather than the majority of commercial film productions.

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[68] Ibid, p46.
[69] Ibid, p67.
[70] Ibid, p13.
[71] Jan Mukarovsky *Structure sign and function* (trans. Eds. John Burbank, Peter Steiner) (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1978), p178.
[72] For instance by neoformalist studies; David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson *Film Art*, David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and mode of production to 1960* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1985). Earlier examples include; Rudolf Arnheim *Film as Art*, reprinted in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism* as 'The Complete Film' and ' The making of a film', *Film as Art* originally (University of California Press,

Film's status as art, indeed as the 'seventh art', although initially disputed, has gained wider acceptance, and benefited from the investigation of film aesthetics by key figures in the development of film theory and history. Although there is a tendency to essentialise the aesthetic characteristics of film to diverse ends, by writers including Rudolf Arnheim, Andre Bazin, Vsevolod Pudovkin, or Sergei Eisenstein, each attempts to provide an explication of the rules or codes of film. Whether this is Pudovkin's and Eisenstein's emphases on montage, or Bazin's focus on the reproduction of reality, film as understood by the metaphor of language gained a degree of currency. Bazin discusses, for instance, the 'evolution of the language of cinema'.[73] Conversely, whilst stressing the specificity of cinema, Arnheim's notion of the 'complete film' provides a prescriptive aesthetics, that normalises certain cinematic effects, and particular techniques.[74] These essentialising tendencies were countered by Victor Perkins in his influential *Film as Film* which considers film rather as the synthesis of artifice and realism, but more significantly moves away from limiting film aesthetics to a single set of codes or rules. "For if there are no rules by which every movie can be bound, there are forms which, once adopted by the film-maker, impose their own logic" [on the film-maker and spectator].[75] Consequently, groups of films might be understood in terms of formal rules, or tendencies, which have a systemic character or 'logic'. Herein, the notion of cinematic conventions, specific to their context of production (and reception), with a positive, or

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Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957), or Siegfried Kracauer *Theory of Film* (Galaxy/Oxford University Press, New York, 1960).

[73] Andre Bazin *What is Cinema*, 'The Evolution of the language of cinema' in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism* originally *What is Cinema* (trans. Hugh Gray) (University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967).

[74] Rudolf Arnheim *Film as Art*, reprinted in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds) *Film Theory and Criticism*.

[75] Victor Perkins - 'Form and Discipline' from *Film as Film* reprinted in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism*, originally (Penguin, Middlesex, 1972), p54. Note Perkins himself adopts rules in evaluating aesthetic techniques in respect of sufficient motivation in the plot.

generative capacity answers the lack of norms which Mukarovsky perceived in cinema. Formal and technical conventions, and furthermore systems or regimes of such conventions, can be associated with diverse film-making contexts. From its outset, technical conventions which contribute to aesthetic norms in cinema might include the use and construction of the 'close-up',[76] or 'types' of character, for instance the Vamp, Straight Girl, etc. as "specific" or "fixed iconography",[77] or the 'flash-back'. Yet more complex, or at least composite, filmic conventions might be associated with, for instance, film genres, or with classical Hollywood distinguished as a mode of production and system of conventions.[78] Genre can be related to a conventionalised or normative, aesthetic regime, with iconography, narrative structure, character types and other elements delimited by convention at a particular juncture. More far reaching, classical Hollywood is associated with a particular narrative style, the organisation of narrative "to tell a particular kind of story in a particular way," with all filmic elements subordinate to narrative. This might be counter to generic conventions, particularly for fantasy genres such as the musical. "Editing, mise-en-scene, lighting, camera movement, and acting all work together to create a transparency of style so that the viewer attends to the story being told and not to the manner of its telling."[79] Despite generic and other differences, it has been suggested that "certain spatial and temporal codes are common to all Hollywood films", and the "various types of Hollywood films being made share these profoundly deep assumptions about cinematic representation."[80] Classical Hollywood is just one instance, albeit economically dominant, of a normative style, which is the "systematic use of specific cinematic techniques."[81]

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[76] 'Close-up' explored by Bela Balaz's in *Theory of the film* reprinted p260-262 as 'The Close-Up' in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds) *Film Theory and Criticism*, originally (Dover Publications inc., 1952).

[77] Stanley Cavell 'Types; cycles as genres' from *The World Viewed* in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, Leo Braudy (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism*, p296, originally in Stanley Cavell – *The World Viewed: Reflections on the ontology of film* (Viking Press, New York, 1971).

[78] David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson *Film Art*, p38 on genre. See also Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson *The Classical Hollywood Cinema.*

[79] Douglas Gomery and Robert Allen *Film History*, p81.

[80] Peter Lehman, 'Style, Function and Ideology: A problem in Film History' in *Film Reader* 4, 'Point of View, Metahistory of film', (North West University, 1979), p72-80, specifically p75.

[81] Gomery and Allen *Film History*, p81.

Bordwell and Thompson associate film style with the patterned and significant use of techniques, namely mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing and sound. There is "no single set of rules"[82] so each film features a unique interplay of structure and style, a distinct organisation of its elements, yet its particular aesthetic system might be governed by the aesthetic norms of its mode of production or genre. Also, beyond these purely cinematic conventions there might be conventions derived from outside of film, including the other arts, whether of composition and staging, or in terms of representations for example. Kristin Thompson suggests a variety of 'background sets', aesthetic *generative mechanisms*, specific to, but not necessarily exclusive to, cinema.[83] Again, "we find many of the same generative mechanisms at work in seemingly very different films."[84] Whilst much has been written about the classical Hollywood system, conventions and norms are similarly applicable to art cinema. To some extent art cinema can be conceived in bipolar opposition to Hollywood, defined by the particular violations of Hollywood norms which it encompasses. Violations, here, have a meaning and significance dependent on the collective awareness of the Hollywood norm. Hence, in the case of purported film classics, such as *Citizen Kane* (1941), considered by Dudley Andrew, these films are "unreadable without the system whose sameness they hope to escape."[85] Thus *Citizen Kane* avoids Hollywood conventions of cutting, rather using alternative techniques associated with deep-space composition.[86] Likewise, Bordwell suggests that the Art cinema is a distinct mode of production which, whilst not governed by a single aesthetic norm is differentiated from Hollywood in terms of subjectivity, objective realism, and authorial expression.[87] Hence, Art cinema has developed conventions (problems of identification, temporal uncertainty)[88] but is also dominated by violations of both Hollywood conventions and its own. In particular its reflexive aesthetic, with overt 'signs of enunciation', aesthetic choices as it were, is associated with both modernism and the phenomena of the auteur.[89] I shall not expand upon this cursory consideration of cinema aesthetics, particularly aesthetic norms, since I will now introduce the notion of aestheticization. However, I shall have recourse to elaborating particular aesthetic norms of classical Hollywood, art cinema, and the continuing modernist tendency of New American cinema, as I engage with my specific examples of aestheticization in the cinema.

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[82] Bordwell and Thompson *Film Art*, p297 and p274 on style.

[83] Reference in Gomery and Allen *Film History*, p79.

[84] Ibid, p80.

[85] Andrew cited p216 in Noel King 'Hermeneutics, reception aesthetics and film interpretation', originally p13 in Dudley Andrew *Film in the Aura of Art* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1984).

[86] Bordwell and Thompson *Film Art*, p281.

[87] David Bordwell 'The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Production', *Film Criticism* vol.4 no. 1 1979, 56-64.

[88] Bordwell cited in King 'Hermeneutics, reception aesthetics and film interpretation', p218.

Wolfgang Welsch engages with the notion of aestheticization in the context of accounting for a "general condition of aestheticization", in which aesthetic criteria are brought to bear upon all aspects and spheres of modern life. Furthermore, he elaborates upon the surface, superficial as it were, level of aestheticization, the styling or beautification of everyday life, and a deeper level, the 'aesthetic turn' in relation to 'knowledge', 'truth' and 'reality'.[90] Welsch defines aestheticization as follows: "'Aestheticization' basically means that the unaesthetic is made, or understood to be, aesthetic."[91] Relating this to Mukarovsky's notions, aestheticization corresponds to the application, and privileging, of the aesthetic functions, aesthetic norms and aesthetic values, in contexts wherein aesthetics was previously absent, or at least subordinate. Now, I would amend this by the addition that aestheticization also includes: the aesthetic being made, or understood to be, more aesthetic. What I mean by this, and I shall develop in relation to my typology of aestheticization, is that the emphasis upon the aesthetic function, norm and values of the aesthetic object is expanded, in contrast to, for instance, commercial and communicative functions, or moral values. Or, alternatively, the status of the aesthetic function is altered, its domain expanded. It is possible, then, to posit an aestheticizing function, and suggest parallel characteristics to the aesthetic function that might prove valuable. Reworking Mukarovsky's thesis on the character of the aesthetic function (see page 19 to 20) it could be said that: Aestheticization is, in itself, neither a real property of an object nor is it explicitly connected to some of its properties. 2. The aestheticizing function of an object is likewise not totally under the control of an individual, although from a purely subjective standpoint the aestheticizing function may be acquired (or, conversely, lost) by anything regardless of its organisation. 3. Stabilizing the aestheticizing function is a matter for the collective. If the aestheticizing function is a variation, or enhancement of the aesthetic function, relating to the aesthetic function itself in analogy to the relationship of the aesthetic function to the object, it consequently observes some of the characteristics and distribution of the aesthetic function. It is similarly collectively constituted, and hence must be recognized on some level. I shall engage with this in due course. The aesthetic function was partially defined as causing maximal focus on any given object, isolating those properties deemed aesthetic. Similarly the aestheticizing function expands this maximal focus to include awareness of the aesthetic function itself, the systemic and organised transformation of the extra-aesthetic. Welsch does make a distinction between aestheticization and the avant-garde attempt to extend the definition of art, advocated by Beuys or Cage, "that something which wasn't art should be understood as art."[92] However, this distinction seems dependent on his concentration upon aestheticization outside of art, and his association of this with kitsch. Furthermore, Welsch touches on the economic implications of aestheticization, in terms of differentiation and also designed obsolescence. There is a parallel with accounts of postmodernity, for instance Jameson's description of "universal commodification", by which "everything in consumer society has taken on an aesthetic dimension," which further corresponds to "all-pervasive visuality."[93] Significantly, the commercial function of cinema needs to be considered in relation to the aesthetic function. The dialectical relationship between the aesthetic function and the commercial function might be expected to be shifted by the operation of the aestheticizing function.

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[89] Steve Neale 'Art Cinema as Institution' *Screen* vol. 22, no. 1, 1981 pp11-39 reprinted in Catherine Fowler (ed.) *The European Cinema Reader* (Routledge, London, 2002).

[90] Welsch 'Aestheticization..', p2 on surface, p5 on general aestheticization, and p14 on knowledge and truth which he doesn't put in quotation marks.

[91] Ibid, p5.

Aestheticization is also characterized by the way it changes the constitution of the object, which assumes "a constitution of having been produced, being changeable, unobliging, fluctuating, etc."[94] In this regard, the aestheticizing function draws attention not only to the aesthetic function, the systemic and organised transformation of the extra-aesthetic, but also the constructed, potentially arbitrary, nature of this system. Again, this corresponds to accounts of postmodernism in connection with eclecticism and the collapse of traditional artistic hierarchies.[95] We might concisely designate this 'playful' aesthetics. Other 'productive traits' that Welsch relates to the aestheticization of reality are aesthetic categories such as "appearance, manoeuvrability, diversity, fathomlessness or fluctuation."[96] I shall relate these to specific examples in my typology of foregrounding aesthetics, developed below. Likewise, Welsch associates the tropes of 'embellishment', 'animation' and 'experience' with surface aestheticization,[97] and I shall develop these in respect of my typology of aestheticization.

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[92] Welsch 'Aestheticization..,'p3.

[93] Frederic Jameson *Signatures of the Visible* (Routledge, New York and London, 1992), p12 on commodification, p31 on visuality.

[94] Welsch 'Aestheticization..', p5.

Types of aestheticization

Aestheticization, whilst focussing attention on the aesthetic function, and the particular aesthetic system perceivable in the work, must necessarily exclude other elements of the work. The excluded elements might be the non-aesthetic functions of the work (symbolic, communicative or commercial) or aspects of the aesthetic function that are not recognizably salient in the system. This exclusion results since the aestheticizing function, like the aesthetic function, is primarily concerned with emphasising certain elements of the work whilst making other elements marginal. I suggest a non-exhaustive, and non-exclusive, list of types of aestheticization, which I designate respectively as 'look', 'texture', 'sensibility' and 'abstraction'. These emphasise particular elements of the work, and make these salient, hence excluding other aspects of the aesthetic function in relation to the work.

'Look'

The first of these, a 'look', is associated with the foregrounding of visual elements, cinematography, fast and slow-motion, editing, shot lengths, camera movement, and mise-en-scene, with the exclusion, or subordination, of other elements. The notion of a 'look' connects with Justin Wyatt's notion of 'High Concept', another tendency in cinema that has been associated with postmodernism.[98] A look embodies an emphasis on a predominantly visual system, organised by means of equivalence, and might be most readily evident in respect of the visual embellishment, or animation of aspects usually not understood as aesthetic. The most pertinent and resonant example of this, which I shall return to at length, is the climactic scene of *Bonnie and Clyde*. As I will explore in chapters five and six, this climactic scene and the interpretation and analysis of it has been central in the diachronic critical reception of the film, and particularly in relation to critics characterizing the film as innovative. It has been suggested that the balletic deaths of Bonnie and Clyde are affective at least in part because of the 'overwhelming and relentless sound' of the machine gun fire.[99] However, it is rather the disjunction between slow-motion imagery and asynchronous but simultaneous sound that I argue is key to this scene. Furthermore, the transformation of the image, achieved by intercutting footage filmed at different speeds, is better understood in relation to other scenes in the film that manipulate temporal qualities of the image.

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[95] For instance, on postmodernism and the collapse of traditional boundaries and hierarchies in relation to cinema, see Emanuel Levy *Cinema of Outsiders*, p56.
[96] Welsch 'Aestheticization..', p14.
[97] Ibid, p2.

'Texture'

'Texture' is less concerned with the exclusion or subordination of particular elements of the work. Rather it emphasises connections between different elements in the work. Various elements including the register of dialogue, mode and register of performances, mise-en-scene, music, as well as visual and aural style, might be organised in terms of analogous forms or structures. An example of texture might be the 'lo-fi', craft construction of the Dogme films, and related films such as *Gummo* (1997). This informs their visual style, sound, and use of found mise-en-scene, as well as more generally their inclusion of tonal and stylistic disjunctions. An absence of post-production devices to 'smooth' editing is consonant with the emphasis on a bricolage construction. Again, I shall return to the notion of 'texture', but should note a correspondence between texture and the phenomena of camp, pastiche and parody. Each of these phenomena are concerned with a shift of the focus of attention to a higher level of organisation and meaning, particularly in the case of pastiche and parody in emphasising the relationship between the work and a pre-existing work or genre.

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[98] Justin Wyatt and R. L. Rutsky 'High Concept: Abstracting the postmodern' *Wide Angle* 10: 4, 1988 and Wyatt *High Concept*.

[99] John S. Douglas and Glenn P. Hornden, *The Art of Technique: An aesthetic approach to film and video production*, (Allyn and Bacon, Boston etc., 1996) p91, in which the affective quality and the relentless sound is compared with the climax of *All quiet on the Western Front* (1930).

'Sensibility'

'Sensibility' relates to elements of the film loosely described as feeling, mood and tone, as well as Welsch's trope of experience. These are common-sense notions, metaphors enlisted from literature and music, not easily defined in respect of individual films, much less so in relation to cinema aesthetics generally. However, a basis for definition is provided by Jeffrey Sconce, who delimits 'tone' as those elements in a film that do not reduce to story, style or authorial disposition in isolation. This distinction between tone and authorial disposition perhaps needs qualifying – elements in the film might be understood in relation to an author's temperament or inclination, but tonal elements do not solely reduce to this.[100] Adapting Richard Dyer's definition of performance, tone is not what is shown, the narrative, nor how it is shown, the style, but rather the register of both what is shown and how it is shown, the metaphorical colouring.[101] Whilst *Bonnie and Clyde* was written and formulated in terms of conveying a new sensibility, and defended in connection with its tone by Pauline Kael, perhaps the most clear cut example of 'sensibility' in the films of the Hollywood Renaissance is *Easy Rider*, encapsulating the (youth) counter-culture sensibility.[102]

'Abstraction' corresponds more readily with formalism, self-sufficient or autonomous art. Bordwell and Thompson give an example of 'abstract form' in Ozu's *Ohayo* (1959), with a cut from a washing line to a living room in which compositional similarities are foregrounded.[103] This conforms, if only momentarily, to the subordination of non-aesthetic functions by the aesthetic. A clichéd example is the Busby Berkeley 'kaleidoscopic moment', at least as originally used, in films such as *Footlight Parade* (1934). Further examples that imitate this occur in *The Big Lebowski* (1997) and *Cremaster 1* (1995), which function as abstraction only if we disregard the sexual representation of women, although this also applies to Berkeley.[104]

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[100] Jeffrey Sconce 'Irony, nihilism and the new American 'Smart' film', *Screen* 43: 4 Winter 2002.

[101] Richard Dyer *Stars* (BFI, London, 1979, 2nd Edition 1998).

[102] See David Newman and Robert Benton's comments in 'Lightning in a bottle' in Sandra Wake, Nicola Hayden (eds.) *Classic Film Scripts: Bonnie and Clyde* (Frederick Ungar, New York, 1972), p14. They discuss the relationship between their article 'The New Sentimentality' *Esquire* June 1964 and the film. Also see Newman 'What's it really about?: Pictures at an execution' in Lester Friedman (ed.) *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde*, p39, on 'New Sentimentality' defining '"the Sixties"'. See also Steve Carr '"From fucking cops! to Fucking Media!": Bonnie and Clyde for a Sixties America' in ibid, p80, 82.

Each of these types of aestheticization, then, privilege particular properties and elements of the work, and privilege one means of organising these, excluding other elements and means of organisation. I have noted that these types of aestheticization are not exclusive, and I shall consider in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde* and other films how they might be combined in respect of an individual film. In considering the aestheticizing function I am primarily concerned with instances wherein aestheticization informs the whole work. However, as this example from Ozu illustrates, and as should become clearer, aestheticization need not apply to the whole work, and similarly the specific type of aestheticization need not govern it entirely. This will be particularly relevant when I consider the recognition of aestheticization, whereby examples such as the climax of *Bonnie and Clyde* highlight customary recognition of aestheticization of violence, the unaesthetic made aesthetic. I shall expand upon this to suggest aestheticization is more pervasive in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and this is the reason for critical contestation around shifts in tone, inconsistency and incongruity, in the film. I should also note the issue of recognition of aestheticization is problematized both by modes of reception which foreground the communicative or narrative (and ultimately mimetic) function, and by the extent to which the aestheticized work differs from the established aesthetic norms, which might be a difference of degree rather than of kind, at least according to a dominant critical perspective.

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[103] Bordwell and Thompson *Film Art*, p277.

[104] Ibid, p146, and p231 on the aerial views of the assembled revue troupe in *Footlight Parade* (1934).

Types of foregrounding aesthetic function and aesthetic system

I will provide an expansive, albeit largely speculative, typology of the means of foregrounding aesthetic function in a work. Associated with each of these types, I will refer to further examples from *Bonnie and Clyde* and certain other films, outline the connection to types of aestheticization, and consider the scope of foregrounding, which elements or properties of the work can be emphasised in this way. These types of foregrounding will also be related in varying ways and degrees with Welsch's tropes of embellishment, animation and experience. After I have detailed the available types I shall return to the problem of recognition, and develop further analysis of the recognition of aestheticization in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly in relation to its characterisation as part of the Hollywood Renaissance.

Embellishment

Types of embellishment most readily correspond to the emphasis on surface appearance associated with postmodernity and universal commodification. However in considering different means of embellishment, I intend to relate particular phenomena to embellishment that are customarily excluded from such associations. Embellishment is relevant to both making aesthetic the unaesthetic, and enhancing the aesthetic in aesthetic terms. In respect of the above types of aestheticization, embellishment corresponds to a means to foreground the 'look', where the relationship between the instances of embellishment is largely of similarity, and is focussed on visual elements of the work. Conversely, embellishments will also correspond to a means of emphasising 'texture' where it is the relationships between, and organisation of, disparate elements of the work that are emphasised, whether these relationships are parallelism (congruity) or contrast (incongruity).

Vividness is perhaps paramount as a means of embellishment. Vividness can be considered a property of many disparate elements of the work, or of a combination of these, but is perhaps most logically related (etymologically) to the visual elements, being visually arresting, eye catching, striking, or conversely in terms of negatively weighted evaluative criteria jarring or shocking. Additionally, intensity of sound might also be a means of embellishment, as in the climactic scene in *Bonnie and Clyde* as previously mentioned. Volume and pitch, or discord, might be extreme. Vividness encompasses a variety of techniques of enhancement, which can be summarised in respect of the elements to which they apply. The visual qualities of the film, or individual sequences, include the luminosity, degree of contrast, focus, dynamism within the frame, the properties of the palette of colours. The match between these visual qualities and other aspects, including dialogue and music, but also narrative context and character relations, might be termed synaesthetic properties. Similarly the dynamic of change through editing, the kinetic properties, might be intensified. The combination of choice of palette, colour contrast, luminosity, and composition of colour in the frame might be associated with embellishment in certain generically governed contexts – in musical sequences in *An American in Paris* (1951), where vibrant primary colours provide a key to the relationship between the action of the dance and the offset background, or in Sirkian melodramas such as *Written in the Wind* (1956), with the symbolism of lush reds in particular. These two examples highlight the way in which embellishment is frequently associated with exclusion or subordination of mimetic functions. Hence realism will often be de-emphasised in favour of generic verisimilitude. Vividness, in terms of luminosity and the reduced range of colour contrast, can be associated with shooting in the 'magic hour', dusk and dawn exterior shooting, most markedly associated with Terrence Malick, and *Badlands* (1973), which I shall consider in connection with the ongoing influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, or *Days of Heaven* (1978). However, restricting examples to *Bonnie and Clyde*, the picnic scene is a cogent example that is also notably inflected by soft-focus shooting, which was consistently associated with the clichéd appearance of adverts within its initial critical reception. Another example is *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), which is given precedence in Glenn Man's account of the Hollywood Renaissance in terms of its graphic construction and 'meticulous visual detail.'[105] Furthermore, the inclusion of glare in shots, and unusual reflections, links *2001* and *Easy Rider* with *Bonnie and Clyde*. Finally, the opening of *Bonnie and Clyde*, with its reduced palette, the ostensibly monochromatic yellow/brown of the archive, and faux archive, snapshots of Bonnie and Clyde, juxtaposed with the vibrant red of Faye Dunaway's lips (also abstracted), establishes the mood of the film. This provides counterpoint in terms of intensity.[106] This example also relates to aestheticization as sensibility, and might specifically be considered in connection with the nostalgic film, but I shall return to this point below.

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[105] See Glenn Man *Radical Visions*, p62, in relation to transformation of the sci-fi genre.

The next means of embellishment might be summarised as transformation, by which I primarily mean making 'beautiful', making 'ugly', or making 'unfamiliar'. This last instance, defamiliarisation or 'ostranenie' is customarily associated with artifice and distanciation, but not with aestheticization. Transformation might be achieved by similar techniques to those discussed above in connection with vividness, but it also touches upon, or overlaps, deviations in respect of representations and their associated conventions. Furthermore, transformation might be achieved through selective choice or emphasis of aspects of that being transformed, which might extend to abstraction. Hence, transformation is a process of exaggeration, if only by omission of contrasting elements. Examples of transformation include instances within the Dogme and proto-Dogme films, most evidently *Gummo*, but also *Breaking the Waves* (1996) and *The Idiots*. *Gummo* in particular has been associated with a tendency of so-called abject cinema. This tendency can be characterized as either an exaggerated naturalism, in terms of focussing upon the 'base', 'grim', 'vulgar', 'sordid' and 'distasteful', or as participating in the inversion of the more normative 'making beautiful' focussed on characters that might be conceived as dysfunctional, abusive, and variously lacking in respect of contemporary standards of beauty and value in appearance. This quality of *Gummo* might be related to a wider cross-media tendency, most apparent in the aestheticization of documentary photography,[107] associated with such photographers as Nan Goldin or Richard Billingham. Yet in other respects continuity between *Gummo* and the films of John Cassavetes might be stressed.

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[106] Douglas and Hornden *Art of Technique*, p74. "Here, the mood of the film establishes the character motivation and sets the narrative in motion before any dialogue begins." Whilst this description features a problematic logical relation between mood and character motivation, it clearly relates to synaesthesia.

[107] See David Levi Strauss 'The documentary debate: aesthetic or anaesthetic? Or, what's so funny about peace, love, understanding and social documentary photography' *Camerawork: A Journal of Photographic Arts* vol. 19, no. 1, Spring 1992, although I have been unable to obtain a copy of this article it discusses a trend of aestheticization in documentary photography, exemplified by the work of three photographers.

Transformations, both as making beautiful, but also at the same time (and so ironically) making unfamiliar, are also at work in *The Graduate*, particularly around the various swimming pool shots. One such shot begins in underwater medium close up of Benjamin in his scuba diving outfit. This diving suit sequence, as well as others in the pool, is key to the overall aesthetic of the film, or at least its first half. Initially the abstract background is marked, albeit already identified in the scene as the pool. Ben is initially to the left of centre of the frame, with his speargun held in his hand near the right hand edge of the frame. Whilst Ben's face is barely visible behind his scuba mask, his figure in the diving suit is clear to begin with, as well as the occasional bubbles that emanate from his breathing mouthpiece. The soundtrack is also patterned with the sound of bubbles underwater. The camera zooms out, and the background, the pool wall, which began as more white with a blue hint, becomes a very bright blue. Benjamin's figure becomes unclear when he is shown in full, seemingly floating just above the pool floor since both his flippers are raised, whilst the bright blue dominates the image. The only other feature in the frame is the bottom of the pool ladder that marginally enters into view. The near silence of the scene is interrupted by a sound overlap, Benjamin's telephone conversation with Mrs Robinson, whilst, however, the abstract colour of the image is sustained by the protracted zoom out. Manny Farber described 'the ultrafluorescent image' with 'an uncluttered cube of overpowering colour and glowing cosmeticized skin', also associated with a 'rectangle of superreality', presumably referring to this scene and others showing Benjamin floating atop a lilo upon the pool.[108] Tellingly, these shots are strongly, perhaps self-consciously, echoed in the thematically related *Harold and Maude* (1971), but with the emphasis wholly upon defamiliarisation.

Another means of embellishment is isolation. Isolation is achieved by exclusion, or selection, of particular aspects or elements, or else the downplaying of other elements. Embellishment is hence achieved by contrast, or rather the lack of normative contrast. Again, *Bonnie and Clyde* provides a useful example of isolation, which functions as an organising principle throughout the film, but is not exemplified in any one scene. The particular isolation I have in mind is the emphasis upon Bonnie and Clyde that combines an erotic dimension and hypersympathetic traits, which might be described as 'cool' as well as 'sexy'. I will expand upon this in considering *Bonnie and Clyde* more fully, but the aforementioned initial shot of Bonnie, focussing with a close-up on her made-up lips, which is followed by the first flirtatious exchange between the couple, whilst Bonnie dresses, establishes not only a key motif, but an emphasis which is extreme and deemed inappropriate by Bosley Crowther. This motif also relates to the cod-Freudian motifs around Clyde's impotence in the film, but is distinguished by its visual emphasis. This isolation is not reductive, the shots and sounds of Bonnie's shoes descending the stairs counterpoint the initial abstraction and sexualisation. Further, the erotic quality is also offset by both sensual and more conventionally romantic aspects in later scenes. This isolation might also be associated with the influence of the French New Wave upon the film.

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[108] Manny Farber 'Cartooned Hip Acting' in *Manny Farber on the movies: Negative Space* (Studio Vista, London, 1971) pp155-6, previously in *Art Forum* December 1967.

Variation relates in part to representations, as well as other aesthetic conventions. Variation is designated as variation of the representation, particularly the image, from either the pro-filmic event or from normative aesthetic constructions that are otherwise equivalent (in terms of say subject matter). Obvious examples of variation in the first sense might include the use of colour filters, as for example in opening scenes in Godard's *Le Mepris* (1963). Alternative examples are the blue dawn shot of Jennifer Jason Leigh in *The King is Alive* (2000) and the opening and closing sequence of *Open Hearts* (2003). These variations are achieved by altering the white-blue or white-red colour balance on the digital video cameras used in their production, pushed to an extreme degree in the second case. This stands out in each case because it contrasts strongly with the aesthetic conventions of Dogme 95, or at least the assumed shared style of Dogme films, and is also inconsistent with the style of the remainder of each film. Another kind of variation is inversion, literally the shot is 'upside-down'. More metaphorical is the inversion of character traits with regards to conventions of representation. Again, the character of Frank Hamer in *Bonnie and Clyde* might be illustrative, with an inversion of the traits associated with the 'sheriff', particularly in the climactic scene.

Recontextualisation like isolation involves altering contrast between certain elements of the work and their background. Yet, contrast is here achieved not by emphasising these features or properties, but by translating, or shifting as it were, the contextualising features, or properties. The rural gangster film and the modern-day western potentially relate to recontextualisation. Hence, whilst *Bonnie and Clyde* is by no means original in respect of rural gangster films, its particular emphasis upon the rural Depression context is distinctive. Setting its more conventional crime story against the backdrop of an Andrew Wyeth painting or *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), as exemplified by the drifter camp scene, alters its form.[109] Also the new-wave episodes within a gangster film featured in Penn's *Mickey One* (1965) might qualify. Recontextualisation, especially when marked, might also relate to the explicitly changeable production of narrative, and production of character, which I shall engage with in considering aestheticization by means of 'experience'. The recombinant nature of recontextualisation is thus associated with 'look' and 'sensibility'.

Blending, or combination, also relates to the overtly changeable production, in this case of generic characteristics, which might include character, narrative and iconography for instance. Blending might also apply to the combination of elements from disparate styles, besides generic hybridity. Embellishment will thus be achieved by the combination of distinct and recognizable stylistic traits. This will result in a markedly distinct organisation of features and elements that will necessarily violate the aesthetic norms associated with the contributory styles. Again, generic hybridity and stylistic eclecticism have both, perhaps problematically, been associated with cinema in postmodernity. A key example of blending from one of my case study films, again *Bonnie and Clyde*, is the use of allusion to Mack Sennett style silent comedies, combined of course with the violence of the gangster film. This is exemplified by the first successful bank robbery that results in the graphic, close-up shooting of the bank teller, standing on the getaway car's running board. This combination of slapstick and violence was clearly problematic for several critics, and was considered both incongruous and anachronistic.

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[109] Steve Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (Routledge, London, 2000) also notes the film's relation to a trend of 'youth oriented gangster films', p81.

Composition, as a means of aestheticization by embellishment, relates to the formal construction of the image. This is both the organisation of the single frame and how the image changes in successive frames. Composition clearly relates to the conventions of painting and photography, and utilises shared aesthetic values such as balance, symmetry, asymmetry and harmony. However, in the case of film these are affected by the potential for movement in the frame. Composition foregrounds the construction of the image, as an image rather than a representation, and with movement or change of the image additionally foregrounds the changeability of the image. Compositional devices such as centring the protagonist, or including a frame within a frame, might be motivated pragmatically to focus attention upon the narrative action, yet also demonstrate the privileging of the aesthetic function. An example from *Bonnie and Clyde* is the use of a frame within frame during the first successful bank robbery. Here, the image combines composition in depth, with several planes including the bank teller, counter screen, customer, and entrance to the bank, as well as subsequently Bonnie and Clyde perceived through the window in the counter screen. Bonnie and Clyde, whilst not being central in the overall image are central and laterally balanced in the frame within the frame. Whilst this framing is used ironically, Bonnie and Clyde framed as bank robbers in the image initially are paid no attention by the other occupants of the bank, it also displays a succession of planes with figures in successive planes each to the right of the closer figures, thus also 'leading' the viewer to the protagonists.

Other compositions that are prominent in their division of the frame include the long shot of Sheriff Hamer cast adrift across the lake in *Bonnie and Clyde*, with the emphasis upon horizontal lines and the stillness of the lake as well as its 'magic hour' beauty. More obtrusive is the Mondrian-like use of split screen masquage in *The Thomas Crown Affair* (1968). Composition is aligned with abstraction, in which the formal organisation of elements in the image is more evident than these elements themselves. Beside division of the frame, and positioning of protagonists or salient objects in the frame, other compositional devices include overlap or blocking to obscure items and retain depth, and contrast or imbalance. Compositional devices and norms in Hollywood and other narrative fiction films are not necessarily instances of aestheticization, since they might be motivated by an aesthetic or non-aesthetic function without foregrounding the aesthetic quality of the image. Composition might be motivated by foregrounding the protagonists and only objects and elements of the setting that are significant to the plot. Compositional norms have also been influenced by other considerations, such as varying aspect ratios in theatrical exhibition and television formats.[110]

Each of the above types of embellishment might be perceived as concerned with 'distinctiveness', aligned with not only violating aesthetic norms but also drawing attention to the changeable aesthetics, and hence the aesthetic function, by these violations. The final means of embellishment I want to develop is abstraction. Whilst I will address abstraction as a category of aestheticization, I will also distinguish abstraction as a means of embellishment. Although I have considered abstraction as a separate category of aestheticization, contrasted to look, texture and sensibility, as a means of foregrounding aesthetics I would associate it more readily with other means of embellishment, although it also figures in connection with animation. Abstraction, is hence, for the most part accommodated by the means of foregrounding more conducive to narrative film rather than a more general system of abstraction more easily associated with avant-garde production. Abstraction foregrounds the production of aesthetics by suggesting formal regulation, for instance literal, as well as metaphorical, symmetries, asymmetries and parallels between coterminous or discrete shots and scenes. Beside the earlier example from Ozu's *Ohayo*, or the kaleidoscopic organisation of Busby Berkeley musical numbers in 1930's Warner's musicals, examples in *The Graduate* might be given such as the opening shot and zoom out. The close up shot of Benjamin's head against a white background, only subsequently revealed as the back of his airplane seat, has marked brightness. This is achieved both by contrast, with the fade in from a black screen which was only briefly preceded by the production company logo, also against a dark background, as well as with hard lighting upon Hoffman's face, from ahead and above. Additionally, the luminous quality of the white surface is enhanced by its high reflective index. This lighting presents Hoffman's face with very little shadow, with the shadow behind his head on the white background clearly delineated, and pinpoint reflections of the light from ahead visible in his pupils. Hoffman's face fills the right hand side of the frame, albeit with an area of white visible beside him on the right edge of the frame, whereas the left hand side of the frame is almost entirely white. The initial noise on the soundtrack, the thrum of the airplane engine, is equally abstract until the pilot's landing announcement begins. Whilst the abstract composition is almost immediately disrupted by the zoom out, this retains an abstracted and geometric quality even as it reveals Benjamin's seat central in the frame amongst many identical others.

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[110] In particular the rules of 3, and use of 'T' composition, and centring of protagonists and significant objects is primarily motivated by narrative clarity, as discussed by Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, p51, as noted by Richard Maltby *Hollywood Cinema* (Blackwells, London, 1995), pp194-5.

Animation

As I suggested above, abstraction also relates to the foregrounding of aesthetics by means of animation. Again, animation is most consonant with 'look', but also overlaps with 'texture', and abstraction is potentially subsumed to either type of aestheticization (or a combination of both within the single work). Abstraction in terms of animation most immediately connotes literally animated sequences, often restricted to opening and closing credit sequences, promotional trailers, and occasionally adopted for communicating extreme subjective experiences (at least outside of animated features associated primarily with Disney and child audiences, or shorts). Abstraction, in connection with animation, would also suggest formal, or for the most part graphical regulation, 'designed' sequences. The obvious example of these are Saul Bass credit sequences, associated with Hitchcock and other filmmakers, whereas the particular use of split-screen in the opening sequence of *The Thomas Crown Affair* might also be included. Whilst abstraction as animation or as embellishment are not easily differentiated, the key distinguishing characteristic of animation is its potentially rapidly changing property, a kinetic quality not determined by pro-filmic movement or editing (at least in terms of 'cuts', although if the animation is achieved by frame-by-frame capture this is clearly involved in the process).

Other means of animation, in a less literal sense, are similarly governed by this stimulated quality of rapid changes, which might be achieved by means of changeability of style, variety of style, or occasional lapses of style, inconsistencies. Changeability and variety of style are both concerned with emphatic diversity, but differ in terms of the consistency involved in their organisation of disparate elements within the work. Variety is akin to blending, the means of embellishment explicated above. However, variety, whilst being similarly concerned with the combination of disparate stylistic elements or features, maintains stylistic elements as discrete elements that do not intrinsically affect, or inflect, each other. Whilst variety is thus an overriding principle in the work, with consistent shifts between these elements corresponding to diverse styles, variety does not entail unrestricted eclecticism. Although variety of style suggests two or more styles are collocated in the work, there is still consistency in the work in limiting diversity to these styles, and potentially in respect of their systematic distribution within the work.

Changeability of style is, meanwhile, a more generalised form of eclecticism, governed by a principle of inconsistency rather than this unified, or at least cohesive quality of variation. Animation in both instances relates to continual shifts in style as a key feature of the aesthetic system, but they differ in terms of how these shifts are organised and integrated. Variation features an alternation of styles, whereas changeability includes a succession of styles wherein alternation is not involved. The final means of achieving animation, which I have designated inconsistency, is likewise associated with a plurality of styles, or norms, but which is not predominant throughout the work. However, inconsistency, or occasional aesthetic lapses, still draws attention to the production of aesthetics, and potentially arbitrary aesthetic choices. This is achieved by inconsistency in conforming to conventions and norms; in some instances conforming to conventions, at other times conforming in an exaggerated, and effectively clichéd fashion, and elsewhere deviating from norms. Inconsistency, then, can be considered a governing principle organising deviations and a playful approach to aesthetic conventions. An example of inconsistency, or brief aesthetic deviation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, is the use of flash forward inserts of interviews in the bank after the professional bank robbery. These simulate a documentary style, with the address of the interviewees to slightly off camera, which contrasts with the slapstick Mack Sennett getaway chase with which it is juxtaposed. The slapstick sequences constitute variation in *Bonnie and Clyde* since they alternate with scenes in which slapstick does not feature, including particularly the violence around the gang's car. Likewise, within *The Graduate* scenes with intense luminosity, particularly associated with the pool and Benjamin alone, are alternated with the scenes with Benjamin and Mrs Robinson meeting, which feature strong variation of light and shadow in the frame and scene. This variation is reiterated and adapted as the film progresses. In contrast, the use of filter and soft focus in several scenes in *Bonnie and Clyde*, such as the homecoming picnic, or the use of canted shots in the climactic scene, demonstrate the changeability of style. These devices permeate specific scenes, but are not repeated throughout the film.

Whilst I have outlined these various means of animation, I have provided few examples. This paucity of examples corresponds to the limited use of aestheticization by animation in either Hollywood or Art cinema. This is perhaps determined by shared adherence to the aesthetic value of unity, as well as their respective emphasis upon narrative, whether governed by transparency or by authorial expression. David Bordwell, in addressing 'intensified continuity', considers the issue of purportedly more animated, kinetic, New Hollywood, and the influence of music video which is clearly significant here.[111] Notably, one critic has considered *Festen* in relation to MTV with its rapid cuts, but these might also be considered in relation to the successive close-ups in Dreyer's films such as *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928).[112] As I consider means of aestheticization as 'experience' it should become clear that both in respect to *Bonnie and Clyde* and those other films I have repeatedly referred to, and more widely in Hollywood and art cinema, embellishment and experience are the predominant means of foregrounding aesthetics, whether associated with 'look', 'texture' or 'sensibility'. This might be reconciled by the observation that animation overlaps with both embellishment, the kinetic quality of vivid, or intense, foregrounding, and with experience, as hyperstimulated, invigorated theme-park experience, yet in both senses animation must be offset by delays and interruptions by alternative forms of embellishment and experience. Hence, animation remains accommodated by other means of foregrounding aesthetics, even when it develops beyond its 'appropriate' contexts – credit sequences, trailers, and so on.

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[111] David Bordwell 'Intensified continuity: Visual Style in Contemporary American Film' *Film Quarterly* vol. 55 issue 3, pp16-18.

[112] See Palle Schantz Lauridsen 'The Celebration: Classical Drama and Docu Soap Style' from *P.O.V.* online journal, http://imv.auldk/publikationer/pov/Issue_10/section_3/artclA:html on *Festen* in relation to MTV.

Foregrounding aesthetics by means of experience, and the notion of sensibility as an organising system of aesthetics might equally be as problematic, or at least as ambiguous, as notions of self-consciousness, or intertextuality, in cinema. David Bordwell suggests that reflexivity, or self-consciousness, is rather a semantic field or "Black Box" commonly applied to a variety of films.[113] Experience as a means of foregrounding certain aesthetic elements relates to the notion of tone I quoted earlier, those elements not solely reducible to story, style or authorial disposition. However, in considering sensibility as an aesthetic system, and experience as a means of foregrounding this aesthetic organisation, it is apparent that tone might also affect style. Again, I shall elaborate various types of experience, as governing aesthetics, particularly relating to the changeability and production of character, genre and generic traits, and narrative. In this respect I shall include examples often accounted for yet not usually related to aestheticization, particularly in relation to generic transformation.

Generic transformation, or metageneric production, is ordinarily associated with reflexivity and intertextuality. John Cawelti and Frederic Jameson have both considered the change, or challenge, to the status of genre in particular films, and especially the relevance of nostalgia. Whilst I have previously referred to nostalgia in connection with the opening sequence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, which I associated with embellishment, I should expand upon the nostalgic element of that film. The nostalgic approach in *Bonnie and Clyde* can be considered both in terms of the aestheticization of history and nostalgic use of genre. I should also address the issue of how generic transformation in individual films consequently affects genre more generally, either individual genres or all genres. Jameson suggests, "the moment in which the deeper aesthetic vitality of *genre* comes to consciousness and becomes self-conscious may well also be the moment in which *genre* in that older sense is no longer possible."[114] Clearly this is problematic both in terms of the passive verbalizing of coming to self-consciousness, but also the assumption that one instance of a film foregrounding awareness of genre production somehow infects all generic production. The key types of generic transformation I wish to consider are inversion, nostalgia, myth as myth and generic blending, which are primarily derived from Cawelti. Cawelti also considers burlesque or parody, the ironic or humorous exploitation of a set of conventions or style. As Cawelti notes, burlesque or parody has existed in cinema almost as long as genres, so Jameson's logic of pure genres is inadequate.[115] Beside parody, or burlesque, Cawelti delineates three further types of generic transformation, the cultivation of nostalgia, demythologisation, and the affirmation of myth.[116] Jameson, meanwhile, consolidates 'metageneric production', which uses "the pregiven structure of inherited genres as a pretext for production which is no longer personal or stylistic in the sense of the older modernism. The latter has of course been described in terms of reflexivity, of auto-referentiality and the return of artistic production into its own processes and techniques."[117] Jameson distinguishes the new reflexivity as intertextuality, again a trait associated with postmodernism. However, Cawelti's typology is useful for highlighting the property of generic transformation that extends beyond textual allusion, that is the cultivation of experience that is not restricted to specific genre references. In this sense, intertextuality, whilst connoting both the playfulness of generic transformation, and in Jameson's terms the commodification of experience, is inadequate as a concept to explain metageneric production.

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[113] David Bordwell - *Making Meaning* (Harvard University Press, London and Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1989), pp111-115.

Cawelti defines the cultivation of nostalgia in genre in the following way; "traditional generic features of plot, character, setting and style are deployed to recreate the aura of a past time."[118] However, implicit in this suggestion is the recognition that the past is inflected by both the contemporaneity of style and by other contemporary qualities. *Bonnie and Clyde*, for instance, in connection with its opening credit sequence already mentioned, but also the Mack Sennett style car chases, and the scenes relating to the depression context (particularly the hobo camp), evokes nostalgia in terms of genre and history. The violence of the film, as already discussed, is primarily associated with the conventions of the gangster film, whereas these characteristics are combined with disparate generic elements. However, history is foregrounded, by nostalgia, since the aesthetic representation of the past is not organised solely in terms of authenticity.[119] The production of genre, and generic traits, is clearly changeable, given that it is recontextualised, and the combination of aesthetic conventions relevant to the period depicted in the film, but anachronistic in some ways to the context of production.

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[114] Frederic Jameson *Signatures of the visible*, p83.
[115] John Cawelti '*Chinatown* and generic transformation in recent American films'. Also see Cawelti on generic transformation in his *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde*.
[116] Ibid, p506, 507 and 509 respectively.
[117] Jameson *Signatures of the visible*, p84.

Cawelti's notion of demythologisation, also associated with inversion, involves invoking the characteristics of the traditional genre to show it as inadequate. This might be achieved by inverting certain values associated with the genre, particularly those privileged in connection with the protagonists, or likewise inverting the narrative resolution. Altman's *McCabe and Mrs Miller* (1971), with the demythologisation around Beatty's protagonist, is a clear example. McCabe, despite the legend that precedes him is concerned with leaving frontier violence behind him. His dealings with The Company contrast with the dynamic and violently forceful hero or anti-hero of the Western.[120] Yet this inversion of the generic conventions, and norms, is not simply related to the genre by intertextual relations of contrast, but is also involved in transforming the experience associated with the genre, or blending the genre with elements of Art cinema.

Finally, Cawelti considers "affirmation of myth for its own sake." In this case, the integrity of the genre is maintained, but as in the example of embellishment achieved by vividness, the generic traits will be intensified to demonstrate their production. *Bonnie and Clyde*, in addition to its nostalgic take on the gangster film and its depression setting, and attempts at historical authenticity, also includes narrative references to Bonnie and Clyde as myth. Hence, the newspaper headlines and cuttings, and the ballad of Bonnie and Clyde, as well as elements such as the insert interviews and their own photo taking, demonstrate the significance of the protagonists beyond their own actions, the resonance of their myth as well as their own complicity in its manufacture. Their poses with machine guns and cigars are iconic for the gangster figure whilst remaining faithful to generic conventions of behaviour. Also worth mentioning is the way in which the interactions between Bonnie and Clyde and victims of the depression are invariably associated with the dissemination of their myth, but also presented in a lyrical fashion.

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[118] Cawelti '*Chinatown* and generic transformation in recent American films', p506.

[119] Gerald Mast - *A Short History of the Movies* 3rd Edition (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991) suggests the new American films of the late nineteen sixties and early seventies were concerned with a different kind of authenticity, 'to render the experiential texture of a human event', influenced by the Czech and French new waves, p421.

[120] Ibid. Mast classifies Altman's film amongst the 'new, "experiental" western[s]', which internalise and senusalize the 'previously external and active genre', p421.

Beyond generic referentiality, post-classical Hollywood and the French New Wave are often associated with the use of allusion. As with generic transformation, allusion alters the constitution of the film since it refers to the film's production in the context of film history. As such, allusion is a special case of aestheticization as experience foregrounded in terms of film grammar and the accumulated cinematic horizon of expectations, the available repertoire of styles and images. Again with respect to *Bonnie and Clyde*, the frequent allusion to the outdated Mack Sennett style car chase is achieved by the use of comic music, prefigured by slapstick sequences, and primarily signified by the use of antiquated cars viewed in frantic chase in long shot. The recognition of the allusion corresponds to recognition of the means of scene construction, the use of film grammar in this case through imitation. Allusion might also carry tonal resonance from the context of the alluded scene. Other obtrusive constructions are more evident as deviations than as imitations. Hence, revelatory use of zoom or rack focus in *Bonnie and Clyde* or *The Graduate* doesn't simply progress the narrative by conveying significant information, but in its marked deviation from Hollywood camerawork also draws attention to this expressive act. Bordwell borrows the term 'searching and revealing' zoom to describe camerawork that combines zooms and pans, with 'still tighter zooms' 'reserved for moments of crucial drama'. He suggests this approach to the use of the zoom became 'a significant norm of the 1960s and 1970s.'[121] An instance of revelatory zoom in *Bonnie and Clyde*, coming immediately after a zoom out and rack out have shifted focus in the shot past Bonnie and Clyde to C.W., occurs with a zoom on Clyde's 'sleeping' figure, revealing his open eye. Likewise, a disjunction between the soundtrack and image, whether the sound overlaps of *The Graduate*, or the contrast between the sound of the machine gun fire and the image of balletic slow motion deaths at the end of *Bonnie and Clyde* foregrounds the matching of sound and image.

'Offbeat' is a means of foregrounding aestheticization as experience that relates particularly to the diffusion of French New Wave influence both in Hollywood and also British films in the mid 1960s.[122] Offbeat is primarily characterized by the 'cool' or mannered performances of stars playing quirky characters with unconventional behaviour. Examples of paradigmatic offbeat characters might include Belmondo's Michel in *A bout de soufflé* or Jeanne Moreau in *Jules et Jim* (1962), whose spontaneous and reflexive actions are adopted by later characters. For instance in British films, particularly those of Richard Lester (*Hard Day's Night*, 1964, *The Knack*, 1965), but also others. *Bonnie and Clyde*, and the performances of Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway with their non-realistic representation of the historical figures, maintains this tendency, particularly in the opening scenes. Beyond highly individuated gestures and facial expressions, which are spontaneously quirky, overstated and at times reflexive performances, 'offbeat' also features the use of stylistic devices that correspond to this quality of quirkiness in the characters by breaking the conventions of Hollywood. These devices might function as objective correlatives for the characters thoughts and feelings, or might simply parallel the artifice of their performances. Hence, in the initial scene with Bonnie in *Bonnie and Clyde* the restless camera corresponding to persistent reframing, shift of focus and character movement conveys Bonnie's sense of boredom.

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[121] Bordwell, *History of film style* p249. From Bern Ley 'Zoom lenses' in Rod Ryan (ed.) *American Cinematographer Manual* 7th edition, (ASC Press, Hollywood, 1993), p157.

[122] 'Offbeat' is an indigenous term to criticism of 1960's films, particularly in use by *Variety*, that seems to define a grouping of films incorporating various British films, such as those of Richard Lester, as well as European films by Godard and others. I shall elaborate the use of the term in discussion of recognition of aestheticization in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Mast characterizes the new American cinema in relation to 'the off-beat antihero protagonist', Gerald Mast *A Short History of the Movies* 3rd Edition, p418.

The consistent use of unconventional devices relates to the quality of playfulness as well as 'offbeat' but with certain distinctions that I shall elaborate below.

Playfulness relates to how variation and changeability are utilised. Playfulness is constituted by light-hearted breaking of conventions, that is without marked significance or symbolism. This contrasts with modernist breaks of convention to shock. For instance, in *The Graduate* the use of flash inserts of the naked Mrs Robinson is a singular use of this stylistic device that corresponds to Benjamin's subjective experience. This choice of device, whilst obtrusive, might equally have been substituted by alternative means of conveying his perspective without altering its communicative function. Likewise, there are a succession of dissolves used to segue shots of Benjamin interspersed with the swimming pool within a lengthy montage, and this use of dissolve which does not conform to the conventional construction of a montage might equally have been replaced by some other edit type. An example from *Bonnie and Clyde* is the use of mobile views from the front and rear of the gang's car as they attempt to escape the dawn ambush by a posse. Whilst these are again motivated in relation to subjective views, they are nonetheless used in a fashion marked beyond this with repetition and variation, mobile views both ahead and behind as the car drives forwards and backwards. One last example from *Bonnie and Clyde* is the use of overlap by a mobile close up shot in telephoto used to establish the meeting at the ice cream parlour between Malcolm Moss and Sheriff Hamer. In this instance the frame is filled by out of focus objects in the foreground for much of the opening tracking shot, and only after more than a minute, and an invisible edit, do the conspirators appear in long shot. This obscuring of the action and setting, contravening the norm of establishing shots, serves no specific narrative purpose and might be understood as fathomless or as having no particular significance, despite the stylistic device being pronounced. Playful stylistic devices might be motivated in respect of subjectivity and authorial expression, but in contrast to the norm in art cinema need not necessarily be so. Eclecticism is constituted in relation to the light-hearted adoption, or borrowing, of stylistic devices from a variety of cinematic and historical contexts. Again, the particular choice of adopted style is without marked significance or symbolism, albeit that it varies from the style in the remainder of the film. Both playfulness and eclecticism relate to the light-hearted use of marked stylistic devices, and correspondingly the collapse of traditional artistic hierarchies and historical aesthetic distinctions. Defunct styles might be mixed with the contemporary, those associated with a particular genre recontextualised within any alternative genre. This use of the distinctive in unusual juxtaposition is nonetheless motivated primarily by the aesthetic function rather than the communicative, and more for the purpose of surprise than shock.

Another form of foregrounding aestheticization as experience is the quality of lyricism. I have already touched upon this in relation to the use of myth as myth in the generic transformation found in *Bonnie and Clyde*. As with playfulness, film grammar and 'offbeat', this quality is achieved by a combination of devices throughout the film. Lyricism, as should be evident given the adoption of the term from poetry, relates to the systematic enhancement or prolonging of the sensuous elements of the film, to the detriment of narrative and pace. Again drawing upon my example of the film *Bonnie and Clyde*, lyricism can be related to the homecoming picnic scene, and the preceding wheat field scene, and in a very different way to the slow motion climax. In each instance, the narrative is retarded by the use of devices associated with lyricism which foreground the experience. In this film and elsewhere, the quality of lyricism also relates to the episodic nature of the narrative, and to the prominence of devices such as the dissolve or fade used in favour of the direct cut or cut to black. Lyricism, as with playfulness, corresponds to emphasising the aesthetic function beyond the communicative, and as such incorporates montage sequences and scenes with little dialogue or salient narrative action. In terms of prolonging the action, or at least some scenes or sequences, instances of lyricism markedly display the changeable production of the film, with variation of pace.

One particular variant of lyricism worth distinguishing is the use of ludic or oneiric sequences. These are prolonged subjective sequences that have no narrative or character consequence, whereas other subjective sequences might retard the narrative but communicate character states. Dreamlike sequences might also relate to a category of foregrounding aestheticization by experience through fathomlessness. This might be deemed to foreground the aesthetic function by occluding the communicative function.

This is illustrated by the mimed tennis sequence in *Blow Up* (1966) for instance. Likewise, *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) emphasises the experience, partially through the iterability of its similar sequences which are fathomless in respect of their overall meaning and chronology. Fathomlessness might also be associated with extreme subjectivity, for instance sequences representing liminal or heightened experiences such as religious ecstasy, drug trips or hallucinations due to sleep, water or food deprivation, hypothermia or other physiological states, if these are represented by stylistic devices that have no rational communicative significance.

Two further examples of types of foregrounding aestheticization as experience might be considered as directly opposed. 'Upbeat' relates to sensuous enjoyment without consequence, emphasising the sanitised surface aesthetic that features no disturbing or unattractive elements. Conversely 'abjection' inverts this by emphasising a surface aesthetic that features conventionally debased or ugly elements. Whilst the former might be associated with certain genres, particularly romantic comedies and musicals, the latter is aligned with a tendency in contemporary art cinema, predominantly originating from Eastern Europe and Russia, but also western European art cinema and American Independent film.[123] Certain of the Dogme 95 films have been aligned with abject cinema by critics, particularly *The Idiots* and *Festen*, but they do not entirely conform to this definition. Rather they combine aspects of the abject, specifically in discomforting or caustic moments, with the final form of foregrounding aestheticization through experience.

'Mistakeism' is characterized by marked breaks in convention, particularly contravention of strong conventions that are cemented as norms associated with normal production values rather than aesthetic choices. Hence, in Dogme films the proscription of mistakes such as the inclusion of the cameraman in the image is circumscribed by the emphasis upon spontaneity and freedom from norms advocated by the Dogme manifesto. Similarly, scenes in *Festen* are characterized by filming with very low light levels even where this literally obscures narrative action. However, 'mistakeism', whilst it clearly corresponds to obtrusive aesthetic choices which foreground the changeable and produced nature of the film, predates Dogme. Harmony Korine's *Gummo*, whilst not being a Dogme film is prototypical for Dogme in respect of its mistakeist aesthetic. Furthermore, even within the two Hollywood Renaissance films I have focussed on, *The Graduate* and *Bonnie and Clyde*, there is a mistakeist element, albeit briefly with the overlap edits that show an action twice. These occur in *The Graduate* at two points, a succession of match cuts as Benjamin turns to face the naked Mrs Robinson, and similarly a match cut on Benjamin's reaction to his mother's suggestion to invite the Robinson family to dinner when Benjamin plunges into the pool from his lilo. In *Bonnie and Clyde* an overlap edit features when Clyde plunges twice into the lake during his struggle with Sheriff Hamer.

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[123] See Tony McKibbin 'Transcending the abject' *Vertigo* Issue 9, Summer 1999, and Richard Falcon 'Reality is too shocking' *Sight and Sound* vol. 9, Issue 1, January 1999, as well as Kaleem Aftab and Ian Stewart 'Transgressive Cinema' *Contemporary* no. 51, 2003.

These different means of foregrounding aestheticization are not exhaustive, but illustrate the means of aestheticization as embellishment, animation and experience respectively. Whilst I have provided examples of each, it is necessary to recall that aestheticization is constituted by the systemic and organised foregrounding of the aesthetic function, whether in terms of a look, texture or sensibility. Furthermore, as is implicit through some of my examples, these various means of foregrounding aestheticization, and means of aestheticization, might be combined in one work. It is their systemic combination that constitutes aestheticization of the film itself.[124] However, this suggests that the aesthetic of a given work might not be immediately identifiable, and that aestheticization might not be readily recognizable given its complex nature. The problem of the recognition of aestheticization is significant in relation to the defining characteristics of the aestheticizing function that I previously elaborated. Since the aestheticizing function, like the aesthetic function, is collectively constituted, what counts as aestheticization is determined by some collective recognition. However, as I suggested when I provided this characteristic recognition must occur on some level but is not necessarily explicitly articulated as aestheticization.

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[124] David Bordwell's notion of 'intensified continuity' has some parallels to my conception of aestheticization. He characterises this as "even ordinary scenes are heightened to compel attention and sharpen emotional resonance." Further, his recognition that intensified continuity concentrates on camerawork and editing, neglecting ensemble staging, parallels some critics' reservations about the 'modern' style of the Hollywood Renaissance. See Ian Cameron, Michael Walker, Robin Wood, V.F. Perkins and Jim Hillier, 'The Return of Movie', editorial discussion in *Movie* 20 (1975).

In terms of critical reception there are several factors that might impede the potential recognition of aestheticization. Hence, the aspects of example films that I have associated with various types of foregrounding aestheticization might be deemed distinctive, but the critic might lack suitable vocabulary to explicate or evaluate them. Thus, in the case of *Bonnie and Clyde* for instance, critics might refer to these distinctive elements by means of metaphor and analogy with other arts, as lyrical, painterly, or the like, or in terms of their enhanced affective quality. Additionally, certain ongoing critical tendencies are incompatible with the recognition of aestheticization. Hence, the tendency to focus upon the non-aesthetic elements of a film, particularly the narrative and communicative function, and mimetic correspondence, its realist qualities, de-emphasises the aesthetic function and disregards the maximal focus upon the aesthetic function associated with aestheticization. More significantly the critical heuristic of identifying 'salient' aspects of the work is liable to omit the systemic organisation of aestheticization, except where this fits a preconceived system such as associated with an auteur. This will mean, for instance, that variation or changeability are perceived as inconsistency, and blending as incongruity, as in the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Finally, in addition, the conservative tendency in criticism aligned with the preservation of aesthetic values and aesthetic norms, and particularly the canon, is perhaps potentially incompatible with playfulness and eclecticism in which traditional artistic hierarchies and distinctions are overcome.

Conclusions: Recognizing Aesthetic Innovation

Within the section in this chapter on innovation I emphasised the necessary condition of recognition of innovation. I suggested that recognition of innovation might be articulated, in particular by critical and trade discourses. In addition, I noted that textual evidence of adoption of the innovation, of imitation of the innovative element or quality, would be sufficient to demonstrate that practitioners had recognized the innovation. I also qualified the extent of recognition, conceding that recognition could be limited to the particular sector of the film industry that went on to adopt the novel aspect. Furthermore, I suggested that imitation of the innovation might be accompanied by other features shared with the innovative film, such as creative personnel or elements of the marketing campaign, and this would assist identification of instances of imitation.

In the following chapters I will focus on analysing those discursive acts that evidence recognition of innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and in chapter five consider critical discourses that suggest imitation of *Bonnie and Clyde* by later films. Motivated by a historical reception study approach, I will focus on the way(s) in which the film has been characterised across time. I will also consider how shifts in the characterisation of the film relate to shifts in its critical status. In particular I will emphasise discursive frames that position *Bonnie and Clyde* as aesthetically innovative, and maintain this primary focus on discourses around innovation. By favouring close attention to these discourses, and how the film was characterised at the time, the case study will investigate how innovation came to be recognized, rather than simply imposing an interpretive frame to explain both the element of innovation and its recognition.

I will address textual evidence of imitation of *Bonnie and Clyde* by other films, within chapter five, focussing on Hollywood genre films that feature specific instances of aestheticization. However, there are clearly methodological issues in identifying adoption of an innovation, and its influence, without considering a much wider survey of films. I stress that adoption of an innovation is not dependent upon a relationship of direct influence. Hence I will consider additional evidence that supports the suggestion that specific films have been influenced by *Bonnie and Clyde*. In the section of this chapter on innovation I have addressed the issue of identifying the innovation, whether as a new product, production process or management approach. A conception of innovation that assumes that the aspect of innovation is clear, and that influence can be simply read from an analysis of later films, is certainly problematic. Bearing this in mind, I will relate the specific aesthetic characteristics of various later films to those analysed in respect of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and its subsequent influence on later films will be considered in terms of the aesthetic characteristics shared between *Bonnie and Clyde* and each film, and how these relate to the aesthetic norms and conventions of the time.

I have also suggested the possible need for a parallel innovation of critical vocabulary in order to recognize innovation, and to articulate this recognition. Whilst I will address the possibility of a rupture in critical practice in relation to the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, it is clearly necessary to consider the spectrum of critical practices and vocabularies applied to the film. Where critics foreground particular qualities or aspects of the film, and these are evaluated as distinct or valuable, I will consider how the characterization of these qualities or aspects change in retrospect. In analysing the aesthetic characteristics of *Bonnie and Clyde* I will also address those aspects that are unmentioned by the critics. This opening chapter has explored the notions of innovation in cinema and cinematic aesthetics. I shall now concentrate on the case study of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and consideration of the discourses around innovation.

Chapter 2: Analysing reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*

Introduction to case study on *Bonnie and Clyde*

Whilst chapter one provided a theorisation of the two concepts of innovation and cinema aesthetics, this chapter begins the case study on *Bonnie and Clyde*, focussing attention upon the critical reception of the film at the time of its theatrical release. I will consider the extent to which *Bonnie and Clyde* was considered as innovative, but will analyse reviews more comprehensively to isolate critical tendencies in the synchronic reception in order subsequently to suggest shifts in criticism in the diachronic reception of the film. As previously noted, the thesis focusses primarily on discursive acts that recognize innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but in order to fully analyse these I will consider all the analysed discourses used to characterise the film, particularly those aspects or qualities of *Bonnie and Clyde* that critics privilege in their discourses.

Chapter two will apply two methods of textual analysis to contemporary reviews. The first approach, content analysis, will be used to consider the content of the reviews, what critics discuss about the film and what tropes feature in their characterisation of *Bonnie and Clyde*. This will enable me to isolate tendencies amongst the reviews, grouping reviews according to shared emphases. The second approach, discourse analysis, will be used to consider in more detail how individual critics discuss the film, the organisation of their criticism, the underlying criteria and classificatory schemata they apply in their characterization of the film, and particularly how they characterize the aesthetics of *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, although ultimately I will be concerned with the characterization of the aesthetics of the film, and particularly recognition of aesthetic innovation, I will initially consider the critical characterization of the film more generally. This will be useful in accounting for the way in which critics de-emphasise the aesthetics of the film, whether generally or specifically for *Bonnie and Clyde*, for Hollywood films, or for films of particular genres.

The emphasis upon discourses around aesthetic innovation is informed by the conceptualisation of recognition of innovation and cinema aesthetics in chapter one. I have stressed the discursive articulation of recognition of innovation, and, following Mukarovsky, emphasised how cinema aesthetics and aestheticization are collectively constituted by critical and trade discourses, as well as industry practices. This chapter, as well as much of chapters three and five, will develop a discourse analytic approach to consider the historical critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Content Analysis of synchronic reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*

It is my intention to provide a content analysis of the available contemporary anglophone film criticism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, in order to begin to describe the historical reception of the film, specifically in respect of print media reviews. Content analysis has been succinctly defined as "The objective, systematic and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication".[125] Content analysis classifies, or categorises, the elements of a text. A specific variation of content analysis is theme analysis, which "does not rely on the use of specific words as basic content elements, but relies upon the coder to recognize certain themes or ideas in the text, and then to allocate these to predetermined categories".[126]

Here these given categories are conceptual, and text units or blocks have been allocated to particular categories in the process of analysing (or coding) each unit of analysis (each complete review or fragment). Three modes of content analysis will be deployed, distinguished in terms of how they count text blocks in respect of the categorisation. *Occurrence* analysis simply notes that a category is instanced within a review. *Frequency* analysis counts the number of occurrences within a review, although this presumes that text blocks or units shall be divisible, either by logical bracketing of text units, words or clauses, or by considering shifts of thematic focus within the text, in order to distinguish each occurrence, and attribute it to one category only. *Proportion* analysis considers the number of words to be allocated to each category within the text, and hence the proportion of the review devoted to the category (given here as a fraction or percentage).

These conceptual categories have been determined on the basis of a preliminary analysis of the review material, in order to allow comparisons to be made between the individual reviews for this film. A discourse analysis of individual reviews follows, which enhances the content analysis, providing some justification for the choice of categories in relation to their actualisation and function, within individual reviews. The categories have been selected in order to meet criteria of *simplicity*, and *ordering*, as well as encompassing *exhaustivity* and *exclusivity*, and such that some categories will be considered as subcategories of yet others (where instances of these categories logically comprise a subset of instances of the initial category). Simplicity is privileged since content analysis is a literal mode of analysis. Categories have been designed to be exhaustive and exclusive in order to avoid ambiguity in the coding process. However, further analysis of the reviews will problematize this criterion on the basis that it presumes a bipolar logical relation between concepts that is not consistent with pragmatic logico-semantic text relations. Oppositional categories are used within individual reviews to describe distinct elements of the film. Hence, whilst one concept might be associated with one element of the film, its antonym might be associated with other elements. Furthermore, antonymic couplets might be used dialectically, qualifying or deconstructing one term in relation to its other.

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[125] Bernard Berelson 'Content Analysis in Communication Research' (1999) reprinted in Paul Marris and Sue Thorndean (eds.) *Media Studies: A Reader* (New York University Press, New York, 2000) pp200-209, specifically p204.

[126] David Deacon, Michael Pickering and Peter Golding - *Researching Communications: A Practical Guide to Methods in media and cultural analysis* (Arnold, London, 1999), p118.

Content analysis describes the 'what' of the content of discourse, whereas discourse analysis describes the 'how'; that is to say, how concepts are articulated and organised within an individual text. However, in both types of analysis it is important to be wary of essentializing through generalisation. The simple, ordered categories used in content analysis risk reducing the variety of articulations to be found across reviews. In essence, the ordering of categories in the design of the content analysis might determine the identification of similarity or repetition where this homogeneity does not provide an adequate description of the relations of individual review texts. Taking the example of the category 'realism', this might be evidenced in reviews in a variety of ways, in terms of credibility, authenticity, verisimilitude or anti-realist devices. All these instances make use of synonyms for realism, and draw upon the semantic field of 'realism', but they might be more usefully distinguished in the analysis. However, categorisation functions as a means for grouping the review texts, in terms of those which collocate particular categories, and this grouping should inform the later discourse analysis in attempting to characterize the way an individual text, or group of texts, organises (categorically) associated concepts. Content analysis is taxonomic, though imaginary; that is to say, classifying according to the analyst's categories rather than categories explicitly defined by the reviews. It enables comparison of multiple texts by means of providing a model of each of these texts that can in turn be compared. This model is a substitute for the more complex originating texts, but at least in respect of the categories of the content analysis, and any inherent deficiencies in these, it adequately stands in for the unit of analysis. This latter point indicates the importance placed on the choice or definition of the categories of the content analysis, since content analysis only allows approximate comparison of the units of analysis in respect of the categories. The content analysis cannot say/show or be interpreted as saying anything else about the reviews.

My aim in providing a content analysis of reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* is to begin to describe the historical reception of the film, specifically in respect of print media reviews. I shall return to the concept of reception elsewhere in this thesis, particularly in chapter three. However, at this point I might simply equate the reception with the totality of responses of viewers of the film at specific junctures in history. Primacy will be given to the response at the time of theatrical release. Reception studies consider the extent to which these responses are describable, or else that the 'trace' of these many events can be considered in combination, constituting a singular, imaginary, reception 'event'. I am already qualifying my content analysis of these print reviews as having greater bearing on their own delimited field, recorded/print/mediated critical receptions of the film. However, I am also considering these critical receptions as having some metonymic relation with the wider 'historical reception', and a homological relation with other individualised receptions. The nature and status of this metonymic relation will be briefly considered within the conclusions of chapter three, with recourse to theories of diffusion, political economy, and contingency, as well as consideration of the nature of discourse, of the 'social', and an ontology of thought which is presupposed by my epistemology. In seeking to characterize the critical reception of the film, I am at once trying to characterize the institution of criticism, historically specific and reducible in the case study to less than fifty writers, and also the engagement of the institution with this particular film. I am not attempting to provide a characterisation, or especially not an interpretation or evaluation, of the film itself. In a similar fashion to Janet Staiger, in *Interpreting Films*, I am aiming to describe tendencies or trends in criticism, although not restricted to trends in interpretative practices, by providing snap-shots of critical practice.[127] However, I am describing how the reviews engage with this particular film as being aesthetically innovative. This perspective implicates the study with an overriding, evaluative, critical position upon the film; i.e. the presumption that the film is significantly innovative. I shall attempt to justify this focus on innovation in respect of my hypothesis two below, but for now I shall simply stress that

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[127] Janet Staiger *Interpreting Films*. See especially pp79-95 on a Historical Materialist Approach to Reception Studies, considering critical receptions of *Rear Window*.

Bonnie and Clyde is not intended as the object of my study. Instead my interest is the practices of reception, and particularly the recognition of innovation, in discourse, as evidenced in reviews. I am concerned with changes of the language(s) of criticism (in its widest sense as practised by every filmgoer), and how these relate to changes or stability in the practices of criticism. Furthermore I am keen to identify any possible correlation or correspondence between changes of critical practice and changes in the films themselves. Already I am reducing reception to criticism, to an engagement with the film by means of discourse/language, and I must be wary of such reductions, and consider the scope of the concept of reception in its plurality, yet my emphasis here corresponds to my informing aim of considering 'films in language', and only subsequently 'films beyond language'. These are what I might more conventionally simplify by reference to the terms *criticism* and *affect* at this stage.[128]

My content analysis of contemporary reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* takes as its point of departure my initial hypothesis one.

Hypothesis one

> A content analysis of synchronic reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* will find that the primary content, that is the greater proportion of each review, will be descriptive, recounting plot, describing scenes, imagery and performances. Most reviews will be similar in this respect. Additionally, reviews will also include anecdotal material, concerning the production history, or recounting the careers of the production personnel, and so on. This will commonly comprise a significant proportion of each text. Content analysis, however, will reveal two general tendencies of criticism. The first is associated with thematic focus, concentrating on narrative content, particularly violence in the film, and providing a negative evaluation, according to moral/humanist criteria. The second, oppositional tendency will be associated with a concentration on style, providing a positive evaluation, and possibly extending to recognition of creativity or even innovation. This tendency will be associated with excusing or mitigating the violence in the

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[128] Staiger introduces the issue of affect in *Interpreting Films* but also engages with it in Staiger *Perverse Spectators: the practices of film reception* (New York University Press, New York and London, 2000), pp51-54.

film. Content analysis (occurrence, frequency and proportion based) should distinguish critical thematic concerns of both tendencies.[129]

Corollary one

Case studies will reveal similar patterns with other innovative films. Content analysis, whilst inadequate for accounting for the contestation of terms and value, can reveal sites of contestation, such as violence in the two proposed tendencies in reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Content analysis does not sufficiently consider tone, context or discourse structure and so is inadequate for description of this contestation. (*Bonnie and Clyde* will prove exemplary in this respect)

Further, an extension of this corollary provides a second hypothesis.

Hypothesis two

Aesthetic innovation is dependent on critical recognition and articulation. Innovations in the language of criticism, and wider vocabulary of discourse upon film, will tend, therefore, to parallel aesthetic innovations. Discourse analysis or thematic analysis should reveal changes in vocabulary.

This hypothesis is an application of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of language to the problem of innovation. This is a language centred constructivist theory, which posits that reality, or more weakly the perception of reality, is determined by language.

Two further hypotheses, also external to the case study on *Bonnie and Clyde*, demonstrate the scope of the thesis.

Hypothesis three

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[129] Brian Winston 'On counting the wrong things' chapter iv in Manuel Alvarado and John O. Thompson (eds.) *The Media Reader*, suggests the difficulty of distinguishing between 'favourable' and 'unfavourable' when assigning elements of the data set in content analysis, p59.

Individual filmgoer's have contingent identities/tastes, most apparent in their vocabularies – their ways of thinking/seeing films. But the wider media discourse, including review criticism, is in some way formative of this vocabulary, performing some kind of agenda-setting function, that is providing the words of description/evaluation, i.e. criticism.

Hypothesis four

This relation of reviews and individual tastes, i.e. taste publics, can be considered in terms of political economy or some other model of consumption (such as that provided by cultural anthropology, cultural studies, or a sociology of taste). Tastes are not solely determined by social factors/categories, i.e. race, class, sex, and age. However, as Bourdieu has suggested these factors are relevant to the formation of individual tastes. Hence, we can characterize innovation/change in tastes, acceptance of the new, and diffusion of acceptance of the new. The diffusion model of language change will suitably account for taste/vocabulary change, although a model of consumption will consider motives and vectors of change/diffusion.

The key problem of this thesis, exemplified by these last two hypotheses, is that rather than suggesting these hypotheses are transhistorical, I would ideally test each hypothesis in various case studies. However, we do not have a record of individual tastes, so a retrospective empirical approach is impossible. Hence, as a historical reception study, we must reconstruct, or speculate on the construction of, individual tastes on the basis of those available traces, including legitimated written material such as reviews but also including letters to editors in response to reviews, and so on. In my consideration of the 'Crowther Controversy' I will include analysis of the *New York Times* 'Movie Mailbag' pertaining to *Bonnie and Clyde.* I will also address the problems of extrapolating from this small sample of traces. These will be considered in terms of providing a spectrum of possible receptions rather than necessarily being representative of wider receptions. However, in conjunction with my analysis of reviews, and the responses to Crowther found in other critic's reviews, I will on speculate the metonymic relation between the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde* amongst critics and these letter writers, and the wider public reception.[130]

Upon beginning the content analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde* it became clear that my initial hypothesis one was far too simplistic and did not account for the diversity of reviews, the diversity of critical practices that should be differentiated from the diversity of institutional contexts of the reviews. An amended hypothesis one follows:

Hypothesis one (mark two)

> A content analysis of synchronic reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* will enable a distinction to be made between those reviews that recognize some innovation in the film and those that are either dismissive or less laudatory or qualified in their evaluation. These groupings of reviews might be characterized in terms of their critical thematic concerns, in order to recognize difference and similarity, and in order to further speculate on tendencies/trends in critical practice. Reviews will be characterized in terms of their shared thematic concerns and omissions or exclusions.
>
> Content analysis will show reviews to be mostly similar in privileging descriptive content, recounting plot, describing imagery, scenes and performances, as well as in including anecdotal material concerning production history, production personnel, and some relations of the film with the 'real' world/history. Differences will be located rather in what some reviews exclude, including explicit definition of film style, comparison of the film with films of specific genres or the French New Wave, or attention to realism, or differences of emphasis of these and other categories/contents.

The content analysis of reviews involved coding individual reviews and recording coding results as well as additional contextual information for each review such as review source

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[130] I will also return to the issue of different kinds and degrees of response, particularly in terms of the notion of investment. This is suggested by Martin Barker and Kate Brooks in *Knowing Audiences: Judge Dredd, its friends, fans and foes* (University of Luton Press, Luton, 1998), p232.

(publication), date, writer (if given), word length, and whether the review was, or appeared, complete or only a fragment was available. Additionally production personnel named explicitly in the body of each review were noted.

Sources of reviews for content analysis, with analysed word length noted (*indicates extract only):

1. *The Spectator* 15/9/67 (1018)
2. *The Guardian* 19/9/67 (188)
3. *The Listener* 21/9/67 (262)
4. *Evening Standard* 21/9/67 (203)
5. *New Statesmen* 22/9/67 (581)
6. *The Sun* 5/9/67 (415)
7. *The Times* 7/9/67 (435*)
8. *The Observer* 10/9/67 (454)
9. *The People* 10/9/67 (198)
10. *Sunday Telegraph* 10/9/67 (684)
11. *Sunday Times* 10/9/67 (413)
12. *The Listener* 14/9/67 (797)
13. *Financial Times* 15/9/67 (604)
14. *Daily Mail* 5/10/67 (844)
15. *The Observer*8/10/67 (397)
16. *Saturday Review* 5/8/67 (586)
17. *The Village Voice* 24/8/67 (594)
18. *Time* 25/8/67 (333)
19. *Daily Express* 6/9/67 (352)
20. *Evening Standard* 7/9/67 (685)
21. *The Guardian* 8/9/67 (430)
22. *Daily Telegraph* 8/9/67 (225)
23. *Morning Star* 9/9/67 (597)
24. *Sunday Express* 10/9/67 (957)
25. *Queens Journal* 24/11/67 (1384)
26. *International Playmen* 1968 [8/10/68?] (2280)
27. *Vogue* 9/67 (236*)

28. *Monthly Film Bulletin* October 1967 (866)
29. *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967 (980)
30. *Kinematograph Weekly* 9/9/67 (332*)
31. *Variety* 9/8/67 (551)
32. *Sight and Sound* Winter 67/68 (1129*)
33. *New Yorker* 21/10/1967 (8730)
34. *New York Times* 7/8/67 (480)
35. *New York Times* 14/8/67 (424)
36. *New York Times* 3/9/67 (1192)
37. *Time* 8/12/67 (2484*)
38. *Newsweek* 21/8/67 (378)
39. *Newsweek* 28/8/67 (1119)
40. *The Village Voice* 31/8/67 (386)

The coding considered 23 categories, as follows:

1. Realist
2. Genre
3. Style
4. Naturalist
5. Transcends (genre)
6. Filmic content
7. Original
8. Sophisticated
9. Violence
10. Brilliant
11. Visionary
12. Lyrical
13. Consistent
14. Painter(ly)
15. Contemporary
16. Inconsistent
17. Classical
18. Anachronism

19. French New Wave
20. Aimless
21. New
22. Godard [and other filmmakers or films of the French New Wave]
23. Anecdote.

Elaborations of these conceptual categories follow, since as previously stated the analysis was thematic and based predominantly on the inclusion of synonyms. Hence I list the acceptable synonyms for each category. Thematic analysis of this kind suffers from the weakness of synonym, that synonyms do not mean the same as each other, do not have identical meaning, and choices of synonyms always evidence a differentiation between words from the available vocabulary, so the equivalence of synonyms taken across disparate reviews denies the essential difference of the reviews. However, it is to be presumed throughout this study that repetition does not equate identity, that is that the use of the exact same word in different contexts, different texts, does not have a single meaning, or single range of meanings/conditions of possibility, but that conversely these words have only partial equivalence, that is a relation of synonymy. As the analysis continued these synonyms already encountered were listed for each category to safeguard consistency in the coding practice, as well as to account for the variety of synonyms recognized. Although, as previously noted, certain pairs of categories are antonyms, and were expected to occur exclusively, other categories feature only in a positive sense, for instance realism and originality, with non-realism, say, or unoriginality, not warranting a category. This has been justified by the focus of the analysis, considering foremost description of the film as original or innovative, and highlighting those other conceptual configurations, or semantic fields, expected to supplement or elaborate any such description, i.e. original implies brilliant and sophisticated. The success of this choice of categories seems to have been attested intuitively during the coding process, since for the most part the negative derivatives of these categories appear largely redundant. Reviewers do not characterize the film in terms of an antonym for brilliance, they simply avoid the semantic field of brilliance. However, the problematic nature of this choice of categories, in addition to other weaknesses of the analysis, will be developed below. For example, in the example of realism we find a term subject to contestation, which is value laden to different effect in diverse reviews, and which this analysis does not fully account for when instances of dismissal of any supposed realism of the film occur, negative references to realism. Considering all possible oppositional categories such as non-realism or anti-realism might have enabled a clearer measure of the (quantitative) weight/significance of any contestations around the film. Similarly, the content analysis based around my categories does not account for reflexive contestation, such as when reviewers mention and dismiss the characterisations of each other. Hence, particularly in the case of Bosley Crowther, other reviews might mobilise semantic fields within implicit or explicit reference to his review, that is not as part of their critical framework but reporting his critical criteria. These reflexive mobilisations of categories alternatively reveal the emphases or focus of contestation.

Categories / Content framework

Realist - realism used as a mode of representation, also historical accuracy or authenticity. Includes: reconstruction, 'grass roots (evocation)', real, literal, authentic, exact, existed, documentary, 'nothing contrived', document, actuality, accurate, factual, 'real life', recreation, reality, 'sense of time and place', believable, fidelity.
Does not include any instance of opposite, i.e. unrealistic, nor any partial synonyms for this i.e. fantasy, make believe etc.

Genre - generic categories of film mentioned, or the term genre used.
Includes: thriller, 'gangster film', comedy, 'film noir', (mention of *Little Caesar* (1931), *Public Enemy* (1931), *Scarface* (1932), indicating gangster films), '(folk) tragedy', drama, 'love story', crime, biopic, farce, 'shoot-em-up film', slapstick.
Does not include 'violent film' as a generic definition, or for instance certain mentions of horror, or comedy, describing elements of the film, or modes, rather than genre, as interpreted from the context.

Style - the cinematic - formal aspects of the film, or the term 'style' used, or specific or technical descriptions of elements of style, or stylisation included.
Includes mentions of: slow-motion, aesthetic (values), editing, imagery, focus, colour, direction, photography, camera work, filters, acting/characterisation (where not considered in terms of some other category, but as it were stylistically), tone, form, mood, technical, close-ups, technical effects, fabrication, esthetic, technicolour, dramatic irony, dialogue (colloquial).

Clearly this category has been used expansively, taking descriptions or synonyms of style, technique, form, mood and tone as being relevant to style. This category, both in this sense, and due to the importance of the category in the overall analysis, and the thesis, in considering 'aesthetic' or 'stylistic' innovation, in the film, but also as characterized in trends or tendencies in reviewing, is particularly problematic. However, the poverty of stylistic description or classification within the reviews, even using this extensive/inclusive understanding, is suitably accounted for in the analysis. This finding of the analysis leads to the contradiction of my initial hypothesis one. Style is primarily described in the act of describing content, not reflectively or explicitly.

Naturalist - considered as a distinct subcategory of realism.
Includes: 'natural background', naturalism.

Transcends genre - includes any synonym for transcending or exceeding where related directly to genre, or implicitly by means of a dialectic X as well as Y.
Includes: 'as well as', 'lifts out of (conventional)', elevate, distinction.
Again, this category functions akin to a distinct subcategory of genre.

Filmic Content -This is one of the two default categories, along with anecdote, which is used to account for elements of the reviews not included in any other category. Principally it is concerned with any such material organising description or evaluation at the filmic level, and story level, as opposed to narrativization of elements outside the film, such as production or reception history. Hence, it incorporates, for instance, description of plot and story, themes, description of characters and acting, non-specific description and evaluation, including any instance of the converse categories only included in their positive sense, i.e. unrealism, unoriginal etc.

Original/Innovative - any synonym for innovation or originality suggesting singularity or at least exceptionality.
Includes: unexpected, individual, 'oblique vision', unprecedented, extraordinary, remarkable, original, 'never like this', originality, bizarre, inexplicable, unusual, fascinating, incredible, audacious, strange, challenging, unorthodox, creative, genius, inventive, watershed, interesting.

Extraordinary bridges this category and the category of Brilliant - hence Original is construed as markedly different, by kind, from other films, whereas Brilliant is different by degrees, taken as simply a superlative. Also, certain phrases are included in this category, or as another example in the category Violence, where nominalizing the phrase produces a synonym, i.e. 'never-like-this-ness'.

Sophisticated - Includes: sophisticated, playful, and subtle.

Violence - synonyms for violence in description of film, and descriptions of acts of violence in the film, and metonymic effective elements such as blood, gunfire.
Includes: slaughters, killings, horror, gun(s), dies, blood(il)y, blinded, 'bullets thud', 'cold[est] blood', murder(s), 'trail of death', rapine, butchering, blood-boitered, grisly, gunfight, death(s), 'fill with bullets', 'shot up', 'machine-gunned', riddled, 'bullets fly', 'blood flows', 'bodies crumple', 'literal "dead end"', mayhem, robbery, sadism, 'bloody (scenes)', 'swings at with a meat cleaver', 'trail of victims', 'mowing down', shoots, battle, murderous, atrocity, sordidness, 'peppered with bullets', crossfire, 'bullet spattered', shocking, 'rough stuff', 'ragdoll dance of death', shootings, carnage, shoot-em, '(bodies) perforated', bloodbath, 'strong meat'

Excludes anecdotal discussion of violence in history, in reality, or around censorship, or effect of violence in film upon audience beyond immediate shock, as well as other reviewer's responses to violence, particularly Bosley Crowther.
Different registers, and orders of description of violence problematize this category, such as abstracted or specific accounts of acts of violence, but rather than distinguishing within the content analysis, grouping these is opted for since it might suggest the extent of contestation around this term, or semantic field, throughout and across the reviews.

Brilliant/Dazzling/ Extraordinary - characterisations of exceptional quality, by degrees rather than kind, with emphasis on synonyms around semantic field of brightness/the visually arresting.
Includes: 'zest (for film making)', brilliant(ly), dazzling(ly), immaculately, perfectly, stunning, superbly, great, 'sheer brio', 'uncanny skill', 'astonishingly good', riveting, 'most

significant', fascinating, magnificent, perfections, excellent, ultimate, 'could hardly have been bettered'.

Visionary - as above, in the particular sense of vision, or insight.
Includes: an insight, a vision.
This is a largely redundant category, retained, however, due to its relevance for certain romantic conceptions of the artist, cf. auteurism, and conflation of the fields of originality, brilliance, and realism (authenticity), and relation to Painter/Painterly category as elaborated in discussion of interpretation of analysis.

Lyrical/Poetic - analogy of poetry, or verse/song form, used.
Includes: poetic, 'rhythm ... of a blues', poetry, 'elegiac ballad', lyrical, ballad, lyricism.
Excludes anecdotal mention of ballad, Bonnie's poetry in the film and real life.

Consistent/Even - suggesting unity or balance, or else focus/centring, in the form/style of the film.
Includes: fluid, 'even(-tempered)', 'steering a perfect course between', 'contained...does not exceed ...(emotional)...limits', 'delicate balance', '100 per cent certain', 'ambiguity at centre of the film pinpointed by frequent changes of mood' [*see below], 'a logic in it', 'in keeping', 'form that holds all elements together', modulated, 'shift imperceptible', 'drives unerringly', sustained, coherent, 'artistic whole'.

Oppositional to Inconsistent. In one instance *, ambiguity was classed as consistent since this 'inconsistency' is consistent, or centred. This perhaps highlights the contested nature of the use of this (ostensibly) oppositional pair of categories.

Painter(ly)/Painters - description as like painting, or with imagistic/composition focus, or comparison with type or element of painting (as metonym), or reference to painters/paintings.
Includes: 'beautiful to look at', Francis Bacon, '(against colourful) backgrounds', landscape, '(primitive) canvases', 'colour compositions', 'clarity of colour and line', paintings, Winslow Homer, Renoir, '(wan as) Ophelia', illustration, Andrew Wyeth, pointillist.

Contemporary/Contemporaneity - concerning relationship, or relevance, of film or story to historical moment of production/reception, or particular perspective/approach of film to its historical plot material, and characterisation of moment.
Includes: immediate, modern, 'swingingest', 'offers what gurus and Flower People offer', 'current attitudes', contemporary, 'pop art'**, 'sixties look'.

**Pop art was interpreted as primarily marking a contemporary mode rather than an artistic mode, within this particular context.

Inconsistent/Uneven/Jarring/Incongruity - oppositional to Consistent, suggesting disunity, imbalance, or incongruity within form, but excluding implausibility or un-credibility.
Includes: joltingly, 'less than equivocal', farcical, oscillates, 'a thing of parts', 'on brink of burlesque', 'rides off in all directions', 'full of holes', 'happily grotesque', incongruously, conflicting, inconsistent, inconsistency, 'lacks consistency', uneven, jarring, 'out of tune', 'isn't consistent', 'helter-skelter fashion', erratic, muddle, 'doesn't jel'.
Again, in some examples, interpretation based on the specific context of the phrase was necessary to allocate it to this category.

Classical - cf. art of especially Hollywood, as traditional, old, established.
Includes: 'middle-aged (Hollywood)', 'old-style (Hollywood)', 'Burnett Guffey, who was already winning Oscars ... in the early 1930's', 'old Hollywood (hand)', accomplished, 'old-time Hollywood'.
Oppositional to New (Hollywood), and to a lesser degree to French New Wave. Note this trope in reviews is often organised around the figure of Burnett Guffey, the experienced cinematographer of *Bonnie and Clyde.*

Anachronism - a disparity between some aspect of the film and the contemporary, not mitigated by, or incongruous with, its representation of (historical) period. Overlaps and exceeds the concept of historical inauthenticity, and is oppositional to Contemporary.
Includes: 'old fashioned', 'both ... turning over fading newspaper files ... and ... watching something alive and immediate', '[don't] accept [Bonnie] as a 30's woman', (Beatty) not history's Barrow', dated, '(Dunaway's) style and acting are sixties', antedates, antique.

The non-exclusivity of Contemporary and Anachronism suggests the way reviews organise these contested tropes. Those instances where these tropes have been used explicitly in a dialectical synthesis, deconstructing the negative implications of Anachronism have been omitted from this category, i.e. 'modern, and impeccably true to its period'.

French New Wave - explicit mention of (French) New Wave as a movement or style (and influence on *Bonnie and Clyde*). (These are distinguished from the subcategory which makes implicit reference by association through mentioning New Wave directors, Godard and so on.)
Includes: 'new wave', 'New Wave', 'French New Wave', 'European New Wave', 'Nouvelle Vague'.
Excludes 'new' without 'wave', or new qualified as American, and more general reference to European or Art cinema.

Aimless/Lacking message/Lacking moral
Includes: 'neither moral nor immoral nor even amoral', '(mawkish) non-message', '[writers don't] make clear their own attitudes [to Bonnie and Clyde]', purposeless, '(tasteless) aimlessness', idiocy, 'lacks all sense of guilt', pointless, 'lacking in taste', 'makes no valid commentary'.

New - oppositional to Classical Hollywood, recent or current or burgeoning (Hollywood).
Includes: 'Current American cinema', '(to come out of) Hollywood in the last decade or so', 'new (approach to moviemaking in America)', '(director) of 60's', 'establish[ing] (themselves)', 'new (style)', 'new (trend)'.
Excludes New Wave, as above, and no reviews in sample explicitly situate *Bonnie and Clyde* in American New Wave, although this is implicit in Pauline Kael by her stressing an American equivalent or correlative to French New Wave.

Godard [and so on] - Implicit reference to French New Wave by association, made in mentioning specific filmmakers or films.
Includes: ‘Jean Luc Godard’, Godard, ‘Bande A Part’, Godard's, ‘Pierrot le Fou’, Truffaut, Truffaut's, ‘Shoot the Piano Player’, Breathless, ‘Band of Outsiders’, ‘Jules et Jim’, ‘Jules and Jim’, Francois Truffaut.

Anecdote/History - the second default category incorporating material superfluous to other categories and concerned with subject outside the film, including production history, 'real' historical accounts of Bonnie and Clyde, reception history, cinematic history, critical history (of *Bonnie and Clyde* and of films in general), censorship history, or any 'essay' material not directly related to the film. It proves difficult sometimes to distinguish historical anecdote and film content description wherein reviews do not mark the distinction, conflating discussion of the 'real' Bonnie and Clyde and the movie characters, even to the extent of beginning a paragraph, or sentence, with the historical character as subject, and finishing with the fictional, or vice versa.

One of the key problems with using these two default categories of Filmic Content and Anecdote is that it has a determinate effect upon the key findings of the content analysis, namely that reviews comprise mostly one or both of these contents. It is arguable how useful this analysis is in characterising the reviews, or whether this finding is simply characteristic of the content analysis, and choice of categories. However, this qualification of the use of the content analysis is balanced by the strength of the analysis in accounting for nearly all the material in each review. The default categories are clearly logically dissimilar to all the other categories. Hence, each is insufficiently defined since they are understood negatively, as being other to the more precise categories. However, without accounting for the content which does not fit the other categories it would be tempting to overstress the significance of any or all of the other categories, qualitatively and quantitatively, and ignore, for instance, the paucity of reference to style in the reviews of the film, or even to genre.

Tabulation

As previously stated, content has been analysed or coded in three ways: occurrence, frequency and proportion. In the process of tabulating the coding the proportional analysis has been privileged since it standardises the units of analysis, the reviews, by considering percentile content, and hence compensates for some differences due to divergent word lengths of reviews. The importance of this is clear from considering the equivalence of Pauline Kael's 8800 word review article and Richard Roud's 180 word preview. These texts are primarily dissimilar except in superficial subject matter, due to differences in form and context. Whether they become equivalent once standardised remains debateable.

Consideration of occurrence, by simply finding the sum total of reviews which feature any particular category, is useful in characterising the predominantly redundant categories, and conversely those common or omnipresent. Similarly, calculating the mean and mode of frequency for any category across the body of reviews provides an alternative indicator of the wider significance of the category to reviews. Amongst the twenty three categories the default categories of Filmic Content and Anecdote are omnipresent (largely by design), as is the category of Violence. The discourse analysis of selected reviews will investigate the extent and means by which this concept dominates the reviews, organising or providing specific discursive approaches to the film. Within the remaining categories it is possible to distinguish the common and elusive/esoteric, although these constitute a continuum rather than distinct classes, those common being (number of occurrences follow in parentheses): Genre (28), Realist (26), Brilliant (21), Original (19), Style (18), Consistent (14), Lyrical (11), Contemporary (10), Painter (9). Elusive categories comprise: Inconsistent (7), New (6), Anachronism (5), Aimless (5), Classical (5), French New Wave (5), Godard (4), Transcendent (4), Naturalism (2), Sophisticated (2), and Visionary (2). It is worth noting that amongst those occurring least often are those categories which constitute distinct subcategories of common categories (Naturalism, Transcendent), and two complementary categories (French New Wave, Godard). Observing the mean and mode of frequency for each category reveals little else - all categories except those omnipresent have modal frequency zero, and the most common categories of Genre and Realism are distinguished with mean frequencies greater than one. Interestingly the category Inconsistent has higher mean frequency than Consistent, and similarly Godard features on average more frequently than French New Wave. Also Style occurs on average more frequently than Brilliant or Original. This might indicate a weakness of both occurrence and frequency analysis - neither fully accounts for the tendency to list items in the review format, whether motivated by formal or rhetorical interests. Hence, aspects of Style, as per my definition, are liable to be listed within text blocks of respective reviews centring on the style and content of the film. Similarly, inconsistency, as opposed to consistency, requires provision of examples to prove rhetorical saliency, whilst the Godard category, including names of films and filmmakers, is similarly more suitable for listing than French New Wave.

Hence, the use of occurrence and frequency analysis would seem valuable in so far as they provide a preliminary characterisation of the deployment of categories within the reviews. But for a more textured descriptive model I will emphasise the proportional analysis, which also compensates to some extent for difference of word length amongst the reviews. Standardisation also enables statistical analysis of correlations between different categories, although I shall consider further the applicability of correlation analysis to the content analysis.

I have tabulated content proportion as columns for each category and row (review). I have also included two additional columns, namely a default composite incorporating the sum of the Filmic Content and Anecdote categories, and a sum totalling the 23 categories. I have used these to check my figures since they are indicative of rounding errors introduced by rounding to one decimal place in every instance. Initially I have also calculated the mean, range, and standard deviation proportion for each category. The purpose of considering these descriptive statistics is principally to evaluate the extent of variation or dispersion for each category, that is the diversity of the reviews with respect to specific categories. This is a simple measure of the diversity of the reviews which is supplemented by further descriptive statistical analysis, Pearson's correlation analysis.[131]

In considering the tabulations in light of the simple descriptive statistics I have confirmed the predominance of the Filmic Content and Anecdote categories, and secondary importance of the Violence category that was suggested by the occurrence and frequency results. Apart from these three, all other categories evidence range and standard deviation in excess of mean, often with range of distinctly greater order of magnitude, which confirms to skewed (towards zero) distribution for each category across the reviews (congruent with their infrequency). With Filmic Content, Anecdote and Violence a normal distribution is more closely approximated. Filmic Content and Anecdote occur in similar proportions on average, although there is more variation of Anecdote, whilst the composite of these categories has much reduced deviation. This conforms to a complementary relationship between the two categories. Immediately it is possible to suggest that this relationship might correspond to an inverse correlation, such that reviews might be characterized by their preference for Filmic Content, or Anecdote, or by their moderate balance of both categories. The correlation analysis will substantiate this.

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[131] Pearson's correlation analysis is a widely accepted descriptive statistical analysis, used in scientific and social-scientific studies. See next note.

Other immediate or notable findings from the tabulation bear on the exclusivity of categories. The logically exclusive categories of Consistent and Inconsistent were found to be completely exclusive, whereas Contemporary and Anachronism were found not exclusive, being collocated or co-occurring in three reviews. Although not strictly logically exclusive, the categories of Lyrical and Painter were found to be predominantly exclusive. This suggests a potential division of the reviews in order to consider discrete tendencies within the survey. I elaborate upon this distinction in discussing the correlation analysis. Similarly, an opposition could be discerned between Consistent and Aimless, which were mutually exclusive, which is explainable by their loose antonymic relation (at least as defined for the purpose of the analysis). However, Inconsistent largely had a similar opposition with Aimless, being exclusive except for one co-occurrence. The Classical and New categories are exclusive, except for the review in which each featured to their greatest extent, whereas Visionary was collocated with the Painter category in every occurrence, suggesting some semantic association. Similarly, Transcendent was co-occurring with Genre, conforming with its subordinate relation, whilst, however, Naturalism did not collocate with Realism, problematizing its logical subordination.

These immediate findings proceeding from the tabulation do little to develop the characterisation of tendencies amongst the reviews. Primarily they suggest two possible distinctions that warrant further investigation. The first distinction is that between Filmic Content and Anecdote directed reviews. The second distinction is that between lyrical and painterly (metaphorically) formulated reviews. In order to both investigate these and to look for patterns within the model of reviews provided by the content analysis I have used further statistical analysis to consider correlations of the categories. In identifying patterns, repeated relations or correlations between the categories across some or all of the survey of reviews, we are isolating patterns in the model that might correspond to tendencies which we can hypothesise amongst the reviews themselves. We might, more simply, discern tendencies in a symptomatic fashion, and quote material from the reviews to support such hypothesised tendencies, yet the correlation analysis might uncover unexpected tendencies, through patterns. There is a presumption in applying the correlation analysis that reviews, or tendencies within the reviews, will associate certain categories of content, whilst disassociating others. Hence, the reviewer will have available a repertoire or menu of discourses, arranged by category or semantic field, from which will be selected appropriate/complementary review material. Again, this is presuming that although the reviews display diversity the analysis will isolate similarity, not simply in the overall available categories of review content, but in selection from this. Clearly the logical looseness of the default categories problematizes any such recognition of similarity on the basis of reviews focus on Anecdote and Filmic Content, and the shared elision of the more particular categories. However, I will consider the validity of the findings of the correlation in due course.

Correlation is a measure of the interaction or relation between different variables. "Correlation suggests two factors increasing or decreasing together".[132] "Correlation coefficients provide an indication of the nature and strength of a relation between two sets of values." Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, which I use, measures the extent to which an increase of a certain number of units in one variable is associated with "an increase *of a related number of units* in the other".[133] However, these relations of the variables simply refer to the model of the reviews that the proportion analysis has provided. Any such relations indicated will suggest investigation in the reviews, but might also be artefacts of either the design of the content analysis and/or the statistics. The clearest example is the relation suggested between Filmic Content and Anecdote. As previously noted our other descriptive statistics have suggested a possible inverse correlation between these two categories, and the correlation analysis confirms this with $r= -0.868$ ($p=0.000$), a strong negative relation with significant probability. This relation is markedly a product of the design of the content analysis and the application of correlation analysis to these results. Since all the categories are exhaustive and exclusive, and these categories encompass the majority of the content, one might readily presume an increase in one will result in a decrease in the other, and conversely. To be more confident of such a relation applying to the reviews, wherein the reviewers choose how they balance description of the film and anecdotal material, we would require considering the reviews in respect of more logically precise definitions. A combined content analysis and discourse analysis of a survey of reviews might corroborate this, considering the different functions of reviews, in terms of criticism and news. Alternatively, I might have defined my survey of reviews to exclude those which were dominated by anecdote, in the same way as I have excluded news stories that mention the film but largely elide criticism, such as those reporting the impact or influence on fashion of the film.

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[132] Robert S. Weiss *Statistics in Social Research: An Introduction* (John Wiley, New York, 1968), p198, via Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p89.
[133] Ibid. Weiss, p206, Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p90.

In order to test the saliency of any correlations which the statistical analysis has marked, and shown as significant in terms of probability, I have considered the probability of relevant co-occurrences to determine how representative the correlation is, that is how many of the values it takes into consideration. Hence, several correlations across the whole survey were dismissed as due to a lack of instances, of being unrepresentative of the model, and also of the reviews. (The question of being representative will be returned to later in the case study). So, for instance, a correlation between Naturalism and Transcendent was deemed an artefact of the statistics due to shared omissions since N =>T has probability p=1/2, that is Transcendent co-occurs in one of two instances of Naturalism, T=>N p=1/4, Naturalism co-occurs in one of four instances of Transcendent, and T<=>N p=1/5, there is one co-occurrence of Naturalism and Transcendent in the five instances where either occurs. (I will continue to follow this notation henceforth, with => meaning implies, in the direction of the arrow, and fractional probabilities given for p maintained to indicate clearly actual numbers of instances considered, not reduced to equivalent fractions, rather than simply probabilities, for instance distinguishing 2/4 and 1/2 as two out of four and one out of two, respectively). Similarly, a correlation between Contemporary and Naturalism was due to shared omissions (N=>C p=1/2, C=>N p=1/10, T<=>N p=1/11.

Considering correlations across the whole survey those which were statistically significant were thus explained as artefacts of the analysis, either of the content analysis or the statistical analysis. This was not altogether surprising given the diversity of the reviews, at least in respect of the categories chosen for content analysis, and this might circumstantially support the suggestion that the content analysis was able to adequately characterize the diversity of the reviews. However, although the amended Hypothesis one predicted diversity amongst the reviews, it was suggested that the analysis might isolate patterns or tendencies amongst the reviews, within which we might find greater correlation.

On the basis of earlier analysis of the tabulation and some suggestive findings of the correlation analysis it was decided to consider five subsets of the survey population and calculate correlations across these to ascertain if they exhibited less diversity and any marked association of different categories. These subsets were largely determined as content specific groupings, but included one context-specific grouping. This latter was the group of reviews sourced from specialist film journals. Similarly, we might have analysed other context-specific groupings, divided by publication type, newspaper or magazine, or even subdivisions of tabloid or broadsheet newspapers, or according to national origin, U.S. or U.K. reviews. However, except in the case of film journal reviews we grouped our survey primarily in respect of content, intuitively deriving a thematic (and largely negative) review set and a stylistic (largely positive) set, in order to consider Hypothesis one. Additionally, derived from our initial findings suggesting an antonymous relationship between the categories Lyrical and Painter we constructed two sets around the collocations of each with the category Original. Hence, further correlation analysis was applied to five subsets, theme (comprising 6 reviews), style (5), film journals (5), lyrical/original (7) and painter/original (6).

Theme

These reviews were determined by combining those that markedly classified the film as aimless with the additional reviews of Bosley Crowther. Hence, the group corresponds to the collocations of content categories Aimless and Violence, but with the addition of the remaining Crowther review. Crowther was narrativized at the time as championing the critics who condemned *Bonnie and Clyde.* Although it is a largely content-specific grouping it is notable that several of these reviews elicited letters to editors in defence of the film contesting their position (providing a correlate context specificity). Within this group we find a more pronounced negative correlation of Filmic Content and Anecdote, suggesting that these reviews place more emphasis upon, or are more dependent on, these two categories of content. Correlations between Original and Realist, and Brilliant/Realist, are due to shared omissions, with a single exception being the one review of the group that although narrativized as negative is more ambivalent. (O=>R p=1/1, R=>O p=1/2, R<=>O p=1/2, B=>R p=1/1, R=>B p=1/2, B<=>R p=1/2).

Less easily explicable were correlations of Anachronism/Violence, Aimless/Anecdote and Filmic Content/Aimless. The first of these was due to a single review (A=>V p=1, V=>A p=1/5, V<=>A p=1/5) although this review featured both Anachronism and a greater proportion of violence. Aimless and Anecdote featured a strong negative correlation. Similarly, although to a lesser degree, a strong positive correlation existed between Filmic Content and Aimless. Given the defining characteristics of the reviews in this group the correlation between Filmic Content and Aimless is slightly surprising, but perhaps we can attribute this to a distinction between the anecdotal and content focussed reviews, with the anecdotal reviews collocated with the absence of 'aimless'-ness. This group, therefore, retained diversity, primarily showing similarity in respect of shared omissions of the whole group - Naturalism, Transcendent, New, French New Wave, Godard, Sophisticated, Visionary, and Consistent. The amended Hypothesis one has suggested that tendencies within the reviews might be most easily marked by shared elisions which suggest that particular categories, or semantic fields, are either unavailable or inappropriate within any specific tendency of reviewing. Within the discourse analysis two of this group of reviews will be analysed, representing the anecdotal and content focussed tendencies within the group, although the lack of positive correlations within the group problematize considering these as representative.

Style

This group was intuitively derived by considering those reviews which feature collocation of Brilliant and Original, and discounting those reviews which placed more emphasis on anecdote. This method was used since the category Style was deemed problematic - it included both implicit wording that related specifically to aspects of style, camera work, editing and such, as well as explicit reference to style or aesthetic considerations. In contrast, those reviews which featured co-occurrence of Brilliant and Original were considered homologous to a tendency to focus upon style within the reviews, or provide a more sophisticated formal analysis. Within this group a reduced negative correlation between Filmic Content and Anecdote was found, attributable to the selection process that excluded those more anecdotal laudatory reviews. Several correlations were attributed to shared omissions and a single co-occurrence: Sophisticated/Style, Lyrical/Naturalist, Lyrical/Transcendent, Painter/Style, Contemporary/Naturalist, Contemporary/Transcendent, New/Naturalism, New/Transcendent, Painter/Brilliant, Sophisticated/Brilliant, New/Lyrical and New/Contemporary.

A strong negative correlation between Godard and Realist was found (with notG=>R p=3/4, G=>notR p=1/2, R=>notG p=3/4, notR=>G p=1/1, notR<=>G p=1/2) suggesting antithetical discourses. Contemporary and Lyrical displayed a strong correlation (with C=>L p=2/2, L=>C p=2/3, L<=>C p=2/3). Consistent and Brilliant displayed a strong correlation (with C=>B p=4/4, B=>C p=4/5, B<=>C p=4/5).

Hence, this group displayed some correlation, although much of the correlation was caused by shared omissions and single reviews with coincident categories. Across the whole group the only shared omissions were Visionary, Inconsistent, and Aimless. This suggests that the group still displayed diversity, but some of the correlations suggest correspondences between the reviews of the group. Due to the nature of the definition of this group the discourse analysis will consider two reviews representing the Godard/Realist antithetical discourses. However, in drawing conclusions about the group consideration will be given to the review that elides explicit mention of style.

Film Journals

This group was derived according to context. Hence, it is useful in considering whether a context-specific but content arbitrary grouping displayed content correlations. A strong negative correlation between Style and Realist suggested two antithetical discourses within this group (S=>notR p=1/2, R=>notS p=3/4, S<=>notR p=1/2, R<=>notS p=3/4, notS=>R p=3/3, notR=>S p=1/1). No similar correlation occurred in the full survey. Anecdote and Filmic Content followed a strong negative correlation, more pronounced than in the full survey. Original and Violence displayed a strong correlation, with however O<=>V p=2/5, but those reviews with greatest proportion of Violence being those that featured Original. Brilliant and Filmic Content displayed a strong correlation, with B<=>FC p=5/5. Again, several correlations were dependent on shared omissions and a single determinate co-occurrence: Sophisticated/Anecdote, Lyrical/Style, Contemporary/Anecdote, French New Wave/Lyrical and Godard/Lyrical. Consistent and Filmic Content displayed a strong correlation with C<=>FC p=3/5. Both French New Wave and Godard followed strong negative correlation with Realism, suggesting these were antithetical discourses (notR<=>G p=1/1, notG<=>R p=4/4, F<=>notR p=1/1, R<=>notF p=4/4).

The shared omissions across the whole group were Naturalism, Transcendent, Aimless, Classical, New, Visionary, Painter and Anachronism. Although this group displayed some correlations these were primarily negative corresponding to antithetical discourse tendencies within the group, both in terms of Anecdote and Filmic Content, as in the full survey, but also around the antitheses Realism/Style, Realism/French New Wave, and Realism/Godard. Two reviews from this group will be submitted to discourse analysis, representing respectively each of these antithetical discourses.

Painter

This content specific group was derived by aggregating the collocations of Painter and Original, suggested by our earlier finding which suggested some antimony between the Painter and Lyrical categories, and intended to focus on the reviews potentially recognising innovation within the film. Once again some correlations were found that were due to shared omissions and one determinate review: Content/Transcendent, Sophisticated/Style, Visionary/Transcendent, Anachronism/Anecdote, French New Wave/Classical, New/Anecdote, Anachronism/Original, Anachronism/Painter, New/Original, New/Painter, French New Wave/Contemporary, and Godard/Lyrical. A strong negative correlation was found between Original and Anecdote (and it is worth observing here that within this group the usual negative correlation between Filmic Content and Anecdote was not expressed with significant probability). This correlation was suggested but not marked in the full survey. Original and Anecdote co-occurred in all six reviews. Brilliant and Genre displayed a strong negative correlation, and whilst these were not exclusive we have B=>notG p=2/4, G=>notB p=2/4, notG=>B p=2/2, notB=>G p=2/2. Lyrical and Anecdote displayed a strong correlation but this was determined by two reviews, and given the design of the group it is explicable that the two reviews which featured Lyrical were the most anecdotal. Painter and Original showed a strong correlation, admittedly by design due to the selection criteria of this group.

This group featured many correlations due to the determinate influence of a specific single review, which featured a diverse configuration of categories and low proportion of anecdote. The shared omissions across the group were Naturalism, Inconsistent and Aimless. The group featured correspondence around selected categories, particularly the organising categories Painter/Original, but were otherwise consistent in their diversity.

Three reviews from this group are submitted to discourse analysis due to overlap with other categories and in order to account for the Brilliant/Genre antithesis.

Lyrical

In contrast, this group was derived from the reviews that collocated Lyrical and Original. The usual negative correlation between Anecdote and Filmic Content was found, applying to a greater extent than in the complete survey. There was also a strong negative correlation between Anecdote and Violence. Correlations due to shared omissions and one determinate review included: Transcendent/Naturalist, Lyrical/Naturalist, Lyrical/Transcendent, Painter/Genre, Contemporary/Naturalist, Contemporary/Transcendent, New/Naturalist, New/Transcendent, Consistent/Painter, New/Lyrical, New/Contemporary and French New Wave/Painter.

Lyrical and Contemporary had a strong correlation, with significant probability and this correlation included most of the subset (C=>L p=5/5, L=>C p=5/7, C<=>L p=5/7). Inconsistent and Anachronism had a strong correlation, due to less coincident instances but again not due to a single determinate case (A=>I p=2/3, I=>A p=2/2, I<=>A p=2/3). Similarly Classical and Consistent had strong correlation due to two coincident cases (Cl=>Con p=2/2, Con=>Cl p=2/3, Con<=>Cl p=2/3), and French New Wave and Consistent correlated with three coincident cases (F=>C p=3/3, C=>F p=3/3, F<=>C p=3/3).

The shared omissions of the group were Sophisticated and Visionary. Of all the groups analysed for correlations this group evidenced the best correspondence between the respective reviews, with correlations occurring around various categories, particularly the correlations around Lyrical and Contemporary which seemed to define the group almost as successfully as the factors which determined it (the collocation of Lyrical and Original). No such correlation occurred in the Painter Original group, although Contemporary and Lyrical also correlated in the Style group. Hence this association between Lyrical and Contemporary might be considered to merit investigation in the discourse analysis of a review from this group. I would speculate that these categories interact in a particular aesthetic designation of the film. Again, within the discourse analysis I intend to investigate the alternative means by which an aesthetic designation of the film is made, either explicitly or most commonly implicitly by mobilising other categories (than Style), such as Realist, Painterly, Lyrical and Genre. Since this group displayed good consistency only one review was specifically chosen for discourse analysis, although due to overlap with other categories a total of three reviews from this group will be considered.

Overall, the correlation analysis of the proportion-based content analysis of the reviews was not entirely successful. This can be explained in several ways. Firstly, the application of correlation analysis to the content analysis has questionable validity and applicability. "Traditional tests of the statistical significance or relations within the results of context [sic] analysis may mean nothing more than that the researcher defined his instrument that way. Under these conditions, valid tests must assume expectations other than those of statistical independence. Correlation coefficients become uninterpretable here".[134] Following from this we can consider that any relationships or patterns suggested by the correlation analysis should not be considered as real or proven, since these are statistical relations within the model of the reviews produced by the content analysis found by applying statistics applicable to independent variables to variables that cannot be presumed fully independent. However, this does not invalidate the use of the findings of the correlation analysis, and other findings of the tabulation of the content analysis, as a means to organise the use of discourse analysis on selected reviews; that is I am using these correlations in an exploratory rather than explicatory fashion. I shall consider further how much individual reviews can be taken as representative of tendencies of reviewing, whether or not correlation analysis seemed to support circumstantially the existence of such tendencies. Yet, as a way of directing my investigation around contestation and semantic association/disassociation suggested by the content analysis, the correlation analysis cannot be disfavoured in comparison to either an ostensibly arbitrary selection process, my choice without systematisation, or a wholly random selection.

Secondly, the correlation analysis did not serve to isolate distinct tendencies or patterns within the content analysis (and hence potentially the reviews). Even where correlations were suggested these included few categories, and did not enable characterising discrete tendencies within the reviews. Of course, this is a result that might not be fully expected given my original Hypothesis one or the way in which the critical reception of *Bonnie and*

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[134] Klaus Krippendorff *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology* (Sage, London and Beverly Hill, California, 1980), p112.

Clyde has been narrativized, with two camps of positive and negative critics, each distinguished by their critical approaches. That my modelling process could not distinguish two such camps does not imply that two such camps do not exist. However, the diversity amongst the reviews displayed within the model does mitigate against this version of events.

Correlations are problematic in presuming a linear relation, Y=a+bX, between two variables (proportions of different categories), and a normal distribution of deviations from a predicted regression line, plotting the linear relation.[135] This does problematize the use of correlation analysis in trying to isolate relationships which may well not be linear in nature.

One form of content analysis which does use statistical analysis in order to support inferences about semantic associations within the surveyed content is contingency analysis. "Contingency analysis aims to infer the network of a source's associations from the pattern of co-occurrences of symbols in messages. It presumes that symbols, concepts, or ideas that are closely associated conceptually will also be closely associated statistically. This is assumed regardless of whether the source is an individual author, a social group with its prejudices or ideological commitments, or a whole culture with its patterns of conventions."... "Contingency analysis starts with a set of recording units, each of which is characterized by a set of attributes which are present or absent. The choice of recording units is important insofar as such a unit must be informationally rich enough to contain co-occurrences."..."In a second step the possible co-occurrences of attributes in each unit are counted and entered as proportions," and "[i]n a third step the statistical significance of these co-occurrences must be tested."[136] My analysis of reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* differs from a contingency analysis in that I do not presume consistency across my whole survey, instead expecting differences between the reviews in terms of semantic associations, or respective statistical relations of co-occurrences. In this respect my analysis bears some similarity to applying the concept of clustering to content analysis.

"Clustering seeks to group or to lump together objects or variables that share some observed qualities or, alternatively, to partition or to divide a set of objects or variables into mutually exclusive classes whose boundaries reflect differences in the observed qualities of their members."..."Under ideal circumstances, a clustering criterion reflects the way clusters are formed in reality, assessing semantic similarities rather than purely analytic ones."[137] To some degree I have clustered the content of my analysis at two stages. Within the design of the content analysis I have allowed for synonyms, and hence clustered synonymous references. In my analysis of the tabulated results, including the correlation analysis, I have attempted to cluster categories beyond their synonymic relation, at least within discrete subgroups of the survey. My isolation of such clusters has been very much qualified, but within the discourse analysis I intend to investigate each cluster in more detail by considering at least one or two representative examples. Where my subgroups have largely exhibited some positive correlations, as well as shared omissions, I have deemed that one review might be considered as representative, and selected according to other criteria such as word length to facilitate the discourse analysis, wherever the particular review corresponded with the remaining reviews of the group in the most part, that is in respect of omissions, inclusions and any identified correlations, and so did not reduce the diversity of the group. Conversely, where the subgroups have exhibited negative correlations, notwithstanding the nearly omnipresent relation of Filmic Content and Anecdote, which in these other cases can be interpreted as indicating antithetical discourses within the group, I have determined that one review for each of the antithetical tendencies would prove representative, wherever correspondence is otherwise adjudged. Due to the overlapping of the groups this has resulted in each group having between two and three representative members submitted for discourse analysis.

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[135] See Jane Fielding and Nigel Gilbert *Understanding Social Statistics* (Sage, London, 2000), p182.
[136] Krippendorff *Content analysis*, p114.

In considering the interpretative findings of the content analysis I have stressed that the findings are specific to the model provided by the content analysis and cannot simply be presumed to correspond directly to tendencies within the actual reviews. There are two factors to consider in making such conclusions, the reliability of the content analysis and statistical analysis, and further the validity. I have already qualified the validity of the content analysis, particularly in respect of my use of correlation analysis. One more factor to consider in relation to external validity is whether the categories of the content analysis are congruent with the reviews. More specifically it is pertinent to consider whether the categories are emic (that is indigenous), or else etic (analytical constructs).[138] The content analysis has suggested problems with several of my categories, particularly Style, as well as the default categories of Filmic Content and Anecdote, and similarly Violence. The category of Style almost seems inappropriate or unavailable to certain of the reviews, although appropriate to others. Hence, this category must be considered only partially indigenous, albeit maybe emergent within the survey of reviews and reviewing considered diachronically. The category of Genre similarly might not correspond to the sense of genre implicitly mobilised in the reviews, with this discrepancy relating to the non-isomorphic relation of genre in journalistic use and genre as defined academically.[139]

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[137] Ibid, p115.
[138] See Krippendorff, *Content analysis*, p156.

Similarly, in drawing conclusions from the shared omissions of categories in groupings of reviews it is essential to be confident that the categories are appropriate, yet that the exclusion of categories is indicative of that category being unavailable to, or deemed wholly inappropriate by, that particular group, whilst being available to other (groups of) reviews. Interpretation is necessary to draw any such conclusions. For instance, in the case of realism because this category is available in wider discourses, criticism within the arts in general, we can presume it is available to all the reviewers, yet this still does not guarantee whether omission of the category equates with its inappropriateness (the film is unrealistic or non-realistic), or restricted saliency (the question of realism is not marked by the film for this reviewer).

Another category that I retrospectively found to be problematic, although in a different respect, was that of original. This category has been considered central in much of my investigation of the content of the reviews due to a presumption of it corresponding to 'innovation', the focus of the thesis. Why not simply have a category 'innovative'? The list of synonyms for the category original reveals that the term innovative was not used in a single review within the survey, although several synonyms equate with the 'making novel' sense of innovation, as well as its 'watershed' association, more closely akin to successful innovation. However, we might consider original as being the *core* term for the semantic field which mostly includes innovative. Innovative is a specialised synonym of original, whereas original is not synonymous with innovative since it is superordinate to it.[140] However, innovation as a concept might not be immediately applicable to discourse around film, in contrast with business and industrial realms or fields, except perhaps in retrospect, or particularly in relation to technical developments. Hence, the closest approximation to traces of innovation in the reviews is provided by considering the superordinate category original (which is less field/context specific).

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[139] For instance the exclusion of 'violent film' as a generic designation, cf. Steve Neale - *Genre and Hollywood*, which provides many examples of historical variation in generic definition(s). Examples include the retrospective characterisation of *Un Chien Andalou* (1928) as surrealist, pp25-6, or the shifts in use and meaning of Melodrama, pp179-186.

The focus on innovation, and original as a category, has further biased my definition of groups in trying to recognize tendencies within the reviews. Three of these groups are defined in terms of collocations of other categories with original. Although the findings for the lyrical/original group suggest that a collocation of lyrical and contemporary might equally have defined the group, the analysis is open to the charge of selective analysis, particularly when the choice of reviews to be subjected to discourse analysis was determined from the groups initially provided by the content analysis. Whereas I am interested in the characterisation of this film (and others) as innovative, my intention is also to account for characterisations of the film that deny or occlude attribution of innovation. Admittedly my hypothesis one (both mark one and two) speculated that tendencies of reviews would be isolatable particularly in respect of their treatment of innovation.

As previously noted, my initial hypothesis one was problematized both by the lack of evidence for discrete tendencies of thematic and stylistic reviews, but also in respect of not accounting for the complementary relation of filmic content and anecdote, rather than simply the dominance of one or other of these categories. (The tabulation of the default composite, summing these categories, corroborates this part of the hypothesis, whilst the correlation analysis demonstrates complementarity). Whilst in amending the hypothesis I accounted in part for this complementary relation, albeit not fully, I also retained a conception of reviewing tendencies around positive and negative evaluations. The content analysis as such avoided making the tricky distinction between positive and negative reviews, which however underlies the simplistic narrativization of the critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde* provided elsewhere. Instead, the content analysis sought to recognize tendencies that characterize the film in shared terms, irrespective of differences in value judgement within each tendency. However, in concentrating on innovation I have re-introduced something similar to this distinction.

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[140] See Ronald Carter, and Walter Nash *Seeing through language: a guide to styles of English* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1990) for this definition of core vocabulary, p63.

Whilst suggesting that my amended hypothesis one is supported by the evidence of the analysis I also recognize the necessity to consider amending my other hypotheses or corollary. Hypothesis two and later are not particular to *Bonnie and Clyde* and so do not immediately require consideration. However, I here propose an amended corollary to my initial (amended) hypothesis.

Corollary one, mark two

> Case studies will similarly reveal distinct tendencies within reviews of other 'innovative' films, distinguishing those reviews that recognize innovation against those that are qualified, dismissive or elide innovation. Any such tendencies will be isolated in terms of co-occurring categories and shared omissions, and the content analysis will serve to recognize sites of contestation amongst tendencies, such as violence in the case of *Bonnie and Clyde*, by differences in proportion of content, but also in differences of meaning configuration indicated by different collocations of categories for that contested (Violence/Brilliant against Violence/Aimless in the case of *Bonnie and Clyde*). However, this kind of designation of contested categories will not adequately account for the nature of contestation.

This last factor contributes to the key inadequacy of content analysis in considering reception. Although content analysis reveals *what* the reviews consider of the film, it does not account for *how* the reviews consider these elements. Hence, it does not satisfactorily isolate contestation of category or classificatory terms. What would isolate contestation aside from an impressionistic analysis (even as part of a discourse analysis)? As corollary one speculates, tendencies of different collocations might suggest contestation. Also, with the categories that are included as antonyms, we might easily account for contestation around these (Consistent/Inconsistent, Contemporary/Anachronism). However, for the categories which lack antonyms, whether Realism, where an antonym is omitted from the categories, or Violence, where no strict antonym exists, we need alternative criteria. Similarly, I have recognized various antitheses amongst the reviews, but have not theorised how antithesis and contestation are related. In some instances it seems antithesis implies the presence of contestation, for instance the antithesis of Realism and French New Wave can be interpreted as indicative of contestation around both the status of the film in respect of realism, and around the value attributed to the film in connection with this status.

Elsewhere, for example the antithesis Lyrical/Painterly, contestation does not seem immediately apparent. One way of resolving this is by considering which categories are solely classificatory schemata, ways for the film to be classified, against those which are criterial schemata, ways for the film to be evaluated. Contestation might be expected more frequently, or even exclusively, around criterial categories.[141] The suggestion of the amended Corollary one, to consider collocations in identifying contestation, might best be tested in respect of the category violence. Violence would seem to be used as a classificatory category by certain reviews, whereas other reviews utilise it as a criterial category. Alternatively, however, contestation might best be identified by discourse analysis, considering tone, or modality, the use of rhetoric, and how a category figures in both the thematic and discourse structure of individual reviews.

I will consider the significance of contestation as a characteristic of diachronic development in reviewing practices that is locatable in synchronic reviews, and attempt to develop this significance and the relation to particular and general changes in reviews, throughout my consideration of the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde.* I would speculate at this stage that innovation might be collocated with contestation, since it is only when the legitimating processes of particular critical approaches are contested, the practices of reviewing that justify particular evaluations, use of specific vocabulary and thematic schemata, that these become most apparent, and such contestation takes on paradigmatic significance. This would be the case with *Bonnie and Clyde.* A practice of thematic criticism associated with a particular moral position concerning both realism and violence is undermined by alternative reviewing practices. These alternative practices hence contest the evaluations consonant with classifying the film in terms of both these categories. The tone and modality of those parts of the reviews which can be considered as functioning as exchanges (and the letters to publications in response to reviews) substantiate this significance in the differences of opinion about 'a film'. Innovation is here collocated with a rupture within criticism, or the language of a specific tendency of criticism, since it cannot be recognized within that established tendency of criticism, by particular reviewing practices, whereas, around the contestation, an alternative tendency of criticism denies the legitimating processes of this first tendency, and in contradistinction recognizes quality or innovation in respect of an alternative schema for classifying the film, and consequent mobilisation of alternative criterial categories.

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[141] I use the term criterial category to emphasise that in this case evaluation is carried out by ascribing the film or an element of the film to a category. This contrasts with Bordwell *Making Meaning* in which he

Within the following discourse analysis I shall return to the problems found with the content analysis, as well as attempting to corroborate, or triangulate the findings.

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considers 'category schemata', pp145-146, and topoi and enthymemes as schemata or rhetorical devices involved in evaluation, pp210-212.

What is Discourse Analysis?

I will be using Discourse Analysis to consider selected reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde.* Before this I will provide definitions of discourse and Discourse Analysis; address the origins and problems of Discourse Analysis; and elaborate key elements that I shall consider within my approach to the reviews. Discourse analysis is central to what might be called a discursive turn in social scientific and humanities research. Discourse as a concept combines attention to the use of language in social life, contrary to theoretical linguistics, and the relation between language use and social structure, corresponding to post-structuralist notions of ideology.[142] This is illustrated by "Fowler's definition of the term: '"Discourse" is speech or writing seen from the point of view of the beliefs, values and categories which it embodies; these beliefs (etc.) constitute a way of looking at the world, an organisation or representation of experience.'"[143] Ideology is thus considered as embodied by specific instances of language use. This active role of language is emphasised by Halliday, whose systemic-functional linguistic approach I will be adopting. Halliday defines discourse as follows: "Discourse is a multidimensional process; 'a text', which is the product of that process, not only embodies the same kind of polyphonic structuring as is found in the grammar (for example in the structure of the clause, as message, exchange and representations), but also, since it is functioning at a higher level of the code, as the realization of semiotic orders 'above' the language, may contain in itself all the inconsistencies, contradictions, and conflicts that can exist within and between such higher-order semiotic systems. Because it has this potential, a text is not a mere reflection of what lies beyond; it is an active partner in the reality-making and reality-changing process."[144]

This conception of language active in the construction or transformation of reality clearly relates to the constructivist conception of reality proposed by Sapir and Whorf, which I have previously addressed [see hypothesis two in my Content Analysis of *Bonnie and*

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[142] Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p146.
[143] Ibid, p147.
[144] M.A.K. Halliday *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Edward Arnold, London, 1985), p318.

Clyde]. " As Sapir argued: the fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up in the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are different worlds, not the same world with different labels attached (Sapir 1949: 162)."[145] Discourse Analysis focuses upon how differences in language use correspond to different and shifting conceptions of reality. "Texts provide evidence of ongoing processes such as the redefinition of social relationships between professionals and publics, the reconstitution of social identities and forms of self, or the reconstitution of knowledge and ideology."[146] It is relevant to point out at this point that 'discourse' can be used ambiguously, to denote general language use, or a specific type of language use, for instance the 'discourse of liberalism', which might be more effectively described as 'an *order of discourse*'.[147] Discourse Analysis should ideally make this distinction clear, and systematically consider what 'language use' entails. "Instead of simply saying, for instance, that discourse is a form of 'language use', we need to spell out what this means, for instance by describing what such language use consists of, what its *components* are, how these components are *ordered*, or how they may be combined into larger constructs."[148]

Fairclough's concise definition elucidates this scope of discourse analysis: "'Discourse analysis can be understood as an attempt to show systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices' (1995a: 16-17)."[149] This systematic attention to the text is often informed by Halliday's systemic-functional linguistics that "'harmonises with the constitutive view of discourse...providing a way of investigating the simultaneous constitution of systems of knowledge and belief (ideational function) and social relations and social identities (interpersonal function) in texts' (1995a: 58)."[150] Besides systemic-functional linguistics, the origins of discourse analysis are various, encompassing several fields and disciplines. A confluence of structuralist linguistics, Conversation Analysis, social psychology and Foucauldian post-structuralist approaches to knowledge all contribute to the current prominence of the notion of 'discourse'.[151] However, arising from these different influences are distinctive ways of thinking about discourse. Van Dijk provides a definition, of what might be qualified as Critical Discourse Analysis, which retains the inheritance from functional linguistics: "Instead of vaguely summarizing, paraphrasing or quoting discourse, as is still often the case in social scientific approaches, discourse analytic studies distinguish various levels, units or constructs within each of these dimensions, and formulate the rules and strategies of their normative or actual uses. They functionally relate such units or levels among each other, and thereby also explain *why* they are being used."... "Discourse analysis thus moves from macro to micro levels of talk, text, context or society, and vice versa. It may examine ongoing discourse top down, beginning with the general abstract patterns, or bottom up, beginning with the nitty-gritty of actually used sounds, words, gestures, meaning or strategies. And perhaps most importantly, discourse analysis provides the theoretical and methodological tools for a well-founded critical approach to the study of social problems, power and inequality."[152]

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[145] Deborah Cameron, Elizabeth Frazer, Penelope Harvey, Ben Rampton and Kay Richardson 'Power/Knowledge: The Politics of Social Science' in Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (eds.) *The Discourse Reader* (Routledge, London & New York, 1999), p145.

[146] Norman Fairclough 'Discourse and text: linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis' in *Discourse & Society* vol. 3(2) (Sage, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi, 1992), p211.

[147] See Teun A. Van Dijk introduction p4, in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process* (Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach vol. 1) (Sage, London, 1997).

[148] Ibid, p5.

[149] Deacon et al *Researching Communications* p148, originally in Norman Fairclough *Media Discourse* (Arnold, London, New York, Sydney & Auckland, 1995).

In addition to shifting between macro and micro levels of talk, text, context or society, discourse analysis combines concern for textual and intertextual analysis. Fairclough stresses the importance of both approaches in combination; discourse analysis should include 'analysis of textual organisation above the sentence, including intersentential cohesion and various aspects of the structure of texts which have been investigated by discourse analysis', as well as intertextual analysis which 'shows how texts selectively draw upon *orders of discourse* – the particular configurations of conventionalised practices (genres, discourses, narratives, etc.) which are available to text producers and interpreters in particular social circumstances.'[153] In particular, Fairclough goes on to argue the benefits of discourse analysis for media reception studies, and hence also for this thesis. "What intertextual analysis offers media reception studies is a textual basis for answering questions about what social resources and experiences are drawn upon in the reception and interpretation of media, and what other domains of life media messages are linked or assimilated to in interpretation."[154] In terms of textual analysis, Fairclough provides a threefold approach, which has been summarised as follows:

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[150] Ibid. Fairclough *Media Discourse* cited in Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p150.
[151] See Barker and Brooks 'The Perils and Delights of Discourse Analysis' chapter 5 in Barker and Brooks *Knowing Audiences*.
[152] Van Dijk in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process*, p32.

> First the content of a text may be examined for the traces and cues it provides of its value as social experience, and thus of knowledge and beliefs which are meant to be attached to such experience. Second, textual features may have a relational dimension, enacting in discourse some aspect of social relations which the analysis should bring out. For instance, and most obviously, relational functions of discourse can be addressed by asking how pronouns such as 'I', 'you', 'we' and 'they' are constituted in media texts. Third texts can be studied for the traces and cues they offer for expressing evaluation of the aspect of social reality the text relates to, and for acting on social identities through this expressive dimension. The experiential, relational and expressive values of textual features can then be addressed in relation to choice of vocabulary, syntactic form and any broader textual structures which are apparent in your sample text or texts.[155]

Beyond considering the text in these three ways, the elements of the text can be considered in respect of the metafunctions of language, ideational, interpersonal or textual aspects.[156]

The elements of the text that are to be considered by the discourse analysis encompass a variety of features of language use, with some being constituted within the clause whereas other aspects function in terms of intersentential or discourse structures. Discourse Analysis will often begin by determining the register and genre of the text(s) to be analysed. Register 'describes the immediate situational context in which the text was produced', while, at least in discourse analysis, genre is the overall purpose or function of a text [which primarily will be the genre of film review within this thesis].[157] Analysis will consider the organisation and structure of the text in terms of discourse or schematic structure, otherwise known as staging, and thematic structure. Discourse structure serves to 'group information and circumstantial detail into sequentially and hierarchically ordered categories and units of meaning'.[158] Schematic structure, the 'staged and goal-orientated organization of genres is expressed linguistically through a functional constituent structure in the text.'[159] Thematic structure is constituted by the development of the theme, that is what the text is about, in the course of the development of the text. Hence, shifts of changes of themes between successive clauses mark out the thematic structure. Considering the development of the theme throughout the text will 'provide a sense of the overall organisation, hierarchy and relations between different aspects or properties of the text and between different units of the text, such as sentences and paragraphs.'[160]

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[153] Norman Fairclough 'Discourse and text', p194.
[154] Ibid, p204.
[155] Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p154.
[156] Halliday *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, p53.

> The choice of clause Themes plays a fundamental part in the way discourse is organized; it is this, in fact, which constitutes what is known as the 'method of development' of the text. In this process the main contribution comes from the thematic structure of independent clauses.[161]

In considering thematic structure it is important to qualify how the theme is determined. Theme, topic and focus are three similar concepts relating to what a text, or specific clause, is about, or focussed upon. Theme can be considered in terms of 'aboutness', or the starting point of the clause, or the centre of attention.[162] This ambiguity has been addressed as the topic problem, since, whereas the theme is often clearly defined in linguistic terms, the 'basis for identification of "topic" is rarely made explicit'.[163] Hence, the topic can be identified with the theme, 'the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned',[164] which in the unmarked case is commonly the grammatical subject,[165] or defined in a variety of alternative ways.[166] For this reason my application of discourse analysis adopts Halliday's definition of theme, as above. "In general it seems reasonable to suggest that the constituent which is thematised in a sentence is, in some sense, 'what the sentence is about', regardless of whether or not the constituent is the grammatical subject."[167] Brown and Yule also discuss the title of a text as a thematisation device, establishing the theme of a text above the clausal themes.[168]

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[157] Suzanne Eggins *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics* (Pinter, London, 1994), p26.
[158] Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p169.
[159] Suzanne Eggins *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, p36.
[160] Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, p169.
[161] Halliday *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, p62.
[162] Russell S. Tamlin, Linda Forrest, Ming Ming Pu and Myung Hee Kim 'Discourse Semantics' in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process*, pp85-88.
[163] Gillian Brown and George Yule *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983), p70.

A further way of considering the organisation of the text beside the development of the theme, or the unifying effect of the topic, is in terms of coherence and/or cohesion. Van Dijk defines "*coherence*: how do the meanings of sentences – that is propositions- in a discourse 'hang together'?"[169] Halliday suggests a variety of means of maintaining cohesion; through reference, to elsewhere in the text or outside the text, ellipsis, conjunctions and lexical organisation. He mentions several specific forms of lexical cohesion, the relationship between words in successive clauses; repetition, forms of substitution by words or phrases with identical meaning, synonymy, or non-identical meaning, hyponymy and metonymy [the words correspond to a specific/general or part/whole relationship respectively], and collocation of words.[170]

Clearly, whilst cohesion concerns the organisation of the text, lexical cohesion introduces focus upon the particular choice of words in the text. The vocabulary of the text can be considered as a whole, or in terms of variations, as well as in terms of particular discursive strategies that use marked transformations of wording.

> "Our vocabulary provides a large variety of alternatives to denote the same thing, but they partially differ in meaning" … "such meaning 'connotations' belong to

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[164] Halliday *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, p38.
[165] Ibid, p44.
[166] See Tamlin et al 'Discourse Semantics', pp86-100, and Brown and Yule *Discourse Analysis*, pp70-73.
[167] Brown and Yule *Discourse Analysis*, pp132-133.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Teun A. Van Dijk introduction p9, in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process*.
[170] See Halliday *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, p288 and p310 on cohesion and lexical cohesion respectively.

> different 'stylistic levels' and indicate distinct spheres of action, activity, types, topics or 'social worlds' within a speech community.

Specific vocabularies, jargon or specialised language, reserved for particular purposes, can be considered as styles of discourse.[171]

Certain discursive strategies have been investigated by critical discourse analysis, particularly in relation to their use by hegemonic media. For example, '[n]ominalization refers to the process of making an abstract noun out of a simpler word, which very often is a verb' such that this process 'turns processes into objects'.[172] Similarly, the use of the passive form of a verb functions to eliminate reference to the 'participants, and prioritises certain themes.'[173] Perhaps more relevant to the discursive strategies of film reviews are forms of classification, 'relexicalisation' [relabeling] or 'overlexicalisation' ['heaping up of synonymous words and phrases to designate items of intense preoccupation in the experience of particular groups'].[174] Further to these discursive strategies discourse analysis informed by systemic functional linguistic analysis also considers 'what is absent or omitted from texts.'[175]

My application of discourse analysis will concentrate on these aspects of discourse – discourse and thematic structure, cohesion, and the particular vocabularies mobilised by individual critics. However, before I begin I should address some of the problems suggested for discourse analysis, or associated with inadequate studies purporting to be discourse analysis. I will also suggest the ultimate value of the approach. Some of the key potential problems with discourse analysis relate to the conclusions analysts make based upon their textual analysis about how discourses influence people, effectively questions of power and ideology, and how discourse corresponds to or evidences forms of thought, in terms ideas of cognition such as mental frames, scripts and schemata. Barker and Brooks, in their discussion of 'The Perils and Delights of Discourse Analysis' pose five questions about the validity of discourse analysis in respect of these kinds of conclusions. Amongst these are:

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[171] Barbara Sandig, Susanna Cumming and Tsuyoshi Ono 'Discourse Styles' in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process*, pp138-9 and 140.

[172] Deacon et al *Researching Communications*, pp150-151.

[173] Ibid.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Norman Fairclough 'Discourse and text', p212.

> (a) What entitles us to conclude that we have identified a wider discourse within a communication, to 'name' it, and thus regard that communication as an example of a wider phenomenon?
>
> (d) What entitles us to conclude that a specific communication, or a wider discourse, has 'power' over its receivers, and how would we determine what kind of 'power' this is?
>
> (e) How far do the different approaches allow us to study different degrees of organisation and coherence of discourses either in individuals or in society more generally? Or are all discourses just fully-formed members of an undifferentiated species?[176]

The issue of power in relation to discourses is clearly problematic, albeit that discourse analysis brings to bear more attention to the importance of language use in relation to the expression of power than previous rhetoric and ideological studies. However, my use of discourse analysis is not directly concerned with power, except in respect of authority in classification and canonisation. Barker and Brooks suggest a rule of provisionality to apply in making claims on the basis of discourse analysis:

> by their nature, discourse or textual analysis can only result in provisional claims about the presence of discursive forms. Among the tests of these will be these; they must draw attention to clearly defined aspects of the materials; and in attaching significance to them, (a) must make clear how these were discovered within the materials, (b) will be persuasive only to the extent that they can explain more features of the materials than other approaches, and (c) crucially must make possible triangulations with other independent kinds of evidence.[177]

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[176] Barker and Brooks 'The Perils and Delights of Discourse Analysis', pp115-116.
[177] Ibid, pp117-118.

Similarly, the way in which discourse is related to mental frames or schemata is problematised by Brown and Yule.[178] A variety of concepts are used to suggest the connection, or direct correspondence between discourse and thought, or the mental organisation of knowledge, such as frames, scripts, scenarios, schemata and mental models, but substantiating this type of convention is generally beyond the scope of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis has been widely adopted in social psychology research, but justifying the fit between this approach and cognitive models still requires work – however, the easiest solution to this problem is to maintain focus upon discourses, and not speculate how discourse and cognition are related.

Finally, discourse analysis has been criticised in specific studies for particular failings of inadequate analysis. The initial paper of the online journal *Discourse Analysis On Line* addresses the kinds of shortcomings evident in specific studies. The authors outline six types of such non-analyses: "(1) under-analysis through summary; (2) under-analysis through taking sides; (3) under-analysis through over-quotation or through isolated quotation; (4) the circular identification of discourses and mental constructs; (5) false survey; and (6) analysis that consists in simply spotting features."[179] Perhaps the most relevant is the last of these, with the spotting of rhetorical procedures and rhetorical tropes in texts not being sufficient to constitute analysis itself. Antaki et al emphasise what is required for analysis is 'to show what the feature does, how it is used, what it is used to do, how it is handled sequentially and rhetorically, and so on.'[180] They conclude their article as follows:

> Perhaps it is safe to say that analysis means a close engagement with one's text or transcripts, and the illumination of their meaning and significance through

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[178] Brown and Yule *Discourse Analysis*, p236.

[179] Charles Antaki, Michael Billig, Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter 'Discourse Analysis Means Doing Analysis: A Critique Of Six Analytic Shortcomings' on the *DAOL* online journal, http://www.shu.ac.uk/daol/articles/v1/n1/a1 published online March 2003, accessed by me 22/09/2003, section two.

[180] Ibid, section nine.

> insightful and technically sophisticated work. In a word, Discourse Analysis means Doing Analysis.[181]

The value of discourse analysis is hence qualified in respects of its potential shortcomings, and particularly in terms of applying Barker and Brook's rule of provisionality in drawing conclusions about how specific discourses related to either expressions of power or mental constructs. However, in conclusion, it is worth stressing the potential benefits or value of discourse analysis. As I have already suggested, the particular value of discourse analysis to this thesis is in order to consider how language change and social change relate. In particular, I will relate the changes in characterization of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and the vocabularies used to discuss it, to the public reception of the film. This is also supported by a quote from Barker and Brooks, citing two eminent discourse analysts:

> Hodge and Kress argue that especially at the point where languages change, the way meanings can be expressed is essential. For this can reveal the social ownership of the new word, or concept, or representation.[182]

If this view is accepted, discourse analysis provides a sophisticated analytical tool with which to consider changes in knowledge, classification, canons, and ultimately media receptions where primary source texts are available.

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[181] Ibid, section ten.

[182] Barker and Brooks 'The Perils and Delights of Discourse Analysis', p118.

Discourse analysis of selected *Bonnie and Clyde* reviews

Within this discourse analysis of those reviews selected as representative by the preceding content analysis I have primarily analysed the discourse structure and thematic structure of individual reviews. This corresponds to my intention to characterize how these reviews consider the film, and how they organise what they have to say. With each review I have provided a simplified breakdown of discourse structure, an analysis of thematic structure incorporating both sentential and paragraph thematisation, analysis of cohesion to consider lexical organisation of the review, analysis of modality, and finally consideration of how all these relate to the content as I had previously categorised it. This enables me to characterize the types of discourse functioning within the reviews and to speculate on the schemata and criteria that are enthymemic within the critical practice and vocabulary.[183]

Discourse structure is notated by apportioning the discourse to functional categories that are found either to be always present or else are frequently optional. These are annotated in order, with an iteration indicated where this commonly organises two or more categories, i.e. for an idealised description of the analysed film reviews we have; (Title) ^ (Headline) [Name] ^ (Background) (Exposition) (Introduction) ^ In[(Evaluation) (Description)] ^ (Summary)

where: ( )	indicates an optional category
[]	indicates an obligatory category
^	indicates an obligatory ordering, with that category preceding the symbol always ordered before that following it
In	indicates an iteration, wherein those categories following, A B say, are found in repeated order (ABABAB for instance).

Within my annotation of the actual discourse structure I have used brackets to distinguish my description of a functional unit and punctuation to present ordering and exclusivity.[184]

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[183] Enthymemes are deductive or pseudo-deductive arguments, such as: A good film has property P, This film has (lacks) property P, This is a good (bad) film. I am using the term here to mean those values that are presumed by the reviewer to provide an evaluation, without explicit justification. See David Bordwell *Making Meaning*, p37.

[184] On the use of these and other annotation symbols see Suzanne Eggins *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, p40, and also Suzanne Eggins and J. R. Martin 'Genres and Registers of Discourse' in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as structure and process*, pp240-241 which cites Mitchell.

Thematic structure considers sentential theme, that is the theme given left precedence, occurring first within the sentence, and as an alternative conception of topicalisation the subject of the mood, that is the subject appearing first within the sentence as part of a coupling of subject and finite verb. Consideration is also given, where appropriate, to the complement, that is a subject that has potential for thematisation but which instead features in the marked non-thematic position. Paragraph thematisation considers both forms of sentential topicalisation to consider the development of the topic within the paragraph and interprets the overriding topic of the paragraph, if any, from the available sentential themes. Paragraph and sentential thematisation are then considered in relation to discourse structure, although the functional description of discourse is necessary since paragraphs and discourse blocks do not correspond.

Cohesion considers lexical organisation within the text, particularly reference, elision, conflation and conjunction. Reference is considered as either: *exophoric*, making reference to something assumed to exist outside the text; *anaphoric*, reference to something previously referred to within the text; *cataphoric*, to something later in the text; or *homophoric* reference which is self-specifying with definite article 'the'. Repetition and substitution by synonyms are important aspects of cohesion that reflect both stylistic choice within the discourse but might also have significant meaning.

Modality relates to expressions within the discourse of the extent of relevance of an associated message within the clause in terms of probability, usuality, obligation or inclination. It also relates to anticipated responses to this message from the potential reader.

Review one

The Listener 14/9/1967 Eric Rhode

Discourse structure

{no title, headline, name - excised by archivist?} Exposition (film noir) Introduction (Bonnie and Clyde story with beginning) In[Description ^ Evaluation (reservations)] {no summary}

Thematic structure

The overall paragraphic thematic structure corresponds to //French Noir //(audience) (Bonnie and Clyde characters) //The gang // The film. More specifically, the first paragraph develops from topicalising French Film Noir to its influence on Penn and *Bonnie and Clyde*. The second paragraph is organised around the alternation of audience and the characters of Bonnie and Clyde. The third paragraph topicalises the gang, although with some initial focus on Clyde, all within description of the story. The final paragraph topicalises the film, including metonyms, its elegiac nature, and Penn conflated with the film.

Relating this to the discourse structure, we have an exposition thematised around Noir, and an introduction thematising the audience and characters. The description focuses on the story, particularly through thematising the gang. The evaluation is embedded in further description of the film which topicalises the film itself.

Cohesion

Within the first paragraph ellipsis organises the development of the topic, from French Noir to its influence, and associates *Bonnie and Clyde* summarily by exophoric references to Polish cinema, French Noir (Carne and Duvivier) and Jean Luc Godard. The second paragraph intersperses the reader/audience with repetition around the film/characters. These last two are conflated by collocation within a single clause, in spite of the use of convention to distinguish the film from its eponymous characters through the use of italics. This paragraph also makes implicit associations with reference to Gabin and Belmondo, further to be taken as anaphoric references to the topic of the first paragraph. Additionally, Beatty and Dunaway are conflated with their associated characters.

The third paragraph features repetition around the gang and Clyde, all of which is used within description of the film/story. Little exterior reference is made except to Wajda's *Lotna* (1959). The fourth paragraph makes anaphoric reference to reservations about the film previously featured within the review, as if functioning as a summary. Penn is conflated with the film, and besides repetition around Godard the conclusion of the description features several exophoric references to Riefenstahl, *To Sir, With Love* (1967), and Winslow Homer.

Modality

Overall, the exposition unit of the text is qualified through use of modality, with examples including; ‘hope[fully]’, ‘usually’, ‘often’, ‘seemed’. The remainder of the review is definitive except the interpretation of Clyde's character and the interpretation of the documentary nature of the film, which feature qualifications ‘suggested’, ‘might’, ‘could’, ‘should’, and ‘certainly might’.

Relation to content categories

Realist qualified as documentary, and association with the synonymous painting mode within the descriptive paragraph focussing on the film.

Genre features mostly implicitly, by association, within the exposition, being most explicit in connection with the influence of noir upon the film, and also features in the introduction with description of the film as a ‘gangster’ film.

Original develops the theme of elegiac, in the final paragraph of the review, using hypotactic extension.

Violence recurs through the second and third paragraph. This contributes to the pathetic proof of the qualified evaluation of the film - the reservation due to violence, the decorative deaths, and the questioning motivation being threaded through the description of the film.[185]

Lyrical features as ‘elegiac’ collocated with reference to the ballad within the film, reflexive by implication, and further expanded as ‘inexplicable’, ‘bizarre’ and ‘dream-like’.

Painter occurs with reference to Winslow Homer, and is associated with realism and a positive evaluation of the film.

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[185] A pathetic proof is a form of deductive reasoning in which the conclusion is not made explicit, and it is assumed the reader will derive this same conclusion. They ‘rely on emotional appeals to the audience.’ See Bordwell *Making Meaning*, pp36-37.

Godard features with repeated comparison by means of reference and association, including reference to Belmondo, as well as by association the question of influence, Godard's reflexivity and anti-Realism, and reservations about *Bonnie and Clyde.*
Content features throughout the description unit of the review, within the second, third and fourth paragraphs.
Anecdote features less consistently within the exposition of the first paragraph and the references of the later paragraphs.

Overall

This review assumes that *Bonnie and Clyde* is suitable to be compared to French Noir and realist painting. Realism is qualified as an evaluative criterion. Genre is given a positive value association, whilst violence leads to reservations, but these are qualified in respect of gangster films. The collocation of Lyrical/Original, as well as inclusion of Painter, provide a basis for a positive evaluation, indicative of a wider art critical discourse. Similarly, a qualified positive association with Godard is made, suggesting a schema that considers the film, and film in general, in respect to privileged European/Art cinema, and implicitly French New Wave. Anecdote pads out the review, with historical background in the exposition, as well as references.

Description is foremost, threaded throughout by Content and Violence, with the evaluation embedded, and the introduction being the beginning of the description. The review includes the rhetorical use of inclusio, with reference to the readers and audience of the film in the second paragraph.[186] It also includes a pathetic proof in the evaluation, which is assumed to be qualified in relation to the violence of the film. The evaluation relies on associations, particularly with art and French cinema. The use of conventions to mark the film and character/actor presumes both these journalistic conventions, as well as an auteurist conflation of the director and film.

The review refers to the aesthetic of the film only implicitly, although with the presumption that aesthetic consideration is appropriate since *Bonnie and Clyde* is equated with art by association and through the use of the painting and elegy metaphors.

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[186] See David Bordwell *Making Meaning*, p208, on inclusio and the use of 'we' in criticism.

Violence, realism and genre are all subject to qualification in some way, which suggests wider contestation, and differences in values associated with these. Genre here serves as an evaluative criteria as well as classificatory schemata, but notably with positive value.

This review was selected as one of the Painter/Original group, although distinct in containing Genre, and Lyrical, and excluding Brilliant. Hence, it is indicative of a mix of art and cinematic discourses common to the group. Only oblique reference is made to aesthetic innovation within *Bonnie and Clyde*, with the film considered original in adapting Noir and the influence of Godard, but specifically in the inexplicable scenes that are considered elegiac.

Review two

Daily Mail 5/10/1967 Anne Scott-James

Discourse structure

[Writers name] (Headline)^Description (picturesque)^(Subheading)^Description (comparison melodrama) Evaluation (Justification developed into relation with real world) develops into Exposition^(Subheading)^Summary (real world and Bonnie and Clyde)

Thematic structure

The overall thematic structure is largely determined by the rhetorical and didactic approach of this review and the strange tabloid style choice of paragraphs. The review proceeds from a lack of explicit theme in a picturesque succession of images, to the film, to ‘I’ (the writer), to ‘We’ (use of inclusio), with further oscillation between ‘I’ and the film, briefly focussing on the characters of Bonnie and Clyde, ‘you’ (the reader), blood and cars as metonyms of action and violence, ‘I’ and ‘you’ (the reader), ‘gurus and pot pedlars’, the film, ‘you’ (the young), the film, and finally ‘we’ (inclusio). This confusion of themes corresponds to the rhetorical organisation, since the paragraphs of the review are not structured thematically or otherwise topically.

The thematisation is similarly mobile with relation to the discourse units. The picturesque opening description lacks any explicit theme. The exposition on Hollywood melodrama has as its theme ‘We’. The evaluation blends ‘I’, the film and the characters as its themes. The justification of the evaluation which develops the relation of the film to the real world switches from ‘I’, to ‘you’ (the reader) to ‘gurus and pot pedlars’, whereas the summary switches from the film, to the youth of the real world, to reach a final rhetorical flourish with thematic focus on ‘We’.

Cohesion

This review features few definitive references, in particular with the first few paragraphs making abstract references to ‘trees’, ‘woods’ and ‘hills’ which provide an impressionistic perspective on the film. Exophoric references in the subsequent early paragraphs are made to Renoir, Ophelia, and Warren Beatty. The title of *Bonnie and Clyde* is often repeated in full, since within the review this is used to anchor or recover the overall topic, whereas repetitions and alternations throughout the text of 'the young', ‘I’, ‘us’ and substitutions for these, as well as the ambiguous use of 'you', tend to disrupt topical cohesion. Additionally, references are made to Hollywood melodramas, with the stars and titles conflated by collocation. The exposition is further personalised at this point by repeated use of inclusio by reference to 'we'. In the following paragraphs this is contrasted with repetition of ‘the young’/‘they’, ‘I’, and 'it' substituted for the film. There also features the use of 'you' to refer to the reader, anaphoric to 'we' and marked as distinct from the young. Further paragraphs intersperse ‘you’, ‘I’, ‘it’ (the film), and ‘young people’, with young people and the film associated by a conflation of the film and their view of it, and hence ‘you’ (the reader) and ‘I’ (the author) are further associated in opposition to this.

References to gurus and pot pedlars and such expand from the personal to social reality, and hence a socialised 'you' is repeated. Again repetition of the film title in full is used to anchor the review, whereas 'you' becomes amended by negative association with the phrase 'your parents', so it refers to young people instead of the previous grouping of (older) readers. *Bonnie and Clyde* is repeated throughout the final two paragraphs, interspersed with repetition of ‘we’ and ‘they’ (the young).

In this way cohesion within this review is almost entirely structured around repetition of personal pronouns, with very few specific references beyond the repeated anchoring use of the film title. Particularly with the conflated or associated use of I/we/you (the reader) and in opposition the film/young people/them (you) this is ambiguous and confused.

Modality

Various qualifiers feature in the review, including ‘could’, ‘could probably’, ‘personally’, 'I feel', and the embedded use of 'maybe', for the most part around any instances of subjectivity, mainly the personal response of the reviewer. However the force of rhetoric throughout the text undermines the use of qualification, with any such qualification either embedded, as asides, or used only to slightly amend more forceful views. This is consonant with the overall polemical intention and journalistic use of rhetoric that characterizes this review.

Relation to content categories

Genre features in the exposition concerning Hollywood melodrama, and is given a negative association.
Style is associated with beauty qualified as lacking a message and also connects with the **painter** references that are loose/vague and do not progress the review, and so are backgrounded.
Violence only appears in a few successive paragraphs and is objectified and contrasted with the 'I' reaction (and by inclusio, the assumed reaction for ‘you’, the reader), and so is very much marked by a negative value, with no sense of the tone or the function of the violence within the film.
Contemporary is largely alluded to through the polemical paragraphs about gurus and so on. These use a pathetic proof, in that those referenced are all assumed to have negative moral associations for the reader as well as the reviewer.
Aimless features throughout the review, associated with melodrama, violence, and contemporary reality. This is implicitly repeated and conflated within the summary around the rhetorical figures of the 'blameless young'.
Content is intermittent within the review, often anchored with use of the film title. Conversely **anecdote** dominates through all the personalization and accounts of the reception of the film. This also contributes to the lack of structure, particularly in the text

units of justification, which develops into the relation with the real world, and the summary.

Overall

Overall, the notion that films are to be primarily judged on their message/moral values is enthymemic in this review. Genre, Hollywood, and entertainment all bear negative connotations. Style and beauty are deemed not significant. Which moral values are relevant for making evaluation are enthymemic, and also that these are shared by the writer and readers, but not by young people. This negative value association with young people and the contemporary social situation clearly reads as reactionary. Realism is considered not an appropriate criteria or concept for this film, since it is melodrama and the characters have *no* motivations (or at least the writer doesn't comprehend any so there can be no meaning to the film). Very few references are made to other films, which contributes to the inadequacy of the description of the film as a film. Instead, criterial schemata are entirely moral, but incorporate psychological realism, as well as the negative value association of melodrama, to justify the moral position.

This review belongs to the theme group, although as such is extreme in providing little description of the film, requiring no film critical terminology but instead utilising rhetorical conservative moral discourse (not simply humanist). It does not acknowledge the aesthetic as being appropriate to *Bonnie and Clyde*, except superficially. The film is distinguished by a lack of morality, so it is not new/original or in any way innovative since it does not qualify as art. There does exist a difficulty in defining the (a)morality and (non)message of the film, but no recognition of this occurs within the text, but the point is recuperated by repetition within the pathetic proof. Rhetorical/polemical moral discourse, and subheadings; 'Why Bonnie and Clyde are more dangerous dead than alive', 'Old time MELODRAMA', 'Fault of SOCIETY', are all redolent of tabloid 'news' discourse. Note this was a late review, which also explains the 'editorial' nature since readers are assumed to be familiar with the film to some extent.

Review three

The Evening Standard 7/9/1967 Alexander Walker

Discourse structure

Introduction (with beginning of film/story) Evaluation Description (^(Subheading) aspects^(Subheading)^characters^(subheading)^scenes) Summary

Thematic structure

The opening paragraph has 'girl' and 'boy', later identified explicitly as Bonnie and Clyde, as theme/topic. Then the paragraph concerning the opening of the film shifts to a paragraph concerned with the film, with intermittent thematisation of violence as the content/subject matter. Following paragraphs thematise the characters of Bonnie and Clyde, and the gang, whilst the theme is subsequently developed from violence to Arthur Penn. The evaluation is anchored with a short paragraph which thematises 'I', the critic, whilst the final summary paragraph reverts to thematising the film.

Relating this to the discourse units we have the introduction thematising the characters of Bonnie and Clyde and the opening of the film. The evaluation has the film and elements/aspects of it thematised. The description focuses on the characters, between and including the subheadings 'Notorious' and 'Wounded'. The conclusion of the description thematises memorable scenes and develops into the summary which has the film thematised, as well as secondary attention to plot/narrative achieved by thematising the characters.

Cohesion

Overall, repetitions correspond to the thematised elements, respectively for each paragraph girl and boy, violence, Beatty/Clyde, Dunaway/Bonnie, they (Bonnie and Clyde), other characters and Bonnie and Clyde. For the conclusion into the summary the thematised elements are Penn, 'I', the characters Bonnie and Clyde, *Bonnie and Clyde*, 'you'/'we', and new. This only adds the reader, and the distinction between the characters and the film, as well as the theme new, to those already invoked within the text.

Exophoric references are primarily to production personnel, aside from the simile of painting around Wyeth, and filmic allusions to *On the Waterfront* (1954) and the European

New Wave. These are interspersed throughout the text, whilst the character/stars feature and are conflated in sections focusing on character description. Bonnie, Clyde, gun and violence recur throughout greatly increasing cohesion and expanding upon the introduction.

Ellipsis conflates theme/violence, girl/boy as a pair, Bonnie/Clyde, and 'they'. Also in the imperative to the audience, which elides them as the subject of the verb, as well as in subsequent use of inclusio, we have 'we' equated with the critic and reader and conflating these.

Modality

This review is almost always definitive, with slight qualifications of the claim of equivalence of the film to *On the waterfront*, and the description of the nature of the violence, as well as the historical accuracy. The summary commands whilst eliding the subject of the verb; "Make no mistake, we *shall* date reputations...It cries out to be seen" [italics mine].

Relation to content categories

Realism is qualified within the description of Beatty/Clyde, and also the earlier description of the film.
Original is particularly concentrated in the summary, as well as the conclusion of the description that segues into it.
Brilliant features in the evaluation, whilst **painting** features in the description and summary.
Consistent is referenced in the description of aspects of the film and violence.

Violence is thematized very explicitly, and conflated in part with the theme of the film, the film itself, and Penn, and although concentrated in the description, where it features most explicitly, it also recurs implicitly with the repetition of 'gun' throughout.
Anachronism is qualified, and not seen negatively.

New Wave and **New** are developed together in the summary.

Content features throughout, whereas **anecdote** features very little. The primary use of the characters of Bonnie and Clyde and the film as themes, which are repeated to increase cohesion, binds the description of the content of the film through the course of the review.

Overall

This review assumes a sophisticated conception of realism, and does not equate realism with historical accuracy. It further assumes that film can be reasonably compared to other works of art, paintings, and can be recognized as significant (with *On the Waterfront* providing a benchmark of Hollywood film, of an earlier decade, but *Bonnie and Clyde* is not qualified as 'simply Hollywood' as it is also related to the European New Wave). The review is not moralist, and therefore violence is not presumed to have negative value. Violence as content is, however, conflated with the film and director, presupposing a thematic auteurist position. Mixing of tones is accepted as 'incredible', and is also attributed to the director. The review makes use of bracketing conventions to associate and equate the star/character.

This review belongs to the painter/original group, and in contrast to the earlier example from this group does not feature either Genre or Lyrical as categories, whilst featuring Brilliant.

Description of the scenes of the film is primary in this review, and is used to structure description and evaluation of the aesthetic and performance. The introduction coincides with description of the beginning of the film, and similarly the conclusion, before the summary, describes a late scene. The review also features some rhetorical devices, the use of inclusio and the command to the reader to 'make no mistake'. The review is the most explicit of all those analysed in recognizing innovation in the film, but this is partially equated with the treatment of the theme of violence, and in summarizing with the 'approach' of the filmmakers. Incredible shifts of tone, and the memorable look of the film, however, imply recognition of an aesthetic and the director's influence, and in grouping these before the summary this implicitly conflates 'approach' with aesthetic. Violence and morality are not seen in opposition, and Violence not seen as a negative criterial category. Realism, Painterly and Original are all used as positive criterial categories, but as before realism is qualified with a sophisticated conception. Primarily the review comprises art/cinematic discourse, but to some extent these are content focused.

Review four

Monthly Film Bulletin October 1967, Author given initials D.W.

Discourse structure

(Title) (Credits) (Synopsis) Evaluation (Penn and the film) developing into Description (Penn and the gang) Summary/Evaluation (last two sentences) (Suitability rating) [Author's initials]

Thematic structure

In the first paragraph the dominant theme is the characters of Bonnie and Clyde, or the gang. For contrast the activities of Bonnie and Clyde or the police are thematised but the mood remains Bonnie and Clyde, except in one instance where it is the police. The second paragraph has the theme develop from Penn to the gang and Bonnie and Clyde, and finally the film, with the audience interpolated between these. Overall then thematic development shifts from Bonnie and Clyde or the gang to Penn, then reverts to Bonnie and Clyde and the gang, and finally shifts to the film. Relating this to the discourse units we have the synopsis focussed on Bonnie and Clyde/ the gang, the evaluation concentrated on Penn, and the description developing from thematising Penn to the characters of Bonnie and Clyde and the gang. The summary/evaluation develops from 'one' (the audience) to the film.

Cohesion

The first paragraph of this review features repetition of Bonnie, Clyde, 'gang raids', C.W., Blanche, Buck, Hamer and the police with additional external references to individual states of America. As a synopsis this is entirely structured around the protagonists and other characters, with limited external reference and very few ellipses.

The second paragraph features repetition of Penn and the film, as well as the characters as in the previous paragraph. Exophoric references are made to *Mickey One*, *The Chase* (1966), Arthur Penn, America, the 30's, the Depression, Roosevelt and Burnett Guffey, with the notable omission being the star names, who do however feature in the credits section. There are marked ellipses around Penn ('his' film), the surprise of the film, and 'we'/'one' as the audience or writer/reader. Also ellipsis is used in substitutions for the gang ('these gangsters') and for the film ('American film'). Conflations are made of Bonnie and Clyde as a pairing, and between them and the film. The paragraph includes repeated motifs of violence, fantasy and reality. References are anchored around Penn, particularly the titles of his previous films, as is description of the film, partly through the use of ellipses.

Modality

This text is invariably definitive and descriptive with the few uses of qualifiers used to confirm rather than to amend meaning, for instance 'unmistakably' and 'far and away'.

Relation to content categories

Realist is both qualified by association as a 'blend of fantasy and reality' yet also stressed with respect to 'unmistakable' accuracy. This first is attributed to Penn, and the second associated with the characters and milieu.
Genre features with a single mention of comedy, and possibly implicitly with reference to 'these gangsters'.
Violence is related to the film, and then described as the content, but concludes the description prior to the summary/evaluation and here is implicitly given a positive value by collocation with the judgement 'so perfectly judged'.
Brilliant occurs in the summary/evaluation, whereas **consistent** is repeated early in the second paragraph in an evaluative discourse, and hence given positive association.
Content features throughout and dominates this review, whereas **anecdote** is anchored around introducing Penn, with references to other films and so on.

Overall

This review assumes the validity of auteurist motif or descriptive criticism. Ellipsis is used in attributing the film to Penn, the references are solely to his films, and the stars are not mentioned except in the credits. There feature repeated implicit motifs of fantasy/reality and violence, and hence realism and violence are not seen as criterial categories, but instead the coherence and appropriateness of the director's treatment or organisation of these motifs is given as an evaluative criterion. It is assumed, although not addressed, that film by an auteur is capable of being art or an expression, but style is not considered except as beauty or as the balancing of oppositions and motifs, particularly violent/tender, fantasy/reality (and myth which acts almost dialectically to this bipolar pairing) and comedy/doom.

Description is foremost, with the synopsis preceding the remainder, and consideration of the film largely made through motifs. Inclusio (and ellipsis) is used in considering the degree to which the film exceeds expectations, its engagement with myth, and in the hyperbole of the overall evaluation. The review is partly made anonymous through this and the use of initials rather than the writer's name.

This review is representative of the film journals group, although it is distinct in its elision of the Style, French New Wave and Godard categories, whilst utilising the antithetical discourse of realism (albeit qualified within the opposition fantasy/reality). The review, as stated, does not address the aesthetic, and does not recognise innovation or originality, in spite of recognising 'brilliance', so it sees the film as different by degree, rather than by kind, for example with this sense of the 'extraordinary' in describing the scene of the picnic with Bonnie's mother.

Review five

Sight and Sound Autumn 1967 Tom Milne

Discourse structure

(Title) Introduction (of film with credits and beginning) Description (plot) Evaluation Description (style) Summary (New Wave/Penn) [Name]

Thematic structure

The opening paragraph thematises the opening sequence of the film, although Penn and the real Bonnie and Clyde are topicalised as the mood. The second paragraph similarly thematises dialogue and descriptions of action from the film, but marks these for Bonnie and then Clyde.

There follows in two paragraphs thematisation of Bonnie and Clyde or the gang, although with violence also featuring between repetitions of these as theme. The subsequent paragraph develops thematically from Penn returning to Bonnie and Clyde, and then thematises the dispossessed farmers within the film, again with marked use of quoting dialogue from the film to topicalise Clyde. Penn is again thematised, being conflated through interpolation with the thematisation of the lyricism of the film and its pastoral quality. In the final two paragraphs we have focus on Bonnie and Clyde again, interrupted with dialogue and topicalisation of Bonnie's mother, and finally thematisation of the past and Penn, relating the film to both film history and Penn's career history.

Hence we have continuous development of the theme throughout this review, from the opening of the film, to Bonnie and Clyde, to the gang, to violence, to the gang, to Bonnie and Clyde, to Penn, to Bonnie and Clyde and the dispossessed farmers. There follows further shifts from lyricism and Penn, to Bonnie and Clyde, to Penn and the film. Relating this to the discourse units we have the introduction equated with the opening of the film, the description of the plot organised around the progression of Bonnie and Clyde, the gang and violence, and the evaluation shifting from Penn to the characters of Bonnie and Clyde and the dispossessed farmers. Description of the style of the film focuses on lyricism and Penn, developing into thematisation of Bonnie and Clyde, whilst the summary focuses on Penn and the film.

Cohesion

The first paragraph features repeated use of Bonnie and Clyde, individually as characters, and references to Penn, as well as the use of convention to mark references to Bonnie/Dunaway, Clyde/Beatty and Muni/Scarface. There is one use of inclusio, with 'we' equated with the audience. The next paragraph continues the repetition around Bonnie and Clyde, with conflation of the pairing, and also includes exophoric references to *Cat Ballou* and *Bande a Part*. Within the third paragraph we find cohesion maintained throughout by repetition of the characters, but with substitution through expansion shifting this repetition from Bonnie and Clyde as a pair to the gang. References are made to Ginger Rogers and *Gold Diggers of 1933* (1933). The fourth paragraph features yet more exophoric filmic references, to Paul Newman and *The Left-handed Gun* (1958), as well as to Al Capone. There is a repetition of violence and use of the opposition reality/fantasy, although again the characters feature continuously with oscillation of 'they' equated with the gang or else with Bonnie and Clyde, as well as references to individual gang members, Clyde's brother and his wife.

The next paragraph features repetition around Penn, with the shifts in mood of the film being anchored to Penn by collocation, and these also being associated with the exophoric reference to Godard and *Bande a Part* (1964). The Depression victims are also associated with reference to *The Grapes of Wrath.* Further repetition of Bonnie and Clyde, especially Clyde, as well as to 'they' (the gang) continues the use of the characters to organise cohesion.

The sixth paragraph includes more ellipsis around the lyricism and change of moods of the film, and 'one's' response, and in attributing these to Penn. Penn is again repeated, as well as Bonnie and Clyde, and exophoric references are made to Burnett Guffey, and Ferdinand and Marianne in *Pierrot le Fou* (1968). Finally, the summary paragraph includes further repetition around Penn and gangster film, with yet more references to Truffaut, Godard, the Nouvelle Vague, *The Miracle Worker* (1962), and *Mickey One*.

Overall, then, we can note an abundance of filmic references throughout this review, in every paragraph, and these are concentrated around gangster film and the Nouvelle Vague, and primarily Penn's films. Penn, as well as Bonnie and Clyde are used to anchor most of the paragraphs. The themes of violence, reality/fantasy and the moodshifts are repeated and developed in several paragraphs, but are also attached to Penn.

Modality

Generally the review is definitive, with the use of qualifiers around the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde, and the tranquillity of scenes, including 'seems', 'sort of' and 'kind of'.

Relation to content categories

Genre is repeated by reference or else by association to gangster film, at the beginning of the review, in the evaluation, and in the summary.
Style is developed in description of the film, within the introduction, and in the description of style, but even features within the description of plot.
Original features in the description of style, in contradistinction with gangster chiaroscuro.
Violence is the dominant theme or motif, particularly in the short paragraph concluding description of the plot, but also importantly recurs in the summary.
Brilliant features in the evaluation and is evaluative of Penn and the moodshifts, and features in the description of style specifically in relation to camerawork. **Lyrical** also features within the description of style, and is marked by ellipsis.
Consistent is found in the evaluation, and is anchored to Penn with respect to the moodshifts.
French New Wave features in the summary, but note **Godard** is found throughout with frequent references to Godard and Truffaut and their films, occurring in the second, fourth and sixth paragraphs and being of central importance for the summary.
Content is focussed in the description units, especially description of plot, and around the fantasy motif, whilst **anecdote** is concentrated in the introduction, in relation to history, and the summary, in relation to Penn's career, except for the prevalence of exophoric references throughout which mostly conform to other categories such as Godard and genre.
Realism does not feature as a content category, at least according to the content analysis of this review. This is because although the review develops the opposition fantasy/reality this is concentrated upon the distinction of fantasy and reality within the film, particularly in relation to Bonnie and Clyde's surprise at the violent retribution they suffer, since they are not engaged with reality. Similarly, 'real-life' functions as a qualifier of the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde, but is not used to describe the representation of reality by the film, or the degree of historical accuracy.

Overall

This review has an enthymemic auteurist approach, with consideration of both the aesthetic and motifs of the film. However, it is distinguished in balancing auteurism with references to the genre of gangster film, and the main stars are also briefly mentioned. By association with terms from the Godard category, it is implicit that this film is serious art, Penn is an artist, and also that genre film is worthy of such validation. Shifts of mood, and yet consistency, are elevated, again in association with the New Wave, whilst originality is valued in respect to the approach to the genre of the film. Style is noted in the description of the plot, and later focused on with the use of the lyrical metaphor. There is attention also to Guffey as the cinematographer, so style and artistic value is not solely attributed to Penn. However, the cast are not considered beyond Beatty and Dunaway.

Violence is not value laden, but instead is considered as the balance determined by Penn, that is it is seen as the subject matter (and hence appropriate) but it is the treatment of this, or the approach, which gives value.

This is a particularly referential review, and the reader is presumed to be familiar with a variety of films, and presumed to have knowledge of Penn as a director, for instance that he directed *The Left Handed Gun*. This canon of films combines Hollywood and the French New Wave.

This review is the second of the film journal group, and also represents the lyrical group. It is distinct from the *Monthly Film Bulletin* in its configuration of Genre, New Wave, Godard and Style, and its elision of Realism (which is implicitly rejected since the film is characterized as having subject matter incorporating a mix of fantasy and reality). Realism and thematic appropriateness are not accepted as evaluative criteria.

Instead, the significance of this film is equated with its re-appropriating the gangster film from the French New Wave, and also implicit in the summary is that it proves Penn's auteur credentials. Innovation is characterized as semi-aesthetic, in transforming the genre (and implicitly both gangster film and the New Wave are treated like genre). There are some similarities to the key example of the painter group of reviews, although with the distinction of the interspersed filmic references, and this review is still structured around description of plot and then of style, both achieved through detailing individual scenes.

Review six

New York Times August 14, 1967 Bosley Crowther

Discourse structure

(Title) (Headline) [Name] Background^Evaluation developing into Description^Evaluation (further negative evaluation)^Summary (with rhetorical flourish in relation to Montreal film festival)

Inset is scene photograph with by-line.
Centred inset is cast list.

Thematic structure

This review features particularly consistent thematisation. Following thematisation of the press agentry surrounding the marketing of the film in the initial paragraph, several paragraphs thematise the film, and then thematise 'travesties' which are equated with the film. This is then developed into thematisation of Penn before resuming focus on the film, which is conflated with its blend of farce and violence.

Relating this consistency to the discourse units we have the background equated with press agentry, the evaluation and description focused on the film, with the further evaluation shifting slightly to the 'travesty' (of the film) and Penn. The summary concentrates on the film and its blend of farce and violence, while the concluding rhetorical flourish returns to the film itself. Hence we have the film very markedly privileged thematically, whereas description of the film is not detailed so the characters are not thematised.

Cohesion

This review is characterized by a preponderance of reference to reality and history, all within a journalistic discourse that refers to press agentry, and the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde. These feature in the opening paragraph with further exophoric reference to Texas and Oklahoma. The second paragraph features repetitions around the film and the pair of Bonnie and Clyde, with the historical pair conflated with the characters. Reference is also made to Beatty, Dunaway, Pollard, and also *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (1967) and *The Beverly Hillbillies*. The third paragraph continues the repetitions and substitutions around the film and Clyde/Beatty, Bonnie/Dunaway, with some substitutions elliptical, for instance 'the killer' and 'sex starved moll'. Another reference is made to the Keystone Cops.

In the next paragraph we have continued substitution around 'these desperadoes', and anaphoric reference to the history of the first paragraph. With the fifth paragraph we find substitutions around Penn, and violence, and the use and development of metonyms for violence. This is also associated to *The St Valentine's Day Massacre* (1967) by reference.

The final paragraph substitutes farce for comedy, and features repetition around the film and its travesty. Rhetorical reflexive reference is made to the critic, and he refers back to his description of the antique nature of the film. In conclusion we find the final rhetorical flourish with reference to the Montreal Festival, which we can also see as a reference to the previous report on the film by Crowther.

The review includes an abundance of references to anchor the historical truth from which the film is seen to depart, and further filmic and entertainment references that carry negative associations.

Modality

The entire review is comprehensively didactic. The only qualification that the film 'might be' passed off as 'candidly commercial movie comedy' is immediately dismissed.

Relation to content categories

Genre features only with references to comedy/farce, except implicitly by association with the gangster genre by reference to *The St Valentine's Day Massacre*. Comedy recurs in the evaluative paragraphs, and generally has a negative association, as well as featuring implicitly with negative association in additional references such as *The Beverly Hillbillies* and the Keystone Cops.

Violence is repeated in the further evaluation and summary, and is associated incongruously with comedy, and deemed particularly negatively. Also this blend of violence and farce is seen as inherently aimless.

Anachronism figures in the description, with reference to Keystone Cops, and the ending of the summary, again with negative association.

Aimless is privileged in the summary, and as mentioned is equated with the blend of farce and violence in the film (and also the travesty of truth referred to in the background and the beginning of the further evaluation). This is the main point of the review, that the film is aimless.

Content comprises the description, where this does not overlap other categories, but as already stated the description of the film is not detailed in this review. In contrast **anecdote** includes the historical inaccuracy and press agentry in the background discourse unit, as well as inaccuracy in the further evaluation, and questioning the purpose of Beatty and Penn, as well as the flourish about Montreal, in the summary.

Overall

This review has enthymemic the view that violence is negatively valued, realism/historical accuracy are criteria for positive evaluation, and comedy and violence should not mix. Further, aimlessness is seen as a cardinal negative value, implying an intentional/expressivist conception of film.

The review has some auteurist conception, in that Penn is blamed for the blending of comedy and violence, and is branded 'aggressive', although the summary also deems Beatty responsible (whilst no mention is made of his producer role).[187]

The film is negatively associated with other films and entertainment, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, the Keystone Cops, *The St Valentine's Day Massacre*, and all are implicitly trash or worse. Additionally the rhetorical climax of the review emphasises the unworthiness of the film to be included in an international festival with an implicit commercial/art distinction.

We can characterize this review as humanist criticism in terms of its dismissal of the film in terms of its aimlessness and possible effect, as well as historical inaccuracy and the unsuitable lead characters.

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[187] Notably Bosley Crowther's review of *The Chase* in the *New York Times* 19/2/1966 also refers to 'the aggressive director Arthur Penn'.

Evaluation dominates the review, with little description, even of plot. Journalistic discourse frames this evaluation with the background of press agentry and rhetoric concerning Montreal. Evaluation is reliant on negative associations, and primarily on the reader accepting the charge of aimlessness, anachronism, incongruence and inaccuracy. Style and aesthetics are only implicitly referred to in connection with anachronism, although it is implicit that the film is not to be considered as art. Some conflation is made between the characters and the stars.

This review is from the theme group, with the balance of content and anecdote in contrast to the other representative review from the *Daily Mail* that has even more journalistic/moralistic anecdote. This review could also exemplify a group of reviews characterising the film as aimless/violent. Note that this is one of three 'reviews' by Crowther, the middle one, and that within these we can note some shift in emphasis, opening with a critique of the tone of the film, perceived as inconsistency, elaborated here as aimlessness and anachronism, maintaining negative associations with violence and the incongruous tone, and the final text which is predominantly anecdotal and fixes on historical inaccuracies and attempts (fails) to understand the wider reception of the film. Although I have designated these reviews as the theme group they do partly elide thematic description of the film beyond the theme of violence, so with their conservative moral/humanist agenda the film is implicitly dismissed as not worthy of further analysis or attention. However, these reviews correspond in their elision of any mention of style. They all maintain some kind of art/melodrama or art/commerce dichotomy, and consonant negative associations with genre films. Also, they share polemical tone, and reliance on rhetoric, using such rhetorical devices as pathetic proof or inclusio.

Review seven

New Statesman 22/9/1967 John Coleman

Discourse structure

{no title, headline, name - possibly excised by archivist} Introduction (end of film and reality) Description developing into Evaluation^Summary/Justification

Thematic Structure

The opening paragraph of the review concentrates thematically upon the film, conflated with Penn, and this is interspersed with thematisation of Bonnie and Clyde, firstly the historical figures and then the characters. The subsequent paragraph topicalises the film script and tone, developing this with thematisation of the critic and audience (in relation to their response to the film), and has the film or metonyms for it (editing, attractiveness of the film) recurring thematically.

Overall, then we have the review focussing on Bonnie and Clyde as well as *Bonnie and Clyde*, and in the second paragraph the film is maintained as topic, although the script and tone and other metonyms are thematised. With the interpolated thematision of the critic and audience response we have implicitly that the film is equated respectively with the characters in the first paragraph and with its effects in the concluding paragraph. Relating this to the discourse units we have the film and characters privileged in the introduction and description, with the evaluation privileging metonyms for the film, and the summary and justification thematising both the film but also anchored with thematisation of the critic and audience response to the film.

Cohesion

The first paragraph features many external references to history; Bonnie and Clyde, the Barrow gang, the Depression, the South, and the ballad; and to production personnel; Penn, Warner, Guffey, Pollard and so on. The review uses ellipsis around its description of the end of the film, and the violence of the film that is implicit. Repetitions in this paragraph are made around the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde, the film, the characters of Bonnie and Clyde, each of which are thematised, and additionally Buck and Blanche (both unnamed in the text) and the gang.

The second paragraph features more exophoric historical and production references, Newman and Benton, Dunaway, Beatty, Robin Hood, Grant Wood, papers, America, Brady and Hindley, and an associative reference to Francis Bacon. We also find reflexive critical reference, with ‘I’/‘one’/‘we’ used to personalise response to the film and for the purpose of inclusio. There is repetition around these, as well as the attractiveness of the imagery (and Dunaway), and recurrence of reference to the film’s climax mentioned in the opening of the review. A conflation is made of the aesthetic values (beauty of images) and seduction (effect) on audience, and the film is thus equated with this effect.

Modality

Modality is used for emphasis within rhetorical forms, including 'literally', 'apparently', 'frankly' and 'surely'.

Relation to content categories

Realism is stressed with emphasis on the literal and authentic, and elision of any distinction between the historical figures and their filmic character equivalents.
Style is referenced particularly in the summary/justification, with explicit reference made to aesthetic values, and is topicalised amidst thematised self-reference of the critic, as 'one'/'someone' and complement 'we'. Style is seen as metonymic to the film, which is then equated with its effect on the audience.
Original is invoked in the introduction, in the description of the film's climax, and in relation, in part, to the representation of violence, although subsequent sentences also associate it implicitly with cinematography and the sophisticated construction of the film.
Sophistication occurs here, explicated as playful representation of violence.
Violence recurs throughout the text, from the opening sentences that implicitly characterize the film as extraordinary in its violence, albeit with only the implication that the film is violent (as well as extraordinarily so). Violence is described with passive thematisation, 'the killings happen', and through description of the effects of violence within the film, as well as repetition of metonyms 'guns' and 'bullets', and references to the climax of the film.
Brilliant as a category frames the evaluation by being invoked within the introduction, and concluding the evaluation before the summary/justification. Although it features as an adverb associated with the action of the photography and the construction of the film, in both instances the verbs are phrased in passive form, although with subsequent reference to Burnett Guffey as actor in the first, which serves to make the conflation 'brilliant film' since the film serves as both actor and subject.

Consistent features as a description of the tone of the film, here topicalised and equated with the film as a metonym, and anchoring the film and its effect on the audience, as well as developing the evaluation out of description, by operating as an evaluative criteria. Francis Bacon is referenced in the summary, with a qualified association in respect of aestheticized representation of the disturbing, marking implicitly the distinction of art and entertainment with *Bonnie and Clyde* considered equivalent to **painting**.
Content comprises description that constitutes most of the first paragraph, whilst **anecdote** includes both reference after the introduction to the historical figures and background of Bonnie and Clyde, as well as references in the evaluation and summary to real and idealised audience responses to the film.

Overall

Within this review the key enthymemes are that the particular representation of violence in the film associates with positive value, due to the sophistication of this representation, and that there is a distinction between realism and historical accuracy, the literal and the 'less than equivocal' (implicit) ballad form of the film. The film is distinguished as art, partly from entertainment, with explicit reference to aesthetic values, brilliance, originality, and the association with Francis Bacon canvasses and the effect of art. There is a presumption of a particular definition of art, as well as various evaluative criteria; original, consistent, sophisticated/playful, and most importantly effective. Auteurism is very much qualified, since although the film is conflated with Penn we also have brilliance associated with Guffey, and the consistency of the tone and effect associated with Newman and Benton. The film is also presented as grammatical actor in its own photography and construction by passivization.

Although considerable description is given of events of the film, attention is also given to style. Whilst the first paragraph concentrates thematically on characters, equated implicitly with the film, the second paragraph topicalises the film, script/tone as metonyms of the film, and the effects of the film, so the review is not simply thematic. Reflexive development of the possible incongruity between the allure of the style and nature of the film's subject matter is used rhetorically in the justification for a positive evaluation, which presumes alternative responses to the film and the need for a defence. This explicit contestation is organised within the inclusio in which the critic includes the reader/audience in his response.

This review is representative of the violent brilliant group of reviews (as well as the style and painter groups), and is important both for characterising the representation of violence in the film positively, but also for addressing why this evaluative position is defensible. A modernist influenced conception of art is privileged by the review, which overrides detailed auteurist consideration of the film, or attention to genre. This group of reviews, which especially focus around the positive evaluation of the representation of violence and stress the consistency of the film, are crucial in considering the contestation around the category of violence, with the extremes of the spectrum of contestation comprising these reviews and the theme group of reviews. Notably, several of the dedicated film journal reviews feature within this group, and we have some variation in the other emphases of the reviews, particularly around the choice of lyrical or painterly metaphors for the film.

Review eight

The Times 7/9/1967 John Russell Taylor

Discourse structure

(Headline) [Name] Cinema (Warner) (Title) Introduction (credit sequence) Background (history related to the film, and production details) Evaluation

Thematic structure

The first paragraph thematises the subjects of the credit photographs, interspersed with the device of thematising the photograph's 'snap'. The thematic focus shifts between these subjects from 'a man' (Clyde), to a group, to 'a woman' (Bonnie), to a group. The second paragraph begins with the previous paragraph topicalised, the use of real photographs, and develops this into the screenplay, and then thematises Bonnie and Clyde, firstly as historical characters and latterly, by conflation, as the characters of the film.

The final paragraph thematises the film and aspects of the film, particularly the participants Beatty, Dunaway and Penn, and the photography of the film, with Burnett Guffey here found as complement, that is an unthematised subject which could potentially be thematised. Thematic focus is twice shifted to other films, as comparatives, in the form of 'other gangster films', and metaphorically 'false starts'.

Hence, the introduction thematises the subjects of the credit sequence, and the use of photographs. The background primarily thematises Bonnie and Clyde, whereas the evaluation focuses on the film and contributions of the production personnel.

Cohesion

The first paragraph uses repetition of the onomatopoeia ‘snap’ as a cohesive device, and for emphasis. The enigma of who these thematised subjects are is enhanced by use of the indefinite participle ‘a’ for each, until change in the participle to ‘the’ (young woman) both stresses the continuity of her as a subject, but also continuity amongst all the photographic subjects, figuring a group of photos and a group of subjects. This is confirmed with further ellipsis with the rhetorical question of who or what this group is, resolved with reference to ‘snap shots’ that in partially repeating the onomatopoeia references and anchors it. Still another ellipsis occludes whose photographs are in question (‘somebody's’). Exophoric references to Arthur Penn, conflated with the film, and to the historical figures of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, and their associates, finally directly answers the rhetorical question(s), whilst substitution of ‘themselves’ for Bonnie and Clyde is used to imply literalness, that is that the historical figures took these actual pictures. Here we also have ‘pictures’ substituted for snapshots, with marked avoidance of photograph or photo, the core vocabulary synonym.

The second paragraph begins with an ellipsis, substituting ‘it’ for the topic of the previous paragraph, which is the use of real photographs in the film's credits. This is then equated with the tone of the film. The use of photographs is then developed into the ‘point about Bonnie and Clyde’, relating the film to some meaning or significance of the historical figures. This functions to reintroduce the historical Bonnie and Clyde as topic, and they are repeated throughout the paragraph, with explicit conflation of the couple and their filmic equivalents. Also repeated in this paragraph are synonyms for crime, ‘stealing’ and ‘robbing’, which again refer at some points to the historical Bonnie and Clyde, and elsewhere to the plot of the film. These, and references to the gun, also serve as anophoric links to the end of the first paragraph. The paragraph features few exophoric references, to the mid-West and Depression in situating the historical Bonnie and Clyde, and to Newman and Benton in attributing the screenplay and tone of the film. In describing the tone of the film the review utilises an oxymoron for rhetorical effect, 'farcical tragedy', and further substitutes this as 'incongruity'.

The final paragraph switches its focus to the film, and then through an ellipsis to the production personnel, ‘everyone concerned’ who are then elaborated with exophoric reference to Beatty, Dunaway, and Guffey, and anaphoric reference to Penn. These feature in repetitions and substitutions, as do the characters of Bonnie and Clyde, and the film itself. Burnett Guffey is related to the historical period that provides the setting for the events of the film, with an ellipsis around these events, as ‘this’, and exophoric reference to the ‘early 1930's’. He is then contrasted with the ‘New Wave cameramen’ using a further exophoric reference and making an implicit opposition between the old and the new. Further exophoric references are attached to Penn, with his films *Mickey One* and *The Chase*, provided conventionally in italics, and reference to Sam Spiegel, producer of this last film. We also have developing from this exophoric references to Hollywood and other ‘gangster films’, with *Bonnie and Clyde* equated explicitly with the former, and implicitly with the latter.

Within the evaluation that concludes this paragraph we find several ellipses, around ‘our’, the reader and writer, and ‘the sort of movies they used to make’, which through nominalisation elides exactly what movies are meant and who made them, Hollywood. These elisions are resolved by repetition of Hollywood, and anchored by repetition of reference to *Bonnie and Clyde*. The final point further develops these ellipses for rhetorical effect, ‘here at last is the real thing. Don't miss it.’ We have *Bonnie and Clyde* equated with the ‘real thing’, which we might adduce by reading back through the anaphoric reference to meaning a film that succeeds, as did those films for which the audience is nostalgic. There is also the imperative addressed to the implicit subject of the reader(s) to not miss the film.

Modality

This review is consistently didactic, with qualifiers only serving within construction of adjectival groups, 'rather ordinary' and 'somewhat muffled', and the notable conclusion with the definite negative imperative.

Relation to content categories

Realist is featured in the introduction, in relating the historical authenticity of the photographs used in the credits.
Genre occurs within the development of the evaluation, with the film implicitly defined as a gangster film by association with 'other gangster films'.
Style features solely within the production background, related to the cinematography.
Original recurs briefly in background in relation to both the screenplay and the spontaneity of Dunaway's performance.
Violence is largely elided, with crime being preferred within the description and violence referenced mostly implicitly with mention of guns.
Brilliant, as a category, recurs in the background, used to describe both the screenplay and the film itself.
Contemporary features briefly in the evaluation with the film described as 'modern'.
Classical and **French New Wave** are collocated in the evaluation, with the contrasting of Guffey as implicitly Classical Hollywood against the camera style of the New Wave. This is also developed in the description of Penn as **new** talent.
Content and **anecdote** feature throughout, and are not always clearly distinguished with description of the film shifting into description of the historical figures, and vice versa, in adjacent sentences or even within sentences. We do have, primarily, a development from content to anecdote in the first paragraph, and a reversal of this in the second.

Overall

This review is predominantly organised through the use of ellipses, setting up the enigma of the credit sequence photographs, and answering itself in addressing the questions of who are the production personnel involved in the film, and what is the relation between *Bonnie and Clyde* and some imaginary body of films for which the audience are nostalgic, Additionally the review uses various other rhetorical devices, such as the oxymoron describing the tone of the film, and the concluding imperative to see the film. Furthermore, the review is organised around two historical parallels. The first is the relation between the events of the film and the actuality of the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde, mediated through reference to the use of authentic photographs. Similarly, the second is the relation between the film, as contemporary, and earlier historicised films; gangster films, Penn's films, films that the audience are nostalgic for, and the films Burnett Guffey worked on at the time that the historical events of the film's story were transpiring. The first parallel implicitly develops the review's position on the film as realist, with this equated with historical authenticity or accuracy. The second plays on associated oppositions between the new and old Hollywood, figured by Penn (and the film) and Guffey, and between Hollywood and the New Wave. Here we find two canonical frames of reference, which are dialectically resolved, privileging at the same time Classical Hollywood and the New Wave. The review occludes any distinction between art and entertainment, whilst, however, assuming that recent Hollywood film has not been of a comparable standard to either classical Hollywood or the New Wave. Alongside this we have the implicit association of positive value with gangster films, hence genre cinema.

This review is singular in its avoidance of the use of the content category violence. Brief reference is made to the historical Bonnie and Clyde killing 18 people, and mention is made of Clyde being attacked, and having a gun, within the film. Amongst all those other reviews considered in the content analysis and discourse analysis none feature violence less proportionately than this review. Amongst those reviews that are vaguely comparable we have two of the longest reviews, which cover the violence in detail but have more varied focus, and the review by Andrew Sarris that concisely claims that the film concerns violence as ‘an American folk characteristic’. As such, the *Times* review seems to be denying the moralist framework that is used elsewhere to condemn the film, but also eschewing the thematic strand of auteurist approaches. Instead, the most explicit criteria by which the film is evaluated is historical accuracy, ‘exact’ness, being ‘impeccably true’ to its period. However, the review is not entirely as literalist as this may suggest. Through its own artifice, the use of the onomatopoeic device to represent the photographs in the credits, the review does imply recognition of artifice in the film's representation of Bonnie and Clyde. Further, the review explicitly recognized the mythic nature of the story, and the action and appropriateness of transposing (scripting) the historical events in a contemporary film, which ‘captures’ the story in an immaculate and modern way.

In this we can develop the singularity of this review that avoids simple conceptions of realism, oppositions between art and entertainment, genre film and Hollywood against European cinema. However, it similarly restricts explicit description of style, anchors its description of the plot in relation to historical parallels, and praises the film and production personnel with vague superlatives, 'brilliant', 'immaculate', 'impeccable', providing little or no elaboration of these evaluations except in relation to historical authenticity. Possibly the majority of the other positive reviews are equally vague, but in contrast tend to frame their praise through the use of either the metaphor of painting or poetry. Although this review acknowledges the contribution of the director to the film, particularly with the headline 'Hollywood director rings the bell', as stated previously the review does not accept a purely auteurist conception of film, instead recognising the contribution of scriptwriters, cinematographer and producer, as well as the involvement of the stars. The film is not explicitly recognized as innovative, although it is not entirely clear whether 'original screenplay' is used as a single text unit, meaning a screenplay not derived from another source, or as a paratactic construction, a screenplay that is both original and brilliant. However, the evaluation does figure the film as indicative of a renaissance in Hollywood film, a return to form.

Conclusions of the Discourse Analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde* Reviews

On the basis of the preceding discourse analysis of eight reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* it is my intention to draw some conclusions and consider the extent to which they would apply to all or most of the contemporary reviews. This, of course, raises the question of how representative these reviews are of those forty reviews considered within my content analysis, and further, how representative these may be of anglophone reviews not available to the researcher. This last question will have to be deferred, although I might suggest that the contexts of the reviews, mainstream newspapers from the US and UK, with primarily popular readership, as well as specialist film press, do approximate the most read reviews, in the two different senses of 'most' read. The mainstream newspapers constitute the wider readership on the basis of readership figures, whereas the film journals correspond to a greater interest, in terms of the specialist interest of their readers in film.[188] However, more urgently I should consider how representative the selected eight reviews were for the sample used in the content analysis. The reviews were chosen on the basis of membership in the groupings I discerned through the content analysis; groupings characterising particular tendencies within the sample. These particular reviews were also chosen on the basis of length, excluding the longest, least manageable, reviews from this close analysis. Finally, where more than one review was chosen to represent any grouping, this was done on the basis of representing any antithetical discourses discerned within each group. We can address the question of representativeness from two directions: how representative is a chosen review of the reviews with which it is grouped, given the findings of the correlation analysis of the content?; secondly, what is omitted by concentrating on the reviews from these groups? What are those reviews that could not intuitively be grouped like? Do some share certain characteristics, or are they singularities?

I will first address this question of the omitted reviews. On the basis of consideration of the seventeen reviews that were not included in the groups I would suggest that for several there exist correspondences between the reviews and particular groups. Alternatively, some of these reviews were characterized by a marked emphasis upon a single category in the content analysis. For an example of the first, one particular review was considered for a group of reviews defined by the collocation of emphases on the content categories Violence and Aimless, but this group was discarded since, aside from this review, it mapped exactly the theme group. This particular review, then, written by the novelist Henry Miller and found in the magazine *International Playmen*, can be seen as a confederate of the theme group. It is distinguished in part from these on the grounds of an excess of anecdote (as well as having a distinctive moral position). This was a relation that was repeated across the non-grouped reviews. At least impressionistically, it was possible to discern similarities between each review with a group of reviews, with, however, a pronounced emphasis in the single review upon one or two content categories, commonly on Anecdote, which marked a distinction from the relevant group. In addition, then, to this confederate of the theme group, we might identify one review akin to both the style and violence groups, yet featuring an excess of anecdote, and three further reviews similar to the violence group, with two of these marked by an excess of content or anecdote, and the third lacking diversity in terms of content categories due to emphasis on Violence and Anecdote.

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[188] Whether alternative critical practices would be found in different contexts, either in kinds of print media publication not included here, reviews in the popular weekly TV guides in America, or counter cultural 'little

In those reviews featuring a marked emphasis upon one or two categories of content, which distinguishes them from the groups by their lack of diversity and hence reduces correlation of concerns, we might identify examples concentrated upon Anecdote, Violence, Content, or else combinations of these. For instance, we find two reviews that have in common, drawing upon the content analysis tabulation, an excessive proportion of Anecdote (exceeding eighty per cent). Less pronounced proportional emphases enable defining one review by its emphasis on Anecdote and Violence, two reviews by emphasis on Violent (with a balance of Content and Anecdote), two reviews by emphasis on Content, and two reviews by overall focus on Content, Anecdote and Violence, with omission or backgrounding of most other content categories.

This leaves three remaining reviews. Two of these seem to share characteristics with each other, and also some similarities with the journal reviews, particularly those with attention to genre. For one of these, by David Robinson in the *Financial Times*, this would be rationalised by my presumption that this is the same David Robinson who wrote for *Sight and Sound* in the 50s and 60s. These two reviews are distinguished by shared valorisation

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magazines', say, clearly cannot be determined without more exhaustive research. On the basis of my cursory survey of 'little magazines' I would suggest they included few or no references to *Bonnie and Clyde*.

of genre, and both elide the painter and lyrical metaphors, and have good correspondence in their choice of content categories except for a difference in choice between Brilliant and Consistent. The final remaining review, from the seventeen, I have included within the discourse analysis as a singularity. It remains for me to justify why I can discard those reviews that have unbalanced emphasis, particularly upon Anecdote, as well as this small group of two genre reviews. Later in my conclusions I will consider the extent to which the entire survey of reviews features the use of the expressive theory, an art-critical conception of artistic expression, attributed to an artist, associated with film most particularly in relation to different tendencies of auteurism. However, aside from this I am failing to account for the critical practices of the more predominantly journalistic reviews, those organised around anecdote, particularly news discourses, and those that focus on content, perhaps mostly plot, with restricted critical discourses. This last factor, that some of these reviews are most emblematic of journalistic practice, does not however mitigate their exemption, since this lack of critical discourse still functions as a critical practice, which in the terms of my thesis might be formative of, or reflect, wider receptions of the film. I will particularly address this below in relation to a conception of 'tabloid' discourse, but will otherwise leave my justification until after my conclusions from the reviews that were submitted to discourse analysis.

I will return to the question of how representative these reviews are of their respective groups as I consider each in turn, and particularly where more than one example from any group has been analysed. Within these conclusions from the discourse analysis it is my intention to discuss the critical practices and enthymemes of each analysed review, and consider whether these are reflected in the group. I am elaborating upon the overall findings of each discourse analysis by relating the review to wider critical practices. In particular, I am considering the use in the reviews, explicitly or implicitly, of various art-critical theories, and the use of particular concepts. These theories include those referred to by David Bordwell in *Making Meaning*, although he mostly defines them as heuristics, and also those referenced by Janet Staiger and Edward Murray.[189] The objective theory considers the film as self-contained, an object of criticism in its own right. The expressive theory advances a conception of film, in our sample, as art, as a personal expression of an artist, and this theory coincides in this respect with auteurism, particularly with more Romantic conceptions of artistic expression. The pragmatic theory considers the film in terms of its effect on the audience, or at least the reviewer. The mimetic theory is concerned with the relation of the film to the real world, in terms particularly of faithfulness in its representation. Lastly, the commentative heuristic is an approach that resolves an apparent disparity between aspects or elements of the film by considering this disparity as intentional and constructed with reflexive logic. This might be opposed to the emphasis on unity of the artistic object, the film, which is commonly a presumed corollary of the expressive theory. Further to these art-critical theories I will consider critical practices in relation to several other concepts - realism, auteurism, humanism, moralism, significance, unity, and subjectivity, and the bipolar oppositions art/entertainment, Hollywood/Art cinema. Finally, less contained concepts such as tone, aesthetic, and innovation/originality will feature in some of my characterisations.

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[189] See Bordwell *Making Meaning* on critical 'routines or practices', or the craft of criticism, chapter 2, especially pp37-42. Also see Staiger *Interpreting Films*, especially chapter 9, pp178-195 'With the compliments of the auteur', and Edward Murray *Nine American Film Critics: A study of theory and practice* (Frederick Ungar, New York, 1975), pp148-149, includes definitions of the objective, expressive, pragmatic and mimetic theories.

Painter group

The discourse analysis included three reviews belonging to this group, with the key example solely representing this group the review from *The Listener*. Additionally, the *Evening Standard* review was also included in the violence grouping, and the *New Statesmen* review was found in both the violence group and the style group. To isolate the critical practices from the tendencies of the other groups, the critical position, specific to ideas of canonicity and enthymemic values, as well as the critical practice can be summarised as follows. This review relates the realism of *Bonnie and Clyde* to documentary, and realist painting, and suggests an equivalence of the film with both Realist Painting and French Film *Noir*. The review also includes the metaphor of 'lyrical', which is used to naturalise the (otherwise) inexplicable elements of the film. In terms of its critical position, this review assumes a canon of (realist) art and art cinema, with positive values associated with the content categories lyrical, original and painting.

The review features negotiation around the concepts of violence, realism and genre. The violence of the film is described, and serves to qualify the evaluation of the film. Realism is defined in relation to documentary and Realist Painting. The genre of the film is qualified as 'gangster' film, but also associated with French *noir*. Primarily, in terms of theoretical approaches, this review utilises the expressive theory, with an auteurist equation of Penn with his film, and further evaluative collocation of lyrical/original and associations with realist painting which relate the expressive theory to evaluation. The review negotiates recognition of innovation and validation of the film, particularly around the tone and aesthetic of the film. Innovation is restricted to the 'elegiac' quality of the film, hence its tone, whilst the association with realist painting and genre also contributes to the aesthetic perception. Violence is problematic, despite the genre.

I now consider the second review to begin to develop the shared practices and positions within the group. The *Evening Standard* review also uses the expressive theory, here in respect of a thematic auteurist approach, which characterizes violence as the theme of the film and its director. The review qualifies realism, which it explicitly defines as authenticity, both in respect to anachronism and the thematisation of violence. It also effectively qualifies violence by this designation as theme. A canon incorporating art, as well as art and Hollywood cinema, is mobilised, with positive values associated with realism, painter and original. In distinction to the review from *The Listener*, this review elides attention to genre, and designation of the film as lyrical, but includes the Brilliant category. Innovation is associated with the treatment of violence as theme, but also implicitly with the tonal organisation and look of the film, conflated as the 'approach' of the filmmakers.

Finally, the *New Statesmen* review again uses the expressive theory, although modified in two respects. The review partially adopts an auteurist approach, but qualifies this by recognising the artistic contributions of the cinematographer Guffey, and scriptwriters Newman and Benton, in addition to director Penn.[190] It combines the pragmatic theory and expressive theory within its conception of art, which corresponds to modernism. Art is associated most closely in the review with Francis Bacon, being characterized as original, consistent, sophisticated, and effective, so sharing the emphasis upon novelty, consistency and complexity, and potentially disruptive or shocking effect, with modernist art. The expressive theory is also underplayed by the review's hint of the objective theory. According to this approach the film is designated as grammatical actor in its own construction. Beyond this blend of theoretical approaches, the review also qualifies realism, and violence in relation to its sophisticated representation in *Bonnie and Clyde*.

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[190] Richard Dyer's *Stars* offers various definitions of auteurism and conceptions of authorship, but for the most part criticism has concentrated on the authorship of directors, pp151-152.

Realism is related to authenticity, but also to the 'ballad' form of the film. The sophisticated treatment of violence is considered in terms of the film's style and tone, and effect on the audience. This relates to a defence of the subject matter of the film that recognizes implicitly the moral concerns of other reviewers. The review, as noted in relation to modernist art, does recognize an art canon, and also suggests the dichotomy art/entertainment, with *Bonnie and Clyde* situated as art. In terms of the antithesis present in this group this review includes the category Brilliant, but omits Genre as well as the Lyrical category.

Common to the analysed reviews in this group we find use of the expressive theory, with some inflection of auteurism in each review. Almost by definition of this group we have valorisation of painting and originality, as well as realism, most clearly in two of the reviews, specifically realist painting in the key example. Each review features some qualification around the concept of realism, and in some way addresses the category of violence, either qualifying it or designating it as theme or subject matter, and so defending, or excusing, the violent content of the film. The reviews share canons that incorporate art and art cinema, although with the more explicit inclusion of (some) Hollywood cinema in one. Aside from these aspects these reviews differ in relation to the antithesis of brilliant and genre, and with the use of the lyrical metaphor in one example. *Bonnie and Clyde* is associated with distinct privileged artists and films, whether French *noir* and realist painting, realist painting and *On the Waterfront*, or the modernist painting of Francis Bacon. However, there is close correspondence of the critical practices and positions amongst these reviews, particularly with the use of the expressive theory, valorisations of painting, originality and realism, and qualifications around potentially contested concepts of realism and violence. Further, all these reviews in their evaluation and recognition of innovation make an association between the innovation and either the tone or visual style of the film, or both, most commonly aligned around key scenes of the film's treatment of violence. Again, on the basis of impressions, we might consider how these shared characteristics are reflected in the remaining three reviews of the group, as well as considering differences between these examples and those of other groups, as we develop them. All the other reviews in the group feature reference to Arthur Penn, and some sense of the author's expression, or construction of the film. Violence is qualified or defended in all the reviews, although a more literal perspective on realism is found in a review from the

Sun. Further, almost by definition, the positive associations of painting and originality with the film are common to all the reviews.

Theme

This group included two reviews submitted to discourse analysis, with a *Daily Mail* review and one of Bosley Crowther's reviews from the *New York Times*. These reviews, and the group, are emblematic of the particularly negative reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and partly in respect of this there is almost no overlap between these reviews, or the group, and any other grouping, since they are predominantly positively inflected. This group, then, is particularly vital to this analysis in considering the general contestation in the critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and specific contestation around concepts such as realism and violence. It is also important in order to characterize the full extent of the spectrum, or space, of critical positions amongst the reviews, and relations between critical practices and critical positions.

Concentrating upon the *Daily Mail* review we find the mimetic theory privileged, with focus upon the relation of the actions of the characters of *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly the violence, and the real world. This is addressed with reference to an assumed moral framework, which might be defined as a conservative humanism. The review secondarily utilises the expressive theory, but negatively in designating the film as aimless, lacking a coherent artistic expression. This evaluation is justified by recourse to the concept of psychological realism. The review, in line with this generally negative perspective, does not imply a canon, but does provide a negative association to genre, Hollywood, entertainment and melodrama, all perhaps implicitly opposed to canonical art. More significantly, the film is perceived as representative of a threat to established values and behaviour, a threat associated directly with the young 'permissive' society. However, this is deconstructed by the dismissal of the film's 'nonmessage' and characterising the film as inconsequential melodrama.

Within the Crowther review again we find a negatively inflected use of the expressive theory, here combined with the concept of intention. The aimlessness of the film is denigrated, but in addition the historical inaccuracy and unsuitable characters are attributed to Penn. Crowther uses a similarly negative auteurism in branding Penn as aggressive.[191] Whilst the *Daily Mail* associates the film with a threat, Crowther finds the film itself threatening. The matter of historical accuracy again relates to mimesis, and an assumed mimetic stance on realism equating historical accuracy, and representative authenticity, with the goal of realist art. This use of the mimetic theory again relates to a moral framework, which in this case is slightly less moralistic and might simply be termed humanist. We also find negative associations made within this review with entertainment and genre, and Crowther marks a commercial/art distinction as a bipolar opposition.

Across the pair of reviews then we note some combination of the mimetic and expressive theories in approaching the film. They both also feature a negative canon identified with genre and entertainment. Both utilise an assumed moral framework, although Crowther is slightly less polemical and moralistic. Both privilege anchoring their perspectives on the film within perspectives on 'reality', rather than considering the film as a film. Opening up to consider the remaining reviews in the group, unsurprisingly we find this combination of attention to mimesis and aimlessness in the two other reviews by Crowther, whilst the first review by *Time* combines a critique of aimlessness and the film's inconsistent blend of attention to realism, mimesis, and 'violent claptrap'. The final review, from *The Saturday Review*, features a critical perspective on the film's realisation of its director's, or scriptwriter's, expression, but this review is more ambivalent, and qualifies its conception of realism in relation to genre. This review, then, differs in not simply applying the mimetic theory in its consideration of realism and violence in the film. This was the only review from the group that also featured within another, namely the lyrical group. This group, as already referenced, was almost synonymous with a grouping defined by the collocation of violence and aimlessness, but beyond this there is not entirely conclusive consistency in the critical practices and critical positions utilised by the reviews. Most importantly, this last review, which was not closely analysed, does not share the combination of a moral and mimetic approach to realism and violence. Once I have elaborated my conclusions concerning the other groupings of reviews I will return to this configuration of mimetic perspectives upon violence and realism that evidently marks the most negative reviews. It remains for me to develop the extent to which the expressive perspective on violence and realism characterized the most positive reviews. This line of inquiry will also be developed in considering changes in critical practice, in critical vocabulary, which might have contributed to the accommodation or incorporation of *Bonnie and Clyde* in a canon of films. Similarly, the incompatibility of the mimetic approach and the expressive will be illustrated with analysis of the contestation of these reviews' positions in letters to their publications.

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[191] Frank Eugene Beaver *Bosley Crowther: Social Critic of the film 1946-67* (PhD Dissertation University of Michigan 1970) published by (Arno Press Cinema Program, New York, 1974) notes that in a retrospective interview Crowther suggests his rejection of *Bonnie and Clyde* was due to the 'failure of the film's makers to properly clarify the psyches of the two killers.' Beaver also argues that Crowther's position in his reviews of

Returning to this group of reviews, in the pair analysed we find shared use of a moral framework, predominantly humanist. In my first hypothesis, before reconsidering, I speculated two tendencies in review criticism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, one that would combine thematic focus and a moral, humanist framework, contrasted with a tendency focussed on style. Although my content analysis did not support this hypothesis, due to a general lack of particular attention to style, this distinction between those reviews privileging mimetic or expressive perspectives upon the film to some degree parallels that conception. However, with the more ambivalent review from the *Saturday Review*, we find a different perspective on violence, which although collocated with aimlessness is not characterized as aimless or within a moral framework, but rather in connection to genre. Although a moral position is invoked in vulgarising popular audiences' liking for violence, and violent genres, this is somewhat removed from the humanist position shared by the other group reviews. Significantly, the other review outside this group that emphasises violence and aimlessness also utilises a mimetic approach and moral framework, but this is distinct in terms of its polemical intent, being an attack of the freedoms of representation of violence in Hollywood film, as opposed to puritanical regulation of the representation of sex.

Violence

The group defined by the collocation of Brilliant and Violence is represented by four reviews from the discourse analysis. Although one review of this group featured exclusively this review was not considered for the discourse analysis on the basis of length. Instead we have reviews selected that combine inclusion in this group with, respectively,

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Bonnie and Clyde corresponds to that put forward in his reviews of *Brute Force* (1947) and *Asphalt Jungle* (1950). Clearly the commercial/art distinction is significant here, see p145 and p146, footnote 3, respectively.

the painter group, *Evening Standard* review, journal group, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, journal, style, and lyrical groups with *Sight and Sound*, and style and painter, the *New Statesman* review.

The *Evening Standard* review as outlined above for the painter group, uses the expressive theory and characterizes the violence of the film as its theme, with a thematic auteurist approach. It mobilises a canon of films and art including Hollywood and art cinema. Alongside positive value associated with active Realism, Painter and Original content categories, the review valorises the film for its approach to violence, in terms of tone and aesthetic.

The review from the *Monthly Film Bulletin* also uses the expressive theory, although with more explicit auteurist conception, more specifically auteurist motif criticism. As with the *Evening Standard* the violence of *Bonnie and Clyde* is distinguished as its content, as a theme, and further as an element of the motif pairing violent/tender. Realism is also treated as an element of the motif fantasy/reality(/myth). Whilst the film is considered accurate, the relation of the film to reality is entirely formulated in terms of the director's construction of the film. Auteurism is used to relate the film to the development of Penn, with reference to his earlier films, but this review elides any references that might indicate an art or filmic canon, and also elides genre, as did the *Evening Standard* review. The evaluation is based on coherence and appropriateness, of the director's treatment of motifs. One further motif pairing comedy/doom indicates tone as relevant to this treatment. However, this review does not develop an aesthetic perception of the film, and further sees the film as different by degree, brilliant, rather than by kind, innovative.

The *Sight and Sound* review not only represents both the violent and journal groups, like the *Monthly Film Bulletin*, but also style and lyrical. Again, this review utilises the expressive theory, with a largely auteurist conception, treating violence as the key theme of Penn's film and relating his approach, style, consistency, and tone (moodshifts) to his development as an auteur, and in this film to generic transformation. Unlike the above reviews of the group this review is marked by a distinct configuration of the content categories Style, Genre and French New Wave, and an elision, or denial, of Realism. Innovation is related to Style and Genre, with the look of the film characterized by contrast to gangster films. The tone is defined as consistent, despite moodshifts, and associated with the French New Wave. As with the *Evening Standard* review it formulates a canon that includes Hollywood and European art cinema, particularly the French New Wave, with frequent reference to Godard and Truffaut.

The *New Statesman* review has been elaborated above for the painter group of reviews. Whilst also utilising the expressive theory it does not sustain a fully conventional auteurist approach in its recognition of the significance of the role of cinematographer and scriptwriter, in addition to director. Realism is associated with authenticity, but also qualified in respect of the 'ballad' form of the film. As with all the analysed reviews of this group the film is validated for its particular treatment of violence as subject matter (sophisticated and playful in this review). The review also contests alternative moral objections to the choice of violent subject matter and the 'seductive' realisation of this theme. The review mobilises a modernist canon of art, which implicitly includes film as well as painting, and in which *Bonnie and Clyde* is associated with the paintings of Francis Bacon.

Hence, the analysed reviews of this group significantly share a conception of the film's appropriate treatment or representation of violence, and consider violence a suitable theme or motif. They each use the expressive theory, although with a distinctive degree of adherence to auteurism in some. In this respect the film's approach is evaluated in terms of consistency, coherence or appropriateness, and these are commonly applied to the visual aesthetic, and tone of the film. Realism is consistently qualified, or even elided, and these reviews do not make significant use of the mimetic theory. These reviews are most antithetical to those of the theme group that were marked by moral antagonism to the violent subject matter and characters of the film. Across the whole of this group of reviews, however, this conception of violence as suitable theme or motif, rather than social threat, is maintained, and similarly consistently the treatment of violence is conceived as an element of the film's approach that is judged in terms of consistency. Whereas the theme reviews commonly characterized the film as aimless, by an analogy with a message, these reviews consider the film in itself. This is also common to those reviews not included in this group but defined as confederate reviews, which incorporate positive positions on the film's violence, and consistency, but are marked by excessive use of content and anecdote, with inattention to style and other content categories. There are variations across the group itself around the use of the lyrical or painterly metaphors, and antithetical emphases on style or genre. There is a significant overlap between this group and the journal reviews, which I shall consider next.

Journal

The analysed reviews in this group have already been developed for this previous violent group. I will now suggest any further shared characteristics or practices found in this group, and exceptions in the other reviews to the characteristics implied by these two. The two analysed reviews from this group, that from the *Monthly Film Bulletin* and *Sight and Sound*, were joined with reviews from trade journals *Kine Weekly* and *Variety*, and an additional extract from a *Sight and Sound* article that reviewed the film. Hence the audience for the selected reviews contrasts with that of the two trade magazines. Whereas the analysed reviews share the use of the expressive theory, with both using some sort of auteurist approach to the film, the trade journals are marked by inattention to Penn, such that he only features in the credits in the *Kine Weekly* piece, and they instead focus on production values and audience appeal.

Again, while the selected reviews qualify realism, both in relation to the film, and significantly denying realism as an evaluative criterion, the trade press emphasises the believability and 'real-life' basis of the story. Violence was qualified as a theme or a motif by the specialist critical magazines, but described in terms of audience appeal or lack of appeal in the trades, ‘strong meat’ and ‘rough stuff’. An economic imperative enforces some adherence to a mimetic approach by the trades. Further, the two selected reviews shared the emphasis on consistency evidenced throughout the violent group. Although the *Kine Weekly* review weakly endorses this perspective, *Variety* stresses inconsistency and incongruity in the film, particularly associated with Penn's direction. We might explain this discrepancy in terms of the magazines focus on mass box office appeal and accessibility, at least as criteria for Hollywood films. That which is characterized as sophisticated or subtle consistency and cohesion by the specialist critics is marked as confusing or jarring inconsistency by *Variety*.

Finally, the *Sight and Sound* review associated the film with a canon of both art and cinema, including Hollywood and art cinema, while the *Monthly Film Bulletin* elided any canon. Similarly the trade press feature few or no references to other films, and no allusion to other arts. Again this is explicable on the basis of contrasting readership.

As the correlation analysis noted this group of reviews shared omission of the Painter category, and for the most part of Lyrical. The specificity of film, and the filmic focus of their respective readers, explains both this avoidance of metaphors for the film and also their shared use of genre as a way to define the film. These reviews use specific film critical discourses rather than general art-critical approaches. The analysed reviews of this group are not entirely representative of this group, being exemplary rather of the overlap with the violent group. However, they do reflect the antithetical discourses within the group, around Realism against the Style, French New Wave, and Godard categories. Most notably, however, they do reflect the unavailability or non-selection of auteurism to the trade critics.

Style

The two analysed reviews of this group have already been considered within the violent group, so I will develop the common and distinctive characteristics of the remaining reviews with these. This group, despite the name, was defined by the collocation of original and brilliant, since the category style was deemed problematic. However, all but one of the reviews in the group feature style explicitly. Each of the reviews make use of the expressive theory, with either a conventional auteurist approach, or auteurism tempered by reference to the cinematographer and scriptwriters as well as the director. Style is related to artistic expression, and in the single review which excluded style, according to the content analysis, we find reference to the creativity and technique of the filmmakers.

Both the analysed reviews stressed consistency as an evaluative criterion in validating *Bonnie and Clyde*, whilst qualifying or denying the relevance of realism as a criterion, and identifying violence as a defensible theme or subject matter. Similarly, the remaining reviews predominantly praise the consistency of the film, with a correspondence between description of the film with superlatives, brilliant, and as consistent. Violence is accepted as subject matter, whether as generically appropriate to a gangster film or else suitable for artistic treatment, and contributing to the effect of the film. Violence, then, is also related to artistic expression, either as aestheticized, or treated in an original, or sophisticated, way by the film. Whilst realism was qualified by the *New Statesman* review, an expressive realism of the 'ballad' form, the *Sight and Sound* review elided realism and might be related to an anti-realist stance associated with the French New Wave. This is similar with the other reviews, although considering the film realist or authentic, even naturalist in one example. They qualify this realism in relation to dreamlike or ballad characteristics, a romanticised or aestheticized realism that is deemed appropriate to the film's subject. Realism is antithetical particularly to references to Godard and Truffaut amongst this group of reviews, with those that include these latter categories placing little or no explicit emphasis on realism.

The selected reviews both mobilised some kind of canon of art and/or cinema. The identification of *Bonnie and Clyde* with art, as part of a wider canon of art, or of Hollywood and art cinema, is maintained by the other reviews, with a shared primacy of the French New Wave within the canon, or else transcendent examples of Hollywood/genre film.

There is some overlap between this group and the violent group, and parallels exist between the approaches common within both groups. Most evidently, the groups correspond in their reviews' characterisation of the film's violence, and the stress on consistency and appropriateness. However, the style group places greater emphasis on other aspects of artistic expression, markedly style and also the transcending of generic forms or conventions. The exceptional review from the style group that does not explicitly allude to style (or at least exclusively) nonetheless distinguishes the film for transcending the gangster genre, particularly with its pathos, but also it creativity.

Lyrical

This group includes two reviews that were submitted to further analysis, one of Andrew Sarris' *Village Voice* reviews which was exclusively allocated to this group, and the *Sight and Sound* review previously outlined in relation to the style, journal and violence groups. Additionally, this group included two further reviews in common with the style group, surprisingly one in common with the theme group, one found in the painter group, and one other. The Sarris review was considered partly due to its exclusion from these groups, and also due to its length, whereas Pauline Kael's lengthy review was not analysed solely because of its length and incompatibility with the majority of other reviews, being much more varied thematically in its development.

The *Village Voice* review is formally distinguished in that it comprises two distinctive discourse units, an exposition on movie violence in response to Bosley Crowther's crusade against *Bonnie and Clyde* and a more conventional evaluative review of the film. In this respect it is not representative of the lyrical group, specifically with its emphasis on more general journalistic discourses. However, focussing on the evaluation and summary that make up the review proper we can note characteristics potentially reflective of the group.

Unsurprisingly Sarris' review mobilises auteurism as a particular version of the expressive approach. Although the term auteur is not used, auteurism is invoked both by the association of the film and Penn with his previous films, but also in consideration of Penn's intentions. Even the necessary reference to another director in connection to a thematically similar film can be seen as maintaining the auteurist position. Hence the review implicitly develops a canon of 'director's films', including Hollywood and 'obscure' films, and also incorporating gangster films.

It is partly due to its didactic element that this review can be characterized as denying the salience or appropriateness of the mimetic approach. The exposition explicitly opposes movie violence to real violence, and refutes a simplistic moral connection between them. Realism, as such, is elided in the review except in so far as Dunaway's performance is considered anachronistic, by being contemporary in style. Realism is implicitly inappropriate, however, for consideration of this representation of a saga or legend.

Violence is considered as an admissible subject, with valorisation of the sensuous representation of the film's violence. Lyricism, as consistent generally with the group, is mobilised as a positive evaluative criterion, but here bound to the representation of violence. Similarly, originality is used as an evaluative criterion, which is consistent with a Romantic conception of both art and the artist. The review does make vague use of the pragmatic theory, characterising positively the sensuousness of violence, whilst ambivalently the pathos and tragedy of the film. However, this review is qualified in its praise/defence of the film, particularly in respect of an inconsistency between mood and characters, and Penn's form being 'a thing of parts'.

Returning to the *Sight and Sound* review we can begin to consider which of its characteristics are specific to the lyrical group. This review again utilises the expressive theory, with auteurism related to style and consistency in this film, and more generally to the development of Penn as a director. Auteurism was, however, qualified in relation to genre, although with Penn's transformation of the genre deemed positive. Similarly to Sarris, and in common with the violent group of reviews, violence was considered as a theme, beside Sarris' subject, and the film's approach to violence validated. Realism, however, was elided. This review also mobilised a filmic canon of Hollywood and art cinema, as well as a more general art canon. The two reviews contrast chiefly in terms of considering the film as consistent, despite its moodshifts, or inconsistent, with a discrepancy between period mood and contemporary characterisation. This antithetical position on the consistency of the film reflects two tendencies suggested for the group in the content analysis, with particular association of inconsistency and anachronism. Extending consideration to the remaining reviews from this group we can consider how representative either or both of the analysed reviews were, for a group that was marked by several correlations in the content analysis. The group was defined by the collocation of Lyrical and Original, but did feature other correspondences between content categories, and the previously mentioned antithesis of Consistent/Inconsistent.

The remaining reviews of the group contrast with the analysed reviews in their use of realism as an appropriate category to consider the film. Additionally, however, they predominantly qualify this by relating the film to genre, particularly to the gangster genre. Realism and the gangster genre are further mobilised around violence, which within these other reviews of the group is marked for its extremity, in terms of graphicness or effect. These reviews are hence distinguished from those of the violent group in that the violence is not defended explicitly as an appropriate theme or subject matter.

The remaining lyrical reviews, then, also utilise the expressive theory, perhaps unsurprisingly given their recognition of originality and lyricism in the film. However, for the most part they are less distinctively auteurist than the Sarris and *Sight and Sound* reviews, although they all do reference Penn. However, they also utilise the mimetic theory, particularly in considering the film's realism and relation to contemporary reality. The lyrical metaphor can be understood as constructing a loose relation between the film's representation of reality and the real world. The painting metaphor, however, contrasted in emphasising the subjective and constructed nature of the representation, but suggesting less affinity with contemporary reality. In this respect we can consider the other reviews in the group as corresponding to a middle position in the spectrum of critical positions, between those reviews that emphasised an expressive approach, to realism and violence, and those that emphasised a mimetic approach. However, the analysed reviews corresponded more markedly with some of the other reviews, the style and violent groups, in their use of auteurism and characterisation of violence as a theme in the film, or within an auteur's motifs. There is a more explicit construction of a cinematic canon by these two reviews than in several of the others in the group, which can be associated with their auteurism. Across the group we have recognition of innovation, or at least originality, which either relates to the construction of tone or mood in the film, or more commonly in the non-analysed reviews to the effectiveness of the violence, or its representation.

Singular review: *The Times*

In order to minimally account for the practices of reviews outside my constructed groups I submitted the review from *The Times* to discourse analysis. As previously stated, this review was deemed a singularity, distinct from both the grouped reviews and those remaining. As such, this review is not representative beyond itself, but does constitute another available and selected position in the space of critical practices. This review was marked most distinctively by its occlusion of the violence in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and as such a related denial of a moral framework for considering the film's subject matter, or treatment thereof. The review utilised a combination of the expressive and mimetic theories, particularly in its description of the realism of the film. The photographs in the opening credits were noted for their authenticity, thus engendering a perceived relation between the film and historical reality. However, the same sequence was considered as establishing the tone of the film, and this expressive account of the film's representation of the past is further developed in describing the script and film as revealing 'the point about Bonnie and Clyde'. The review maintains a qualified auteurism. Whilst conflating Penn with the film, featuring a headline referring to the 'Hollywood director', and including references to his previous films, the review nonetheless attributes the tone of the film to the script of Newman and Benton, and the look of the film to Guffey.

The review is constructed around two historical parallels; firstly relating the film to the historical events and figures of Bonnie and Clyde; and secondarily relating its contemporary production to old Hollywood, and films the (an) audience are nostalgic for. This latter parallel constructs a canon, valorising particularly those films that people are nostalgic for (with who being unspecified, except by partial inclusion the reviewer). Additionally, gangster films and New Wave films are added to this canon, with two oppositions formulated between new/old Hollywood and Hollywood/New Wave. The film is hence positioned as representing a Hollywood renaissance.

The review thus qualifies originality. Genre is considered positively, whilst a qualified, or subjective/expressive realism is also validated. Beyond these aspects, the review features brief mention of tone and visual style, which are praised with superlatives, but not elaborated.

As previously stated this review is revealing in its avoidance of contesting the value or appropriateness of violence in the film (or its treatment). Whereas the analysed review by Andrew Sarris equally succinctly alluded to the violence, it still privileged this for its sensuousness and lyricism. This review, instead, focussed on characterising the realism of the film, which is achieved in both a sophisticated and naive/literalist way. The historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde are conflated with the filmic characters, and the review does not maintain much demarcation between these. However, the review stresses authenticity and ‘capturing perfectly’ reality, a double realism of authenticity and poetic or subjective realism. We could relate this, then, to a form of realism associated with art cinema, or more specifically in the context of this review with the French New Wave. The use of a conception of realism appropriate to art cinema to consider a Hollywood film highlights a possible change in the available critical practices to apply to Hollywood films. However, the characterisation of realism in art cinema and the French New Wave, at the time and now, is additionally contested around concepts such as 'anti-realism' or subjective realism, particularly relevant to consideration of aestheticization and tone, of different aspects of artifice.

Summary

In considering the analysed reviews and the wider survey in terms of their different critical practices, what I have suggested as their positions in the available space of critical practice, the clearest impressions concern antithetical approaches. Specifically, the difference in emphasis upon the mimetic theory and the expressive theory by the theme and violent reviews respectively informs their opposing evaluations of the film. However, in analysing a variety of reviews it is possible to suggest further differences in critical practice. On the basis of my content and discourse analysis I have associated the mimetic approach with the moral humanist criticism found in the theme group. This approach informed a particular perspective on violence and realism, in relation to the film, and was also associated predominantly with a negative evaluation. Although realism as a term or concept was commonly utilised by a broad cross-section of the reviews I have distinguished the mimetic approach as privileging the relation of the film to reality, both in terms of the faithfulness of its representation, but also in respect of the appropriateness of subject matter. Those reviews characterized as utilising the mimetic theory in addition to mentioning realism tended to use the concepts of 'the real' or 'reality' in organising their discourse structure, particularly in terms of what they thematised and referenced. Further, these mimetic approaches used realism as a key evaluative criterion. However, as I have suggested, the mimetic approach was not solely concerned with representation, a one-way relation between reality and the film, but a two-way relation that includes some concept of affect, or at least an association, particularly with violence or other socially prescribed behaviour, between movie violence, say, and real violence. This notion of an association between screen subject matter and society inevitably underlines moral strictures about what is appropriate for film, either as art or entertainment. This seems to be always primarily conceived in terms of the relation of the film to wider reality, rather than an application of the pragmatic theory with a conception of the film's effect on individual audience members. We might understand this in terms of these reviews expectation of, or search for, a message in films, and the conditions of a suitable message. Clearly this is more specific to humanist values, but as I have suggested it is implicated in the mimetic approach.

In relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, then, the use of the mimetic approach by these moral humanist critics, particularly those in the theme group, led to their damning the film's violence, particularly in terms of aimlessness. However, despite denying the film equivalence to the status of message this is deconstructed in these reviews by their fear of some communicative effect of the film on (young) audiences. Further, these reviews utilised a mimetic emphasis on realism, often simplistic with a denial of different conventions of realism, in order to further damn the film in terms of inaccuracy, inauthenticity and anachronism. Additionally, beside their perspective on the contested tropes of realism and violence, which has a determinate effect on their evaluations, these reviews sometimes justified their criticism in terms of the opposition consistency/inconsistency. This complemented characterisation of the film's (in)coherency, still considering the film as a failed communicative event.

This mimetic approach can be markedly contrasted with the expressive approach commonly used by many of the positive reviews of the film, including those of the style and violent groups. The expressive approach privileges the expressive theory, and consistently in these examples develops a qualified auteurism. These reviews either understate realism, particularly as an evaluative rather than classificatory criteria, or else sublimate realism to artistic expression with qualified conceptions of realism, either subjective realism or even anti-realism. Similarly, in relation to violence, these reviews conceive violence as subject matter or theme, and evaluate the film in terms of its (expressive) approach to this. This, as well as the treatment of realism, is evaluated in terms of consistency, appropriateness and originality, and commonly either includes particular attention to style, or at least use of the lyrical or painter metaphors.

My discourse analysis, however, suggests that the reviews do not fit a simple dichotomy between moral humanist critics and formalist critics, although this has been previously suggested elsewhere.[192] Such a separation is narrativized easily around generational difference, with Bosley Crowther as champion of the older humanist critics opposed to Andrew Sarris, or more readily Pauline Kael; as ascendant younger formalist critic. This generational ordering also corresponds to a simplified characterisation of the 60s, with the contestation of values, canons and traditions in the conflictual public space of the media, between the young and establishment. However, as I have consistently suggested, the reality is far more complex, despite the incompatibility and incommensurability of these two tendencies. Even my designating the 'mimetic approach' practised by the theme reviews elides their use of the expressive theory. They use a particular notion of art as message to mitigate their moral or artistic conservatism. Hence, it is my intention to elaborate the different ways of making sense of, or of characterising the movie, in use at the time. I will also consider the ways of accommodating the movie, or marginalizing it. The mimetic, expressive and pragmatic theories, various metaphors, models of film/audience relations, and taxonomies, including canons, privilege certain films, specific characteristics of films, and discount others. How these are available and used as critical practice, and change over time, relates directly to the change in filmic canon, or canons. Which concepts and tropes are available or unavailable to reviewers, and active or inactive in relation to particular films, can be narrativized to historicize critical practice. Hence, my analysis suggests that the expressive theory is clearly available to all reviewers at the time of *Bonnie and Clyde*, but was utilised in different ways and with different emphases. In particular, it is useful to consider the extent to which auteurism is applied to *Bonnie and Clyde*, and by whom. Janet Staiger has previously suggested the source of the nascent auteurism in review journalism of the 50s and 60s was in the literary New Criticism, whilst noting that "[i]t was not routinely practised, however, for films of mere entertainment."[193] This auteurism was qualified, without the singular focus on the director but attention to the writer, and additionally cinematographer and/or stars in some instances. What is the significance of the use of auteurism in some of the reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and its refusal or denial by other reviews, not only those with mimetic approach? If it was not routinely addressed to entertainment films, some or all Hollywood films, why was it applied here and what implications does this have?

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[192] See Murray *Nine American Film Critics*, p186, and Lester D. Friedman *Bonnie and Clyde (BFI Film Classics)* (BFI, London, 2000), p9, 'film criticism shifted from stodgy Bosley Crowther to pugnacious Pauline Kael' and for his narrativization pp22-26. Also Frank E. Beaver *Bosley Crowther*, p148, notes Crowther was voted the winner of the 'Blue-nose' award for 1967 in *Esquire* and cites Hollis Alpert 'Case of Crowther' on the effect on the status of Crowther (from *Saturday Review* 23/9/1967 p111), in footnote 3 for p148. See also Stefan Konfer 'Hollywood the shock of freedom in films' *Time* 8/12/1967, p37; Steven Carr 'From Fucking Cops! to Fucking Media!', pp84-5; Tom Stempel *American Audiences on Movies and Moviegoing* (University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, Kentucky, 2001) chapter 6, 'Closing the Sixties' particularly pp68-71; and John Cawelti in his intro to Cawelti (ed.) *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde*, p3.

I briefly want to address directly the subject of the canon, or canons, before resuming considering the variety of ways in which the expressive theory was used in the analysed reviews, including auteurist applications. Within the analysed reviews we have evidence for, or a suggestion of, several canonical positions taken in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, but also more generally.

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[193] Staiger *Interpreting Films*, p188.

Positions on film as art and corresponding notions of canon

1	No film= art	anti-auteur, film=entertainment	negative canon
2	some (few) films= art	exclusive/moral high auteur	Canon
3	these films= art	art cinema	canon
4	these, or those, films= art	art and other cinemas	canons
5	this film= art	auteurism related to Hollywood and genre	

These canonical positions clearly have direct bearing on the relevance of the expressive theory, and particularly auteurism. The negative canon, which denies all film the status of art with requisite placing of film as entertainment was unsurprisingly not evidenced in the reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, but was partly approximated by the trade press reviews. These considered the film in terms of production values and audience appeal rather than as art. However, these reviews excise the negative association of film as entertainment, and whilst they denied auteurism, eliding Penn, they did conceive film as craft. The second position, the Canon of high auteurs, corresponds to that invoked by the theme group of reviews, in that it emphasises the exclusivity and rarity of films that are art, maintaining the binary opposition of art/entertainment but with a few select films and auteurs included as art. This Canon mobilises an elite class of auteurs, but makes auteurism inappropriate to mere entertainment films. Staiger's work begins to suggest how a shift from negative canon to Canon informs critical practice in review journalism from the 1920s through to the 1960s. In particular, a shared Canon of realist humanist films, primarily by European directors, with the incorporation of some exceptional Soviet and non-European films including some from Hollywood, could be further developed. In respect of the reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, though, this Canon is primarily assumed, as befits an unproblematic Canon. Further, these reviews demonstrate that *Bonnie and Clyde* does not share the characteristics of Canonical film, aesthetically, in terms of mimesis, and in choice and treatment of its subject matter. Mimesis, as an evaluative criterion for a Classical Canon is problematised by particular aesthetic innovations, specifically neo-Realism and subsequently the French New Wave.[194]

The less exclusive canon, which incorporates a wider grouping of art films, and potentially more exceptional instances of other films, can be associated with the adoption and diffusion of auteurism, and heightened emphasis on expressive approaches to canon. This position possibly corresponds with some of the reviews from the painting group of reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Rather than assuming a single set of characteristics for Canonic films, this canon allows for a variety of characteristics, combined appropriately. As well as relating to the adoption of auteurism, this canonical position also relates to a wider range of art discourses, perhaps particularly around the acceptance of modernist forms (with a parallel art canon superseding an art Canon). This position did not explicitly exclude *Bonnie and Clyde*, but rather the canon required explication and the inclusion or exclusion of the film had to be negotiated.

Finally, the wider canonical position, which incorporates a multiplicity of canons, including art films and those from Hollywood and genre cinema, corresponds to a full adoption of auteurism. This was evidently reflected in several of the groups of analysed reviews, particularly the style and violence groups, and the specialist film journals with the exception of the trades. The widespread dissemination of this critical perspective is perhaps indicative of the degree of diffusion and penetration of auteurism within review journalism at the time of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s release.

The potential canon that includes *Bonnie and Clyde* relates differently to the general canonical positions. As implicitly suggested, this hypothetical canon is antithetical to the negative canon. However, there is some overlap or intersection with each of the remaining positions. Whilst the high Canon for the most part excludes the film, as evidenced in the analysed reviews, it is conceivable that the film could be accommodated into such a canon with an adapted criteria of mimesis, and in considering later reviews of the film it will be worthwhile to seek examples of this. Less exclusive, by definition, is the canon of art cinema, which can incorporate *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly by association with the French New Wave or in analogising the film with modernist painting. The canons of film have much more potential overlap, although the inclusion of *Bonnie and Clyde* as canonical, rather than simply being compared to canonical films, whilst being sensible is evidenced in only a small quantity of the analysed reviews. However, the comparison of *Bonnie and Clyde* with a variety of canonical films, and canons, does entail the development and application of specifically cinematic critical discourses, above and beyond auteurism and different inflections of the expressive theory. In this respect, my discourse analysis of the contemporary and subsequent reviews for *Bonnie and Clyde* might suggest the adoption and diffusion of such discourses.

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[194] Note, however, in Crowther's criticism, for instance, his preference for Neo-Realism. 'Crowther's claim that films have a unique ability to reveal reality to mankind caused him to prefer and seek pictures which made use of this possibility' (Frank Beaver *Bosley Crowther*, pp152-153, on Crowther's taste for 'graphic reality', also substantiated by his annual top ten lists which include *Open City* (1945) number one in 1946, and *Shoe Shine* (1946) number six in 1947, ibid p171).

The variety of applications of the expressive theory, as well as the mimetic theory, are informed, if not determined, by this variety of critical canonical positions. Relating to the simplified dichotomy we would associate the mostly negative moral humanist reviews with an exclusive Canon, and the positive formalist reviews with canons. These different positions have variant conceptions of film and of art cinema, and again we could elaborate these causally in terms of generational differences. The former relate to film as a moral lesson, and share a conception of art cinema organised around cinema as message, serious cinema, possibly incorporating neo-realism but also some more subjective cinema, such as Antonioni or Godard's *A bout de Souffle*.[195] The latter relate to film as film, and with the incorporation of the French New Wave share a potentially playful and aesthetic conception of art cinema. In addition, they more readily, and frequently accommodate Hollywood and genre cinema within their canons. These extremes of canonicity, and conceptions of film, are however mediated by the remaining canonical positions, and by models of relating to film as a painting, or as a poem, amongst other analogies. It is the ways in which these middle positions apply the expressive theory in their reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* that I now want to develop.

Whilst the theme group of reviews predominantly subsumed the expressive theory to the mimetic, using realism and unity as evaluative criteria and being resistant to innovation, they included one exception. This review considered the film, particularly its violence, primarily in terms of generic conventions rather than mimesis, and hence grounded the consideration of expression with genre. However, as with the rest of this group its final evaluation considered the film as aimless, concentrating on its failure to communicate a message (albeit considering this to be a fascinating message).

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[195] See Staiger *Interpreting Films*, pp193-195.

Alternatively, the lyrical group of reviews features another distinct balancing of the expressive and mimetic approaches. Whilst the group of reviews privilege the expressive theory, most markedly in the auteurism of the analysed review of Andrew Sarris, they predominantly also apply the mimetic approach. Whilst they conceive violence in terms of its extremity, but as an extreme (or significant) expression of the artist, most evidently in Sarris' evocation of the 'sensuous' violence, they also relate the mimetic theory to the contemporaneity of the film. Lyricism, as a metaphor, can be seen as mediating the mimetic and expressive theories. The notion of lyricism suggests art reflects contemporary reality, but in a formalised, altered way. This group is associated either with canon or canons, but does not necessarily situate *Bonnie and Clyde* in these.

A similar balance is instanced in the singular review from *The Times*. Although expression is partly subsumed by mimesis, with the valorisation of authenticity, in turn mimesis is subsumed to expression, with the artist capturing, or translating, reality. This review, whilst recognising canons, including old Hollywood and art cinema such as the New Wave, does retain the emphasis on realism of the canon, whilst denying the moral framework that justifies this.

The key remaining reviews that make significant use of the mimetic approach are the trades from the journal group. Whilst these share a specifically cinematic conception of expression with the specialist journals, notably around genre and technical (production) values, they in effect deny auteurism. In evaluating the film in terms of believability, they maintain the salience, if not dominance, of the mimetic theory as an evaluative criterion in use by the wider (potential) audience. Expression, albeit diminished by being related to craft, is conceived in terms of audience appeal, as is the film's violence. However, the specialist journals adopt an auteurist approach, offset by consideration of genre, and associated with canons, or potential canons. The *Sight and Sound* review is exemplary in its presumption of canons incorporating French New Wave and Hollywood films. In contrast the *Monthly Film Bulletin* elides a canon whilst maintaining an auteurist perspective on Penn's films.

Proceeding to those groups of reviews in which the expressive theory dominates or invalidates the mimetic approach, the painting group illustrates a distinct position. As well as privileging artistic expression, these reviews develop ideas of expression in their evaluation. In particular, in adopting a thematic auteurism, they evaluate the film in respect of its particular approach to its themes in relation to originality, and by analogy with various artistic modes or conventions, specifically realist or modernist painting. These reviews further equate the approach of the filmmakers with either its tone and/or its visual look. Artifice and construction are implicit in the representation, rather than a simple identification of realism with authenticity. The film is considered in relation to a canon of films and of art, although the boundaries of this canon vary with each review.

The violent group is again associated with either thematic or motif auteurism. Expression is related to evaluation, particularly with the evaluative criteria of consistency and appropriateness. Appropriate treatment of the motifs or themes of the auteur is valorised, and this in turn can be associated with a variegated set of appropriate approaches, the canons. Again, the active representation, in particular of violence, is stressed, rather than authenticity. Finally, the style group is associated with auteurist approaches, and consistency as key evaluative criterion, albeit a somewhat sophisticated conception of consistency. These reviews again privilege the expressive theory. They conceive the violence of the film as aestheticised, and as such expressive, or in terms of effectiveness, and so as an expressive choice. The style group is most markedly aligned with the possibility of canons, including the French New Wave and various classes of Hollywood and art cinema.

The final critical position, in terms of a balance of the mimetic and expressive theory, which I intend to outline is that adopted by more journalistic, specifically tabloid, discourses. I shall return to this, however, in due course, in discussion of both tabloid approaches and those reviews dominated by anecdote and description of plot content.

Further to this summary of the actualised critical positions in terms of the use of the expressive theory, I want to consider my conceptions of tone, aesthetics and innovation in relation to the analysed reviews. Whilst I am primarily concerned with aesthetic innovation in the film, or as it is suggested by characterisations of the film, I have avoided defining or delimiting the 'aesthetic' in the chapters of the thesis on content analysis and discourse analysis. Within the content analysis the category Style has been used but only a partial correspondence is assumed between style and aesthetic. As well as this the category Style was problematic partly in that it includes generalised commentary within the reviews referring explicitly to style or the aesthetic, but also specific description of stylistic choices in particular scenes. However, in the discourse analysis I have reintroduced the notion of the aesthetic in several instances, considering how configurations of style and other categories of content are organised to characterize this. Similarly, tone was excluded as a category in the content analysis, but has been discussed in the discourse analysis. I will address the status of both tone and aesthetic, as categories indigenous to the reviews or uncontained analytical constructions imposed upon, or used to interpret, the survey of reviews. In addition, I will elaborate what is understood by each term in my interpretation or characterisation of the reviews; what in the reviews is treated as salient in these respects and how this is organised in their general discourses; and in what way do these concepts relate to the critical practices of the reviews in general, to my groupings, or to individual reviews. In this respect, as with the findings of the content analysis in relation to style – that the reviews featured minimal description of style – it is clear that the reviews generally consider tone and aesthetic briefly, and in these instances in their summary evaluation of the film, if at all. Predominantly reviews do not address the aesthetic directly or explicitly. The mediated characterisation of the film in terms of the painting or poem metaphors might be suggested to provide a determinate framework for addressing the tone and aesthetic, resolving the problematic nature of the concepts in a particular way by analogy with an assumed *familiar object*. However, even in the lyrical group of reviews, say, we might suggest that tone might be appropriate, at least inferentially, to the reviews but the specific tone of the film might not necessarily be described consistently across the group.

In the painter group of reviews I have suggested that both tone and aesthetic, specifically the visual look of the film, are associated with the treatment of violence in the film as well as originality in its approach. In the *Listener* review, tone is implicitly elevated as an important aspect of the film, or films, by association with a reference to the importance of atmosphere in French Film Noir, and this influence on *Bonnie and Clyde*. The description of the film as elegiac also combines attention to tone and lyricism. Further, the look of the film, implicitly seductive and stylised, is related to the decorative representation of violence, but also to Realist Painting, in terms of beautiful composition and clarity. Finally, form, tone and aesthetic are combined in repeated description of the film's ballad form, and reference to the 'dreamlike' picnic sequence. The *Evening Standard* review more readily associates tone with the 'chilling' casual violence of the film, but places great emphasis on contrasts of tone, between scenes of violence, slapstick and 'delicate comedy'. Even Beatty's performance as Clyde is used to invoke the contrast between 'slack' and 'tense' atmospheres. The look of the film, however, which is summarily conflated with its approach, is primarily associated with the calmer moments of the film, albeit contrasted with the bloody, and described in terms of analogy with painting. The colours of Burnett Guffey's cinematography are related to Andrew Wyeth's painting, whilst significantly this review also privileges the picnic scene with its pointillist 'golden tones'. Tone and aesthetic, are hence characterized around the treatment of violence, and the contrast of this with the rest of the film. The *New Statesman* review analogises the film both in terms of its ballad form, but also in respect to Francis Bacon's paintings. Explicitly addressing the seductive 'aesthetic values' and the mixed 'tones' of the film, this review concentrates on how the treatment of violence informs both. Focussing particularly on the climactic ambush the review validates both the cinematography and the editing of 'alluring images', but also relates the aesthetic to the effectiveness of changes in tone. In the reviews from the group that were not further analysed the analogy between the cinematography, mostly referred to as photography, of Burnett Guffey, and some valorised form of painting is maintained. Guffey is named in the majority of these reviews.

Tone is also referred to in these reviews, as atmosphere, mood, emotion, and this is either related to the treatment of violence, or else to the contrasting of tone between the scenes of violence and other privileged scenes.

As with the contrasting use of the expressive and mimetic theories, the theme group of reviews are significant either in their distinctive description of tone and aesthetic or in their avoidance of these concepts. Primarily, these reviews describe the tone or aesthetic, or both, in relation to inconsistency or incongruity. For instance, the *Daily Mail* review, whilst highlighting the visual appeal of the film, likening it to Renoir's painting, damns it as a 'photographer's film' because of the 'cold' depiction of violence, and the film's melodrama. Similarly, Bosley Crowther focuses on the incongruity of tone, contrasting the elements of comedy and farce with the 'grisly' violence. In the analysed review the aesthetic of the film is not even vaguely considered, although this is unsurprising since the

the film is described as 'claptrap', and the director as 'aggressive'. In his other reviews we do have some recognition of style, in terms of 'skilful fabrication', and implicitly with the film described as 'jazzy'. However, this is still downplayed in relation to inconsistency, inauthenticity and aimlessness. In the other reviews of the group the aesthetic is similarly denied relevance or questioned, in terms of appropriateness or consistency, for instance the *Time* review considering the use of filtered photography. Primarily, then, the theme reviews avoid mention of style, or devalue style whilst emphasising tone in respect of incongruity. Tone is judged in terms of the film as message, and explicitly according to 'taste', and readily denigrated in association with farce, burlesque, melodrama, or slapstick, which are all presumed as commonly vulgar or tasteless.

In complete contrast, the violence group of reviews focus on aesthetic and tone in association with the concepts of consistency and appropriateness, as opposed to inconsistency and incongruity. I have discussed the *Evening Standard* and *New Statesman* reviews above in relation to the painter group. The *Monthly Film Bulletin* is similarly concerned with the 'modulated' tones, the 'pattern of moods' characteristic of the film. The review largely elides the aesthetic, except in its summary which praises the 'evocative' camera work', whilst validating the mixture of comedy and 'doom'. However, the description of the picnic scene implicitly associates the aestheticized, as 'dreamlike', and the tone, with its atmosphere of doom.

The *Sight and Sound* review also associates tone and aesthetic, albeit more explicitly as 'mood and *milieu*', and emphasises consistency, or at least coherence in the moodshifts. This review describes the aesthetic in relation to that of the French New Wave films of Godard and Truffaut, but also to Hollywood. The visual look of the film is characterized as a generic transformation of the urban chiaroscuro of the gangster film. Similarly the moodshifts are understood in relation to particular paradigmatic Godard films. Again, this review privileges the picnic scene as well as the climactic ambush, noting the camera work and use of slow-motion respectively, and these are also treated as emblematic of the tones, and shifts or ambivalence of tone in the film.

These reviews are representative of the other reviews of the violence group, particularly in their emphasis on the consistency or cohesiveness of tone, with moodshifts, and the appropriateness of the aesthetic approach. These are commonly associated, particularly through privileging the contrasting scenes of the picnic and the slow-motion climax. As with the painter group of reviews the tone and aesthetic are associated with the treatment of violence, but within this group the contrasting of the scenes of violence with the 'pastoral' scenes is more marked. Significantly the theme reviews either did not detail the picnic scene, or else qualified it as photographic. Within the violence group of reviews it is commonly described as extraordinary, but positioned as exemplary for the rest of the film.

The violence group overlapped with the analysed journal reviews. However, as with their general critical position the trade press reviews had a distinct conception of tone and aesthetic. The aesthetic is subsumed within praise of technical or production values, particularly the camerawork. Tone is addressed in terms of audience excitement and shock, and the appeal or non-appeal of the treatment of violence. The blend of comedy and violence, at least as synonymized as crime, is deemed problematic and inconsistent by the *Variety* review, whilst the 'excitement' is consistent for *Kine Weekly*. To some extent this conception of inconsistency, or an incongruous mix, is associated as much with genre demarcation as with a mimetic approach to, and problematisation of, the tonal organisation of the film. As with the theme group, the mimetic approach to the film mitigates aesthetic, or in this case generic, conservatism. Even the soundtrack is considered jarring, albeit implicitly by association with genre conventions.

The style group of reviews largely parallel those of the violence group in their use of the concepts of aesthetic and tone. Organising these primarily around consistency, they nonetheless mobilise the aesthetic in considering the stylised representation of violence and expressive realism of the film. Particularly, the aestheticized 'dreamlike' or ballad sequences are privileged, again both scenes of violence and the picnic or pastoral scenes. Tone is given less attention, although also related to the originality in the treatment of violence, and the film's transcending of generic norms, for instance with 'pathos'.

The key review from the lyrical group, by Andrew Sarris, devalues the 'pathos' of the film. Whilst emphasising the sensuousness or lyricism of the treatment of violence in the film, this review also suggests a degree of inconsistency between the period mood and the characters. Again, whilst not explicitly suggesting an inconsistency in mood at different points in the film, Sarris conceives a difference in quality of the realisation of the tone, between scenes of 'exuberance' and 'hysteria' when compared with failed pathos. Sarris does not, however, address the aesthetic of the film, except in so far as relating the sensuousness of violence and noise in gangster films centrally to aesthetics. In a sense, then, the lyrical is the aesthetic of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Significantly the remainder of the reviews in this group differ in how they characterize the film as lyrical, and how they conceive tone and aesthetic. In some instances particular scenes are privileged as lyrical, and this seems to combine a sense of these being marked tonally and aesthetically in contrast to the scenes of violence. Alternatively, some of the reviews of this group associate the lyrical metaphor with the form of the film, and particularly its combination and organisation of contrasting moods. Within this group then there is some contestation, or at least antithesis, around tone and aesthetic, especially tone, in terms of consistency or inconsistency, and around selecting the most significant aspects of the film, as lyrical, either the original treatment of violence or the overall tonal organisation.

The different groups of reviews then, to the extent that they are consistent in their approach to tone and aesthetic, vary in their particular conceptions and in how they associate these concepts with other evaluative criteria and content categories. Additionally, there is a suggestive correspondence between their conceptions of tone and aesthetic and the choice of scenes that they privilege in description. Finally, although I shall not consider the reviews that were not submitted to discourse analysis in terms of tone and aesthetic, simply because these were elided in the content analysis, I shall consider the singular review from the *Times*. This associates the tone of the film with both the opening credit sequence, and its use of photographs, as well as the script and its combination of comedy and 'sadness'. The look of the film is associated with Burnett Guffey, but praised in comparison with the New Wave. The praise of aesthetic and tone is not elaborated, and is qualified in respect of the review's discourses of realism. This review is possibly typical of the remaining reviews that were not further analysed, at least in that it briefly alludes to tone and aesthetic but does not develop either concept.

Throughout the above characterisation of the different reviews' treatment of the aesthetic and tone(s) of *Bonnie and Clyde* I have not made explicit what I consider to be understood by aesthetic and tone, and the possible relation between the two, at least in respect of *Bonnie and Clyde*. In considering the reviews I have used an expansive conception of film aesthetics which whilst focussed on visual style, the look of the film, and the use of sound, the aural equivalent to this 'look', also includes aspects of mise en scene, cinematography (composition, use of filters and lens, optical and mechanical effects such as slow-motion), editing, performance styles, costume and location. Style, or stylistic choice, in any of these aspects, contributes to defining an aesthetic. Additionally, however, I would associate tone and aesthetic. In terms of the aestheticization of affective elements, stylising scenes or sequences that are formative of mood (to the extent that individual scenes can be isolated from the whole film in this respect), reflexive expressive organisation of mood and modal sequences, I would subsume tone to the aesthetic of the film. Whereas, particularly in terms of an objective correlative, style can be seen to reflect tone or mood, I would emphasise, at least in relation to particular films including *Bonnie and Clyde*, that the aesthetic is determinant for atmosphere.

Chapter 3: Dialogues and contestation

The 'Crowther Controversy'

Moving from the discourse analysis of the contemporary reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* to the letters written in response to some reviews, as well as the reconsideration by Joseph Morgenstern in *Newsweek*, we can consider the way in which the film is characterised by this dialogue. I will also consider those reviews that might also be considered to particpate in a dialogue with Crowther, and function as critical interventions in the 'Crowther Crusade'. In particular, considering the letters written to the *New York Times*, we can investigate how much of the mimetic approach to the film used by Bosley Crowther is shared by the letters, how much they contest or agree with his evaluation within a shared evaluative and classificatory schemata, shared criteria, or to what extent, if any, they contest the relevance of these criteria, of this approach. Similarly, I will consider the extent that other critics explicitly contest Crowther's evaluative and classificatory schemata.

In particular, though, in looking at the organisation of these letters, both individually and as a single discourse unit, it is important to recognise the extent to which these are doubly mediated, both as responses to Crowther, but also as necessarily edited to fit the Mailbag format. In considering the organisation of them as a single unit, as well as their respective organisation individually, it is necessary to bear in mind the possible effects of editing. This might not simply amount to extracting elements of each letter and organising them into a coherent whole, but could potentially include active re-writing of their respective texts. Where aspects of the thematic and discourse structure suggest, by virtue of anomalies, the intrusion of the editor, it will be noted in the individual analyses. However I will primarily address the significance of the letters, and dialogue, in light of this mediated nature, in the conclusions of this analysis.

I will not elaborate the existing work on reception studies around film and television, but my analysis of the Movie Mailbag will draw upon some of the key ideas and assumptions of this work.[196]

Discourse Analysis of traces of public receptions of *Bonnie and Clyde*

New York Times Movie Mailbag 27/08/1967 sec. 2, p11 + 20

Discourse Structure

Overall

Title (Movie Mailbag)^Headline (Bonnie, Clyde)^(To the editor)^Letter one (ctd)^ Headline^(To the editor)^Letter two^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter three^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter four^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter five.

Hence we have an iterative structure In[Headline^(To the editor)^Letter n]

Letter one

(To the editor)^Background (review and seeing film) (Answer to Crowther) (Alternative reading/description) (Summary)^Name^Residence.

Letter two

(Headline)^(To the editor)^Postscript to film (elision?)^Name^Residence.

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[196] See for instance: Kim Christian Schroder 'Making sense of audience discourses: Towards a multidimensional model of mass media reception' *European Journal of Cultural Studies* vol. 3(2)(Sage, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, 2000); Martin Barker, Jane Arthurs and Ramaswami Harindranath *The Crash Controversy* on the issue of the typicality of audience members, and surveying audiences; Janet Staiger 'The Handmaiden of Villainy: Method and Problems in studying the historical reception of a film' *Wide Angle* vol. 8 no. 1; Eric Smodin ''This business of America': fan mail, film reception and *Meet John Doe*' *Screen* 37:2 Summer 1996, on typicality and G. Tom Poe 'Historical Spectatorship Around and About Stanley Kramer's *On the beach*' in Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby (eds.) *Hollywood Spectatorship: Changing perceptions of cinema audiences* (BFI, London, 2001) on the audience of the 'event' of a film exceeding the audience for the film.

Letter three

(Headline)^(To the editor)^Summary (re-evaluation of film) (Answer to Crowther)^Name^Residence.

Letter four

(Headline)^(To the editor)^(Answer to Crowther) Summary (morality of film)^Name^Residence.

Letter five

(Headline)^(To the editor)^Summary (on film embeds relation to current affairs)^Name^Residence.

The structure of the individual letters is less standardised than the following mailbag, and there are also differences in the space allocated to letters, consequently with shorter headlines, all two or three words, including the overall paraphrased title "Bonnie, Clyde" which doesn't even encompass the film's title. Particularly with the later letters these appear to be edited, or at least very concise, and this is in contrast to the majority of the seven letters in the subsequent mailbag (letters generally shorter, in terms of lines and words, than latter).[197]

Thematic Structure

For each of the mailbags I will apply discourse analysis to the individual letters, and then to the whole mailbag.

Letter one

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[197] Ronald Carter and Walter Nash *Seeing through language: a guide to styles of English* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1990) suggests letters to Newspapers often have a Problem-Solution structure, and citing Winter (1977) suggest they share the "*argumentative function* in communication. The fundamentals are a *fact*, a *statement*, or *situation* (normally proposed first) which is opposed by a contrary or different *fact*, statement or situation."

Thematisation

The background elides the letter writer as subject and so makes *Bonnie and Clyde* thematic. The answer to Crowther section thematises itself, and the opening paragraph of the description of the film thematises the film and metonyms for it. Subsequently, Crowther is thematised, followed by more elements of the film, whilst the summary thematises the film, its faults and the letter writer.

Cohesion

The background features references to the film title, Crowther, his review, and the letter writer, whilst the answer to Crowther features repetition around Crowther and his view, and the film, with a conflation of Crowther's opinion and 'vision' of the film.

The central paragraphs of the letter, constituting an alternative description of the film, develop from this answer to Crowther, with the conjunction 'rather' and further reference to Crowther, substitution for him, and citation from his reviews, leading into the specifics of the refutation. Developing from repetitions around the historical setting of the film, and conflation of the historical figures of Bonnie and Clyde with their characters, in order to connect the brief exposition on history to description of the film, the letter shifts to repetitions around the film, its moods and comedy. Further rhetorical repetitions and oppositions around the 'point' of the film, its strength, and its use of comedy continue the alternative description of the film, with exophoric reference to the Keystone Cops and to the Depression. In contrast to Crowther's review, the film's 'use of' the Keystone Cops and comedy is positively associated with a message (point) and design of the film.

Another paragraph develops from repeated reference to Crowther, effectively as a conjunction between the topics of this and the previous paragraph and echoing that paragraph's structure by direct reporting from Crowther's review. Repetition around Crowther's description of violence and the film, and subsequently around the characters of the film, maintain the dual emphasis on the film and Crowther's description of it.

There is only one explicit inclusion of 'violence' as a term, but this links to the quote in the previous paragraph and earlier implicit associations around 'bloody' and 'death'.

The summary is marked by full reference to the film by its title, and this is repeated within the paragraph, associated secondarily with the expression of the letter writer's opinion, and both these full references to *Bonnie and Clyde* link anaphorically to the first and second paragraphs respectively. Further exophoric references are made to Estelle Parsons and *The Grapes of Wrath*, with brief repetition around her. Concentrated repetition and substitution around the film throughout the paragraph is consolidated by the rhetorical tripling: 'What it tries'…'What it does'…'What it says…' This conclusion uses ellipsis and inclusio for rhetorical address to 'us', the reader and audience for the film.

The letter, then, is organized around the dual emphasis upon the film and Crowther's description of it, and effectively operates as a dialogue. Each paragraph of description of the film develops from disputing Crowther's description, which is quoted or indirectly reported, and the summary concludes by presenting the letter writer's opinion separately. There are a few exophoric references beyond the film, Crowther and the letter writer, to the Depression, The Keystone Cops, Estelle Parsons and *The Grapes of Wrath*. Although it does not refer to the director or leading stars of the film the letter is organized in a similar way to some of the reviews of the film, for instance the dialogical reviews of Sarris and others.

Modality

Besides the imperative 'must' on the reader to disagree, and one qualification of his own opinion, 'seems', the letter features strong qualifying modal adjuncts around Crowther's view that is contrasted with 'actuality'.

Relation to content categories

Style occurs with the recognition of a stylised use of the Keystone Cops. **Realism** is only implicit, both as the film as a 'commentary' on history and in association with *The Grapes of Wrath*. **Genre** features with reference to comedy, and Crowther's designation as farce, but this is qualified. Similarly, **Violence** features explicitly in description of the film, but largely as a refutation of this as Crowther's designation. **Consistency** – this is implicit in refutation of Crowther's description of the pointless blending, and also in the 'steady' emphasis and progression within the film. **Brilliant** is denied, with the film as 'not perfect', yet Parson's performance is singled out as 'superb'.

Those content categories that feature do so in relation to contestation of Crowther's characterization of the film, denying that the film is simply violent and pointless, and qualifying its comedy as well as recognizing stylisation.

Overall

As previously mentioned, the letter is organized as a dialogue with Crowther, with dual emphasis on detailing Crowther's description of the film and providing an alternative description. Only the summary paragraph is not explicitly structured by this dialogical nature. Modality and qualifying modal adjuncts are used to oppose Crowther's views to those of the letter writer and provide an orientation for the reader alongside the letter writer. Similarly, although the letter writer is explicit about the subjective status of his statements the concluding sentence rhetorically uses inclusio to further include the reader in this orientation towards both the film and Crowther.

The film, and secondarily Crowther, remains thematically privileged throughout the letter, and those content categories active in the letter are primarily determined in response to Crowther. Hence, the letter contests the description of the film as pointless, lacking a message, as violent, as inconsistent or incongruous in its mix of violence and humour. The description of farce is denied, and the use of comedy given a positive valuation, including a shift in the value association of the Keystone Cops. Similarly, the historical inaccuracy of the film is refuted, although not explicitly in terms that contest the status of the film in relation to realism. Finally, the use of the Keystone Cops is related to stylisation, and similarly the mood shifts are seen to have 'design'. However, whilst thus recognizing an aesthetic element, even aestheticization in the film, the letter is qualified in its praise of the film, and does not recognize innovation.

Letter two

Thematisation

There is no continuity of theme in this letter, in part since it comprises only three sentences. The letter is possibly edited as it features a nominalized theme in the opening sentence, and the meaning of this and the letter is very dependent on context within this Movie Mailbag.

Cohesion

In the first paragraph exophoric reference to *Bonnie and Clyde* resolves the elisions of the opening sentence. Repetitions feature around Bonnie, Clyde and their passions and relations. There also features an extended quote from the film's dialogue. The second paragraph features abstract references to the scriptwriters and several more ellipses with repetitions and substitutions around the film. Anaphoric reference is made to the substance of the dialogue quote in the earlier paragraph by means of the substitution of 'advertising campaign' for 'advertisement'.

As with its thematisation, this brief letter lacks a distinct structure. It is organised through ellipses and around a dialogue quote from the film that is then developed as being reflexive in relation to the film. Exophoric reference is made both to the film and its unnamed scriptwriters, and the paucity of reference suggests that this letter is possibly edited. However, as an intervention in the overall dialogue about the film it does function as complete in itself.

Modality

The letter features no use of qualification through modality.

Relation to content categories

Violence features with 'shoot'em-up violence', which is also associated with sex. Otherwise the content categories are not found active.

Overall

This brief letter is organised through ellipses and around the reflexive use of a dialogue quote from the film. The implication is that the film is empty of value or substance, and this is associated with the summary characterization of the film in relation to violence and sex. This letter doesn't explicitly refer, or even implicitly relate to Crowther's review, instead offering its criticism of the film in terms of its inadequacy against its own advertising.

Letter three

Thematisation

The first paragraph has the film predominantly thematised, although Crowther is also thematised, whilst the second paragraph has Crowther privileged, with additionally the cast of the film. The final paragraph has less thematic consistency, with the letter writer and the abstract theme of emotion in criticism occurring.

The summary, which begins the letter, has the film privileged thematically, whereas the answer to Crowther has him predominantly thematised, although it also features the writer.

Cohesion

The first paragraph features exophoric references to the film and Crowther, as well as *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and to a particular audience for a screening of the film. The letter uses ellipses and a list of antonyms associated with the film to organize its summary characterization of the film. Additionally, repetitions, although in slightly shifted contexts, of 'dark' and 'real', implicitly highlight these as characteristics of the film. The second paragraph uses repetitions around Crowther, and substitutions around the film, beside a single reference to the letter writer, and exophoric references to the cast of the film and to *The Beverly Hillbillies* that also function as references to Crowther's review. The final paragraph features yet more repetitions and substitutions around the letter writer and Crowther, and use of inclusio to associate the letter writer with fellow review readers.

Overall, then, the summary includes exophoric references to the film and Crowther, plus *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and is primarily organised around a list of characteristics of the film. The answer to Crowther, meanwhile, is primarily organised around repetitions and substitutions of Crowther, and in the final paragraph to the letter writer. The letter is framed by proposals of inclusion – the opening factualised sentence to be agreed by 'any sensitive patron' and the closing sentence stating what 'we, his readers' can expect from Crowther's reviews.

Modality

The letter is definitive, with 'as far as I can see' the only qualification applied to a subjectivized statement about Crowther.

Relations to content categories

Original features here as 'a totally new thing'. Although this might relate to **new** it has no reference to production, whereas it does associate novelty with antonymic pairs of qualities of the film. It is also implicit that newness or novelty, at least difference in the film, is what Crowther shies away from. **Realism** features implicitly within the antonyms, with the film as real and unreal. **Consistent** – this is implicit in the real/unreal, funny/sad, etc. listing which has these characteristics as coherently integrated. **Style** is loosely attributed with 'expressive qualities'. **Brilliant** includes the 'exceptional cast', and the film 'as fine as…'

Overall

The letter is organised as a response to Crowther, first with summary characterisation of the film, and subsequently with critical focus on Crowther's review, or at least the letter writer's description of it. The summary and response are framed within an address to other readers, and the position on both the film and Crowther are largely given as objective, with one rhetorical exception.

Whilst using references that featured in Crowther's review, to *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*, the letter nonetheless reconstitutes the critical position on *Bonnie and Clyde*, eliding any mention of violence in preference to dark/real as a configuration that implicitly associates with realism, and denying the charge of aimlessness and inconsistency, albeit implicitly, with the positive list of oppositional qualities of the film. Innovation, or at least novelty, is explicitly recognized, in association with this complex ambivalence, and the letter carries the implicit suggestion that this innovation is troubling for Crowther (but not for the readers).

Beyond this the letter contests the status of the film, as fine as can be expected, and problematizes Crowther's review, as not all that can be expected. Loosely, innovation and the 'expressive qualities' of the film are associated, since Crowther is insensitive to both.

Letter four

Thematisation

The answer to Crowther has Crowther thematised, whereas the summary primarily thematises the film, and secondarily the letter writer.

Cohesion

The first paragraph features the list of qualities of the film, an implicit rejoinder to Crowther's review, organized between exophoric references to Crowther, *Bonnie and Clyde*, Dunaway and Beatty. The subsequent paragraph makes the response to Crowther implicit around repetitions of the film and developing description of its representation of Bonnie and Clyde and the Barrow gang.

This letter is again organised in response to Crowther, although partly implicitly. Initially it lists qualities of the film missed by Crowther, with exophoric references to Crowther, the film, and the stars. It continues less concretely, organised around the film and its representation of the criminal characters.

Modality

The letter is predominantly definitive, with particular emphases 'accurately', and 'abundantly', but with a minor qualification subjectivizing a conclusion – 'I believe'.

Relation to content categories

Realism features with 'accurately portrayed' as 'in real life'. **Violence** occurs as a 'career of illegality and violence', qualified by the conclusion of the film's morality. **Style** and **Brilliant** are associated vaguely in 'excellent production', and the quality of performance is also noted.

Overall

This letter is organised around thematic focus on Crowther, for the answer to Crowther, and upon the film, for the summary that develops the response to Crowther. The letter provides a list of qualities of the film omitted by Crowther, and subsequently contests his characterization of the film in terms of historical accuracy. The summary, then, is developed from a liberal humanist concern for realism and a clear moral presentation, which nonetheless allows violence and illegality as subject matter.

The answer to Crowther concentrates on production values, including performance, and moods within the film, tenderness, suspense, humour. Crowther's charge of inconsistency or incongruity is elided whilst the charge of aimlessness is denied, expressly given the rhetoric, by the 'abundantly clear' moral message.

Letter five

Thematisation

The film is thematised in both paragraphs of this letter, although it is only named in the second paragraph. The first paragraph also has the recent riots, and their reporting, topicalised.

Cohesion

The first paragraph has elision and then substitution around the film, which remains unnamed in this paragraph. Exophoric references are made to the Newark and Detroit riots and the reporting of these, and their participants are developed with substitutions and repetitions. The second paragraph features further exophoric references to Arthur Penn, and the first reference by name to the film that thus also links by anaphoric reference to the earlier elision. The film is identified as an unusual documentary, making an implicit anaphoric association with the reporters and description in the previous paragraph. Overall, then, the letter is organised around a parallel between *Bonnie and Clyde* and the Newark and Detroit riots. Hence, the exophoric references to these, and to Arthur Penn, anchor the development of the letter. The summary of the film frames, or features as embedded, the exposition on the riots, reporters and rioters.

Modality

Rhetorical qualifications feature twice, with 'seemed to me' and 'it seemed so clear' used in central arguments in the letter.

Relation to content categories

Realism features with the film described as 'documentary' and 'real', and implicitly in the argument as to authenticity in relation to the 1967 riots and 1930's. **Contemporary**, meanwhile, is implicit in the parallel with the 1967 riots. **Brilliant** – the film is almost 'remarkable', so it is qualified as not quite brilliant, and **Original** is also loosely suggested with 'unusual' (documentary), although the association is qualified partly with 'absurd'.

Overall

This letter is organised around the parallel between the film and the riots in Newark and Detroit. Hence, it is primarily a defence of realism in the film, with implicit characterization of the film as having contemporary relevance and an association, qualified, in respect of realism with violence. With the elision of the film title in the first paragraph this letter seems to have been edited, although aside from this it is coherent and complete in itself.

The film is recognized as unusual, and almost remarkable, so as well as contesting the realism and contemporaneity of the film this letter also contests its status. The remarkable/unusual qualities of the film are associated with the tone and mood. Notably, as with letter two, this letter as reproduced does not reference Crowther, and the letter is not explicitly constructed as a dialogue, although it does have features of rhetorical address, 'it seems to me', and makes thematic choices which engage in dialogue with the reviewer at least implicitly.

Overall, letters one to five, Thematic structure of the Movie Mailbag

Thematisation

Headline	Letter	Themes
'Bonnie, Clyde'.	Letter one.	Film, Crowther, elements of film, writer.
'Nothing to sell'	Letter two.	Phrase/Bonnie/Scriptwriters – no continuity of theme.
'Totally new'.	Letter three.	Film, Crowther, writer, emotion in criticism.
'Clear Moral'.	Letter four.	Crowther, film, writer.
'The "Have-Nots"'.	Letter five.	Film, riots/reporters.

There is thematic consistency between the three letters that participate in a dialogue with Crowther, with Crowther, the film and the letter writers thematised in some combination. Letters two and five, in contrast, are partly dependent for their meaning upon their context amongst the other letters, and both function with less directed address, as open proposals concerning the film (albeit to the readership of the Movie Mailbag).

In contrast with the later Mailbag letters, these letters are generally shorter, featuring less internal diversity of theme, and there is no clear continuity or development of themes beyond the above consistency of including the film, Crowther and each writer amongst them. Also, the headlines are more concise and don't directly relate to thematised elements within their corresponding letters.

Cohesion

Letter one

This is a dialogue with Crowther, with dual emphasis on the film and his review, including quotation and/or reporting from the review, all organised around contesting pointlessness, violence and incongruity.

Letter two

Organised around film dialogue quote, and ellipses, with the quote developed as reflexive in relation to the film.

Letter three

A dialogue with Crowther, but framed by the proposal/inclusion structure appealing to readers to agree with the alternative characterization of the film, by a list of ambivalent qualities, and disagree with Crowther.

Letter four

Dialogue with Crowther, organized around initial omissions of Crowther and further description of the film's representation of Bonnie and Clyde.

Letter five

Organised around a parallel between *Bonnie and Clyde* and riots. Exposition on riots embedded within the summary on the film. Rhetorical appeal to readers to agree to proposal.

Letters one, three and four are primarily organised in terms of a dialogue with Crowther, whilst letter five implicitly contests Crowther's position and appeals to the readers. In this sense these letters are more consistent in their overall cohesion than the subsequent mailbag, although clearly they are functioning to create their own context to a greater extent than these. Only letter two differs in this respect, and is addressed, at least as much as to the readers, to the advertising campaign for the film.

Also worth noting is the fact that none of the letter writers give any indication of status, as in the institutions mentioned in the later letters, and they primarily originate in New York City, with the one exception given as 'Brooklyn'.

As dialogue, four of the letters are organised around either offering an alternative description of the film, refuting or pointing out the inadequacies of Crowther's description of the film, or some combination of these to contest its characterisation and evaluation.

Modality

The letter writers qualify their own claims as subjective, 'it seems to me', 'I believe' and such in all letters except letter two, while qualifications around Crowther's opinions also feature in letter one.

Relation to content categories

As with the later letters the content categories are not always appropriate to the letters, but they are sites of contestation with Crowther in some instances.

Amongst this Movie Mailbag the most common content category which features is **Realism**, in contrast to the later letters. This also contrasts with Crowther's reviews, which deny realism in terms of historical inaccuracy, yet this is not explicitly a site of contestation with Crowther. The letter writers accept a valorisation of realism, particularly of some authentic or accurate portrayal of history, as commentary, documentary or simply portrayal, although in one instance another kind of realism might be suggested by the validated opposition real/unreal that is used to characterize the film. **Violence** whilst featuring in as many letters does so more briefly and implicitly, again in contrast with the later letters where it is a site of contestation. Additionally, as with the later letters, we find the use of content categories not found in Crowther's reviews, or at least downplayed by Crowther, such as style. These are the positively inflected categories of **Style**, **Consistency**, **Original** and **Brilliant**, each featuring more or less explicitly in two or three letters, and **Contemporary** found in one. Further, **Inconsistency** features, albeit qualified in relation to a single element of a performance within the film, in one letter, whilst **Aimlessness** and **Anachronism** do not feature. There is, at least in the use of the content categories, less marked contestation within these letters, with a refutation of Crowther in relation to realism, and more elision of Crowther's content categories, and correspondingly some of his evaluative criteria, and their replacement by those positive categories he elided.

Overall

This mailbag, with the exception of letter two, is largely organised around each letter providing an alternative characterisation of the film to refute that within Crowther's review(s), either by disputing elements of Crowther's characterisation, or more frequently by suggesting 'omissions' from Crowther's description. These alternative views are often qualified by making them subjective, and only in the first, longest letter, do we find a more polemical stance on Crowther's review. This is particularly in relation to violence, incongruity and aimlessness, although the criticism of Crowther himself is subjectivized in this instance. This letter, in this respect, offers a template for the second movie mailbag, which as noted elsewhere also emphasises contestation around the descriptive and evaluative criteria Crowther relates to 'violence'. However, letter one is qualified in its praise of the film, in contrast to several of the later letters. It does recognize stylisation in the film, shifting the evaluative association of the Keystone Cops from the pejorative association of 'farce' in Crowther, and similarly credits the mood shifts with 'design', denying Crowther's designation of this as aimless and/or incongruous. Nonetheless, this letter does not recognize innovation in the film.

As well as the other letters in this first mailbag being less confrontational, they also differ from the later letters in terms of their privileging of realism, which is used as a criteria for repositioning the film, as authentic and hence valuable. Providing a dissenting position within this mailbag, letter two, whilst not explicitly referencing Crowther, supports his view of the film, in this instance by suggesting its emptiness/vacuousness, which is also related to its exploitative approach, specifically in terms of its advertising campaign, and in association with 'shoot'em-up' violence. This letter finds its analogue in the later mailbag in the letter that mobilised a quote from *1984* to provide a conservative humanist critique of the film for its violence. Whether these two letters were selected to feature in the mailbag simply to provide some balance, and hence are representative of the opposite extreme of opinion within letter writers and all of the readership, or whether their inclusion is proportionate to the number of statements of this sort of opinion amongst all the letter writers, can only be conjectured.

Letter three, as with letter one, contests certain of the key aspects of Crowther's characterisation of the film, particularly aimlessness and inconsistency, albeit implicitly, and elides mention of violence whilst repositioning the film in terms of the configuration dark/real. This letter, exclusively amongst both mailbags, explicitly recognizes innovation, or at least valorised novelty, in *Bonnie and Clyde*, which is associated with the 'expressive qualities' of the film. This is central to the characteristics of the film that Crowther is deemed insensitive to. Similarly, letter four contests Crowther's evaluation and description of the film by highlighting elements and qualities of the film elided by Crowther. Production values, and the contrasting moods of humour and suspense, are positively valued, and the letter further contests Crowther's charge of historical inaccuracy and aimlessness. The respondent defines the film as historically accurate and suggests a 'clear moral' in the film.

The final letter within this mailbag predominantly disputes the charges of anachronism and contemporary inappropriateness that Crowther levelled against the film. Relating the film, as does Crowther, to the current situation, by reference to the riots in Newark and Detroit, it orientates this relation to contemporary reality as both realism and contemporary resonance. The letter also characterizes the remarkable and unusual qualities of the film, associated with its tone and mood. Hence, with the exception of letter two, the letters within the mailbag invariably valorise the tones and mood shifts of the film, and for the most part validate the aesthetic of the film, in the one instance loosely as its 'expressive qualities', and in the first letter as stylisation. Aesthetic innovation, however, is recognized solely by letter three.

Discourse Analysis of responses and dialogues
New York Times Movie Mailbag 17/9/67

Discourse Structure

Overall

Title (Movie Mailbag)^Headline^(To the editor)^ Letter one^Headline^(To the editor)^ Letter two^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter three^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter four^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter five(ctd.)^Title^Concise Headline (ctd from)^(Letter five continues)^Headline^To the editor^Letter six^Headline^(To the editor)^Letter seven.

The iterative structure of the earlier Movie Mailbag is predominantly maintained, albeit with an interruption around Letter five which is continued on a later page.

Inset: Photo with caption and quote from Letter one.

Individual letters

Letter one

(To the editor)^(Background) (Answer to Crowther) (Summary)^Name^Residence.

Letter two

Headline^(To the editor)^(Answer to Crowther) (Alternative reading/description of film) (Summary)^Name^College (of Holy Cross)^Residence.

Letter three

Headline^(To the editor)^Introduction (context of Crowther campaign) (Citation *1984*) Exposition (relates *1984* passage to *Goldfinger*, *Dirty Dozen* and *Bonnie and Clyde*)^Name^Residence.

Letter four

Headline^(To the editor)^Intro/background (context Crowther campaign) Narrative (audience response, queues) Summary (attack on Crowther as 'liberal')^Name^ Residence.

Letter five

Headline^(To the editor)^Reading of film (ctd. later page). Summary (relates Crowther)^ Name^Residence.

Letter six

Headline^(To the editor)^(Answer to Crowther)^Name^Status (law student)^Residence.

Letter seven

Headline^(To the editor)^Exposition (ellipsis?) (Relate Crowther) (Summary)^Name^Residence.

The structure of the individual reviews is largely standardised, although how much this is attributable to standard letter writing conventions and conventions of the 'Movie Mailbag' that the letter writers are aware of, and how much is due to the editorial practice of the newspaper is debatable. For the most part the letters, particularly the longer initial letters, seem complete, although letter seven seems to begin in the middle, so to speak. The detailed thematic structural analysis of the individual letters will consider this further.

Thematic Structure

Individual letters, then whole

Letter one

Thematisation

The summary thematises Crowther, 'I' (the letter writer), and the situation (of Crowther judging films by the criterion of wholesomeness), with a rhetorical closing sentence referring to this. This parallels the overall thematisation, which begins with Crowther, interjects 'I', and relates the film, violence, and criticism of violence within its thematic development. The thematic structure is largely determined as a 'mock' dialogue with Crowther.

Cohesion

The background introduces Crowther, his review, and the film, featuring substitutions around Crowther and the film. Repetitions around these two feature throughout the answer to Crowther section, although mainly in the first and last paragraph, and the summary resumes repetition around Crowther and the letter writer. Also we have repetition around the real Bonnie and Clyde and particular contested terms associated with them, American, violent and 'human rats', and of 'wholesome' in relation to the film. Further exophoric references are made to Pollard, Penn, Beatty, various aspects of Americana, including Fords, Cokes, Kodak and Eddie Cantor, as well as to Detroit and Danang, and in the summary to *Hamlet*, *The Sound of Music* (1965), and *For a Few Dollars More* (1966). Each of these references carry presumed connotations, particularly value associations around the latter, and contemporary, rather than simply geographical, resonances to the cities.

Hence, as well as thematically, cohesively this letter is built around a dialogue between the writer and Crowther, as a response, and repetitions and references around the film, and films/art, and reality, both contemporary reality and the era of Bonnie and Clyde. Primary contestation, then, is around the meaning and value of the film, but also around the meaning of the real Bonnie and Clyde, although the relevance of this is qualified.

Modality

This letter is largely didactic, definitive in its response to Crowther, with two rhetorical uses of qualifiers. Bonnie and Clyde 'may' [have been…] allows Crowther's proposition, but then partly denies it, whilst 'seems to me' qualifies the writer's view by subjectivizing it, but again with a rhetorical function.

Relation to content categories

Realism – although the letter privileges the real it only relates realism to the historical (in)accuracy of the film. **Violence** is related to the real, again, but briefly qualified in respect of the film, 'such violence', and deemed necessary and integrated. **Consistency** is associated with violence within the structure of the film. **Brilliant** loosely occurs with the description of Pollard as 'magnificent'. The other categories, except **Anecdote** and **Filmic Content** do not feature.

Overall

The letter is organised around its function as a dialogic response to the Crowther reviews, and contestations around his terms, reality, violence, wholesomeness, but all in the context of the meaning and significance of both the film and the real Bonnie and Clyde. Overall, the ground of conflict, then, is whether a suitable message can be attributed to the film, above and beyond any other artistic value. Aesthetic innovation is hence not foregrounded within this letter. Note the overall heading for this Movie Mailbag which can be related to this letter, which is otherwise only additionally quoted by the photo caption whilst the other letters are quoted by their respective headlines, has the questions "Facts? Meaning? Art?" and it is primarily these terms, especially the first two, which are developed in this letter.

Letter two

Thematisation

The answer to Crowther develops a dialogue, with Crowther being 'addressed' in turn by Penn, Bunuel and the audience. The reading of the film, as an alternative to Crowther, develops around the film and the audience response, with Penn and Dunaway given agency in relation to the intentions and success of the film.

Cohesion

The letter begins with reference to Crowther and Penn, as well as to the Bonnie and Clyde legend and American society. The second paragraph continues around Crowther and Penn, but then contrasts this with references and repetitions of and around Bunuel's *Exterminating Angel* (1962), including elliptical reference to the plot of that film.[198] The complicated paragraph of key exposition features various figures of speech, simile and frequent ellipses. Key references and repetitions occur around the film, characters and violence, as well as American society. Violence is also developed through metonymic descriptions of violent scenes (Buck's 'death', Blanche's 'blinding', the 'repeated machine-gunnings.') Within this we also have reference to other characters, Vilma, Buck, Blanche, and a dialogue quote from the film. The paragraph starts with a reference to Penn, previously mentioned in the opening paragraph, significantly shifting the emphasis from that of the previous paragraph (Bunuel).

The final paragraph maintains the focus on the film and violence, with additional reference and repetition of Dunaway, and repetition of Penn. An anaphoric reference re-introducing Crowther sets up the conclusion.

Modality

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[198] Note *Exterminating Angel* showed in New York in August 1967, advertised in the *New York Times* 27/8/1967, Section 2 D9. Also relevant is the description of this film by *Variety* as an 'offbeater'.

Modal adjuncts are used rhetorically around Crowther and his response(s) to the film – 'surprisingly', 'perhaps', 'must', and in contrast 'actually' in description of the film.

Relation to content categories

Although 'reality' features within this letter this is not explicitly related to **Realism.** **Violence** is related to the real, but within the paragraph of exposition and the summary we have reference to the violence within the film. The exposition also features description of violence within scenes. **Vision** is associated with Penn, but not particular to this film so it does not feature as a content category. **Sophisticated** loosely occurs in the description that the film is played 'subjectively and lightly' suggesting nuance.

Again, this letter is organised as a dialogic response to Crowther, and framed by this address to him, and addresses him with the concerns of Penn, Bunuel and the audience. The reading of the film relates to the alternative response of the audience, particularly to violence, and its organisation within the structure of the film by Penn. Implicitly the letter writer associates the film with the art of the Bunuel film (which was screened contemporaneously in parts of America), and to its potential affectivity. Violence is related to the real world, but also implicitly defined as the subject material of Penn. Key terms in contesting the status of the film are 'intelligent comment' and 'insight', so it is maintained that the film does have a valuable message that surprisingly (and likewise other rhetorical qualifiers) Crowther couldn't see. Similarly 'subjective' and 'light' relate to the sophisticated direction, organisation, and with the dreamlike element, to the tone of the film. However, style is not addressed and the headline that is extracted from the letter, 'brutal turnabout', refers to the privileged point of the letter. This letter more closely approximates a review in itself, particularly in the exposition and summary final two paragraphs. The continuity of this letter from the opening letter, particularly around contesting the message and art status of the film, will be developed in considering the overall structure of this Movie Mailbag.

Letter three

Thematisation

Crowther is thematised around passages quoted from *1984*, violent films, with *Goldfinger* (1964) thematically privileged within a list, and audience pleasure in violence. The introduction hence thematises Crowther, whilst the *1984* passage is thematically diffuse with its own themes determined by the elisions within it, and the exposition focussed on violent films and audience thrills.

Cohesion

The letter begins with reference to Crowther, and his campaign, and to Orwell and *1984*, including quotation of a particular passage. Repetition within this passage about films (violent war films), and the audience for these, is maintained outside the quote.

The second paragraph conflates a list of films, or filmic references including *Bonnie and Clyde*, with these violent war films in the passage, and continues repetition around us/the audience, and pleasure. Finally, references occur to Orwell and the previously quoted passage of *1984*, and repetitions around violence, including metonyms, although these don't directly relate to either *Bonnie and Clyde* or the other films, and around pleasures of the audience (again an unspecified audience). The whole letter is organised around justifying Crowther's campaign by relating presumed gratuitously violent films, including *Bonnie and Clyde*, to the passage on violent war films in *1984*. The pathetic proof is dependent on the meaning of the quoted passage, and assumed authority of Orwell. The headline quote derives from a central position in the letter, and similarly rhetorically evokes this message, about the parallelism of 'cheap thrills'.

Modality

The letter features two significant qualifications, 'perhaps' qualifies the whole argument at least in its application to *Bonnie and Clyde*, whilst 'often' qualifies the generalisation of such violent films.

Relation to content categories

Genre features by association, but only as 'violent films' including *The Dirty Dozen* (1967) and *Goldfinger*. **Violence** is of key importance, but features within anecdote not specifically related to *Bonnie and Clyde*, although the implication is made of violence as gratuitous and the association made between *Bonnie and Clyde* and this.

Overall

Structured around anecdotal discussion of violence, not specific to *Bonnie and Clyde*, and relating this to Orwell's *1984* quote, the letter almost suggests the letter writer hasn't seen *Bonnie and Clyde*. This perhaps indicates this is a source of evidence of a particular reception of the film, that is choosing not to see it. Primarily, the emphasis on *1984* and other films, and qualification around the classification of *Bonnie and Clyde* as gratuitously violent, and the description of violence which bears no relation to the film, suggest no knowledge of the film beyond this contested and controversial status as gratuitously violent. It shares, then, Crowther's position on violence, which it aims to justify in relation to *1984* and in terms of humanist discourse 'cheap thrill … without feeling the humanity of the victim.' Even the rhetorical use of inclusio, including the writer himself with the audience of violent films, rather than discussing and distinguishing them, suggests a humanist, inclusive, conception of essential and universal human characteristics. Similarly, the films that are referenced, and the *1984* passage, can be seen to deny the artistic status of *Bonnie and Clyde*, with an art/entertainment dichotomy. Even whilst recognizing 'skill' in their construction and emotional or tonal organisation, this is related (relegated) to commerce, rather than the absent term art.

Letter four

Thematisation

The background paragraph thematises Crowther, and his reviews, through the use of nominalised temporal adjuncts. The narrative about audience responses to *Bonnie and Clyde* thematises the film, but particularly develops around the writer and actual audiences, with Crowther made complement. In the summary paragraphs we have ellipsis involved in the thematisation for rhetorical effect around 'it', this being Crowther's 'liberal' attitude.

Cohesion

The letter is largely organised around being a response to Crowther. Whilst it introduces Crowther and his campaign, referring to his previous two reviews, even in narrativizing the writer's activity of seeing the film, with 'half of New York', Crowther remains the repeated term, and the Crowther campaign is the context. Similarly, in the penultimate paragraph the campaign is the starting point for the summary criticism of Crowther, so even though the final rhetorical paragraph does not name Crowther he remains the focus. Hence, these last and second paragraphs have constructed an opposition, isolating Crowther from the audience and the letter writer. This response is less about contesting the status of the film, although it implicitly does that, but rather the status of Crowther.

Modality

A single modal phrase 'it seems' is used, rhetorically directed at Crowther, and associated with an abstracted statement.

Relation to content categories

Brilliant features with the film as 'wonderful'. **Violence** is not related specifically to *Bonnie and Clyde*, being anecdotal.

Overall

As suggested above, this letter is primarily organised as a response to Crowther, but in questioning the status of Crowther, and assuming, beside a brief statement, the value of *Bonnie and Clyde* as 'wonderful'. As such, it is a defence of popular, Hollywood films, and a criticism of Crowther around his liberal credentials. This is organised within a rhetoric of inclusio and pathetic proof, the majority audience/readership are assumed to agree with this argument. The headline quote 'Right to agree' has an ironic aspect when extracted, and similarly given the tone of the letter, which assumes the readers 'right to agree' with the letter writers criticism of Crowther. Since the film is barely addressed, we do not have recognition or characterisation of its aesthetic or innovation in the film, or its status as art, since its value is assumed inherent and incontestable (although already disputed by Crowther).

Letter five

Thematisation

The first paragraph of the letter begins thematically with the message of the film, and in elaborating this thematises 'everyone' of the message, developed to include the reader, and also related to the writer, 'I'. From thematising the atmosphere of the depression, the letter shifts to 'a girl' and 'a boy', implicitly Bonnie and Clyde. The meaning of Bonnie and Clyde, and hence a reading of the message of the film, is topicalised.

The second paragraph begins strongly privileging the film thematically, interrupted simply with the rhetorical 'who cares'. However, 'I', the writer, is shifted from complement to theme, again interrupted by thematising Crowther, and everyone/no-one, although this is in relation to the writer. Finally the letter shifts the theme to the film, and returns the writer to the complement, as it had previously done with Crowther. Hence, the reading of the film makes its message thematic, although it develops to include the boy/girl in the description of the film plot. The summary then shifts to the film itself, from these metonyms of its message and characters, before privileging the writer herself, although also thematising Crowther and other viewers of the film, and finally returning to the film as theme.

Cohesion

The first paragraph begins with a reference to *Bonnie and Clyde*, and an ellipsis around the message of the film. There then features repetition around an abstraction on people wanting meaning to their life, and similarly around the emptiness of the 1930s, interpellating both the reader and writer in remembering this. The letter uses ellipsis around this atmosphere of the period, conflated implicitly with the film, to introduce abstractly a boy and girl. Only the subsequent paragraph resolves the implicit relation with the film, relating this to the story of the film, and of Bonnie and Clyde.

From an elliptical reference to the story of the previous paragraph, and reference to the real Bonnie and Clyde, the second paragraph develops through repetition and substitution around the story, and conflates the story and the film. Repetition of reference to the letter writer, 'I', and to the film, surround references to Crowther, and are maintained through a discussion of the impossibility for everyone of being objective in response to the film. This discussion features repetitions around 'no-one', and an ellipsis summarises this impossibility, in order to reverse the earlier rhetorical question of the paragraph to answer, 'it is a great film.'

Much of the letter, then, is abstract, or at least non-specific, with the references that are featured including the film, the real Bonnie and Clyde, and Crowther. Instead, the letter uses repetition to relate the meaning of the film to abstract people's lives, to the atmosphere of the 1930's, and to the story of an unspecified girl/boy pairing. The second paragraph anchors this abstraction as being the story of the film, and in seeking to address the rhetorical question ‘Is it a great movie?’ develops through the responses to the film of the writer, Crowther, and everyone/no-one. Finally, the claimed impossibility of an objective response to the film is used, as above, to answer this question affirmatively, although with qualifications.

Modality

Although the modality of the letter is predominantly definitive, the ‘maybe’ of the final sentence does qualify the conclusion

Relation to content categories

Realism – although it addresses reality, and the real Bonnie and Clyde story, the letter does not include realism as such. **Violence** is related to, but denied as, the message of the film. **Sophisticated** features as thought provoking, whilst **Brilliant** features twice rhetorically as a ‘great’ film, framing the whole discussion of the reception of the film. Much of the letter is anecdote concerning the reception of the film, and filmic content about its story, message and beauty, or moving nature.

Overall

This letter is organised around associating the film with the status of meaningful message, disentangling this message from violence, and consequently validating the film as ‘great’. Realism as an evaluative criteria, at least in terms of authenticity, is dismissed, and by denying that the film’s message relates to violence the letter similarly dismisses the negative value associated with violence by reviewers, including Crowther, using the mimetic approach.

The headline ‘no neutrality’ draws attention to the anecdotal discussion of the impossibility of being objective about the film. This, in turn, is used to justify valorising the film. This section, albeit in an abstract fashion, applies the pragmatic theory to evaluating the film. The letter suggests key evaluative criteria for film (and potentially implicitly for art) are being moving and thought provoking. This is, however, part of an evaluation and description of the film as a beautiful, meaningful story, with equal emphasis on each of these aspects. The film is attributed a meaningful message, aesthetic value but qualified as a story. The choice of story as synonym for the film, and also movie, as repeated in collocation with thought provoking and great, might be understood as negotiating the issue or status of the film as art (as against entertainment).

The letter does not recognize aesthetic innovation yet does claim aesthetic value for *Bonnie and Clyde* and counters Crowther's mimetic approach to the film. Also, in recognizing subjective responses to film, and recuperating these as an index of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s artistic value, the letter suggests contestation around a Canon (*the* great films) or rather canons.

Letter six

Thematisation

Within a single paragraph the letter thematises the letter writer, 'I', and a generation, presumably the younger generation, which the writer self-identifies with (note they give their status as student at the end of the letter). Crowther and the film both feature as complement.

Cohesion

Those exophoric references that are made specific are to the letter writer, the film and Crowther, and all feature in the opening clause. There is repetition around the former two, whereas Crowther is then omitted. There is also repetition around life and violence, in contextualising the film, substitution around the contemporary period, and use of simile or identity statements concerning the film, as contributing to thinking, and being specially relevant.

Modality

The letter is didactic throughout with its use of hyperbole such as 'outstanding'.

Relation to content categories

Violence – the film is seen as an outstanding statement upon violence, and hence relevant. **Contemporary** is stressed in terms of relevance, both countering Crowther and in the conclusion of the letter. However, this is related primarily to violence, and not other aspects of the film. The remainder of the letter is predominantly **Anecdote** concerning Crowther's response to the film, and description of the film as a statement, as **Filmic Content**.

Overall

The letter is brief, possibly edited, comprising a single paragraph which functions wholly as a response to Crowther. It is largely organized around contesting the significance of the film in terms of its meaningfulness and relevance. Hence, the violence of the film is part of its message (statement) and is related to contemporary reality. This, then, adopts Crowther's terms contextualising the time of theatrical release for *Bonnie and Clyde*, 'these times' but contests the relationship between the film and the contemporary situation. It also contests the status of the film as message, as per the previous letter.

In this last respect the letter makes implicit a generational distinction, with the film deemed especially relevant to the/a younger generation. To the writer, and his generation, then, the film has particular value, being 'outstanding', as well as relevance. As, implicitly, a contribution to 'thinking', we might associate the film with art, and similarly with its meaning and comprehension of life. Senseless real life violence is used to counter

Crowther's claim of gratuitous movie violence. Thus the letter addresses Crowther's evaluations around anachronism, lack of meaning and violence, with contemporaneity, heightened meaning and appropriate violence.

Letter seven

Thematisation

This letter uses elision of a specific subject by thematising 'it' three times, particularly at beginnings and ends of paragraphs, especially in the exposition section. We also have clearer thematic development from the real Bonnie and Clyde, through their degeneracy, to the film. Similarly, in the response to Crowther section there is clear thematic development through Crowther's (second) point, to no one and the writer. The final paragraph combines another thematic ellipsis, 'it', with thematising the writer's opinion and concluding by returning the real Bonnie and Clyde to theme.

Cohesion

The opening paragraph is mainly non-specific, and features an exposition on reviewing, but it is clear from the context that it makes implicit exophoric reference to Crowther and his reviews. Additionally it features repetition and conflation around 'a film' and 'the film', with substitution and a list of the elements of a film. The next paragraph features exophoric reference to the real Bonnie and Clyde, and then the movie, with frequent repetitions and substitutions around the film, around 'documentary biography', in denying this classification, and repetition of art, in granting this status by implication and anaphoric reference to the previous paragraph.

In the third paragraph we find further elliptical reference to Crowther's review, and his 'second point', but this reference is made explicit with reference to Mr. Crowther by name. Thus the earlier implicature around Crowther, and his 'first point', is anchored here. Repetition features around Bonnie and Clyde, the Depression, and the film, mostly continued from the previous paragraph, and association is made between Bonnie and Clyde's degeneracy, as referred to in the previous paragraph, and the amoral, footloose period. This is related to the possible audience engagement with an abstracted gang of robbers, which conflates both the real and filmic Bonnie and Clyde, but makes them abstract. The writer refers to himself for the first time, and repeats reference to the film by title, preparing for the summary.

The penultimate paragraph features yet another ellipsis upon the problems of Crowther's review, indicating a summary. There follows repetition around first Crowther, and then the film and its qualities, particularly technical excellence. As a summary we find several aspects of the previous paragraphs feature by anaphoric reference, the description of Bonnie and Clyde as the degenerate couple, and the 'technical' evaluation of the film. Again, in the concluding paragraph of the summary, we find anaphoric reference to the previous paragraphs, particularly around history, movie critics, and reality, including the real Bonnie and Clyde.

Overall cohesion

Much of this letter is organised through implication, with abstract or non-specific paragraphs, or sub-paragraphs, about movie reviewing or gangs of robbers, given anaphoric referential meaning within context, and also elliptical references resolved by later anaphoric references to Crowther, and Bonnie and Clyde, for instance. The exposition is distinguished particularly by this non-specificity, with repetition and conflation around a film/the film. In the second paragraph, although specificity is anchored by reference to Bonnie and Clyde, and *Bonnie and Clyde*, we still find implication in the film being designated as art by association (very clearly as an enthymeme). In the third paragraph, whilst we have Crowther explicitly referenced we still have implication around the appropriateness of Bonnie and Clyde as characters for an implicit audience ('no one can hold a respectable brief for a gang of robbers…'). The writer references himself in setting up the summary, which shifts from relating the film to Crowther's review to primarily offering an evaluation of the film.

The summary is indicated by an ellipsis around the problems with Crowther's review. The final two paragraphs organise an evaluation of the film and repudiation of Crowther, largely by means of anaphoric references to earlier parts of the letter focussed respectively on a movie critic's function, history, reality, particularly the real Bonnie and Clyde, and the relation of these to the film and the critic. Hence, although the letter opens suggesting what the critic should observe, the technical or artistic qualities of the film, the letter is primarily organised in contesting Crowther's position on the relation between the film and reality, and the suitability of its lead characters. However, this is shifted from Crowther's primarily mimetic approach to consider the technical aspects of the film, its sensitive, thought provoking telling and its status as art.

Modality

Those qualifications that feature have largely rhetorical function: 'may have been' qualifies Crowther's view of Bonnie and Clyde, and 'it would probably' makes a hypothetical claim about the film. The opening clause of the letter 'it would seem axiomatic' whilst qualifying its claim nonetheless rhetorically maintains it by eliding the subject of the verb, to who it would seem, and through the marked use of the term 'axiomatic'.

Relation to content categories

Realism is both denied, in terms of documentary nature, but implicit in the films reflection of the period. However, although the letter features various references to the real, these are not directly concerned with realism. **Style** features as technical quality. **Sophisticated** is related to sensitive storytelling, whilst **Brilliant** occurs as excellence and high quality.

Overall

Although the letter opens repudiating Crowther's criticism of the film on the basis of inaccuracy, suggesting this is irrelevant, and similarly responding to Crowther's dismissal of the suitability of the characters within the film, it is nonetheless largely organised around addressing these two aspects of the mimetic approach. Whilst it does valorise the film, conferring the status of art upon it and evaluating it as excellent in relation to technical aspects and its story, the letter is still concerned with the film as a message, as having a valid sentiment and being a sensitive reflection of the historical period.

The extracted headline for this review 'Not a documentary', which denies Crowther's criteria of historical accuracy does summarise the position of the letter. The letter suggests Crowther's review makes two category mistakes, mistaking the criteria for evaluating a documentary biography with those for a fictional narrative, and mistaking the function of a movie critic for that of a historian.

With its many ellipses this letter is reliant on context for much of its sense, and this would explain in part its positioning within the 'Movie Mailbag'.

Thematic structure of the whole 'Movie Mailbag'

Thematisation

Headline	Letter	Themes
Facts, Meaning, Art.	One.	Crowther, writer, film, violence.
Brutal turnabout.	Two.	Crowther, Penn, Bunuel, film, production and audience response.
Cheap thrill.	Three.	Crowther, *1984*, violent films, audience pleasure.
Right to agree.	Four.	Crowther, film, audience responses, writer.
No neutrality.	Five.	Film, message of film, writer, Crowther, audience response.

Anguish of violence. Six. Writer, generation (Crowther and film as complement)

Not a documentary. Seven. Real Bonnie and Clyde, film, writer, Crowther's points.

In this broad sense, noting the themes within each letter and their respective headlines, there is thematic consistency across the collected letters of the Movie Mailbag, with all the letters developing Crowther, or his reviews, as a theme, and for the most part thematising the film at some point. Mostly the letters are admittedly subjective, in that they feature self-reflexive thematisation of the writer, with the exceptions being the more expositional second and third letters which contextualise the film instead in terms of Bunuel and *1984* respectively.

Overall, however, the letters feature some development from concern with the violence of the film, or more commonly Crowther's inappropriate condemnation of this, and subsequently contesting its status as message, as relevant, and as having an appropriate artistic approach to its historical subject matter. Hence, for the most part, at least thematically, the respondents contest or confirm the status or characterisation of *Bonnie and Clyde* within a similar framework to Crowther, utilising the mimetic approach. Even insofar as they contest this framework, particularly the last letter, they do not elaborate on this but continue to contest the individual criticisms made by Crowther.

Cohesion

Through the letters we find much greater distinction in terms of their different approaches to cohesion, which are largely due to differences in style across the stylistically flexible genre of movie mailbag letter. We see a development from letters which function more clearly as dialogues with Crowther, contesting his characterisation, to a supportive letter, to a narrativization of audience responses and more subjective personal accounts, and finally the more implicit critique of Crowther.

Modality

Qualifications more frequently feature around Crowther or one of his statements as it is paraphrased. Sometimes there are qualifications of the letter writers' stronger rhetorical claims.

Relation to content categories

Since the letters have a very different function and context to that of a review it is not surprising that the content categories are largely found inappropriate. Mostly the letters are constituted by the equivalent of anecdote in the reviews. However, it is useful to consider in which ways they do utilise the content categories, and how these relate to those used in Crowther's reviews. Predominantly the letters feature the category **violence**, although violence is often delegated to anecdotal discussion of Crowther's response or of violent films in general. **Realism** does not commonly feature despite the 'real' frequently occurring as an organising element in the discourse, either thematised or repeated.

What is striking in considering the overall deployment of content categories across the mailbag is the otherwise primacy of **Brilliant** and additionally **Sophisticated**. This reflects the contestation of the value of the film, which the letters engage in with Crowther's review, which is also achieved in terms of **Style**, **Consistency** and contemporaneity. For the most part, except for violence, none of these content categories feature in any of Crowther's reviews. Crowther denies realism in terms of historical inaccuracy, which certain of the letters in turn dismiss (as a critical criterion) whilst not recognising realism in the film. He finally recognizes style as 'a skilful fabrication', and denies consistency, characterising inconsistency, and sophistication, characterising aimlessness (the non-message as against the nuanced message).

Overall

Due to the context of the Movie Mailbag, a selective and edited sequence of letters written in response to Crowther's reviews, the overall group of letters cannot be used straightforwardly as representing a wider reception. Except, of course, insofar as the letters do demonstrate available responses to Crowther, and the film, and participate in a public dialogue, contesting the status of the film and the status of Crowther's reviews, his 'crusade'. It is significant, in this respect, to consider the function of the letters and how this relates them to the reviews, and contrasts with the function of reviews.

These letters, whilst being mediated by editorial practices, are nonetheless interventions by the respondents in a social debate around the film. They are also participating in a dialogue with the Crowther reviews, both individually and as a whole. This is clear from their shared thematisation of the Crowther reviews, as well as associating this with thematisation of the film. Even where the letters do not initially thematise Crowther, in letters five through seven, both he and his reviews remain implicit as the 'point of departure' for each letter, that is as implicit theme.

This is of clear importance in considering the contrasting functions of the letters and reviews. In one sense the review is a final, authorized and definitive statement of evaluation and classification of the film, although clearly it functions in other ways, as news discourse, and as consumer guide (alerting cinemagoers to the arrival of a particular film, at a particular date, even, in reviews of this period and type of publication, at particular theatres). The review, in this sense, does not invoke a response; it does not initiate a dialogue. However, Crowther's reviews in particular are clearly operating as interventions in the wider critical space, responses both to the film but also the perceived positive audience reception of the film at Montreal, and other critics' responses. In this sense the review is functioning as part of a wider dialogue.

Although the number and type of letters which feature cannot be considered directly representative of the wider reception of the film, there are good reasons to assume some homology or isomorphic relation, at least in terms of possible editorial practice. Relevance and credibility can be considered editorial criteria for inclusion in the mailbag. Other factors might inform editorial criteria for inclusion, most obviously in relation to the editorial bias of the newspaper. The movie mailbag might be seen as functioning to represent the diversity and degree of opinions featuring in letters received by the newspaper, which in turn relates to the diversity and degree of opinions felt and thought by readers of the review. Those who chose to actively respond to the review by writing a letter might be assumed to correspond to those members of the readership with most (or more) passionate investment in the status of the film and the status of the film reviews (both of these either specific to Crowther, *Bonnie and Clyde* and the *New York Times*, or more generally). Clearly this investment might correspond not only to a distinctive degree of response but also to the nature of response.[199]

As stated, the letters function in dialogue with the reviews, to either contest them or provide support. In this the letters are organised around either an evaluative orientation to the Crowther review(s), a direct response, and/or an evaluative orientation to the film, an implicit response. This second group of letters also relates to the initial letters written in response to Crowther's reviews. It is interesting in this respect to consider how the letters differ in terms of how they each depart from Crowther's reviews, and how specifically they do depart from Crowther. Letter one shares with the analysed Crowther review the use of references with value associations, but in this and its use of alternative content categories, namely consistency, brilliance, and realism, it contests Crowther's evaluation and classification. Whilst sharing aspects of his rhetorical/critical practice, his reliance on evaluative references and the mimetic approach, the letter particularly contests Crowther's prescriptive use of specific conceptions of violence and realism (exploitation and historical accuracy) as primary evaluative criteria. Letter two features a more distinctive shift from Crowther's critical position and practice, countering his value references with references to Bunuel and both implicitly and explicitly positioning the film as art. Addressing Crowther as if on behalf of Penn and Bunuel, and re-evaluating the violence of the film, as well as the film as sophisticated, this letter again contests Crowther's position on violence with a use of the expressive approach that locates meaning and effect in the film's violence. However, the letter continues to use the mimetic approach, associating value with the film's message, 'insight', and relation to the real world. This letter is more independent of the Crowther reviews, using its address to Crowther to frame its alternative review of the film. Letter three, which supports Crowther more closely, shares both his evaluative orientation towards violence in film, but also his anecdotal journalistic discourse. Orwell's *1984* is introduced to the debate, complemented by value references around violent films. Apart from the use of Orwell this letter does not significantly depart from Crowther's critical position, practice, or tenor. Letter four differs from those preceding it in terms of its narrative organisation, being concerned with the Crowther campaign and wider (New York) response to the film. Whilst briefly contesting the status of the film, and questioning Crowther's ideological position (his liberal credentials), the letter functions less as a response to Crowther than as a summation of accomplished responses. Whilst letter four highlights the subjectivity of Crowther's response to *Bonnie and Clyde*, letter five focuses slightly abstractly on the impossibility of an objective response to the film. Identifying a message in the film this letter discredits Crowther's understanding of the violence in the film, and his criterion of historical accuracy. However, the letter writer maintains a primarily mimetic approach, basing evaluation of the film upon how 'meaningful' is the film's message, and its capacity to provoke thought. This is qualified as a subjective reading, which negotiates the status of the film as both sophisticated and brilliant by denying the Crowther reading of violence. Letter six is a further subjective defence of the film, again in terms of the meaningfulness of its message, this time its relevance and contemporary resonance. Another subjectivized but primarily mimetic approach to the film, this letter is constituted as a brief reply focused on contemporaneity.

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[199] On the notion of investment see Martin Barker and Kate Brooks *Knowing Audiences*, p232, and also Barker's recent work on *Crash*, summarized in a paper at the *Screen* conference, June 2001 and now published as Martin Barker, Jane Arthurs and Ramaswami Harindranath *The Crash Controversy: Censorship campaigns and film reception* (Wallflower, London and New York, 2001). Barker's insistence on investigating strong emotional responses, particularly disappointment, whilst proving a corrective to fan studies focus on strong positive responses, and providing a potential approach to understanding viewer expectations, does not address this problem of degree/kind differences in viewer responses. Also relevant is Stephen Prince's concept of responses on the basis of 'non-compromisable values', as per his paper at the conference for *Society of Cinema Studies*, Washington, May 2001.

The final letter is more implicit in its address to Crowther, preceding any reference to him with its exposition on movie criticism and a paragraph distinguishing the filmic and real Bonnie and Clyde. It is organized around addressing aspects of Crowther's mimetic approach, yet it does maintain concern with the film as message. Again, although the letter relates the film to alternate content categories, brilliant, style and sophisticated, it only makes sense in the context of a response to Crowther, which takes issue with particular aspects of his critical practice, whilst not in any developed way with his overall critical approach.

Summarising, then, the characterisations of the film that feature in these letters clearly require contextualising in terms of their function as responses to Crowther, and their placement in the Movie Mailbag. Although they contest the value of the film, particularly around violence and its message, they do not evince any recognition of aesthetic innovation. However, they do evidence a wider dissatisfaction with Crowther's review in particular, and various aspects of critical practice: the kneejerk response to violence, denying the film the status of art (as either auteur film or Hollywood), generational subjectivity presented as objectivity, and inappropriate application of the mimetic approach (or at least the excesses of the mimetic approach) in Crowther's valorisation of historical accuracy and suitable characters. Hence, much of the letters' contestation takes the form of addressing various perceived category mistakes in the Crowther reviews; treating the film as if a documentary, not treating the film as art, mistaking the message of the film, and the assumed authoritative/paternalistic tenor (and function) of the film review. Similarly, the letters contest the status of some of Crowther's evaluative criteria, again negotiating around descriptive and evaluative categories. Yet none of these letters, from the second Movie Mailbag, relate their criticism of Crowther's mistaken characterization of the film to innovation, or significantly develop the aesthetic of the film.

Critical interventions in the 'Crowther Crusade'

As well as considering the correspondence between Crowther and the letter writers of the 'Movie Mailbag', in terms of shared evaluative and classificatory schemata and criteria, I will consider the explicit or implicit interventions made by other critics in the 'Crowther Crusade'. The narrativization of the critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde* pits Crowther, and other established critics, against the younger generation such as Pauline Kael, or Andrew Sarris. Their reviews can be understood, at least in part, as being in dialogue with Crowther contesting his critical practice, and orthodox or establishment rejection of the film.[200]

Andrew Sarris *Village Voice* 24/8/67

Crowther is referenced by name in Sarris' review, but in the first instance adjectivised within the nominalization "a Crowther Crusade" which is paralleled with the 100-Years-War. An ellipsis is used in the following two sentences, with the finite form of the verbs 'to use' and 'to incite' used without an explicit subject. Continuity with the opening sentence, and contextual knowledge that Crowther is referenced by association with *The New York Times*, resolves both ellipses. There is also an elliptical reference to the director and an actor of the film (presumably Beatty), which is only implicitly resolved within the text, by reference to each of these in turn in the second part of the column which functions more conventionally as a review of the film. However, this reference to Penn and Beatty also functions as an exophoric intertextual reference to Crowther's review, and in this sense its meaning is clear. Later in the opening paragraph we find the substitution 'the Times critic' for Crowther, which conflates Crowther with his publication.

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[200] For references to Crowther's crusade, either with explicit reference to him or implication, see the following reviews, articles or accounts: Charles Champlin *L.A. Times* 31/12/1967; Albert Johnson *Film Quarterly* 21 no.2; Richard Roud *The Guardian* 19/9/1967; J.Hoberman *Village Voice* December 1992, pp6, 18; Derek Prowse *The Sunday Times* 10/9/1967; William Pechter originally 1967 source unknown, reprinted in *Twenty four times a second*, pp86-88; John Simon *Movies into Films*, p17; *Variety* 6/3/1968. Also *Variety* 13/12/1967 reported the *Time* magazine reversal on the film. As noted below, Sarris termed the phrase 'Crowther Crusade'.

The following paragraph begins thematising violence but with Crowther again referenced by name functioning as complement. We thus have Crowther initially referenced as an adjective in the nominalization 'Crowther Crusade', subsequently featuring as elided theme, referenced implicitly in association with *The New York Times*, and latterly substituted as 'the Times critic.' The reference in the second paragraph features Crowther as complement, but otherwise he only features implicitly in Sarris' text, most markedly in his rhetorical conclusion to his review of *Bonnie and Clyde*. To Sarris 'much of the film is so strikingly original, so unexpectedly funny and endearing, that the slanders in the Times emerge as exercises in dull spite.' By anaphoric reference to the opening paragraph, and the metonymic substitution of 'the Times' for 'the Times critic', Crowther features again. Of course, Sarris subsequently qualifies his own praise for the film in his next column, but this review of the film is framed primarily as an intervention in the Crowther Crusade, as Sarris defined it.

As previously mentioned, the Sarris column both frames and delimits its review of *Bonnie and Clyde* by its intervention in the 'Crowther Crusade'. The opening and closing sentences of the section of the column related to *Bonnie and Clyde* are formulated as dialogical responses to Crowther, albeit addressed to Sarris' readership including the readership common to Sarris and Crowther. This response to Crowther functions both to provide an orientation towards Crowther and his review, as well as to *Bonnie and Clyde*. In this sense the contestation around the characterization of the film needs to be seen in the light of these orientations. Sarris explicitly denies Crowther's characterization of the film, or elements thereof, and implicitly denies Crowther's authority, by means of invalidating his review and critical approach. Further, he implicitly denies Crowther's characterization by providing an alternative description and evaluation of the film. In respect of the first form of contestation, Sarris explicitly denies Crowther's moral approach to screen violence. This is organized, moreover, primarily by critiquing a 'moral issue' approach in general, that is a moralist mimetic approach as applied to film. With a rhetorical contrast to *Mary Poppins* (1964) on the one hand, and the suggestion of hypocrisy in Crowther's benign perspective on James Bond, Sarris suggests the simple identification of the film as violent, with negative evaluative connotations, is unperceptive and inflammatory. Sarris additionally describes Crowther's review as a 'diatribe against violence', and provides an alternative characterization of *Bonnie and Clyde* as 'sensuous about violence'. The letters feature three forms of contestation and repositioning active in relation to the topic of violence. Sarris discounts Crowther's characterization by denying its general framework, and implicitly repositions Crowther and his review by describing it as a diatribe, as well as a vendetta and censorious. Finally, Sarris provides an alternative characterization of the film in relation to violence, with markedly contrasting associations and value connotations. To Sarris, *Bonnie and Clyde* is 'sensuous about violence'. Sarris effectively counters Crowther's mimetic approach to the film with a predominantly expressive approach. His own approach is dependent on a distinct critical position, which differs from Crowther particularly in relation to auteurism and genre, specifically the gangster genre in this instance. The gangster genre is associated with *Bonnie and Clyde* by the near repetition of 'sensuousness' in the review, related to 'noise' in the genre, with an assumed positive aesthetic evaluation, and to violence in *Bonnie and Clyde* which is further qualified as 'lyrical'. In stark contrast to Crowther, Sarris does not invoke an art/entertainment dichotomy as a framework with corresponding value associations, but in terms of genre and director assumes a single inclusive positively inflected grouping of 'good' (or substitute 'moving') movies. Additionally, however, Sarris implicitly associates the film with its director, and in relation to this describes Crowther's review as a vendetta against the director. Although his auteurism is not explicit within this review (the term auteur does not feature), the pre-eminence of describing films by identifying them with their director, and attributing their qualities to the director, assumes an auteurist approach. I have elsewhere described Crowther's reviews as utilizing a sort of negative auteurism, blaming the film's faults upon the 'aggressive' Penn, but Sarris is here engaged in both contesting the validity of his own brand of auteurism, and also the status of Penn as an auteur.

Finally, in his own characterization of the film, Sarris provides a clearly, although implicitly, alternative characterization of the film to that provided by Crowther. The key evaluative terms in this characterization are 'sensuous', 'lyrical', 'folk tragedy', 'strikingly original', 'a thing of parts', and 'half-baked pathos'. In addition, the performances of Beatty and Dunaway are, respectively, 'forceful' and 'mannered', whilst parts of Penn's direction are 'characteristically good'. In respect of those positively inflected evaluative terms; sensuous, lyrical and original, as well as the implicitly validatory category 'folk tragedy', we have a markedly contrasting characterization to that of Crowther, largely determined by Sarris' expressive approach. Lyrical and original are absent from Crowther's reviews, except in so far as his belated description of the film as a kind of folk ballad in his last review can be read as lyrical. Similarly, Crowther prefers negatively inflected categories or genres to position the film, shoot-em-up, melodrama, slapstick or farce, and the slightly more neutral comedy (although this is not entirely neutral in his usage).

As signalled by Sarris' own intervention, describing Crowther's crusade as a vendetta against, presumably, Penn and Beatty, we have further points of difference in relation to the description and evaluation of the director and male lead. Corresponding to his auteurist approach Sarris praises Penn's direction of the 'exuberant scenes', albeit simply as good, and relates this to his earlier films. Crowther, meanwhile, blames the violence and perceived inconsistencies of the film upon its 'aggressive' director. Likewise, the two reviewers provide opposed evaluations of Beatty's contribution to the film.

Sarris does, however, share certain aspects of Crowther's characterization. Whilst he associates the changes in mood and tone with originality ('unexpectedly funny and endearing') he nevertheless characterizes a lack of cohesion in the film. Whilst it is formally 'a thing of parts', and often, tonally, 'half-baked pathos' for Sarris, this is still a repositioning when compared to Crowther. Crowther's charge of inconsistency in its 'helter-skelter' assembly and an incongruous generic mix, of violence, farce and melodrama, corresponds to that of Sarris, whilst, however, this is configured with different evaluative criteria in each reviewer. Inconsistency is not the most significant criticism of this or any film, and can be associated with the director's originality. In contrast, inconsistency, at least in respect of *Bonnie and Clyde*, is associated with other negative evaluative criteria by Crowther, violence, aimlessness and anachronism, and framed within a mimetic approach. Inconsistency or incongruity, for a Hollywood film, is most reprehensible, then, in terms of its departure from realism.[201]

Sarris and Crowther also share a negative disposition towards Faye Dunaway's performance, and in this instance this is in terms of similar criteria. To Sarris she is 'mannered', whilst to Crowther she 'romanticizes' Bonnie and is inauthentic by playing comedically. For both, there is an anachronism evidenced in her character or performance, although again with different implications, of varying degrees, in line with the differences between an expressive and mimetic approach.

In summary, Sarris' intervention in the Crowther crusade functions in several ways; as a contestation of the status and authority of Crowther, and in contesting approaches to film criticism, particularly moral and mimetic approaches. In framing his review of the film with his intervention, Sarris privileges his critique of mimetic criticism of the violence in the film. Further, this is primarily associated with a reductive 'moral issue' approach. At least implicit in this is an auteurist defence of the artist, against censorship, and allowing the expressive possibilities of violence. Sarris' intervention is more than simply an intervention in respect of *Bonnie and Clyde*. It participates in a broader ongoing debate about approaches to film, particularly approaches to Hollywood film, and around the relationship between value, canons and directors. Likewise, it contributes to an ongoing discussion around sex and violence in film contemporary with the introduction of the ratings system in America. Essentially, though, the intervention constitutes an element of Sarris' larger project.

It is in this respect that the significance of the intervention can be judged, both its significance to Sarris, and to the Crowther crusade and responses to it. Sarris provides two reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, this being the former which is further qualified, in its praise, by his second. Although Sarris attributes originality to the film it is not significantly innovative in his characterization, and in both his reviews he concurs with Crowther in describing the film as inconsistent, with this being more clearly deemed a flaw in the later review. Hence, although Sarris' intervention occurs early in response to Crowther's reviews, before the mailbag of respondents in *The New York Times,* before Pauline Kael's considered analysis, it does not function primarily as a defence of the film. *Bonnie and Clyde* is used by Sarris as a point of departure in his ongoing dialogue with other critics, including Crowther. It will be productive to note the extent to which Pauline Kael's review similarly plays out a more expansive exchange in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde.* However, Sarris' nominalization of the 'Crowther Crusade' does function within both the wider contestation around the film, and in the contemporary and subsequent narrativization of the reception of the film. Finally, even if Sarris sees the film as simply an example of violent and generic Hollywood films that deserve recognition, or at least considered, non-reductive criticism, this highlights the violence in a similar way to retrospective accounts. These characterise *Bonnie and Clyde* as being innovative in its treatment of violence, and as marking a watershed in critical attitudes to violent genre films.

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[201] Extended analysis of other reviews by Crowther might suggest this does not hold for the European art cinema, whether neorealism, the New Wave, or otherwise. I have already noted that the argument Crowther applies to *Bonnie and Clyde* is analogous to that he used for other genre films including *Brute Force* and *Asphalt Jungle*. Notably, Crowther accepted the incongruity, or 'eccentric' style and 'emotional erraticalness' of Godard's *A bout de Souffle*. See Frank Beaver *Bosley Crowther* and Janet Staiger *Interpreting Films*, p193, which quotes Crowther's review, originally from *New York Times* 8/2/1961.

Pauline Kael *The New Yorker* 21/10/67

Pauline Kael's *New Yorker* essay on *Bonnie and Clyde* has variously been narrativized as exemplifying the turning of the critical tide in favour of the film, and as a focus of the positive reviews of the film being also exemplary of a shift in movie criticism, commonly conceived as a generational shift.[202] The outgoing *New York Times* critic Bosley Crowther is contrasted with the incoming Kael, given her opportunity to present her analysis of the film at length within her new publication.[203] However, in spite of this, it is necessary to explain in what sense Kael's article constitutes an intervention in the Crowther crusade, rather than simply her contribution to the critical reception of the film. Crowther remains unnamed throughout the near nine thousand words of 'Crime and Poetry', but I would suggest there are several implicit references to his criticism of the film, which, whilst not being solely directed towards him can still be understood clearly as relating to him, particularly given the context of the 'controversy among some of the New York film critics.'[204]

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[202] See for instance Frank Beaver *Bosley Crowther*; Lester D. Friedman *Bonnie and Clyde*, pp21-26; and Steven Alan Carr 'From "Fucking Cops" to "Fucking Media": Bonnie and Clyde for a Sixties America' in Lester D. Friedman (ed) *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp77-100. Gerald Mast *A short history of the movies* elides the role of critics, and suggests the New Hollywood chimed with the values of the younger generation.

[203] Kael previously wrote for *McCalls* from 1965 to August 1966, and for *New Republic* from November 1966 to August 1967. She joined *The New Yorker* and rotated with Penelope Gilliat, writing in the autumn

Throughout her article Kael organizes an opposition between the audience of the film, who engage with and appreciate it, including herself with frequent use of inclusive 'we' and 'us', and 'people' who are upset, disturbed or threatened by the movie. Within this ordering of the audience, into an authentic audience and these other 'people', there are several statements that identify these people, including other movie critics and presumably Crowther. Opening the article Kael asks rhetorically; "How do you make a good movie in this country without being jumped on?" Implicit in this is that *Bonnie and Clyde* is a 'good movie', and it is elided that someone, or some people, are 'jumping' on the film. She suggests the film does "go too far for some tastes", again being non-specific about whose tastes. A few pages later Kael questions the accusations of historical inaccuracy made upon the film, with these associated with 'movie critics'. She psychologizes the reasons for this criticism of the film's treatment of the Barrow gang legend, "it's because it shakes people a little." Similarly, people are uncomfortable about the violence of the film, and "[t]oo many people - including some movie reviewers" have moral objections to the film as a potentially dangerous influence. Now, considering these elements of Kael's response to these people who have disparaged the film, including movie critics, we see that they are identified by their thematic concerns, with historical inauthenticity as well as sharing a moralist mimetic approach to violence in the film. Amongst those U.S. reviews analysed within my content and discourse analysis this concern with historical accuracy is evidenced in Crowther, and additionally in the first

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and winter editions. See Joseph Dalton Blades *A comparative study of selected American film critics, 1958-1964* (Arno, New York, 1976) (Bowling Green State University PhD thesis 1974).

[204] Albert Johnson 'Review of Bonnie and Clyde' in *Film Quarterly* 21 no.2 reprinted in Cawelti *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde.*

review in *Time* magazine and the later review by Henry Miller. Further, the moral denunciation of the film for its violence, frequently as 'aimless', is common to these same reviews and the first of two reviews by Joseph Morgenstern in *Newsweek.* Given this, Kael can be considered to responding to any and all of these, as well as other reviewers, but primary significance can be attributed to Crowther and the *Time* review, given their status and the narrativized responses to them.[205] Crowther, even contemporaneously (although unnamed and so implicit at the time) was summarized by Richard Schickel of *Life* magazine for his attack on the film for "historical inaccuracy, excessive violence, moral turpitude and, I guess, bad breath..."[206] Within the context of the Crowther crusade it makes sense to read Kael's article as an intervention responding to Crowther's reviews, and additionally in the section criticizing auteurist approaches to film criticism, equally responding to Sarris. So, if it is given that Kael's article does function, at least in part, as an intervention in the Crowther campaign, in what way does it function, what does it contest and what does it share in common with Crowther's reviews, or those of Sarris?

The key sites of contestation are those outlined above as being identified with the film's detractors, historical inaccuracy and a lack of morality. Kael initially responds to the charge of historical inaccuracy, both disputing the claim, characterizing the film as "far more historically accurate than most", and querying the relevance of historical accuracy as an evaluative or descriptive criteria. Kael suggests that this is not an appropriate criterion for the film, it being a version of a legend with generic antecedents. Secondarily, she states that this criterion is not in use consistently by the same movie critics for other films they don't dislike, giving the example of *A Man For All Seasons* (1966). Hence Kael admonishes subjective criticism and its use of the mimetic approach to justify the critics' tastes. At least implicit in this is that since *Bonnie and Clyde* has generated this inappropriate response it is distinguished as 'art', Kael's conception of art loosely corresponding to the pragmatic theory.

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[205] See Ronald Gold *Variety* 30/8/1967 'Crowther's "Bonnie"-Brook: Rap at Violence stirs Brouhaha', p5 and p26, and Hollis Alpert *Saturday Review* 23/9/1967, p111 'Case of Crowther'.
[206] Richard Schickel *Life* 13/10/1967.

Kael's contestation of the moral characterization of the violence in the film is more developed, extending for several pages. She begins this with an alternative characterization of the film and its use or treatment of violence. The violence is described in terms of its effect on the audience, and Kael summarizes; "*Bonnie and Clyde* needs violence; violence is its meaning." Further, "[i]t is a kind of violence that says something to us." Kael defends the film as making a meaningful, affecting statement about violence, as well as defending the freedom of artists in general to treat violence as a subject matter, no matter how these treatments might be evaluated. This defence of the artist, both in the particular and the general, echoes Sarris' objection to the moralist mimetic approach to violence in film. Kael further echoes Sarris by associating this morality with establishment interests and the critics claim upon moral authority. "Too many people – including some movie reviewers – want the law to take over the job of movie criticism; perhaps what they really want is for their own criticisms to have the force of law." Within the context of the Crowther campaign, and Crowther's "unprecedented" action of writing three reviews damning *Bonnie and Clyde*,[207] this claim for legal and moral authority can reasonably be identified with Crowther. Kael continues to dismiss "healthy" and "cheerful" films, or rather films that feature suitable behaviour and characters, as not being 'good' movies, and by implication not art. She similarly disputes the charge against *Bonnie and Clyde* that it confers glamour on violence.

Again, then, in response to Crowther and the like, Kael logically develops an argument in terms of the general and particular. She defends artistic freedoms to treat violence as subject matter, and the specific treatment in *Bonnie and Clyde*, detailing the implications of a moral objection to violence in the film that might equally apply to *Macbeth* or *Medea*, and disputing the specific moral objection that the film glamorises violence.

The remaining element of Crowther's reviews which Kael might be understood to respond to is his criticism of Beatty's performance. Whilst recognizing shortcomings in his acting, Kael nonetheless evaluates this as distinctive, and innovative, as 'new "genius"' which exceeds accepted taste. This part of the response is constituted as part of her alternative characterization of the film, which is not addressed to other movie critics. In contrast, she incorporates within her article a critique of auteurism, or at least the privileging of the film director above and beyond the writers and other creative personnel. This critique can be implicitly understood as addressed to Sarris. Kael develops an historical and largely anecdotal argument declaring the error of applying auteurism to films which do not originate from writer/directors such as Fellini, films such as *Bonnie and Clyde* in which directors make use of primary material originating from the screenwriters. Besides her reservations about auteurism, Kael nevertheless applies a combination of the expressive approach and the pragmatic theory in her characterization of the film, and shares with Sarris the use of the lyrical metaphor to best describe *Bonnie and Clyde*. This is privileged both by repetition, of poetic and lyric[al], but also within her title. She conceives of the film in terms of its formal and stylistic qualities, and relates these to originality, and contemporaneity (its look, mood and tone), as well as associating the film with gangster films and various films of the French New Wave. As suggested above, she provides a positive orientation towards the violence in the film, and correspondingly an orientation toward the moral critics of this violence. It is only on the subject of Faye Dunaway's performance that she concedes an element of Crowther's characterization, the charge of anachronism. As with Sarris, however, this is qualified in relation solely to Bonnie and not the movie as a whole. Similarly, the quality of the script concerning Clyde's impotence is inconsistent with "the intelligence of the rest of the writing", but this is quite different to Crowther's broad charge of incongruity and inconsistency. Kael's essay is a lengthy and roaming analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde* and exposition on movies and movie criticism. In its length and breadth of reference it can be understood as functioning primarily to establish, or towards establishing, Kael's critical reputation, and given that it was superfluous to Penelope Gilliat's earlier positive review of the film in the *New Yorker* this function is credible. Yet, despite the lack of reference to Crowther a combination of textual and contextual indicators suggest that it also functions as an intervention in the Crowther campaign, as well as contributing to the wider critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, constructed as a final and definitive word on the film. Given this, as well as the narrativization of the critical reception of the film, and the hypothesis of this thesis that *Bonnie and Clyde* and its reception constitutes an exemplary event in the shift in critical practices and tastes in the late 1960s, consequent with being innovative and particularly towards Hollywood movies, it seems tenable to consider Kael's intervention.

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[207] Ibid.

Narrativization and significance

Sarris and Kael, then, are primarily engaged in contesting the critical approach of Crowther, whether explicitly or implicitly, in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*. Countering or undermining Crowther's moralist and mimetic approach with their own respective variations upon the expressive approach, particularly around the violence of the film, they also consider the film in respect of different value frameworks. Both deny or negotiate the implicit art/entertainment dichotomy found in Crowther's reviews, with Sarris valorising a director's cinema, incorporating violent and generic films, and Kael deconstructing the opposition, recognizing art in entertainment and vice versa. We thus have a contestation of the status of the film, as with the mailbag of letters written in response to Crowther's campaign, but the significant difference is that these two critics ground their (albeit qualified) validation of *Bonnie and Clyde* within their equally contrasting approaches and frameworks.

As has been elaborated, neither Sarris nor Kael explicitly recognize aesthetic innovation within *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, in Sarris we find recognition of originality and poetry in the film, particularly the sensuousness of its violence, and this is loosely associated with the aesthetic of the classic gangster film. Likewise, in Kael we have the validation of Beatty's performance as innovative, "new 'genius'", and similarly the contemporaneity of the film, associated with its look, mode and tone, which does largely constitute an appreciation of a distinctive aesthetic. Kael, within her summary paragraph, as well as more explicitly in hindsight, classifies *Bonnie and Clyde* with the new Hollywood films that she distinguishes from earlier Hollywood and European films, formally and in terms of their affective qualities.[208] Whilst Sarris does not share this intimation of the New Hollywood in his review, within his qualified praise of Penn we can discern a positive inclination toward contemporary Hollywood directors. Beyond the case of *Bonnie and Clyde*, then, a distinction can be made between the humanist criticism of Crowther, for instance, ill prepared for the New Hollywood with its general dismissal of entertainment films such as *Bonnie and Clyde*, and the new type of criticism practiced by a younger generation of critics including Kael and Sarris. This has also been narrativized, again in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde* but also more generally, the parallel between the New Hollywood and developments in criticism. However, this has partly been discussed in terms of the burgeoning influence of auteurism.[209] Yet in the writing of Kael we find a denial of auteurism that nonetheless complements an expressive, and to some extent formalist approach. In focussing on the sites of contestation between Crowther, on the one hand, and Sarris and Kael, on the other, in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, we can better explicate the (gradual) shift in critical practices and tendencies. Further, as my discourse analysis is at pains to suggest, a simple opposition between humanist critics and formalist critics does not sufficiently account for the spectrum of critical practices, or critical positions, available at the time of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s release, nor the developments in the critical field. In focusing on the recognition of aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, recognition that might not be explicit or forthcoming until the critical practices underwent a significant shift or development, the parallel between aesthetic development and critical development is emphasised. We can begin to speculate upon the relationship inherent in this parallelism, between New Hollywood and new movie criticism. Drawing upon the conclusions of my more exhaustive discourse analysis of the reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* I can speculate that the use of the lyrical metaphor, and to a lesser degree the painting metaphor, serves to bridge between critical positions that do not recognize value in the film and later critical positions that in complete contrast recognize aesthetic innovation. Likewise, certain other tendencies

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[208] Kael to Allen Barra, *San Francisco Bay Guardian* 28/8/91, p29-31 " 'I think it's nutty,' she says, 'when writers talk of the '40s as being a 'Golden Age'. Start with, say *Bonnie and Clyde* in 1967, which I think is

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the film that really fired up a lot of film enthusiasts [and which was the subject of one of her landmark essays in *The New Yorker*], and look at the truly great films that came out over the next seven or eight years, films by Robert Altman and [Francis Ford] Coppola and Scorsese and Brian De Palma, and you'll see a depth and richness that American movies never had before. I really think – I'm just putting a phrase out here, but I think it applies – there's a *grown-up* quality to those films that the earlier Hollywood had lacked.'" Reprinted in Will Brantley (ed.) *Conversations with Pauline Kael* (University of Mississippi, Jackson, 1999).

[209] Janet Staiger *Interpreting Films*, chapter 9 'With the compliments of the auteur'.

within the reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* contest and affirm its artistic status, whilst not acknowledging innovation in aspects of the film that are associated with its artistic invalidation by the humanist and other critics.

Clearly, the distinction between the interventions of Kael and Sarris and those of the mailbag respondents cannot be fully understood simply in terms of the different functions of the review and the letter-to-editor, or of the different status of critic and reader. Sarris and Kael are notable amongst their contemporary film critics for using their reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* as interventions not only in the controversy around the film but also in the Crowther crusade. The only significant additional review that also functions, again implicitly and more partially, as an intervention is the review of Richard Schickel in *Life*. Like various other reviewers Schickel primarily narrativizes Crowther's "unprecedented display of overkill", as well as referring to his antagonists, other critics and readers, but Schickel also suggests an alternative position on the film, to both parties, plumping for "the nice, soft grass of the middle ground." Schickel might differ from those other reviewers who simply note Crowther's moral condemnation of the film, in that he contests specifically the characterization of the violence ("esthetically correct"), but unlike Kael and Sarris, and like these others he does not contest Crowther's critical approach (unsurprisingly since it corresponds more closely with his own).[210]

How then can this difference between the interventions of Kael and Sarris, with their contestation of critical practice and position, in particular the mimetic approach and in relation to violence, and the mailbag interventions, be best understood? As suggested by my conclusions upon both of the movie mailbags devoted to the Crowther campaign, their letter writers are primarily concerned with repositioning the film, providing alternative characterizations, but commonly within a similar critical approach, and framework, to that utilised by Crowther. Hence, in the first mailbag we find an emphasis on validating the realism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly in terms of the authenticity or accuracy of its historical portrait, or as a commentary. However, this is couched within a valorisation of realism that corresponds to Crowther's mimetic approach. Similarly, in one of these letters we find the film praised for its contemporary relevance, again evidencing a mimetic framework, but here not constrained by the moralism of Crowther with his implicit rejection of the contemporaneity of the film seemingly founded upon the sensitivities of his taste. This mailbag, with the exception of the second letter, develops around Crowther's omissions and insensitivity, that is around the failings of his particular application of his critical approach and evaluative framework. The respondents for the most part share the mimetic approach, with a valorisation of realism, but contrast with Crowther, at least in degree, in respect of their moral orientations. Hence, the violence of the film is downplayed by these letter writers. Furthermore, they predominantly discern a morality in the film. Likewise, these letter writers can accommodate the mood shifts, the juxtaposition of violence and comedy in the film, within their characterisations, which are more sophisticated or sensitive than that of Crowther (in their own implicit estimations), simply because these elements do not jar with their moral values. In this sense, they lack the (moral, but in practice also aesthetic) conservatism of Crowther's particular brand of humanism, instead displaying more liberal concerns. This liberalism corresponds to these letter writer's subjectivized characterizations of the film, and also their less polemical, or contestational, stance upon the film than either the later letter writers or Sarris and Kael (and of course Crowther). The differences between their characterizations of the film and that of Crowther are in terms of stressing contrasting aspects, particularly certain elements that Crowther largely elides, although, for instance, his final review does concede some quality in the style of the film, in terms of 'skilful fabrication'.

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[210] See Frank Beaver *Bosley Crowther*, p148, who records that Richard Schickel noted with regrets Crowther's retirement.

The second mailbag, as I have previously suggested, is more contestational, particularly around the violence and message of the film, although still predominantly sharing Crowther's mimetic frame. Rather than being organised around Crowther's omissions and insensitivity, their critique of his reviews focuses on his inappropriate valorisation of historical accuracy and suitable characters within film, and other category mistakes in this criticism, as well as the tenor of his reviews. Whilst they problematise Crowther's adherence to historical accuracy as an evaluative criterion, these letters maintain a concern with the relationship between the film and reality, less in terms of realism, which is subsumed by the characterisation of the film as art, but instead by focussing on the meaningful message and relevance of the film. Despite this caveat, that the film should be considered as art rather than evaluated as if it was a documentary, these letters do not develop an expressive approach to the exclusion, or de-emphasis, of the mimetic. Basing their re-evaluation of the violence of the film upon an expressive approach, and similarly recognizing within the film an appropriate artistic approach to its historical subject matter, the overriding evaluative criterion used by these letters is 'meaning'. Mobilising the content categories of brilliant, style, sophisticated and consistent, these letters nonetheless contrast with the more aesthetic and formal concerns of Kael and Sarris, and do not fully develop a characterisation of the film's aesthetic, even by means of metaphor. Clearly, they differ from Crowther in terms of their critical positions and framework, not simply in their specific response to the violence of the film, or alternative conception of the realism of the film, as with the earlier mailbag, but also at a more general level in their combination of the expressive and mimetic approaches. However, Crowther's key evaluative criteria of realism (or at least a relation between the film and reality), coherence and consistency, and 'meaningful'-ness and validity of message, against which he dismisses *Bonnie and Clyde*, are maintained by these letters but with an entirely different evaluation. As with the earlier letters, then, these alternative evaluations are qualified as subjective, although widely held, and the objectivity of Crowther's views problematized as generationally subjective, again with intimations of differences in moral and ideological orientation between Crowther and the letter writers as in the first mailbag.[211]

The letter writers in both mailbags, as previously mentioned, do not predominantly recognize aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but in this they are not distinct from much of the wider contemporary reception. The one exception, the third letter from the earlier mailbag, recognizes innovation, or at least novelty, in the complexity and 'expressive qualities' of *Bonnie and Clyde*, particularly in its combination of contrasting

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[211] Andrew Sarris, in his obituary for Crowther 'Not to Praise Bosley Crowther, But Not to Bury Him Either' *Film Comment* May/June 1981, p76, suggests: "Crowther and his readers agreed that some subjects were more 'significant' than others, that there was a place, albeit a minor one, for comedy, adventure, romance, abstraction, and experimentation, but that the main task of movies was to edify and enlighten the body politick." My analysis of the Movie Mailbag questions this 'agreement'.

characteristics. However, for the most part the letters refute Crowther's characterization of the film by recognizing various elements of quality and sophistication, yet neither innovation nor novelty. We also have the negatively inflected letters which summarise *Bonnie and Clyde* as vacuous and a cheap thrill, and the first of the letters from the later mailbag which does not significantly address the aesthetics of the film, but simply focuses on its meaning. In contrast, those letters that do develop the aesthetic, or at least quality of the film, do this in various ways. Thus we have emphasis on its mood shifts and stylisation, production values, contemporaneity, relevance, affectiveness as art, and outstanding meaning. Hence, particularly in the second crop of letters, we have the message of the film privileged beyond the stylistic and formal qualities. Clearly, this can be seen as indicative of the pre-eminence of the mimetic approach within both mailbags. Additionally we might consider the popular reception of the film, particularly its box office success upon its second theatrical run, in relation to this recognition of significance to at least some segment of the audience.

The significance of the Crowther controversy, and the contestation around his reviews, is partly related to the status of Crowther and the *New York Times*. Crowther's long career of movie criticism had been marked by contributions to the advancement of the artistic status of films, for instance in his comments upon *The Miracle* (1948), and the subsequent court case. Crowther's liberal credentials, and support for a humanist film art, proved more questionable within the contestation around *Bonnie and Clyde*. The *New York Times* status as the newspaper of record, the primary authority amongst U.S. newspapers for literary and theatrical criticism (as well as having certain elements syndicated) was less problematised by the controversy. However, the retirement of Crowther and promotion of Renata Adler might be seen as a reaction to the controversy intended to maintain the newspaper's status.

The controversy has been interpreted as evidencing a generational shift in film criticism, Crowther and others contrasted with Kael as well as Adler. The controversy can also be understood more specifically in relation to movie representations of violence. During the period 1967-1968 the *New York Times* alone featured several article on movie violence, often in connection with the introduction of the Ratings. Additionally, several film historians have suggested the primary innovation of *Bonnie and Clyde* was its stylised representation of violence. However, I have suggested that the notion of a generational divide is reductive, ignoring the critical positions of other established critics, and their respective turnarounds, as in the case of Joseph Morgernstern.[212] I will also address the wider aesthetic innovation of *Bonnie and Clyde*, beyond that in its treatment of violence, in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

Hence, for my purpose the Crowther controversy is important to the extent it represents one prominent and explicit example of the wider critical contestation around the film upon its theatrical release.[213] Other examples of contestation are significant, but the Movie Mailbag in response to Crowther's reviews provides an invaluable index of wider receptions, albeit with the qualifications I have already mentioned in respect of its mediated nature. Likewise, the interventions by other critics, in the 'Crowther crusade', also mark explicit differences in critical practice and positions amongst the contemporary film critics. Extrapolating from these, to suggest shifts in criticism, would be problematic and unsubstantiated without consideration of a wide range of later reviews by a variety of critics. However, I will use a survey of retrospective criticism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and later reviews of other films that reference *Bonnie and Clyde*, to speculate on such shifts. In itself, the Crowther controversy is insufficient to constitute a 'rupture' in film criticism. The controversy does not evidence the inability of critical vocabulary to engage with the film, and a parallel innovation in film criticism developing out of this critical shortcoming to correspond to the aesthetic innovation of *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, when I consider the retrospective critical references to *Bonnie and Clyde* I will elaborate the significance of the Crowther controversy and wider synchronic contestation around *Bonnie and Clyde* in relation to the accumulation of serious criticism that repudiated the evaluative and classificatory criteria mobilised by Crowther and the theme group of reviews. I will also speculate how the diachronic contestation of the status of *Bonnie and Clyde* relates to the paradigmatic reception of innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde.*

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[212] Glenn Man *Radical Visions* notes other critical retractions, Andrew Sarris on *2001* in *Village Voice* 7/8/1970 and Arthur Knight on *McCabe and Mrs Miller* in *Saturday Review* 7/8/1971, p183 footnote 3.

[213] It is worth noting that Crowther's initial damning review was itself partly in response to the positive reception of the film at the Montreal International Film Festival, linked to the Montreal Expo. On the 'wild cheers, ecstatic applause and shouts of bravo at the end' for the World premiere screening of *Bonnie and Clyde* see Martin Knelman 'Martin Knelman on Movies: *Bonnie and Clyde*: Brilliant' *Toronto Daily Star* 8/8/1967.

Chapter 4: Aesthetic analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde*

Aesthetic analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde*

Following an analysis of the film *Bonnie and Clyde*, I wish to suggest the film's key aesthetic characteristics, and consider how these correspond to those readily accounted for, both by contemporary critics and retrospectively. Most importantly, I want to describe those aspects of *Bonnie and Clyde* that are marked, both within the film by repetition, vividness or in relation to significant moments in the narrative (and particularly sustained moments), but also by comparison with contemporary Hollywood conventions. These marked or distinctive elements encompass those articulated by the contemporary reviews, especially in connection with the visual look and the tone of the film, and the highlighted scenes, specifically the homecoming picnic and climactic ambush. However, they also include corresponding stylistic choices in other points of the film, and additional aesthetic characteristics omitted by the reviews. I will also relate these marked elements, or choices, to aestheticization, as well as the conventional practices and approaches of Hollywood, and conversely art cinema including specifically the French New Wave, and contemporary (to 1967) television. Working through each of these marked aesthetic characteristics, I shall thus consider connections to the contemporary critics (and my grouped tendencies). I will also consider these aesthetic characteristics in relation to my typology of aestheticization. Where appropriate reference will be made to other films, including but not restricted to my case study films.

Whilst I will consider a wide variety of historical approaches to *Bonnie and Clyde*, and its distinctive aesthetic, one of the most comprehensive is provided by Glenn Man in his *Radical Visions*. In describing both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* Man suggests that they each share an eclectic combination of expressionism and realism, of techniques derived from the new wave and neorealist cinema. These techniques include new wave influences such as disjunctive editing, ellipses, fragmented structure, rapid collage montage, closed subjective framing, soft focus, distorted angles, handheld camera, flash forwards and flashbacks, and a mixing of genres.[214] Elsewhere he associates the mixing of styles and generic homage with *A bout de soufflé* and *Shoot the Piano Player* (1960), and stylistic variation with *Jules et Jim*.[215] Additionally, the techniques influenced by neorealism comprise long takes, deep focus, wide-screen compositions, privileging tracking and panning camera, grainy cinematography, actual locations, episodic narrative, open framing, use of overhead mic and actual sounds, and a montage of setting-appropriate songs and music.[216]

I intend to elaborate on individual techniques, accounting for how they are used and organised within the film. I will also relate their use to my specific types of aestheticization, the various examples of embellishment, animation and experience. Initially I shall develop particular techniques in approximately the order of first appearance, or use in the film, and subsequently will consider how they complement each other and which are most marked by either repetition or difference.

Archive 'snaps' and credits

The use of a mixture of archive photographs and matching monochromatic production stills of Bonnie and Clyde, integrated with the opening credits, has several notable qualities and elements, and can be considered to function in a variety of ways. As I have previously suggested in considering this scene and the cut to Bonnie in terms of embellishment and intensity, the monochromatic palette, and restricted sound, provide a counterpoint to the vibrant, hypersensual red lips of Bonnie, and indeed the restless energy of the following scene. However, while the credits sequence is less dynamic, and vivid, it is nonetheless functioning in other respects. The still photographs are effectively an abstraction, contrasting with the conventional animated/moving image and abstracting a moment in time. They also contrast strongly with the common use of animation (literal or metaphoric) in credit sequences. Their monochromatic sepia colouration can be associated with both historical authenticity, the photographic equivalent of an authenticating patina, and a nostalgic palette. However, the credit sequence is not singularly monochromatic, since certain individual credits transform from a light gold sepia writing against black, fading to red writing. These include the acting credit for Beatty at (0:00:22).[217] Similarly, the sound is embellished. With the restricted visual stimulation, the succession of still images held for up to two seconds, the sound is foregrounded in contrast to its conventional status. Yet, whilst the soundtrack begins with the simple inclusion of the click of a camera or slide projector, coinciding with the archive pictures, and recorded with reverb, it varies with both the introduction of music, evidently emanating from a record and so artefactual, but also as the click shifts to accompanying some of the credits (0:01:04). This serves to isolate the rhythm of shots in the credit sequence, but also foregrounds the production status of the film. Man touches upon this self-conscious quality of the credits, as well as relating the sequence to the film's 'personalisation' of the gangster genre.[218] *Bonnie and Clyde*, through its title which gives the first names of the protagonists rather than the customary surnames or nicknames of movie gangsters, and through its establishing snapshots of Bonnie and Clyde, and subsequent establishing scenes, personalises the gangster couple, identified beyond their criminal exploits.

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[214] Glenn Man *Radical Visions*, p103. See also Gerald Mast *A Short History of the Movies* 3rd Edition, p418. Mast lists several characteristics, predominantly thematic, of the New Hollywood films, which include: 'off-beat antihero protagonist; the sterile society that surrounds him; the explicit treatment of sexual conflicts and psychological perversities; the glorification of the past and the open spaces; the slick but tawdry surfaces of contemporary reality; the mixing of the comic and the serious; the self-conscious use of special cinematic effects (slow motion, quick cutting, ironic juxtaposition of the visual and sound)', p418.

[215] Man *Radical Visions*, p47and p11 respectively.

[216] Ibid, p103.

Hence, while the credits sequence in *Bonnie and Clyde* is neither animated nor as evidently varied as say a live action scene shot in black and white, and thus contrasting with the colour remainder of the film, it is nonetheless indicative of the changeable and produced style of the film. Various critics have suggested the sequence, as well as the subsequent scene, establishes the mood of the film.[219] Whilst the credits function as counterpoint, they do also function in respect of initiating a perspective upon the historical milieu of the film, authentic, nostalgic and aestheticized, and this informs later scenes, particularly some of those I shall consider in relation to compositions.[220] I shall associate this with the 'painter' conception of the film.

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[217] All film times for *Bonnie and Clyde* are taken from the Region 1 DVD. Any times given later for *The Graduate* are from the Region 2 DVD.

[218] Man *Radical Visions* contrasts *Bonnie and Clyde* with the 'prosocial' Gangster film. He also considers the 'personal' Western, p27.

[219] For instance John Russell Taylor *Times* 7/9/1967, and Douglas and Hornden *Art of technique*, as before, p91.

Defamiliarised view

The next shot, an extreme close up of Bonnie's lips (0:02:17) can be considered in relation to several significant aesthetic characteristics of the film. I have previously related the shot to embellishment through vividness, emphasised both by the extreme close up and striking colour, as well as the following shots of a hypersensualised Bonnie. However, the shot can also be considered as an instance of defamiliarisation. Despite the fact that close ups of lips might be a mainstay of Hollywood film, in relation to the 'kiss', the designation of this shot as defamiliarisation seems justified in two key respects. The lips are viewed initially in extreme close up, lacking any contextual cues for romance, and additionally as the initial shot of the sequence the shot violates the conventional opening with a long shot.[221] There is a strong disjunction between this opening shot, and another that is defamiliarised in respect of angle and view later in the scene. This shot (0:03:51), up the stairs, as Bonnie tramps down is incongruous partly due to the variation in accompanying sound, with Bonnie's shoes upon the wooden stairs louder than all that has preceded this.[222] However, the camera is also positioned at a low height, looking up the stairs, so as Bonnie approaches it is focussed on her feet and legs with her face beyond the frame. In two further examples of defamiliarised images in *Bonnie and Clyde* it is not essentially the view or angle which causes the defamiliarisation, nor is it simply proximity, with the respective images filling the frame. Rather, it is since they feature as opening shots for a sequence lacking a preceding establishing long shot. Hence, the opening shot of the coat on the ground, before Clyde pours the loot onto it and divides it between the Barrow gang, is marked by initiating the scene in extreme close up on an inanimate object. Likewise, whilst not being in close up, an opening shot past Buck of C.W. Moss in a gas mask (1:14:18), followed by a close up of Buck's hand tracing the tattoo upon C.W.'s chest stands out both in respect of the lack of establishing long shots, and the lack of previous narrative motivation for the inclusion of a gas mark. This narrative elision is only resolved by the dialogue in passing shortly after in the film. These examples all function differently. As implied above, the shot of Bonnie's lips is both abstracted and vividly sensualised, and beautifies as well as making unfamiliar, whereas the later shot of Bonnie de-emphasises this beauty and any association with grace, this being enhanced by the marked variation in sound level.[223] In the later examples, the coat is isolated, lacking spatial indicators, and the gas mask is narratively inexplicable. I will address one further case of defamiliarised images in relation to those shots that I define as passing and framing extreme close ups below. Defamiliarisation functions as a type of aestheticization by embellishment in each of these instances. These shots are clearly aestheticized by means of defamiliarising the protagonists and their surroundings, but also foreground a playful disregard for conventional camera set-ups.

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[220] Note also that the Press Release on *Bonnie and Clyde* associates realism with Penn and the opening of the film. Source BFI microfiche.

[221] See Man *Radical Visions*; '[t]his is an unusual shot for the beginning of a movie, for it violates the conventional opening cue of classical narration, which is usually a long shot imparting maximum information to the viewer before breaking down into medium and close-up shots within the scene", p13. This contrasts with Bordwell and Thompson *Film Art*, p340, who do not stress the lack of 'conventional' establishing shots in the documentary *High School* (dir. Fred Wiseman).

[222] Man *Radical Visions* just describes this as Bonnie 'clomps down the stairs', p15.

Zooms

Beyond defamiliarisation, the shot of Bonnie's lips is also marked in relation to the subsequent zoom out (combined with a pan or track away to the side). Zoom is again used in a more marked fashion in this sequence when the camera zooms in to fix upon an extreme close up of Bonnie's eyes and nose (0:02:00). The use of zoom features prominently, in a similarly marked fashion, frequently throughout the film. These are marked in terms of the unconventional use of zoom shots. This formerly unconventional use is associated with the influence of television production style and practices upon the 'new' style in Hollywood,[224] as well as by its use in communicating, or drawing attention to, significant narrative or character information. Hence, examples of zoom shots, both zoom in and zoom out, can be found in the diner scene, such as that pulling back from an opening shot close up (0:11:10), this time of Clyde. A zoom in occurs on Clyde's 'sleeping' figure (25:38) revealing his open eye, and coming after a zoom and rack out have shifted focus in the shot past Bonnie and Clyde to C.W., and then back to Clyde. Rack focus is another device that is used in *The Graduate* in a similar way to *Bonnie and Clyde*, which constitutes a special case amongst the frequent uses of telephoto lens and zoom. Again, the critics of both films elide the use of the device, but it might correspond in part to their recognition of both frequent uses of zoom and out of focus shots in *The Graduate*, or 'oscillation' of shot scale in *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, the omission of references in the reviews to the use of this ostensibly self-conscious device, marking the changeable use of focus, might be deemed significant.

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[223] Man *Radical Visions* discusses the sequence as establishing 'subjective narrative techniques' and 'Bonnie's sensuous vitality', p13.

[224] See Peter Bart 'New Breed Scans Horizons' *New York Times* 10/1/1965 and various *Variety* reviews especially in 1968, for instance *Faces* 26/6/68 (Robe) and others, *The Graduate* 28/12/67 (Murf). Also see

A zoom out features during the boisterous checkers game between Buck and C.W. (42:00). Additionally, and perhaps more narratively significant, there is the zoom in on Buck's hand as he releases the brake of the police car in the first ambush scene (45:53) or conversely the zoom out when he tells his joke to Eugene and Velma, to include their response (1:05:25). Also, a later zoom emphasises the sheriff noticing the gun tucked in C.W.'s trousers in the fast food takeaway (1:18:34). Herein, a zoom shot is used as, or as if, for a subjective view, whereas elsewhere it corresponds to an omniscient narratorial view (or focalisation). Further examples include the zoom in upon Buck's hand (1:26:33) in his death throes, the zoom in following Sheriff Hamer into Blanche's cell (1:34:43), and another revelatory zoom out, expanding beyond the newspaper and picnic blanket to include Bonnie and Clyde in their late idyll (1:39:10). These examples of zoom in and zoom out are used to reveal salient narrative information. Bordwell borrows the term 'searching and revealing' zoom to describe camerawork that combines zooms and pans,

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Paul Joananides 'The Aesthetics of the Zoom Lens' *Sight and Sound* vol. 40, no. 1 Winter 1970/71 and John Belton 'The Bionic Eye: Zoom Esthetics' *Cineaste* XI no. 1 Winter 1980/81 on zoom.

with 'still tighter zooms' 'reserved for moments of crucial drama'. This approach to the use of the zoom became 'a significant norm of the 1960s and 1970s'.[225]

Each of these examples, as suggested above, is marked. The use of zoom out or zoom in shots is obtrusive, at least in so far as it is unconventional in Classical Hollywood, and clearly emphasises both the changeable visual perspective and changeable shot selection. Thus it foregrounds the quality of the film having been produced, and the potential variation of framing. In this respect the overt and frequent use of zoom corresponds to variety and diversity of style, an aspect of animation. In addition, the variation from the conventional use of establishing long shots might be associated with experience, since it emphasises the oneiric, the abstract image and poetic qualities, rather than narrative intelligibility. Additionally, the consistent succession of opening shots in close up, or extreme close up, followed by zoom or cuts to wider shots, marks the form of the film more generally through its structure of repetition. Whilst Man notes specific uses of zoom, the contemporary critics do not include explicit reference to this device in reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*. One review does mention the film's inconsistent oscillation between close ups and distancing,[226] but this shall be considered further in relation to the film's use of passing and framing close ups.

Glare

Within my discussion of vividness as a type of aestheticization through embellishment I noted the inclusion of sunlight glare in the image in both *Easy Rider*, and replicated optically in space in *2001: A space odyssey*. Glare, or else lens flare, also features in *Bonnie and Clyde*, notably in the opening and closing sequences. Following the close up on Bonnie's lips the camera zooms out and both pans and tracks away to the right, to reveal Bonnie's reflection in her bedroom window. Glare features in the mirror reflection here (0:02:21). Hence, this is glare that appears on the reflective surface within the image, whereas the later use of glare in the climactic scene is glare on the lens. This occurs when the camera tilts and pans to follow the disturbed birds that fly away, revealing the presence of the posse. Glare features in two shots of their flight (1:48:08, 1:48:10). In both instances the inclusion of glare might be considered unconventional, a mistake by Classical Hollywood standards of unobtrusive camerawork, as well as embellishing the particular image. Hence the first case adds something to the reflection of Bonnie's face in the mirror, and contributes to drawing attention to her, and the second example likewise enhances the beauty (and perhaps sense of freedom or escape) conveyed by the shot of the birds in flight. Glare functions both as a marked variation in the luminosity of the overall image, and displays the quality of the image being produced. It is a marked shot selection, as well as being contingent, in contrasting with conventional shots. The inclusion of glare did not gain explicit mention in the contemporary reviews,[227] although it might arguably be associated with the use of the adjective 'dazzling', attached to the cinematography by some critics.[228]

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[225] Bordwell *On the history of film style*, p249 from Bern Ley 'Zoom lenses'. In *The Graduate* one instance is used to occlude narrative information by means of momentary inclusion, that is the zoom out from the empty petrol gauge as Benjamin enters Santa Barbara.
[226] Sarris *Village Voice* 24/8/67.

Restless camera

The initial scene with Bonnie might be further characterized as 'restless', an effect achieved by means of a combination of camera movement, including hand-held camera, shifts in focus, actor movement, and accompanying sound.[229] Whilst not nearly as pronounced as the 'agitated camera' of the Dogme film *Festen*, the scene is punctuated by sudden movements or variation, either by Bonnie or the camera. For instance, the zoom in to an extreme close up of her eyes and nose detailed above follows Bonnie's purposeless striking of the bed frame, and is rapid and dramatic in its shift, suddenly excluding the bed frame from the shot (in fact the camera lifts over the bed frame as well as zooming in). The foregrounded rustling sound of Bonnie's movement also precludes any restful or still moments, despite the consistent chirrup of the birds. Bonnie's twisting motions, pronounced particularly in respect of her head and hair, are accentuated by match cuts on her movement, whilst variations in her facial expression, sighs and pouts, are both mannered and at times incessant. This quality is maintained when Clyde is introduced into the scene, with match cuts on his nervous motion when Bonnie first calls to him (3:32), and similarly mannered shifts in expression during their first conversation. This is curtailed as they begin to walk away. Although other scenes in the film do not display this particular quality, of a specific stylistic correlative of character mood, I shall account for similar effects in discussing both the use of hand-held camera, and repeated use of whip pans. Despite the omission of reference to the restless camera, each of these aesthetic characteristics might be related to Bosley Crowther's description of the film's 'breakneck speed' and 'helter-skelter' quality.[230] Thus, the restless camera might be considered as aestheticized in relation to kinetic intensity, as well as animated by the variety of stylistic devices which it combines.

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[227] This contrasts with the reviews of *The Graduate.* Stanley Kauffmann 'Review of *The Graduate*' *New Republic* 17/12/67reprinted in *Figures of light* (Harper & Row, New York, 1971) noted Nichols' 'recurrent affection for the splatter of headlights and sunspots on his lens' whilst the *Film Daily* review associated 'sunlight glaring into our eyes' with Nichols and the film's 'artsy effects', Edward Lipton 'Review of *The Graduate*' *Film Daily* 18/12/67.

[228] For instance John Coleman *New Statesman*, and Joseph Morgernstern *Newsweek* 28/8/67, in his second review.

[229] Jim Cook in *Screen* vol. 10 no. 4/5 July/October 1969, p107, describes "restless hovering camera" in the post *Gold Diggers* hotel room scene.

Passing, framing close ups and extreme close ups

When considering the general variation of shots within *Bonnie and Clyde* it is evident that the film includes a prevalence of conversation shots. That is the use of over-the-shoulder type shots which view one character past another, either literally over the shoulder or otherwise past their head and/or body, both as part of shot/reverse shot constructions or as isolated shots. Although the conversation shot might be less consistently used in Classical Hollywood it is an available option, so their individual uses in *Bonnie and Clyde* are not particularly marked. However, within the film we can select a number of overlap shots which are marked, either in respect of figures passing in front of the camera obscuring another figure, figures in close up or extreme close up on the edge of the frame used to frame the character in focus, with the camera viewing past them, or other intrusions into the frame.[231] This last example might not fully correspond to an overlap shot, but if a figure or object, or part thereof, enters the frame and in doing so expands the evident depth of field towards the frame, even if it does not pass directly in front of another figure or object, it can be considered homologous to an overlap shot. Similarly, the shot past a figure might not include an overlap of another figure, but effectively incorporates overlap of the frame, with another plane passing in front of the plane of action. There are quite a number of these types of shots in *Bonnie and Clyde*, even excluding shots where auxiliary characters enter a deep composition from the side and pass in front of the protagonists but not in close up. However, I shall provide detail upon a succession of these overlap shots since they seem marked in themselves, and furthermore complement, and share an affinity with, the film's characteristic formal compositions which I shall discuss subsequently.

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[230] Crowther *New York Times* 7/8/67.

An early significant framing close up follows the initial close up of Clyde's head drinking from a coke bottle, with the bottle top and a match in his mouth (0:006:24). This is the opening shot after an ellipsis when Clyde has presumably bought himself and Bonnie a coke. The next shot (0:06:28) is centred upon Bonnie but her face is framed by his arm holding the coke bottle, out of focus in the foreground, as well as his face on the frame edge. She is also framed by the air hose in her hand. Two shots later the shot of Bonnie is again past Clyde, this time past his face, out of focus, whilst her face is additionally framed by both parts of the air hose. Coming after the partly defamiliarised opening close up of Clyde from below, and being repeated and varied within the scene, and replaced by other framing devices, the shot is marked. Furthermore, Bonnie's face glows in bright sunlight, but with a strong shadow from the air hose upon her cheek, so the composition is vivid in respect of contrast of luminosity. A more frenetic example of a shot past one character in a foreground plane to another, that is nonetheless similarly marked, features in the second grocery robbery when Clyde is attacked by and wrestles the butcher. This shot immediately after Clyde has struck the butcher with his pistol (0:20:32), actually has a reversed configuration, since the butcher is in the foreground, seen from behind and in medium close up as he lies on top of Clyde, whilst Clyde who is obscured by the butcher is seen beyond him, with his face slightly out of focus and his body kept out of view by the overlap. In this instance the shot lasts around a second, including the time period when the camera follows the butcher's head as Clyde rolls him off (with Clyde leaving the frame). However, this is simply one of many shots which contribute to the frantic, and close struggle between Clyde and the butcher in the scene, which includes continuous reframing during certain shots and match cuts on motion, as well as jump cuts that shall be outlined below. Both these overlap shots exemplify the variation and diversity of shots within *Bonnie and Clyde*, but also the preference for less conventional compositions and framings.

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[231] On Hollywood conventions around the representation of space, and alternatives to these, see; Bordwell and Thompson *Film Art*, p143-5, Maltby *Hollywood Cinema*, pp194-195, and Noel Burch *Theory of Film Practice* (Trans. Helen R. Lane) (Secker & Warburg, London, 1973) chapter 2 '*Nana*, or the two kinds of space'.

This preference is maintained in the second bank robbery, the first that is successful. The sequence opens with a variation in framing, with the camera's view across the crossroads from opposite the bank being curtailed by the shop's canopy that cuts off the top of the frame. Following this an extra passes in front of the camera, in medium close up, walking across from behind (and screen right), immediately before a cut to the initial shot from inside the bank (0:26:34). This shot features several planes, with the bank teller on the left hand edge of the frame in medium close up, overlapping the protective screen, and behind that a female customer. Bonnie and Clyde are initially in the extreme background, outside and framed by the open doorway of the bank. They step inside, and remain framed by a 'window' at the bank counter, and are seen in medium shot from the hips up. This use of frame within frame is marked, and I shall return to this in the following section. However, it is also significant that there are a succession of planes in the image, with all other planes being beyond the teller, and that there is variation in the use of the frame within frame device, essentially frames past frames. Hence, we have a further use of overlap, which combines with formal composition, and overlap involved in variation to the formal composition. This might be related to Man's reference to the influence of neorealist use of deep focus,[232] but clearly this use of deep focus composition is more similarly aligned with, for instance, *Citizen Kane* in terms of its contrivance, or obtrusiveness. The shot is effectively used in reverse as Bonnie and Clyde exit the bank.

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[232] Man *Radical Visions*, p103.

During their attempt to escape there features an alternation of mobile close ups and overlap shots to depict C.W.'s slapstick attempts to escape his parking space. Hence, we have the medium close up of the bumper of the car in front (0:27:38) disturbed by the intrusion into the frame of the front wheel of the escape car, overlapping the other car in close up. A few shots later (0:27:40) a close up of the back window of the escape car moves across the frame to reveal a medium shot of the bemused black bystanders. This shot cuts again to a medium close up of the car in front (27:41), disrupted by an extreme close up of the escape car's wheel. (These examples are distinct as examples of mobile close ups as well as overlap shots.)[233]

A variation of the overlap features two scenes later, in the opening shot of Bonnie's reflection (29:21) in medium close up, past Bonnie's head in extreme close up (and slightly out of focus). Here, whilst the camera is static Bonnie moves, whilst she is singing, all the while overlapping her reflection. This shot might also be considered a parallel to the mirror shot of Bonnie in the opening scene, already discussed in relation to glare. Another overlap shot involving Bonnie is a mobile close up that occurs within the zoom out during the game of checkers already referenced (42:02). The camera zooms out from the checkers game and Bonnie enters the edge of the frame as an extreme close up, of her arm and then torso, and as the camera continues to zoom out and up this becomes a close up of her head and shoulders, and the camera continues to zoom out leaving her in medium shot (she also walks away from the camera). This shot is marked not simply as a mobile close up, achieved with zoom rather than solely movement of the character or figure, but also as a complex component in a long take with variation in depth composition as well as sustained zoom.

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[233] See John Orr 'Traducing Realism: *Naked* and *Nil By Mouth*' *Journal of Popular British Cinema* vol. 5, 2002, on the mobile close up.

As with the use of overlaps in the sequence of Clyde wrestling the butcher, a mobile close up is used during the action of the first ambush. Buck is running to the police car that blocks the driveway, the only escape route (45:49). As Buck runs towards the camera, seen in medium close up from the waist up, he obscures Blanche running behind him in the background. The camera pans as Buck passes, the shot becoming a close up, and Buck exiting the frame at the same time that he in turn becomes partially obscured by smoke, indicating the blast of his shot gun. Similarly, in the struggle with Hamer after the gang have captured him, when he spits at Bonnie, there features repeated use of mobile camera and mobile close ups, as well as other obscuring or overlap shots, alongside a lack of spatial indicators. This sequence also includes an overlapping edit, or momentary double take, which I shall discuss later, and a violation of the 180-degree rule, a marked discontinuity edit. It is also characterized by obscured shots, unsteady hand held camera and inclusion of a whip pan. Hence, as with Clyde's struggle with the butcher, a variety of technical devices are used in combination. Foremost, in terms of overlap shots is that featuring Clyde twisting Hamer around and away from the car, which finishes with Hamer passing in front of the camera, slightly out of focus but otherwise in medium close up, obscuring Clyde who is behind him (54:14). Three shots later there features a medium close up of Buck from behind, shot by a mobile camera which is angled up so he is only visible from his midriff up and almost half the height of the screen is taken up with trees in the background (54:17). Clyde's head bobs into and out of the bottom right corner of the screen, slightly out of focus in a plane beyond Buck. Hence we have a mobile medium close up, featuring an implied overlap with the intrusion into the frame of a part of a figure which is in another plane beyond the main figure, and so out of focus. This shot is followed by the whip pan, as Hamer is twisted around again, and then by further unsteady shots of Hamer, Clyde, and Buck obscured by the camera adopting a view through foliage which is in focus in the foreground. Again, the combination of shots might be associated with Crowther's description of the film's 'helter skelter' construction.

Another overlap occurs within a shot (58:51) I have already discussed as a defamiliarised view, and the overlap contributes to the extended defamiliarisation. The close up shot of the coat on the ground is disturbed by the intrusion into the frame of the doctor’s bag with the money in, and Clyde's hand, from the right edge. This is followed, after these have filled the screen in extreme close up, and then moved toward the coat, by Clyde's knee and side, with Clyde's arms, and primarily the bag, obscuring the coat but also the money that he has deposited on the coat. It is only after the bag and Clyde's arm have pulled back, into extreme close up, and then exited via the bottom of the frame, that the money is fully revealed (as somewhat meagre spoils). The next two examples of overlaps involving intrusions into the frame can be discussed together as they both occur whilst Eugene and Velma are with the gang in Eugene's car, and feature intrusions into the frame with a close up or medium close up of the couple. Throughout the Eugene/Velma episode the couple are privileged by either use of close ups or being in the centre of the frame when the members of the gang are in the shot. In both instances of significant intrusions into the frame there is an element of threat, in the first instance undercut by humour and in the second more as a subtext. The first occurs when the barrel of Buck's shot gun swings into the frame, up from the bottom edge, of a close up of Velma and Eugene (1:05:06), and Buck jokily imitates a protective father threatening a would-be son-in-law into a shot gun wedding. This is followed a couple of shots later by a shot of Buck, with the middle of the gun in front of him, and a repetition of the close up of the couple with the gun barrel protruding across most of the screen. The second instance occurs in the third scene in the Eugene/Velma episode, at nighttime. In this shot (1:06:52) the medium close up of Eugene and Velma is interrupted by C.W. thrusting his part eaten burger towards Eugene's face. This follows Eugene's complaint that he has the wrong burger. The preceding shot includes C.W. who is seen to be stretching his hand with the burger toward Eugene, so the combination is a match cut with a momentary gap (the medium close up of Eugene and Velma) before the motion of the hand and burger is resumed when they enter from the bottom corner of the frame, overlapping Eugene, before being pulled back out the frame in a similar fashion. The aspect of menace is primarily in the uncomfortable silence that very briefly follows, before Buck inanely fills it.

I wish to touch on a few similar examples, describing them more succinctly, before elaborating upon one more marked instance. Other examples of overlap shots past a figure or object include shots of the clinch between Bonnie and Clyde in the wheat field scene, in each of which a leaf enters the frame, in the extreme foreground, either slightly or almost completely out of focus (1:08:59, 1:09:07, 1:09:20). Similar intrusions into the frame feature in the extreme close ups of C.W.'s tattoo, initially when Buck touches it (1:14:23), then when Blanche and Buck's hands enter the frame in the foreground (1:14:40). Somewhat later Malcolm Moss's hands are framed in extreme close up in front of C.W.'s shirt, and he opens the shirt to reveal the tattoo in close up (1:34:01). A parallel to this occurs when Malcolm, the side of his torso in the extreme foreground on the left hand edge of the frame, lunges at C.W., seen in medium shot, across the frame and the table between them (1:43:43). Further overlaps, also mobile close ups, feature in the second ambush. A medium close up of the back of Bonnie's torso as she strikes out a candle with a pillow (1:19:45), is followed by another mobile close up as she enters the bottom left corner of the frame in close up, in the extreme foreground, before moving away to medium close up and beginning to shoot out the window (1:20:30). Lastly, as sheriff Hamer questions Blanche in her cell there are at least two marked overlap shots in which Blanche's head in close up obscures Hamer's torso, also in close up, which fills the remainder of the frame (1:35:17, 1:35:30).

Similar shots are more evident in *The Graduate*. Additionally, they are noted more frequently by critics in respect of mobile close ups, out of focus effects, extreme close ups, and arguably more generally with the association with Claude Lelouch. This last connection is explicated by David Bordwell when he addresses the blurring and flattening effect of telephoto lens in Lelouch's *Un homme et une femme* [*A Man and a Woman*](1966), which he suggests 'popularised the romantic connotations of misty blobs of colour swarming around the characters', with these fuzzy foreground shapes designated as 'lelouches' by Andrejz Wajda, albeit previously used by Antonioni.[234] While only certain instances in *The Graduate* might be described as lelouches, including the shimmering blur of Ben's mother's back (3:49), Benjamin framed by the dark blur of the hotel check-in desk (25:23), or Elaine in zoom framed by the Berkeley fountain statues (1:12:35), these are clearer examples than in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Furthermore, in

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[234] David Bordwell *On the history of film style*, p248.

The Graduate there are examples of out of focus greenery in the foreground that also constitute lelouch type shots (1:07:46, 1:07:59, 1:08:30), and additionally a slightly out of focus aerial view of a tree obscuring Benjamin below at Berkeley (1:11:38) and filling the frame with green.[235] The shots of Bonnie and Clyde in the wheat field scene are equivalent to these. The lelouches might be considered as aestheticized in relation to abstraction, whilst the other overlap shots, passing and framing shots, are marked as compositions.

However, the most pronounced example of a mobile close up, in this instance a sustained track and pan shot past objects in the extreme foreground, occurs as the opening shot for Malcolm Moss's meeting with Hamer (1:40:16). The shot begins with a car passing in zoomed close up, and after this passes out of the frame the window of a barber shop is revealed across the street but seen in zoom, yet in the extreme foreground out of focus is what appears to either be slats of a wooden bench, or the wood frame of the back of a pick up truck. The camera continues to pan or track behind this, with a poster of F.D.R. revealed between the slats, and then when this exits the frame the head of a passer by is framed by the slats. After the passer by exits the frame the entire frame is filled by the out of focus object in the extreme foreground, before lettering on a wall is revealed, again across the street in zoom but appearing between the slats. There follows a near invisible edit (1:40:32), with a cut from a shot with the out of focus object on the right side of the frame to a very similar shot, with the object slightly further back. The track and pan finally passes the foreground object, and continues with the window of a pharmacy, in zoom, a poster, and then the ice cream parlour window which is seen past a sign post which is on the same far side of the street. Vague reflections are visible in the window, and the camera finally tilts down to reveal Malcolm and the back of Hamer, with his telltale hat, through the window inside the ice cream parlour. This sustained shot has been accompanied by the continued music which has functioned as a sound bridge from the previous scene, and has lasted 30 seconds thus far, with the shot maintained until Moss is obscured by a fast moving truck that passes across the telephoto shot (1:41:18). The shot is marked due to a combination of factors. The sustained length of the shot, its combination of telephoto focus and out of focus objects in the extreme foreground, and their defamiliarised aspect, all contribute to the shot being marked. Furthermore the maintained intrusion into the shot of the out of focus foreground objects is literally obtrusive, demonstrating the produced nature of the image and contrasting strongly with Hollywood convention.[236] Whilst this expressive use of overlap, and extreme foreground blocking, used with zoom, might not be innovative, it exemplifies the repeated use of overlap, as passing and framing close ups and mobile close ups, found in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Throughout the film overlap shots, mobile close ups and intrusions into the frame contribute to both obscurity of the image and undermining the sanctity of the frame edge. That these qualities are combined at several points, such as in both the sequences of struggles between Clyde with the butcher and with Hamer, as well as the two sequences with C.W.'s tattoo, justifies considering them in combination. The former examples illustrate obscurity and intrusion into the frame motivated by action. However, the first instance of intrusion into the frame with the tattoo is an incidental moment without narrative or dramatic significance.

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[235] Reviews of *The Graduate* address these effects as follows: Patrick Gibbs 'Review of *The Graduate*' *Daily Telegraph* 9/8/68 refers to 'clever out of focus effects'; Penelope Houston 'Review of *The Graduate*' *Spectator* 16/8/68 cites 'a lot of out-of-focus greenery' 'crawling towards the camera' in close up; Edward Lipton *Film Daily* mentions 'an out-of-focus blur, a third of a person swims into view'; Andrew Sarris 'Review of *The Graduate*' *Village Voice* 28/12/67 suggests 'lurching heads in nightmarishly mobile close-ups' are a homage to Fellini's *8 ½*; Tom Milne *Observer* Review 11/8/68 notes 'some lush Lelouche-style photography' ;whilst unnecessary extreme close ups are associated with various European films and filmmakers in John Simon *Movies into Film* Feb 1968.

One final example of the use of overlap and zoom worth mentioning is the final shot in the film (1:49:29). This features zoom out revealing that the camera has been looking through the open car door window, and then revealing that the camera is behind the car, followed by a tracking shot behind the car. This tracking shot past the back of the car, in the extreme foreground, shows the bullet holes in the car, in extreme close up, and then the bullet holes in the rear window, whilst for the most part maintaining a composition in depth, with members of the posse, Malcolm Moss, and the two black farmers seen through the various windows in medium and long shots. As I have suggested, the predominance of overlap shots in the film is not mentioned by contemporary critics. The nearest references are Sarris's critique of the inconsistent oscillation between close ups and distancing, and similarly Kael's qualified criticism of an over reliance on close ups, and conversely John Coleman's praise for the use of focus, which nonetheless more specifically apply to the wider use of close ups, and diversity of shots, in the film.[237] However, it is relevant to consider the use of overlaps, particularly those that combine with composition in depth and/or use of zoom, alongside instances of formal composition more generally. Similarly, the widespread critical praise for the cinematography, or photography of the film, as well as the frequent use of the analogy with painting, relate to both formal compositions and devices such as overlap. The persistent use of passing and framing shots, various kinds of overlap and mobile close up, is marked and indicative of the changeable stylistic choices of the production. Particularly, these shots relate to embellishment in terms of composition, intensity with certain extreme close ups, but also to a playful approach to staging, composition and shot selection. Hence, in repeatedly opting to avoid a more conventional set up, an aesthetic function is foregrounded rather than narrative intelligibility.

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[236] See reference in Belton and also Bordwell *On the history of film style*, p247, to extreme zoom lens, but he makes no reference to the out of focus overlap.

Formal compositions

Whilst much of the film can be considered in respect of 'alluring images', as one critic described the film,[238] I will isolate several key examples of shots and scenes which correspond in part to scenes distinguished by critics. Specifically, I will account for compositions that combine embellishment, in terms of vividness, variation, abstraction and isolating elements. Composition also constitutes a means of foregrounding aestheticization, inherently to be perceived in terms of aesthetic values such as harmony and balance, but also variation within the frame. Whilst the opening extreme close up of Bonnie's lips can be considered as both an abstraction and balanced composition, moving to the centre of the frame although in the bottom half as the dissolve continues, as well as an instance of defamiliarisation, similarly several of the shots of both Bonnie and Clyde drinking coke are also both examples of shots past the other and feature formal framings.

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[237] The reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* from Coleman *New Statesman* 22/9/67, Sarris *Village Voice* 24/8/67, Kael *New Yorker* and *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*.

[238] Coleman, ibid.

One shot that illustrates an asymmetric composition shows Bonnie in close up (6:49) with the air hose in her hand marking the left edge of the frame. Bonnie predominantly fills the left hand side of the frame, with the bottle of coke at her mouth, just off centre, and raised into the almost blank right hand side of the frame. Bonnie's face is lit by bright sunlight, except for the strong shadow of the air hose which crosses the edge of her face, and her hair, and also the shadow of her hand which is seen in the bottom corner of the frame holding the air hose, but which barely comes up above her chin. Another early scene that includes marked compositions including a figure, this time in medium close up, is the scene with the dispossessed farmer and his family outside his repossessed farm. In this case (15:37), the composition is marked in itself, as I shall briefly outline, and further marked by reiteration through the scene, repeated or approximated by several subsequent shots. The shot has the farmer in medium close up, central in the frame, shown from the chest up. He has a textured face, seen in three quarter profile but slightly soft focus, and wears a hat. To the left of the screen, in the background, can be seen the roof of a farm building, with a wind gauge upon it pointing in the opposite direction to the farmer's glance. The top edge of the roof is at about the same height in the frame as the bottom brim of his hat, whilst the wind gauge has equivalent height to the hat. On the right of the frame, in the background is a tree whose branches fill most of the space to the side of the farmer, and include almost vertical branches which run parallel and near to the right edge of the frame. The farmer's clothes are dirty, a blue and white striped shirt and worn denim dungarees, and beside the grey and brown roof, grey wind gauge, grey sky, and dark tree, the main contrast in colour is provided by the farmer's pink face and his woven hat. The initial shot is sustained for a few seconds, and is repeated almost exactly (15:41 and 15:45) with the farmer now facing the camera, and then approximated but slightly varied (15:50). In this latter shot the angle has shifted, and the camera is nearer to the farmer, but with less use of zoom the shot is still a medium close up of the farmer from the midriff up. The tree and wind gauge are in approximately the same positions, although both take up more of the frame, and the sky behind is blue (It is unclear whether a continuity error occurs here, since the farmer's shirt and dungarees both look slightly different, the shirt now appearing more grey than blue and without evident stripes). Another variation occurs when the farmer shoots at his old farm (16:08, 16:13), with the farmer's head and body in three quarter profile but in the left half of the frame, with his hand raising the gun across the right hand side of the frame, and the tree and wind gauge, and grey sky, again in similar positions.

Another marked composition occurs in the second bank robbery, and I have touched upon it already, again in relation to shots past figures (26:34). The use of framing within the frame has already been used in Clyde's attempted robbery of the failed bank, with shots past the teller through the counter window (18:25), and subsequently a zoomed in variation showing Clyde in close up behind the security bars (18:38 and 18:43). This later composition, during the second bank robbery, is marked since Bonnie and Clyde enter the bank and stand so they almost fill the frame within the frame, viewed in medium shot from the thighs up, and both face the screen, with Clyde's gun also directed at the screen. The composition, which isolates Bonnie and Clyde as bank robbers, is used ironically since when Clyde initially declares 'This is a stick up', he is too quiet, and goes unnoticed. The shot is repeated for his more forceful second declaration (26:40), and approximated, from a different angle and without the bank teller in the foreground as they walk out the bank (27:15).

Another shot that features a frame within the frame, and this time combines aspects of symmetry and asymmetry, is the opening shot of the outside of the apartment the gang rent (40:41). This features the wooden trellised archway as a frame in the foreground, through which the apartment is seen central, whilst in front of that still in long shot, and arranged asymmetrically are the realtor and his car on the left of the frame and Buck just to the right of centre. Clearly this shot establishes the space, and provides narrative motivation in respect of foreshadowing the difficulty of the gang's escape after they are surrounded by the police. Yet the symmetric framing, and the foregrounding of the framing element is clearly marked and aesthetically motivated.

The next shot I wish to elaborate contrasts with these others since it is a long shot wide-screen composition. This shot follows the gangs tussle with Hamer (which is shot and edited in a frenetic style), and so is distinctive both formally and in the disjunction of tone, the calm in the image, enhanced by the soundtrack and sustained length of the shot. The shot features Hamer in a boat (55:07), in long shot in the centre of the frame, and as if in the middle of the lake. The far shore approximately defines the mid point of the frame, so the height of the frame is balanced between the lake, in the bottom and foreground, and the trees and sky in the far background. The boat lies parallel to the shore and frame. Clouds also stretch laterally across the sky, and the sheen of reflected light on the water is largely demarcated by horizontal lines. The image is relatively bright, although the sky and light on the lake suggest the shot might have been filmed at around the 'magic hour' with low light. Hamer barely moves, and only his head and shoulders are visible above the side of the boat, and the soundtrack is also still, with the continued use of bird song, a sound bridge from the previous shot, and the sound of lapping water. The shot is sustained for about seven seconds, but then cuts directly to the next bank robbery.

There are several more shots which also feature formal wide-screen compositions, and which bear some similarity to each other. I will touch upon three scenes, the wheat field, the 'homecoming' picnic and the uprooted farmer's camp, with specific long shots in each, and additionally a medium close up shot that follows one of these. These are similar in respect of their emphasis upon stark landscapes, but also due to the use of filters and/or soft focus. They might also be related to the nostalgic sepia representation of the Depression era, initiated by the archive snapshots in the credit sequence. The first two of these scenes are also consecutive, and a further similarity between these is emphasised by the dissolve between them. That similarity is the inclusion of shadows, from the clouds, crossing the landscape. The wheat field scene opens with a medium shot of Bonnie amongst the wheat, apparently taken using a filter given the appearance of the sky, and then depicts Clyde and the gang's search for her. As Clyde spots Bonnie (1:08:33) we have another long shot, showing Bonnie in the distance obscured by the wheat, and Clyde in the foreground in the bottom right of the frame. The frame is again laterally bisected, with the wheat field in the bottom of the frame, and a line of trees on the horizon, with the sky in the top half. The shot is held whilst Clyde runs after Bonnie, approaching the centre of the frame, although the camera cranes up slowly. Additionally, whilst the wheat field is bathed in sunlight at the start of the shot, quite rapidly the shadow from a cloud above crosses and fills the bottom portion of the shot, apart from a thin strip just below the trees. Hence the shot combines a marked formal composition, with the landscape privileged beyond the protagonists who become specks in the middle distance, but also takes advantage of the contingent, with variation derived form the fortuitous local weather conditions. The final shot of the scene (1:09:40), a slight variation with the wheat field taking up less than half the frame, and the trees more evident, still has speck like figures near the centre of the frame, and the wheat field largely in shadow except a swathe beneath the trees. This dissolves to the homecoming picnic scene, likewise shot with a filter, albeit now in soft focus, with the landscape in shadow that then passes. The brief continuation of the music from the previous scene, as a sound bridge, further emphasises the parallels between the scenes.

This opening shot (1:09:46) combines soft focus and filter with wide composition and composition in depth. In this instance, whilst the ground takes up about half the frame the horizon is rolling, punctuated with hills and the dilapidated structure in the background, presumably abandoned agricultural or industrial machinery. The figures, the gang and Bonnie's family, are arranged in the middle ground, in groups across the frame, and in the foreground there are parked cars, with two figures, a child and an adult beside one of the cars. Towards the end of the scene another long shot has the sky in roughly the top half of the frame, with the dilapidated structure demarcating the horizon and figures predominantly arranged laterally in the middle distance, including a group in the middle of the frame. However, in addition Buck and Blanche occupy a closer plane, and are near the left edge of the frame, whilst two departing figures are ahead of them, one directly in front of Buck partly obscuring him but also on the edge of the frame, and one in the immediate foreground exiting the bottom of the frame. Blanche stands out against the muted filtered colours since her white blouse is the only element of bright colour. Although the next shot is a closer, tighter view from the same direction, the subsequent shot (1:11:32) is a medium close up of Clyde, from the waist up, and this is noteworthy for including a similar element of contrast. In this case, the apple in one of his hands, and the silver wrapper (for a choc ice?) in his other hand also stand out due to the enhanced contrast in colour tone. An apple had also been used for a similar contrast in an earlier shot in the scene. These scenes are examples of embellishment by transformation, analogous with the use of colour filters, naturalised filter use or coloured lighting, in *The Graduate* or films by Godard such as the opening of *Le Mepris*. In *The Graduate* filter effects are achieved naturalistically, for instance the shot through the fish tank, as Benjamin retrieves his keys (8:15), has the fish tank and water function as a filter that pervades the background with a subtle greenish hue, or when he peers up at his parents beyond the surface of the pool (22:44). In the strip joint scene, in contrast, colour features with directed and localised coloured lighting. This first occurs in the entrance (56:37), with the exit sign and curtain glowing red, and this red light adding a red hue to those parts in shadow of the people in the bar.

The scene at the Depression victims' camp is similarly subdued, using low level dialogue mix and the sound of the wind. Whilst the opening aerial shot, with a wide composition, features a continuation of music from the previous scene, this very quickly fades out. The shot (1:28:34) includes the camp, seen from a high angle, in the foreground in long shot, and features a band of sky along the top of the frame, and the curve of a lake just below this. The cars of the farmers are organised in something like a crescent, and when the gang's car reaches the camp it fills the open edge of this configuration. The curtailed clear area of the camp is in the centre of the frame. Most significantly in this composition, beside the farmers and their cars that are organised across the frame in various planes, is the tree in the bottom right corner of the frame, and the line of washing that emanates from this. Again, in contrast to the muted colours of the landscape, sky and the farmers, the brighter washing stands out, particularly since it is in constant motion, caught by the wind. Also, two open fires at the near and far edges of the clearing contrast strongly, and the gang's car is also a distinctive colour compared to the dark cars at the camp. As well as having some affinities with both the above scenes, and the shots detailed therein, this shot is also sustained, in this case with the camera static and the shot held for about 35 seconds. These three scenes, the wheat field, homecoming picnic and Depression camp, all combine authentic, nostalgic and aestheticized representations of the past. Retaining seemingly authentic mise en scene enhanced and made nostalgic by the use of filters and focus, and maintaining a muted palette also found in the shots of the farmer shooting his repossessed house, they correspond to the critical association of the film with 'realist painting', both purportedly accurate but also composed.

Finally, in relation to compositions, I will describe two further shots that feature distinct frames within the frame, one from before the farmer's camp, and the other later. The first instance occurs at the beginning of the nighttime ambush (1:19:41). A close up of the mirror on a bedroom dresser fills the left hand side of the frame, with the left edge of the frame coinciding with the fluted post from the top of the dresser. The right hand side of the frame includes the far post, and the vertical panels of the wall, painted but evidently distressed by time. Within the downward angled mirror is the reflection of Bonnie and Clyde, in medium shot, but only for a fraction of a second since the mirror swings back and smashes, then shatters into large shards, to simulate the effect of it being hit by gunfire. Clearly this shot functions in several ways. Bonnie and Clyde's reflection being hit foreshadows their own demise, and the shot continues a motif of mirrors and other reflective or glass surfaces, windows and sunglasses, maintained throughout the film and associated with being shot.[239] However, the shot is nonetheless marked by its formal composition, not only positioning Bonnie and Clyde in the reflection, but also emphasising them against the sparse background. The inclusion of reflected images within the frame, contrived within the composition, is another similarity with *The Graduate*. Again, at times these convey significant character reactions or narrative information, but are governed by compositional rather than communicative factors. The prime initial example of this in *The Graduate* is when the reflection of the naked Mrs Robinson appears to Benjamin in Elaine's portrait (15:23).

The remaining shot in *Bonnie and Clyde* is less dramatic, and more sustained, but likewise includes a marked frame with the frame, albeit this time barely curtailing the screen. This shot of the Moss veranda (1:33:13) features the support beams for the canopy of the veranda at the extreme edges of the frame, with Malcolm Moss sat on the right hand side of the frame in the foreground plane beside one of these. On the left hand edge, a plane further back, is the other veranda post, which C.W. approaches from the back of the frame by the house. Bonnie and Clyde are between C.W. and Malcolm, in the farthest plane back, immediately in front of the house, with Bonnie sat to the immediate right of the doorframe.

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[239] For instance, Clyde shooting out the window of the failed bank, Clyde shooting the bank teller through the car window, and Clyde's sunglasses being broken before the climactic ambush.

I have outlined a variety of examples of formal compositions, including long shots, wide-screen compositions, frames within the frame compositions in depth, and combinations of these. When considered in addition to the overlap shots already detailed, it is reasonable to suggest that *Bonnie and Clyde* has a 'composed' quality. Clearly, this resonates with some of the characteristics of the film found in the contemporary reviews, including those amongst the 'painting' tendency. Meanwhile, within the list of characteristics provided by Glenn Man, these composed shots correspond to closed subjective framing, soft focus, deep-focus and wide-screen compositions, as well as arguably grainy cinematography with the extreme soft focus and filter of the homecoming picnic scene. Hence, a number of reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* emphasised the beautiful appearance of its imagery, or particular scenes: the 'alluring images' and 'dazzling' photography,[240] 'colourful backgrounds',[241] 'stunning camerawork',[242] 'colour compositions',[243] 'beautifully composed',[244] 'photographer's film – a beauty',[245] 'expertly photographed',[246] 'camerawork excellent',[247] 'scene after scene of dazzling artistry',[248] and the 'memorable' look of scenes.[249] Hence, the critics recognize aestheticization in respect of the compositions within the film, in terms of embellishment through making beautiful, vividness, and clarity, or specifically as examples of foregrounding the aesthetic function through composition. Comparisons with particular painters or painting schools also mark recognition of a distinctive style and the process of making stylistic choices in the film.

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[240] Coleman *New Statesman* 22/9/67.
[241] Ann Pacey *Sun* 5/9/67.
[242] Tom Milne *Observer* 10/9/67 and Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 67.
[243] Derek Prowse *Sunday Times* 10/9/67.
[244] Eric Rhodes *Listener* 14/9/67.
[245] Anne Scott-James *Daily Mail* 5/10/67.
[246] *Observer* 8/10/67 no author given.
[247] Doku *Variety* 9/8/67.
[248] Joseph Morgernstern *Newsweek* 28/8/67.
[249] Alexander Walker *Evening Standard* 7/9/67.

Elsewhere, the parallel with painting, or particular painters, was developed: the 'potency of an undiscovered primitive',[250] the 'clarity of colour and line recalls the realist paintings of Winslow Homer',[251] 'green, grey and brown photography like an Andrew Wyeth painting'[252] and a 'pointillist canvas',[253] this last in relation to the picnic scene, as well as finally comparison with Francis Bacon.[254]

Shifting from the consideration of shot composition and framing, I shall now develop aesthetic characteristics relating to the moving image, including the use of various stylistic and technical devices. In particular, variations in the shooting style shall be elaborated. The film does mix what might be termed following camera, which follows the characters by means of tracking, panning, tilts and reframing, and conversely objective camera, including static camera set ups with the characters, or for instance various cars, leaving the frame during the shot. Additionally, various devices feature that might be described as subjective camera.

Hand held camera, moving views and whip pans

Hand held camera features in various scenes within *Bonnie and Clyde*, but is most markedly used in chaotic action sequences. Exemplifying this is the use of hand held camera in the sequence with the struggle between Hamer and Clyde, which whilst not being subjective as such is expressive of the general situation. Hand held camera, with a shaky or unsteady quality, combines with overlaps and obscuring shots, with frenetic editing and the omission of spatial indicators provided by means of a still and recognizable background. Whilst I have touched upon this scene already, below I shall develop it further in respect of the use of a whip pan. However, the action sequence during the night ambush makes similar use of hand held camera to express the sensation of chaos for the gang members, particularly early on in the sequence. An illustrative shot (1:20:00) is a close up of the back of Clyde's head and shoulders, with immediately past him the broken window, and hanging down from near the top of the frame the broken light bulb. The shot follows a similar shot from behind Clyde (1:19:56) when he breaks the window. However, this second shot is more clearly hand held, featuring erratic reframing of Clyde, that has the camera swing up and then down, as well as less dramatically from side to side. Hand held shots are particularly favoured at the start of the sequence, depicting the initial reactions to the ambush of both Buck and Blanche in one apartment, and C.W., Bonnie and Clyde in the other. Marked hand held shots also include the previously mentioned mobile close up shots of Bonnie, seen extinguishing a candle with a pillow and shooting out a window.

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[250] Robert Robinson *Sunday Telegraph* 10/9/67.
[251] Eric Rhodes *Listener* 14/9/67.
[252] Alexander Walker *Evening Standard* 7/9/67.
[253] *Evening Standard* 21/9/67 unnamed author.
[254] Coleman *New Statesman* 22/9/67.

As well as hand held camera which stands out from the more comprehensive mix of objective static shots, and smooth tracking or panning following shots, there are also instances of mobile camera with a view from the front of a car which are similarly less steady, more erratic. These include the more subjective view (1:08:31) from inside the car, past the back of Buck, of Clyde running to the side and ahead of the car looking for and spotting Bonnie in the wheat field. More frequent is expressive use of moving view of the road or way ahead, which is used most markedly and frenetically to express the frantic situation during the dawn ambush when Clyde circles in the car trying to find an escape route. Each moving view is prefigured by a medium close up shot of Clyde at the steering wheel, taken from the bonnet of the car, except one instance in which it follows immediately after a medium shot of the car, and the penultimate instance. In this case it follows a medium close up of Clyde in profile through the driver's window that shows him being shot in the arm, with the explosion of a bloody squib. Hence, we have a number of these moving view shots, most lasting less than a second, with these two instances which vary in terms of their preceding shot (1:25:15 and 1:25:15 respectively) occurring amidst several other examples (1:25:04, 1:25:08, 1:25:12, 1:25:19, 1:25:26). Each shot is disorientating, but there is added variation, with one shot being the moving view as if from the front of the car as it reverses (1:25:12), and two shots being the moving view from the back of the car, as it drives forward (1:25:19, 1:25:26) that adds to this effect. The first of these has pronounced lateral motion so it approximates a whip pan.

Given this association within the film of the moving view with the threat to the gang, and their frantic attempt at escape, it is arguable that the two instances in the climactic scene provide a stylistic foreshadowing of Bonnie and Clyde's demise. The first (1:47:37), coming immediately after Bonnie's recognition of Malcolm, seen in the moving view in extreme long shot beside his pick up, is a view that shows the road ahead and the trees on the left hand side. The second (1:47:45), has Malcolm in long shot stood in the road and the pick up on the right hand side of the frame, but varies from a fixed moving view shot since the camera pans to keep Malcolm in the view as the car pulls off the road (or at least the production vehicle that is simulating the car's motion). Hence, we have expressive connotations beyond representing Bonnie and Clyde's unsuspecting recognition of Malcolm in the climactic scene.

The other expressive and quasi-subjective use of a camera device that I shall now outline is the use of whip pan. The first instance of this is more innocuous, being used to convey the subjective view of Clyde, looking around the failed bank (18:40). Clearly the camera is positioned where Clyde has been stood, and the view is further motivated as subjective by Clyde's glance to the side in the previous shot. This whip pan moves from a view into the back of the bank through the security bars, quickly shifts past the counter screen, and the teller, and slows as it crosses another such screen, incorporating a tilt up to finish viewing the corner of the ceiling. The later uses of whip pan are more pronounced, albeit very brief shots in action sequences associated with violence. Hence, the shot of Clyde twisting Hamer around (54:17) parallels the overlap shot from this struggle already described, but in this shot the camera follows Hamer as he is swung around. He begins on the right of Clyde, on the right of the frame, moves to being ahead of Clyde, and finally to the left of Clyde in the frame. Hamer is initially bent forward in medium close up on the bottom half of the right hand side of the frame, with Clyde's head in the left bottom corner of the frame. Hamer rises as he is swung around, filling the centre of the frame, obscuring Clyde, seen from the midriff up. The shot continues with Hamer on the left hand side of the frame, but the pan continues finishing with Hamer in the centre of the frame, and only Clyde's arm still evident.

The final two instances of whip pan are close parallels to each other, being even shorter shots of Buck and Clyde respectively falling whilst being struck by one or more bullets. Buck is falling away from the mattress, during the night ambush, having been hit in the head. His fall begins in medium shot, beyond the mattress, with the camera then panning and tilting to follow Buck's fall to the right of the frame. Immediately after a cut to a closer view, a medium close up of Buck's upper body on the ground, the camera whip pans to centre Buck's head (1:21:15), a motion that matches the direction of the previous pan and tilt. Notably, in the parallel shot of Clyde's fall (1:48:25), the whip pan occurs after a cut to a closer view, with the preceding shot being a pan and tilt following Clyde's fall to the right of the frame in medium close up. The cut to a closer view, which initially shows Clyde from the waist up, whip pans again in a matching direction to the motion to solely include Clyde's head at the left hand edge of the frame.

Whilst the critics might have also elided the marked use of these subjective camera movements, the impact of the scenes of violence in the film, most particularly the climax, could be readily associated with these kinds of device. I shall elaborate further on the recognition of stylistic devices associated with the critics' description of the violence, and Bonnie and Clyde's demise, when I consider the use of slow motion. Each of these examples of expressive camera movement contribute to the variety of camerawork in the film, and embellish their respective shots, particularly in kinetic terms with movement of the frame. Each might also be related to variation, especially hand held camera and moving views, with inherently shaky or erratic framing. The expressive use of hand held camera, corresponding to the mood of characters or the scene, is obtrusive and foregrounds the production of the image, and the changeability of style. Hand held camera tends to be more kinetic, and more often less artfully composed.

Jump cuts and 180-degree violation

Whilst Glenn Man included disjunctive editing and ellipses amongst the expressionist devices adopted by *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate*, influenced by the French New

Wave, he made no explicit reference to jump cuts. Jump cuts, which had constituted a feature in cinema since the silent period were nonetheless primarily associated with the New Wave, Goddard and Truffaut in particular.[255] Clearly, the comparison of *Bonnie and Clyde* with the New Wave, and particular films and filmmakers, might in part be explicated by the inclusion of jump cuts, a contravention of Classical continuity editing. One such instance occurs in Clyde's struggle with the butcher. After they have fallen into a display case together, Clyde stands and begins to head toward the camera. Before he reaches the edge of the frame there is a jump cut (20:20) to a shot of the butcher from exactly the same view, with Clyde suddenly absent from the shot. A similar elision features as a jump cut during the pursuit of the gang after their professional bank robbery, as they make for Oklahoma. A static medium shot view down the road features the gang's car from ahead, which passes the camera and exits the left edge of the frame, creating a swirl of dust that obscures the road. However, a cut follows (56:54) to the same view, with the dust removed and the pursuant police car suddenly in the middle distance.

Another violation of continuity editing occurs in the immediate aftermath of Clyde's tussle with Hamer, as Clyde and Buck still struggle in the lake. Effectively there is a 180-degree cut (54:48), that is a cut that crosses the line of action, with Buck and Clyde switching from the right and left side, respectively, to left and right. However, despite this apparent discontinuity edit, it is partially occluded since straight after the cut Clyde is submerged in the lake. However, he emerges just fractions of a second later, and so despite this, and the splash of water across the frame that accompanies him, and the coincident shift from medium shot to medium close up, we have a disorientating and unconventional shift of orientation. These devices are clearly most marked in respect of the conventions of Classical Hollywood continuity editing. In *Bonnie and Clyde*'s adoption of discontinuity techniques associated with the French New Wave, there is variety of editing, and this contributes to the more generalised blending of New Wave stylistic devices with Hollywood filmmaking practices.

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[255] See Bordwell 'Jump cuts and blind spots' and Raskin 'Five explanations for the jumpcuts in Godard's *Breathless*' for instance.

Isolated heads against dark background

One particular formal composition that I have kept apart from the discussion of marked compositions in the film is the recurrent use of shots of character's heads isolated against a dark background, as if they are in an abstract setting. In the first example of this, in the cinema, a medium close up of Clyde's head and shoulders is set against an almost uniformly dark background (28:28), with the faint glow of the cinema screen barely illuminating the rear wall in the bottom left corner of the frame. Another instance, this time an exterior medium close up shot of C.W. (1:31:24) just as he has arrived at his father's house, has C.W.'s head and shoulders in view, but with the left hand side of his face concealed by shadow. A dim reflection of light can be seen to the left of his face in the frame, although when the shot is repeated a few shots later (1:31:27), C.W.'s head moves to obscure this background element. Whilst these shots might not seem exceptional, the vast majority of shots in darkness, either exterior or interior, include at least partial background, even for close ups. These 'isolated' shots are a mainstay of film publicity posters, displaying the protagonists but without a specific background context, but are still marked within the film as a form of embellishment.

Slow and fast motion

As I have previously suggested, the most commented upon sequence in *Bonnie and Clyde*, by contemporary critics as well as in retrospect, is the portion of the climactic ambush scene after the gunfire begins when normal speed and slow motion footage are intercut. Amongst the aesthetic devices referenced by reviews, the use of slow motion is one that stands out. Thus, slow motion is either explicitly addressed,[256] or a metaphorical account attempts to capture the essence of the scene; 'cinematic perfection of the death scene' and 'decorative deaths',[257] 'choreography of death', [258] and 'rag doll dance of death',[259] or the critic simply foregoes description of the 'most extraordinary end[s]'.[260] Similarly, in retrospective accounts consideration of the relation of influence between Kurosawa and Penn, or Penn and Peckinpah, *Bonnie and Clyde* upon *The Wild Bunch* (1969) and so on, is focused around this sequence.[261] Consequently, these accounts often imply that the aestheticized representation of violence is the significant innovation of the film. Furthermore, as my discourse analysis of the reviews suggests, the perceived value of the film was frequently aligned with the perceived value of the scenes of violence, either gratuitous, unnecessarily or inappropriately stylised, made more affective by the use of stylistic devices or aesthetically appropriate. Hence, aesthetic evaluations of the film were dependent upon whether the violence was gauged according to a moral, mimetic, expressive or pragmatic (affective) critical framework. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that in part a shift in the associated value of the sequence, and thus the film, was necessary in the process of the film becoming canonically accepted. However despite the predominant association of slow motion with the aestheticization of the violence in the final scene, slow and fast motion feature elsewhere in the film, albeit less frequently than some of the other stylistic devices and aesthetic characteristics that I have already considered.

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[256] Penelope Houston *Spectator* 15/9/67, Tom Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967, Joseph Morgernstern *Newsweek* 21/8/67, *Time* 8/12/67.
[257] Eric Rhodes *Listener* 14/9/67.
[258] *Time* 8/12/67.

Slow or fast motion occurs, or is suggested in a few scenes. For instance, during the homecoming picnic scene, either subdued motion or actual slow motion features as a child rolls down the sand mound (1:10:38). Whilst it is not clear if this is shot at a higher frame rate, the subdued motion and lack of sound gives the impression of slow motion. Conversely, beside other shots of the gang's getaway car that can be understood as pastiche or otherwise intertextual reference to the Mack Sennett silent comedies, at least one such shot appears speeded up.[262] Hence, during the dawn ambush, as the car circles, two consecutive shots appear to be speeded up, one as the car drives from left to right in medium long shot (1:25:16), and one in long shot (1:25:17). In this shot, unlike certain others, it is not the breakneck rhythm of the accompanying music that suggests the enhanced speed of the car, since there is no non-diegetic music .

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[259] Kael *New Yorker* and *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*.

[260] Coleman *New Statesman* 22/9/67.

[261] See Stephen Prince *Screening Violence* (Athlone Press, London, 2000), p 10, on the influence of *The Seven Samurai* on Penn and *Bonnie and Clyde*, p13, which includes confirmation that Peckinpah saw *Bonnie and Clyde*, and p178, that Peckinpah was influenced by the editing of different speed footage in Kurosawa, *Bonnie and Clyde* and an episode of *Felony Squad* edited by Lou Lombardo. Stephen Prince (ed.) *Sam Peckinpah's The Wild Bunch* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999), p183, states Penn 'knows Kurosawa' and Peckinpah aimed to 'surpass' *Bonnie and Clyde*, pp184-186. Man *Radical Visions,* p10, on the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* on *The Wild Bunch* as well as *Billy Jack* (1971) and other violent films.

However, whether slow and fast motion are used elsewhere in the film, clearly they are used most markedly during the climax, and most specifically during the shooting. Initially, a close up of Bonnie immediately prior to the start of the gunfire appears to use slow motion (1:48:20). The close up is sustained for longer than a similar shot just two shots previously, but with very little movement from Bonnie's head as she exchanges glances with Clyde. The slow motion shots begin in earnest as Clyde is struck by multiple bullets. Hence a medium shot of Clyde from the waist up and seen falling (1:48:23), features part of Clyde's head flying off, but at reduced speed, and the subsequent shot of him, in which he falls further and begins to crush the pear in his hand likewise appears slowed. More marked use of slow motion follows nearer the culmination of the sequence. A slow motion medium shot of Bonnie as her head lolls (1:48:36), is followed by a slow motion shot of Clyde on the ground (1:48:38) as his body lifts off the ground. This is followed by an aerial view of Clyde, in front of the car, and Bonnie in the car, in slow motion (1:48:39), and a medium close up shot of Bonnie, framed by the car door, leaning forward in slow motion (1:48:40). A further shot of Clyde, on the ground from behind (1:48:41), and a final shot of Clyde rolling back (1:48:45), now in near silence, complete the slow motion shots, with many occurring in close succession. Clearly these slow motion shots embellish the scene, making the protagonists deaths more beautiful as critics have claimed or complained, and varying the intense kinetic qualities of the sequence. Furthermore, the disjunction between the slow motion film imagery and normal speed sound, which is incessant and loud, further intensifies the affective qualities of the scene. This might be related to aestheticization as experience, with the disjunction adding to the lyrical qualities of the protagonists' demise. Additionally, the aestheticization of the protagonists' necessary deaths, in respect of the conventions of the gangster genre, contribute to generic nostalgia.

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[262] An example of a Sennett comedy with a contrived final chase featuring the Keystone cops, played out at frantic pace is *Wandering Willies* (1926, Del Lord). This features the characteristic speeded up shot (about 19 minutes into the film) as well as various other parallels with *Bonnie and Clyde* I shall mention elsewhere.

Canted shots

It is noteworthy that despite the recognition by critics of slow motion in the climax, few, if any, make reference to the canted shots that prefigure the shooting, and in one instance occurs during it. Hence, when Bonnie and Clyde pull up we have a canted view of Malcolm (1:47:53), in medium shot with markedly canted shadows. The next shot of the car (1:47:55), as Clyde exits, is also canted. Finally, at least one shot of Bonnie, whilst she is being shot and framed by the open car door, is shot at a canted angle (1:48:43). As with the inclusion of moving view shots in the scene, these canted shots, though partly motivated by the angled bank upon which Clyde parks the car, can be understood as expressive and associated with foreshadowing Malcolm's treachery and the protagonists' imminent deaths. Clearly then, the canted shots are a marked variation, which furthermore are marked for expressive purpose in their inclusion in solely this scene, as well as embellishing the scene in respect of variation in shot choice. Canted shots might be considered as an expressive use of defamiliarisation, but altering the perspective on the whole scene rather than a single figure or object.

Inserts/flash forward

The three inserts during the gang's escape after their professional bank robbery are marked in several respects. Firstly these inserts interrupt the pace of the car chase sequence, including briefly pausing the musical accompaniment, and as such contrast in tone. Additionally, these are shot in a different style to the rest of the film, approximating documentary interview footage, at least with their opening shots with address slightly off being direct to camera, as if to an interviewer out of frame. Finally, these are all presumably flash forward shots, since they would not reasonably be taking place immediately following the robbery, whilst the police are still in pursuit of the gang (at least assuming there are no lengthy elisions in the car chase). Clearly, in the first and last respects, the disjunction of tone and use of flash forward, these shots contrast strongly with Hollywood and are more akin to the French New Wave. Considering the three inserts in turn, the first showing the interview of the younger security guard (57:27) introduces the structure of these inserts, with a direct cut on the beginning of the guard's phrase; 'There I was, staring straight into the face of death'. Similarly, an abrupt cut to the music precedes the shot. After the guard finishes this phrase the music begins immediately over the top of the shot and bridges to the next shot. This second shot is taken further from the guard, and shows the interviewer, spectators and a cameraman taking the guards photo, accompanied by a flash and the sound of the click of the camera (alongside the music), before a direct cut back to the gang's car. This first insert comprises two shots, lasting in total about eight seconds, abruptly interrupting the chase, but also integrated by means of resumption of the soundtrack music. As suggested, the later inserts adopt a similar albeit slightly varied format. The second insert (57:56) again occurs after a direct cut to image and music, and includes a medium shot of the (seated) farmer who was spared during the robbery, and standing around him a reporter and a small audience. The cut is immediately followed by the first half of a phrase, and the second shot in the insert begins immediately after he pauses. The second shot in this case is a medium close up of the farmer's head and shoulders, also including his raised arm as he points past the camera. Again the music resumes within the insert, albeit only momentarily before the cut back to the chase this time, and straight after the farmer completes his sentence on the word 'funeral'. As with the first insert, the farmer addresses someone off camera, so it is not quite direct address. With the closer shot of the speaker there is a non-descript background. In the first instance this was the wood panelled interior wall of the bank, and here it is the window of the bank, with curved bars visible beyond it on the outside. The second insert is slightly shorter than the first, whilst the final insert is still shorter, lasting less than two seconds and comprising one shot, although embellished. This shot again follows a direct cut, although this time the music continues as a sound bridge straight through the shot and back to the chase. The shot features the bank manager and younger security guard in medium shot, at either side of the frame and pointing at the bullet hole in the centre of the frame, in the pockmarking of the internal bank wall. The shot is embellished by the introduction of a flash of intense light mimicking flash photography, momentarily bleaching the background and their faces, and giving the shot a similar look to a colour negative. The shot returns to its initial appearance before almost immediately cutting back to the chase. Clearly these inserts function within the film in respect of depicting the mythmaking process around Bonnie and Clyde, and mitigating the sympathetic representation of their characters. They also counterpoint the car chase, both visually, as well as interrupting the music, and in terms of tone. In the middle insert, the farmer's comments also provide further intimations of Bonnie and Clyde's inescapable deaths. However, it is as both flash forwards and disjunctive edits, effecting a tonal disjunction, that these inserts are most marked. It is also this shift in time that most readily connects with the characterisation of the film by contemporary critics. In particular, Alexander Walker's description of scenes alternating 'incredibly',[263] the shift in mood achieved 'brilliantly' according to *Sight and Sound*,[264] and the integration of 'slack and tense moods' recognised by the *Evening Standard*,[265] can be associated with these inserts as well as other instances of tonal juxtapositions and disjunctive editing. I will finally briefly touch upon two further characteristics that relate respectively to shifts in tone, with the use of visual irony, and disjunctive editing, with mistakes in editing and staging, as well as considering the wider issue of tonal disjunction, particularly in respect of the film's incorporation of slapstick.

Visual irony

Whilst irony might be attributed to various aspects of the film, including dialogue, actor's gestures, and stylistic devices, or the juxtaposition of a combination of these, I shall focus upon two instances of subtle visual irony. These are both shots that feature a sign within the composition that contains an ironic statement, given the particular dramatic context. Hence, in the Eugene and Velma episode, as the gang pursue and catch the couple, a shot with both cars side by side (1:03:18) also features a road side sign reading 'Warning No shooting or dumping on this road.' Notably the 'no' has been obscured. Given both the preceding conversation between Eugene and Velma, in which Velma convinces Eugene that they should cease their own pursuit with the question; 'What if they have guns, Eugene?' (1:02:40), and that the gang stop the couple immediately past the sign, the wording seems significant. The blend of joking and a threat to the couple during the episode corresponds to the inclusion of the sign, given that it is uncertain whether any shooting will occur. An earlier instance that is similarly fleeting occurs with Clyde's attempt to rob the failed bank. After Bonnie and Clyde have pulled up outside the bank, and Clyde climbs out of the car, a shot from inside the bank through the window includes the lettering on the window (in reverse) 'Deposits guaranteed' (18:12). Given both the failed status of the bank, and that Clyde subsequently shoots out the window, the wording again seems significant. Whilst one contemporary review, the second article in *Time* about the film references the use of 'dramatic irony' in the film,[266] clearly this does not correspond exactly with these instances. However, irony as an available means of comprehending reversals and rapid mood shifts in the film, as well as tonal disjunctions, seems pertinent to the characterisation of these by reviews. Such visual irony might also be associated with slapstick; such as the Mack Sennett produced *Wandering Willies* which features early on a sign 'Fireworks prohibited in the park', immediately prior to fireworks being set off in the park and the involvement of a policeman.

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[263] Alexander Walker *Evening Standard* 7/9/67.
[264] Tom Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967.
[265] *Evening Standard* 21/9/67 author unnamed.

Slapstick disjunctions and visual (visible) mistakes

The final aesthetic characteristic of *Bonnie and Clyde* I wish to develop is this inclusion of marked rapid mood shifts, and tonal disjunctions, especially those featuring slapstick. These were clearly problematic to various critics, particularly those I have termed the theme group and notably Bosley Crowther. As I have discussed in relation to my discourse analysis of the reviews, comedy, and particularly synonyms such as farce and slapstick, and also burlesque, invoked negative values associations for these critics,[267] and their juxtaposition with violence was deemed inconsistent (as well as morally inappropriate). In contrast, the tone or mood shifts were also amongst the aesthetic characteristics singled out for most fulsome valorisation; 'scenes alternate incredibly',[268] shift in mood 'brilliantly',[269] with the 'frequent changes of mood' associated with a 'rich texture',[270] the 'audacious and unexpected approach',[271] and conversely the whole considered a 'modulated film'.[272]

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[266] *Time* 8/12/67.

[267] For instance see *Time* 25/8/67, Doku *Variety* 9/8/67, Bosley Crowther *New York Times* 7/8/67 and 14/8/67 and 3/9/67.

Whilst the issue of inconsistency versus consistency, incongruity versus congruity, and inappropriateness against appropriateness were strongly contested (see in particular my account of the Crowther Crusade, and interventions by Kael and Sarris), these were the alternative concepts applied variously to disjunctive editing, devices such as the inserts I have already mentioned, as well as more generally to the sympathetic (but initially childlike or foolish) portrayal of the criminal protagonists. Additionally, the use of the Flatt and Scruggs' 'Foggy Mountain Breakdown' as non-diegetic music accompanying the sequences of the car escaping and car chases was problematized. Slapstick, associated with the pratfalls and ineptness of the protagonists, and subsequently other characters is primarily associated with this use of music, and combines with the comedy of the Eugene/Velma episode. After the end of this episode the foreboding around death and the tragic aspect of the film predominates, including the later uses of this music. Whilst I shall consider key instances of slapstick, I shall also account for the way in which these are organised in the film, particularly noting scene juxtapositions with discordant tones. Whilst Bonnie is the first character to trip up within the film, it is Clyde who is associated with slapstick in a more developed fashion early on in the film. Hence, in the aftermath of the first grocery robbery when Clyde pulls away from Bonnie's advances, we have Clyde banging his head on the inside of the car (9:20) and falling out of the car (9:45). This features in a scene that also combines intimacy and tenderness between the couple, and also follows the first use of the soundtrack music to accompany the escaping car. This music is used again when Clyde chooses to steal another car when they leave the diner (13:15), adding to the sense of excitement associated with Bonnie's response. Music is again used to correspond to Bonnie's reaction after the attempt to rob the failed bank.

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[268] Alexander Walker *Evening Standard* 7/9/67.
[269] Tom Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967.
[270] David Wilson *Guardian* 8/9/67.
[271] Nina Hibbin *Morning Star* 9/9/67.
[272] *Monthly Film Bulletin* October 1967, D.W.

Clyde says to Bonnie; 'We've got a dollar ninety eight and you're laughing', and this is immediately followed by Bonnie's increased laughter and the introduction of the comic music (19:40). It is worth mentioning here that so far slapstick has been particularly aligned with Clyde, and specifically Bonnie's perception of Clyde. Also, two of the most graphic scenes of violence within the film follow shortly after, Clyde's struggle with the butcher and the point blank shooting of the bank teller through the car window, and both are markedly isolated from the use of comic music. Arguably a dramatic, or somewhat serious or even sombre tone is emphasised in these. However, whilst the shooting of the teller does not feature the music, it does follow C.W.'s slapstick getaway from his parallel parking (27:30), occurring only thirty seconds later. Furthermore, irony can also be associated with the subsequent cut to the cinema, and the soundtrack to *Golddiggers of 1933*, 'We're in the money'. Following this scene slapstick is less associated with the initial members of the gang, Clyde, Bonnie and C.W. who become professional, but rather with secondary characters and the anonymous police driving cars in chase scenes. However, a counterpoint of slapstick can be associated with Blanche's hysterical behaviour during the first ambush, at least the way she simply runs past the police waving a kitchen spatula (46:19).[273] Buck is also associated with his corny jokes, but never in terms of slapstick.

The key instances of slapstick or comic moments and mood shifts in the second half of the film occur in respect of the getaway chase and inserts after the professional bank robbery, as well as the Eugene/Velma episode. I have already elaborated upon the shifts in tone effected by the abrupt cut to the music in the first two inserts. In addition to these inserts, the musical accompaniment to this chase occurs early on, and the music and editing emphasise the ineffectual attempts by the police to catch the gang, specifically as the first car skids through a sign and off the road (58:10), and as the second car overturns (58:24). These shots are long shots, keeping the policemen anonymous. Also, the unexplained shot, in terms of previous action, which features the gang's car centre frame descending a grassy hill, and the two police cars following down the hill but approaching it from either side of the screen, adds to the comic 'Mack Sennett' quality of the chase.[274] Finally, the chase concludes with the police giving up at the state border. This is depicted with an interior shot of the police in their car, with one telling the other 'I ain't gonna risk my life in Oklahoma!' followed immediately by a long shot past the Oklahoma state sign showing the police car hastily turning back. The music continues throughout these shots. The upbeat ending of the scene is immediately undercut by the shot of the meagre pile of loot, and the gang's bickering division of it.

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[273] See Man *Radical Visions*. Also F.A. Macklin *Film Heritage* vol. 3 no.2 Winter 67-8, p18, describes Blanche as a "keystone moll". Jim Cook *Screen* vol. 10 no. 4/5 July/October 1969, p109, refers to her "hysterically clinging to the paint brush."

Following this scene, and proving pivotal in the overall shift in tone in the film is the Eugene/Velma episode. This is primarily comic, in this instance with Gene Wilder's debut film performance providing the comic focus. Hence, this is established by Eugene's fall out of the veranda when he responds to his car being stolen (1:01:45). Furthermore, sustained shots of his reactions and his dialogue, characterized by anxious repetition, are used for comic effect. For instance, the shot of his reaction when Velma asks about the risk of the gang having guns, his immediate retraction of his desire to 'tear them apart' instead deciding to turn around and go to the sheriff, lasts several seconds. Similarly, the subsequent shots, of the gang's car closing in on the couple, whilst Eugene repeats, mantra-like, 'step on it Velma' (1:02:51), are kept for several seconds, and also feature the gang's car seen in the rear window getting nearer. Similar, albeit featuring later in the episode, is Eugene's reaction to Velma revealing her age (1:06:09). This is preceded by the forced humour between the couple and the gang, and Bonnie's innocent question leads to a sequence of reaction shots from Eugene and Velma, two shots of Eugene interspersed with one of Velma that last over ten seconds in total, with no accompanying sound apart from the hum of the car's engine. The tone from this point on tends to the tragic and lyrical, and for instance the later inclusion of the 'comic' music is used ironically, as when Hamer meets Malcolm at the ice cream parlour. The incorporation of slapstick, and blending of an ostensibly defunct style derived from the Mack Sennett comedies, with the tragic gangster movie is a form of aestheticization in terms of generic blending and playfulness. These are both types of aestheticization that affect the experience of watching the film. More than any other characteristics of the film, and contrasting with the modernist use of shock effects, this might be considered as postmodern.

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[274] Again, the characteristics of the car chase have precedence in *Wandering Willies*. This features the escaping car veering across the road whilst oncoming cars also veer (18:41), the pursuing cars overturning (about 20 minutes and 21:20), and the meeting of other vehicles approaching from either side of the frame (21:30).

Mistakes

Finally, some ostensibly intentional 'mistakes' in the film are worth mentioning, as these potentially contribute to the mixed tone of key scenes of violence. Hence, mistakes in staging feature as the butcher brings down the cleaver past Clyde (20:10) and during the night ambush as a policeman runs toward, and collapses upon the mattress (1:21:18). In the first instance there is no spatial reason for the cleaver coming down past Clyde, who hasn't stepped aside, and in the latter Buck is to the near side of the mattress. Additionally, at least two instances of overlapping edits feature in action sequences. Firstly when Clyde leaps into the lake after Hamer (54:19), this is followed by a longer, overlapping take of him reaching the edge and leaping into the water (54:20). Similarly, the overturning police car during the comic chase just previously mentioned is depicted with an overlapping edit as the car topples over (58:24 then 58:25). Clearly, this last instance most obviously contributes to the comic tone of the sequence.[275]

Amongst the various aesthetic characteristics of *Bonnie and Clyde* that I have highlighted, these last three, irony, slapstick and mood shifts, as well as 'mistakes', bear most readily upon the tone(s) of the film, and the potential general aesthetic experience for the cinemagoer. Within my analysis I have primarily considered stylistic devices that constitute means of foregrounding aestheticization in terms of embellishment and animation in individual shots. However, there are also aspects of the film that function in a more holistic way. Hence, whilst the script for the film might be related to a new sensibility influenced by the French New Wave,[276] the film similarly deviates from Hollywood in terms of its tonal organisation and palette. Hence, as Cawelti has discussed,[277] the film can be associated with generic transformation, in terms of his categories of myth as myth and nostalgia, as well as generic blending. Similarly, as I have intimated in relation to several of its aesthetic characteristics, the film can be characterized by a playful approach to style, and blending of stylistic devices from Hollywood and art cinema. Furthermore, and again in relation to the tone of the film, various critics described the film as lyrical, ballad-like or poetic in some sense.[278] Whilst this might readily connect with the beauty of the homecoming picnic scene, and the like, it is nonetheless attributed to the film as a whole. Not being limited in relating to the appearance of the film, unlike the metaphor of painting, the analogy with poetry or other lyric forms might arguably hint at recognition by critics of the wider aestheticization of the film, in this case foregrounding aesthetic functions analogous to those identified with poetry. However, this was significantly contested, particularly in terms of the aesthetic values of unity, harmony and consistency.

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[275] For a revealing article that addresses the Hollywood norm of unobtrusive technique see Steven Kallis Jr 'Sorry 'bout that!: Visual boo-boos – obvious enough to be idiotic – that crop up all-to-frequently even in professional production' *American Cinematographer* vol. 50, no. 5, May 1969 suggests that all obtrusive aesthetic devices are a mistake. "I was told something that I consider to be the foundation of all quality work: *the audience should never be aware of the camera*. One of the characteristics of a really important picture is the fact that the audience is drawn into the film and shares the experience being shown; the minute someone watching a film becomes aware that he is seeing a motion picture much of the effort that has gone into making the film in the first place has been wasted."

There are two further aspects that I have touched upon in relation to the two opening sequences, the archive snap shots during the credits and Bonnie in her room. The first of these is the film's approach to history. As I suggested in respect of the credits, these establish a tone and perspective towards history, combining both nostalgia and authenticity. However, although these aspects continue throughout the film, it is also the playful approach to history that this sequence significantly displays, combining real and faux archive photos as well as in the use of the 'click' approximating the sound of a projector or camera, and the similarly artefactual sound of an antique record. This approach to history, as well as the characterisations of the protagonists was clearly problematic for Bosley Crowther, amongst other critics, who railed against the historical inaccuracy, and even anachronism of the film with the vintage car chases. This illustrates the way in which criticism conflates or combines different aspects, in this case the use of slapstick as well as the playful approach to history. The last aspect I wish to touch upon, and which was also damned by Crowther, is the characterisation of Bonnie and Clyde. I have intimated at various points of this consideration of the film's aesthetic characteristics that various of the film's stylistic devices impact the sympathetic depiction of the protagonists. Similarly, the marked incessant facial gestures of both Bonnie and Clyde in the scene of their initial meeting relate to the mannered performative style of both Beatty and Dunaway, and this clearly also affects the characterisation. More specifically, as well as being mannered, the characters might be characterized as 'cool', a quality associated with characters in French New Wave films (from Belmondo's Michel in *A Bout de Souffle*, to Jeanne Moreau in *Jules et Jim*), and also with characters in British swinging London, and similar offbeat films. When I discuss the aesthetic innovations of *Bonnie and Clyde* I shall consider these amongst the influence upon it. Clearly this quality of 'cool' also contributed to the anachronism of the characters, as perceived by some critics, or conversely their contemporaneity. Whilst these two characteristics, a playful approach to history and a stylised approach to characterisation also contribute to the wider aestheticization of the film, and might be associated with pastiche, they are less easily defined in relation to particular shots, sequences or scenes. However, I shall elaborate more fully similarly holistic aesthetic characteristics when I address the film's aesthetic innovations. Whilst not all of these aspects of the film appear to be explicitly referenced by the contemporary reviews, or even retrospectively by critics, they do contribute to the stylistic eclecticism of the film, and might variously be understood in respect of my types of aestheticization. As I have intimated at several points, although the critics do not seem to explicitly address certain aesthetic characteristics of the film, the combination of these same devices contribute to their general characterisation of the film. Hence, whether the film is considered as innovative, or overly self-conscious and superficial, critics do note the stylistic variety in the film, although to a lesser extent than in considering *The Graduate*, probably due to the focus upon violence in the film.[279] As with *The Graduate*, a similarly significant proportion of critics consider the film as erratic, or aspects of it as inconsistent or less effective.[280]

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[276] See Matthew Bernstein 'Perfecting the New Gangster: Writing *Bonnie and Clyde*' *Film Quarterly* vol. 53, no. 4, pp16-31, on Newman and Benton.

[277] Cawelti 'Tradition and Transformation'.

[278] For instance; Penelope Houston *Spectator* 15/9/67, Tom Milne *Observer* 10/9/67, Eric Rhodes *Listener* 14/9/67, Tom Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967, Derek Prowse *Sunday Times* 10/9/67, Hollis Alpert *Saturday Review* 5/8/67, Judith Crist *Vogue* 9/67, Andrew Sarris *Village Voice* 24/8/67, Peter Harcourt *Queens Journal* 24/11/67, Kael *New Yorker*, Bosley Crowther *New York Times* 3/9/67.

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[279] Reviews that note the stylistic variety in *The Graduate* include: Murf *Variety*28/12/67, designated as the modern fashion, or current gimmicks; Andrew Sarris *Village Voice* 28/12/67, John Simon *Movies into Film* Feb 1968 and Charles Champlin *LA Times* 18/12/67 as eclecticism, and Richard Gerner *Hollywood Reporter* 20/12/67 where this is termed freewheeling direction; Penelope Houston *Spectator* 16/8/68 refers to trampling 'screen conventions'; Arthur Knight *Saturday Review* 23/12/67 characterized the film in terms of 'experimentation'; Murf *Variety*28/12/67 described 'switched-on cinematics'; Joseph Morgernstern *Film 67/8* previously in *Newsweek* (date unknown) commented on cluttered style.

[280] For instance Patrick Gibbs *Daily Telegraph* 9/8/68, Clive Hirschhorn *Sunday Express* 11/8/68, Dilys Powell *Sunday Times* 11/8/68, *Time* 29/12/67 no author, David Robinson *Financial Times* 9/8/68, John Simon *Movies into Film* Feb 1968, Murf *Variety* 28/12/67, Kael Trash art, Chris Hudson *Monthly Film Bulletin*, Jan Dawson *Sight and Sound* Summer 68 v37 no 3, Richard Schickel *Film 67/8*.

Chapter 5: Retrospective references to *Bonnie and Clyde* and its influence on other filmmakers' practices

I will now address critical references to *Bonnie and Clyde* and consider diachronic shifts in the characterisation and status of the film. Initially I will focus on references to *Bonnie and Clyde* in reviews for later films, but I will also later consider retrospective critical accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde* itself. Within this chapter I will also address the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* on other filmmakers by considering the aesthetic characteristics it shares with selected Hollywood films. In particular, I will consider Hollywood genre films that feature aestheticization, including some of those films that critics associated with *Bonnie and Clyde.*

Retrospective characterisations of *Bonnie and Clyde*

References in reviews for other films and articles on changes in cinema

In this section I will consider whether *Bonnie and Clyde* is referenced in reviews of other films with particular aesthetic or evaluative connotations. More specifically, is it characterized as innovative or canonical, either explicitly or by presumption,? Alternatively, I will consider whether it is referenced simply as a familiar film, to aid classification, or in relation to either its genre, or its stars or creative personnel who are involved in the later film under review. Additionally, I will expand upon references that imply imitation of *Bonnie and Clyde*, in respect of recognition of innovation. Whilst I shall not apply discourse analysis to these reviews in full, I shall consider how the references to *Bonnie and Clyde* are worded, and how they cohere within the reviews.

Bosley Crowther *In Cold Blood* review *New York Times* 17/12/1967

In Cold Blood is contrasted with *Bonnie and Clyde* as "much more aware and adult." In one of his last reviews Crowther maintains his position on the film.

Arthur Knight *In Cold Blood* review *Saturday Review* 30/12/1967

Knight's *In Cold Blood* review makes reference to *Bonnie and Clyde* but with no explicit evaluative position or connotations for the film.

Andrew Sarris *Cool Hand Luke* (1967) review *Village Voice*

Sarris refers to *Bonnie and Clyde* and "other films that undercut the conventions of their genres by escaping the controlled studio environment in which the conventions were carefully contrived in terms of light and shadow." Hence, *Bonnie and Clyde* is associated with both transcending its genre, and more implicitly with realism. Furthermore, Sarris references Penn's "stylistic eclecticism", but without the reservations from his initial review of *Bonnie and Clyde.*

Stanley Kauffmann *The Graduate* review *New Republic* 23/12/1967 reprinted in *Figures of Light* pp276-277

The Graduate is contextualised in relation to "many months of prattle about the 'new' American film (mostly occasioned by the overrated *Bonnie and Clyde*)." Hence, *Bonnie and Clyde* is evaluated as overrated, but also its association with the new American film much qualified in terms of "prattle."

Stanley Kauffmann in 'The Future of Film: A symposium" in Richard Schickel and John Simon – *Film 67/68: An anthology*

Kauffmann suggests that "the best American commercial films seem to be 'growing up'" but qualifies this as not bearing up to close scrutiny. This clearly echoes his comments in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde* in his review of *The Graduate.*

Whit *Variety* review of *Killers Three* (1968) 20/11/1968

The byline for this review suggests "'Bonnie and Clyde' obviously cued this" – the similarity with, or imitation of *Bonnie and Clyde* is foregrounded by inclusion in the byline. Furthermore, a reference in the body of the review compares the plot, it "picks up when film enters the *Bonnie and Clyde* pursuit phase." Again, *Bonnie and Clyde* seems identified as a prototype for the film.

Stanley Kauffmann *The Wild Bunch* review 19/7/1969 reprinted in *Figures of Light* pp179-183

In the middle of this review, whilst discussing violence, Kauffmann compares this film to Kurosawa, and then suggests the "obvious point of comparison is the end of *Bonnie and Clyde* (there are also other comparisons with that picture), but Penn used slow motion to try to poeticise the deaths of two particular people. With Peckinpah, it is almost always extras who fall in slow motion – depersonalised death." Kauffmann proceeds to discuss the representation of violence in *The Wild Bunch* in terms of an analogy with ballet, not bullets, and classifying it as the "cruellest esthetics."

Bonnie and Clyde is thus explicitly contrasted with *The Wild Bunch*, with the qualifier 'but' after the suggestion of comparison. *Bonnie and Clyde* is identified primarily with the climactic ambush, and 'Penn's' use of slow motion. In relation to the evaluative connotations of *Bonnie and Clyde*, the conclusion of the sentence contains the potential evaluative, as well as classificatory, trope of poetry. Clearly, this is qualified by the addition 'try to', but not denied as such. *Bonnie and Clyde*, hence, even in such cursory reference is identified with its violence, with Penn, and the expressive attempt at poetry. Hence, in considering *Bonnie and Clyde* in terms of an analogy with poetry, albeit briefly, this reference is equivalent to the lyrical group of reviews, and contrasts to some extent with Kauffmann's own reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*. *The Wild Bunch* is similarly related to ballet, although with a cruel aesthetic.

John Simon *The Wild Bunch* review August 1969 reprinted in *Movies into film* pp173-176

Simon refers to *Bonnie and Clyde* within a paragraph of the second half of the review, again in relation to its violence. Having discussed the cinematography and score of *The Wild Bunch* in the previous paragraph, Simon maintains cohesion by thematising the "editing of Louis Lombardo" in the opening sentence. Hence *Bonnie and Clyde* is referenced whilst constituting the complement in the phrase; "we are once more brought up against *Bonnie and Clyde*." Whilst this association suggests a comparison in terms of editing, the following clause clarifies this. "Even more than that film, *The Wild Bunch* revels in bloodletting; not since baroque poetry and mannerist painting have there been such human fountains, blood spurting from them in manifold sets. They are photographed either in slow motion or, conversely, in a quick montage of single-frame or very short takes." Simon also relates this to ballet.

Bonnie and Clyde is hence associated with violence, but this is related to both painting and poetry, albeit perhaps implicitly devalued painting and poetry. Now, in this case, the reference to *Bonnie and Clyde* can be read as either associating it with the 'balletic' quality of the violence, or merely identifying it with violence. The initial association with editing implies the former, but the direct comparison is in terms of graphic violence. Simon, thus mobilises the tropes of poetry and painting, as well as ballet, to provide analogies for *The Wild Bunch*, but in a qualified way, particularly in the context of the review which states definitively that it is "an important bad film" and not "genuine art". *Bonnie and Clyde* might be considered to connote graphic violence, or a particular approach to representing violence.

Byro *Variety* Review *The Honeymoon Killers* (1969) 10/9/1969

This film is associated with "the line of 'Bonnie and Clyde' and 'Pretty Poison'", most specifically in relation to "how subtly in America ordinary emotions when compounded with crime, can lead so casually to murder and violence." *Bonnie and Clyde* is clearly marked as connoting a generic 'line' and crime, murder and violence.

Pauline Kael 'The Bottom of the Pit: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid' *New Yorker* 27/9/1969 reprinted in *Deeper Into Movies* pp3-9

"This Western is a spin off from *Bonnie and Clyde*", Kael references the film after introducing the trope of the industry trying to make "now" movies. *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovation, and its subsequent imitation by *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), is explicit and related to the contemporaneity of both.

William Pechter 'Anti-Western' review of *The Wild Bunch* source unknown, reprinted in *Twenty four times a second* (films and filmmakers) (Harper and Row, New York and London, 1971) p91

Pechter references *Bonnie and Clyde* in relation to its charged use of its genre's capacity for violence. However, this is contrasted with the violence of *The Wild Bunch* that exceeds that of *Bonnie and Clyde.*

Stanley Kauffmann *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) review 27/9/69 reprinted in *Figures of Light* pp198-200

"It's as egregiously Beautiful as anything I've seen since the meeting between the wounded Bonnie and Clyde and the Okies by the stream." This is another veiled criticism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, although in relation to its beauty. Clearly the association with *Bonnie and Clyde* is motivated by the later film being directed by Penn.

Richard Schickell *Alice's Restaurant* review *Life* no date given

Bonnie and Clyde is referenced in relation to its "folk balladry". Again, the reference might be understood as being primarily motivated in connection with Penn, or the status of *Bonnie and Clyde.*

John Simon *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* review December 1969 reprinted in *Movies into film* pp177-178

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid is identified as a "comic western with a plethora of supposedly stylish devices leading up to a bloody ending – in other words, *Bonnie and Clyde* rides again." This clause opens the review, so the comparison with *Bonnie and Clyde* is emphasised, and the noun phrase '*Bonnie and Clyde* rides again' clearly condenses the connotations of this film being a sequel or Western adaptation of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Clearly, *Bonnie and Clyde* is again partly identified with its violent ending, as well as 'supposedly stylish devices.' A further reference follows in the second paragraph of this short review. "It jollies up and glamorises these outlaws' careers in much the same way that *Bonnie and Clyde* did those." Hence, as well as being related to style and violence, *Bonnie and Clyde* is further summarized as glamorising its outlaw protagonists. Simon here returns to considering *Bonnie and Clyde* in similar ways to the theme group of reviews. However, clearly this review is a useful index of the recognition of imitation of *Bonnie and Clyde*, foregrounded in the review, albeit that *Bonnie and Clyde* is not hence deemed as innovative since Simon dismisses the shared qualities of the two films.

Byro *Tell them Willie Boy is Here* (1969) review *Variety* 22/10/1969

This review opens by evaluating the film as "perhaps the most complex and original film since 'Bonnie and Clyde'". Hence, *Bonnie and Clyde* exemplifies complexity and originality. The review qualifies this comparison of the two films by suggesting Polonsky's film lacks the "entertainment values" of *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, both films are aligned in relation to their "deeply personal and radical vision of the past and future of America."

Stanley Kauffmann *Patton* (1970) review 7/3/1970 reprinted in *Figures of Light* pp235-238

The violence of *Patton* is contrasted with that of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Hence the primary association of *Bonnie and Clyde* with violence continues at least for some critics.

Rick *Variety* review of *Ned Kelly* (1970) 17/6/1970, initially extracted on www.variety.com

Discussing Mick Jagger as Ned Kelly, the reviewer suggests, "Jagger's Clyde has no Bonnie, his Sundance Kid has no Butch Cassidy." Here, both films are only implicitly referenced, but they are identified with their pairs of protagonists. This reference would seem to primarily use both films as familiar examples featuring pairs of criminal protagonists.

Pauline Kael 'Numbing the audience' *New Yorker* 3/10/1970 reprinted in *Deeper Into Movies* pp183-193

Whilst addressing the "movies that are popularly considered as the best movies at any given time", Kael suggests they somehow express a mood or connect with the audience. She then lists such movies, including; "*The Wild One*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, *Blackboard Jungle*, *On the Waterfront*, *Morgan!*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Graduate*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Easy Rider*, the new *Joe*, and probably the new *Five Easy Pieces*." Again, Kael explicitly relates *Bonnie and Clyde* with a canon of sorts, of significant or important films although not necessarily great film art.

Pauline Kael 'Men in trouble' *I never sang for my father* review section *New Yorker* 31/10/1970 reprinted in *Deeper Into Movies* pp213-220

References *Bonnie and Clyde* but simply in relation to Estelle Parsons and Gene Hackman.

Pauline Kael 'Men in trouble' *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* (1970) review section *New Yorker* 31/10/1970 reprinted in *Deeper Into Movies* pp213-220

Again Kael suggests *Bonnie and Clyde*'s influence, albeit with other films in this case. The film under review "has been synthesized from *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Hud*, *Easy Rider*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and *Downhill Racer*." However, in this instance it is worth mentioning the presence of a cast member from *Bonnie and Clyde* in this film, Michael J. Pollard.

Rick *Variety* review *There was a crooked man* (1970) 4/11/1970

Reference is made to *Bonnie and Clyde* in connection with Newman and Benton, but also this film is described as "a larger-than-life folk ballad."

Pauline Kael 'Epic and Crumb Crusher: *Little Big Man* and *Love Story*' *New Yorker* 26/12/1970 reprinted in *Deeper Into Movies* pp267-278

Considering Penn's *Little Big Man* (1970), Kael references *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Alice's Restaurant* as his earlier films, but specifically in terms of Penn being "robbed of prizes for *Bonnie and Clyde*." Hence the film is categorized as a film worthy of awards or prizes.

John Simon 'The Festival and awards game' p401 in *Movies into film*, presumably originally printed in 1970

Considering the Best Picture nominees for the 1969 Oscars, Simon again compares *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* to *Bonnie and Clyde*, as "a poor man's *Bonnie and Clyde*, or perhaps, some other pauper's *The Wild Bunch*." Here Simon explicitly recognizes innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*; "What in *Bonnie and Clyde* was real innovation for America (even if patently derived from the French New Wave)" being contrasted with the later film. *Bonnie and Clyde*, then, clearly connotes recognized, though relative, quality and innovation. The context of the discussion of the Oscar nominations might be relevant to this - *Bonnie and Clyde* was itself nominated for Best Picture two years before.

Gold *Variety* review of *Little Murders* (1971) 3/2/1971

The devastating emotional impact of this film is related to *Bonnie and Clyde*. Hence *Bonnie and Clyde* connotes affective impact.

Murf *Variety* review of *Bad Company* (1972) 4/10/1972

There is explicit reference to *Bonnie and Clyde* only in connection with Newman and Benton. However, the review considers this film's "modern" mix of violence and slapstick, and suggests in this case it "spares the slow-motion bits and other offensive ballet touches." This clearly implies a negative evaluation of the style of violence in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but possibly other films as well.

Murf *Variety* review of *The Getaway* (1972) 13/12/1972

Bonnie and Clyde is associated with the "lovers-on-the-lam plot". Hence, it has generic connotations.

Verr *Variety* review of *Badlands* 10/10/1973

Bonnie and Clyde is mentioned in determining the commercial prospects of this film, which "seem centered somewhere between 'Glen and Randa' and 'Bonnie and Clyde', which isn't bad." The reference can be understood simply in connection with the box office success of *Bonnie and Clyde*, but coming after discussion of the 'arty excesses' of the film, and first features in general there are other implicit associations. Given the conclusion that *Badlands* is 'offbeat' and 'self-conscious' the choice of film reference seems relevant – the review only makes reference to these two films explicitly, although with additional generic references and mention of James Dean.

Tom Milne review of *Dillinger* (1973) in *Sight and Sound* Summer 1974 vol. 43 no. 3

The review references *Bonnie and Clyde* at two points, with only *The Life and Time of Judge Roy Bean* (1972) scripted by Milius also twice mentioned. *Bonnie and Clyde*, alongside *Bloody Mama* (1970) is identified with 'mood pieces', and associated with the loose treatment of history in *Dillinger*, at least in terms of collocation in this clause. Furthermore, with the latter reference, *Bonnie and Clyde* is implicitly related to mythmaking, albeit that *Dillinger* is contrasted with it in respect of the twist that emphasises the FBI chief's attempts at mythmaking in the latter film.

Pauline Kael 'Roger & Edwina, Sheena, and Uncle Jean' *New Yorker* 17/9/84 reprinted in *State of the Art: Film writings 1983-1985* pp220-230

In discussing *Sheena* (1984) Kael references *Bonnie and Clyde* in association with the film's writer David Newman, albeit also mentioning his writing for the *Superman* (1978, 1981, 1983) films.

Pauline Kael 'Mirrors' reviews of *Utu* and *Places in the Heart* in *New Yorker* 15/10/84 reprinted in *State of the Art: Film writings 1983-1985* pp240-248

Discussing *Places in the Heart* (1984) Kael references *Bonnie and Clyde* in association with Robert Benton, this film's writer-director. Kael suggests Benton "plays with characters and ideas, as he did in the script of *Bonnie and Clyde*." Later, she again references *Bonnie and Clyde*, this time in connection to his sixties scripts "with an impudent countercultural tone."

Conclusions

From this small survey of reviews for other films, it is clear that in these instances at least *Bonnie and Clyde* is being referenced not only for its familiarity but to suggest particular connotations. These connotations vary between different reviewers and reviews, but include stylised or poetic violence, glamorising or mythologizing its protagonists, and perhaps more implicitly associations with 'off-beat' and 'self-conscious' qualities. The notion that *Bonnie and Clyde* is imitated, or serves as a template or equivalent for the films under review, is stressed to varying degrees, being most pronounced in the reviews of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (John Simon) and *Killers Three.* The degree of imitation or similarity is qualified in relation to *The Wild Bunch*, *Dillinger*, *The Honeymoon Killers*, *The Getaway* and *Little Fauss and Big Halsy.* The aspect which is similar or imitated also varies between different reviews. *Bonnie and Clyde* connotes "mythmaking" and "mood pieces" in its perceived influence on *Dillinger*, it provides a generic template for *The Honeymoon Killers*, *The Getaway* and *Killers Three*, and represents modishness, "now" films, for Kael in considering its influence upon *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.* Indeed, Simon's discussion of the Best Picture Oscar nomination for *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* explicitly addresses the "real innovation" in *Bonnie and Clyde.* Perhaps unsurprisingly there is no consistency in terms of which films reviewers related to *Bonnie and Clyde.* Whilst certain films recur, it is notable that not all reviews for these films make an association with *Bonnie and Clyde.* For instance, the *Variety* reviews for *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Alice's Restaurant*, and *The Wild Bunch* all preclude any reference to *Bonnie and Clyde.* Furthermore, the primacy of *Bonnie and Clyde* as a reference connoting stylised violence and the episodic genre film, is qualified by references to *The Wild Bunch* or *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* respectively in the *Variety* reviews for later films.[281] Examples include reviews for *Soldier Blue* (1970) (reference to *The Wild Bunch*), *Pocket Money* (1972) and *The Life and Time of Judge Roy Bean* (both reviews with reference to *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*).

Besides references to *Bonnie and Clyde* that suggest imitation, other reviews use it as a point of reference, often in terms of evaluative criteria. Hence, it connotes beautiful scenes (Kauffmann on *Alice's Restaurant*), complexity and originality (Byro, *Tell them Willie Boy is Here*), as well as an intensity of affect (Gold, *Little Murders*). Additionally, the film also exemplifies certain classificatory or descriptive characteristics, specifically its folk-ballad structure (Schickel, *Alice's Restaurant*) or its countercultural tone (Kael, *Places in the Heart*).

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[281] Notably, the editorial discussion 'The Return of Movie', featuring Ian Cameron, Michael Walker, Robin Wood, V.F. Perkins and Jim Hillier, in *Movie* 20 (1975) considers *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* the "archetype of the contemporary Hollywood film" ... "which is all set pieces." This discussion also considers the significance of Lelouches (albeit as 'Elvira Madigan style') and the prevalence of zoom shots.

In considering these reviews there are no clearly identifiable trends or shifts in the connotations of *Bonnie and Clyde*. This is explainable by the fact that the relevant connotations are determined by the film under review. However, certain recurrent tropes, particularly the film's association with stylised violence, are noteworthy.

Retrospective or revisionist critical commentary upon *Bonnie and Clyde*

In considering later critical accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde* I will not use the discourse analysis approach for the entire text. Instead I will focus on evaluative passages, especially wherever contestational, as well as explicit recognition of innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, or imitation by other films. Whilst looking at the evaluative tropes I will also relate these to classificatory criteria, particularly where these are associated by collocation or otherwise. These evaluative and classificatory criteria will be compared, where appropriate, to those mobilised in the synchronic critical reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Carolyn Geduld 'Bonnie and Clyde: Society vs. the Clan' *Film Heritage* vol. 3 no.2 Winter 67-8 pp1-6

Bonnie and Clyde is initially identified as one of the recent films "which have bridged the gap between art and popular appeal." The film's impact is considered to be primarily "its dramatic shifts of mood between parody and horror", and Geduld posits that these are brought about by its combination of antithetical genres, the domestic comedy and 'Jesse James' style Western.

In the penultimate paragraph the film is conflated with Penn, and the writer suggests an evaluation of the film based on her reading of its genre blend: "Arthur Penn's great achievement in *Bonnie and Clyde* is the use of the domestic comedy-Western as another way of expressing the tension between tribe and town." This is qualified in terms of an anthropological valorisation of the film. It is deemed relevant, and to "work beautifully." Hence, despite a focus on the film in terms of its relevance to contemporary society, it is finally acclaimed as art, although with certain flaws or failings.

F.A. Macklin 'Bonnie and Clyde: Beyond violence to tragedy' *Film Heritage* vol. 3 no.2 Winter 67-8 pp7-21

This article opens with definitive valorisation of the film: "*Bonnie and Clyde* is the best American film of the past decade." It then proceeds to contest the critical dismissal of the film, in relation to its violence and designation as "a tragedy". Tragedy functions significantly in the essay to ease the introduction of the analogy between the film and various works of Shakespeare, most specifically *Macbeth*. This is a recurrent trope throughout the essay. Tragedy also becomes identified with catharsis, by means of a paratactic construction, and hence the affective aspect of *Bonnie and Clyde* is emphasised. This is discussed in terms of the film's 'power' or "sheer power."

The subsequent paragraphs contest the value of the violence in the film, or its representation - "never gratuitous" but used by Penn to "build[s] point after point." Several paragraphs later, the ending of the film is valorised in terms of Penn's inventiveness and expressive ability: "the film is resolved with perfection, originality and nuance." Penn is attributed this as the next paragraph praises his "marvellous command" and continual invention. Following further discussion of the film's plot, the last twelve paragraphs of the account praise various aspects or characteristics of the film; its diversity, character relationships, acting, but the final paragraphs return to the designation of the film as great or innovative. It "is a milestone", "poetic realism" that does "new and different things." The possibility of imitation, "its followers", is suggested. The essay concludes having contested *Bonnie and Clyde*'s status, making the case for its innovation and canonical status as powerful tragedy.

Judith Crist 'Against the grain' December 1967, reprinted in *Private Eye* pp250-253

Crist introduces *Bonnie and Clyde* in discussion of two films denounced for violence. It is the second of these, and "may well emerge as the most moral, let alone the best, American film of the year." In an article considering the increase in violence in films, or more specifically the moralist backlash against this, Crist valorises *Bonnie and Clyde* as moral, and classifies it as the best American film of the year. She further characterizes it as "stunningly contemporary in its sights and sounds." The film is hence valorised in the context of a contestation around the significance of violence in films generally, and to a greater extent than *The Dirty Dozen*, with which it is paired. This pairing, with both "excellent examples of the use of violence for artistic and intellectual purposes" stresses the artistic elements in the films, but this is stressed more in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*. The references echo Crist's review of *Bonnie and Clyde*, which was categorised in the style group of reviews in my survey.

Judith Crist extract of 'From Georgy to Clyde – Movies: Morals, Violence, Sex, Anything goes', reprinted in *Private Eye* pp264-271

Crist makes still more references to *Bonnie and Clyde* in this discussion of the changing form and content of movies. Alongside a list of other films, its "shattering impact" marked these changes. Later in the same article Crist associates *Bonnie and Clyde* with *Blow Up*, with both demonstrating "the ultimate in cinematic skill, in establishing a milieu, in editing and romanticizing reality for artistic purpose." *Bonnie and Clyde* does not simply connote the emergent cinema, but is a benchmark, canonical in terms of "cinematic skill."[282] Lastly, Crist again praises the film's morality ("amazing"), and this is considered prior to its appeal or significance to a young audience.

William Pechter 'Family Style' originally 1967 source unknown, reprinted in *Twenty four times a second* (films and filmmakers) (Harper and Row, New York and London, 1971) pp86-88

In this article Pechter discusses *Bonnie and Clyde* in relation to its controversy, and the contestation of its value by Crowther and Kael. It is identified as being 'about' violence, but this is qualified with dismissal of the clichéd and stereotypical elements of the film. Whilst Pechter mentions "brilliant" scenes, he also balances this by saying there are as many banal scenes. Pechter thus engages with the trope of 'originality' in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but qualifies this by suggesting it applies partially to the film.

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[282] This review, p268.

William Pechter 'American Style' originally 1967 source unknown, reprinted in *Twenty four times a second* (films and filmmakers) (Harper and Row, New York and London, 1971) pp89-90

Bonnie and Clyde is considered by Pechter alongside *Point Blank* (1967). He suggests both "suffer[ing] from European influence", as well as having "something to say about America and violence." *Bonnie and Clyde* is praised for its "energy", its "kinetic thrust". Finally, though, Pechter contrasts *Bonnie and Clyde* with *White Heat* (1949), for the latter film's "casual brilliance."

Albert Johnson critical review of *Bonnie and Clyde* originally in *Film Quarterly* vol. 21 no.2 (Winter 1967-68) pp45-58 reprinted in Wake and Hayden (eds.) *Classic Film Scripts: Bonnie and Clyde* pp31-37

This critical review begins with addressing the controversy around the film. The film's use of "laughter and farcical situations" is contrasted with "other gangster films." Further, it is considered a "distinguished American film" in relation to its "*romantic* imagination." However, in addition, in praising the film for its imaginative, picaresque qualities, Johnson also relates the film positively to realism. A "unique pseudo-documentary style", and later a "movement toward neorealism" in American films are both associated with *Bonnie and Clyde*. Besides praising the performances, Johnson proceeds to discuss the film's "lyricism" and "folk-balladry", reconciling the tropes of realism and expressivity in terms of the lyrical analogy.

The concluding paragraph designates *Bonnie and Clyde* "an outstanding piece of cinematic art", so this review is another example of retrospective criticism that establishes *Bonnie and Clyde*'s canonical status. The lyrical analogy, as well as the distinction around the film's transcendence of genre norms, are both mobilised to justify the evaluation.

Robin Wood *Arthur Penn* (Studio Vista, London, 1967)

Whilst Wood's book is an auteurist examination of Penn's work, focusing on key motifs, references to *Bonnie and Clyde* are dispersed through the text. They include reference to it as "the culmination" of the gangster film tradition, albeit as related to the "determining influence" of the New Wave. In connection with the films blend of gangster film and New Wave "inventiveness" Wood emphasises that the style and mood constitute a "consistently 'felt' whole". The notion of "culmination" suggests an implicit valorisation, and canonisation at least in respect of the genre. With Wood's overall emphasis upon Penn as an artist, despite his qualified criticism of *Mickey One*, and especially with his designation of *The Chase* as Penn's "first indisputable" "masterpiece", *Bonnie and Clyde* is clearly elevated to art status, with the most likely implication being masterpiece status.

Vernon Young 'Our Local Idioms' in *Vernon Young on Film 1967-70* Original source unknown, pp12-13

Bonnie and Clyde is related to *They Live By Night* (1948), but as "a dehydrated version." Young emphasizes its "*style*". Hence it is a stylised take on a classic, but lacking substance.

Vernon Young 'Some modest American films: A modest proposal' in *Vernon Young on Film 1967-70* Original source unknown, pp

In his discussion of contemporary American cinema, and its evaluation, Young references *Bonnie and Clyde* initially in connection with *In Cold Blood*. This film is contrasted with it, with the implication that *Bonnie and Clyde* is either less generic, or not generic. When he comes to consider *Bonnie and Clyde* itself he admits to being more favourable to the film in retrospect, associating it with the term "*classic*", and explicitly stating it had "no superior in the past twenty years of American commercial cinema." Whilst he proceeds to praise its authenticity, and performances, he also mobilises the lyrical trope in considering the film's "ballad" rhythm. He concludes by suggesting the film will be imitated, to the detriment of each film imitating it. A more explicit recognition of canonical status and innovation is difficult to suggest. Notably, this is another critical turnaround in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*. Finally, in considering *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, Young suggest this imitation has begun, stating it "was obviously an attempt to make a kind of *Bonnie and Clyde* western."

Rolling Stone review 14/12/1967 no author given

Presented as a review, rather than a retrospective critique, this evaluation of the film featured in an early edition of the new magazine. The account stresses the plot details, and also argues that the film is historically accurate and authentic. In the penultimate paragraph the critic praises "some excellent cinematic moments", and compares the cinematography with *A Man and a Woman*. It then suggests the "last scene is too good and too startling to spoil with an explanation." In some ways this review is antithetical to Bosley Crowther's reviews, stressing the film's fidelity to history and excusing the protagonist's violence as "the only available way to deal with the society and still have fun."

Philip French 'Incitement against violence' *Sight and Sound* Winter 67/68 pp2-8

French considers *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The St Valentine's Day Massacre* in relation to reviving the Gangster genre. Contrasting the two films, the objective anti-mythical Corman film with *Bonnie and Clyde*'s "romantic" character, French evaluates both as "the high-water marks" of two tendencies in the genre. Furthermore, both "clarify" these tendencies, and "transcend the genre." Following discussion of the differences in plot, setting and characters between the two films, French addresses the historical veracity of *Bonnie and Clyde*, with omissions or changes deemed "in keeping with the overall 'truth' of the film."

French also addresses the influence of biographical gangster films upon the French New Wave, and conjectures the cross-influence of the New Wave upon *Bonnie and Clyde*. There follows further discussion of the development of the Gangster genre, with particular topical focus upon Corman's film. Returning to *Bonnie and Clyde* French differentiates its "rapid alternation between farce and tragedy", as "a more sophisticated film." Its realism is validated, with many scenes of "almost documentary fidelity", but this is qualified again in terms of the film's historical omissions, and by characterising the film as Bonnie and Clyde's projection of their idea of themselves. In concluding, French mentions "the film's other considerable merits", but rather than outlining these suggests the film is a work of art that is "so subtle in its morality" as to be open to misinterpretation. Hence, whilst French has directly engaged with the tropes of authenticity, anachronism, morality and the romanticization of Bonnie and Clyde, and explicitly positioned the film as both a "high-water mark" that nevertheless transcends its genre, rather than contesting its critical reception he explains the film's potential "misinterpretation." Clearly, in addition to recognizing *Bonnie and Clyde*'s canonical status in relation to the Gangster genre, as well as that of *The St Valentine's Day Massacre*, French distinguishes it as a 'sophisticated' work of art. The article serves to reiterate much of the critical focus of the earlier *Sight and Sound* review, evaluating and characterising *Bonnie and Clyde* in relation to both the Gangster genre and film art.[283]

John Simon 'Follow-up review' January 1968, reprinted in *Movies into film* pp169-171

Simon comments upon the "customary" second thoughts of other critics on *Bonnie and Clyde*, and begins to qualify his own criticism. Rather than the violence, it is now the "anti-hero worship" of the film he now castigates. Additionally, he devotes paragraphs to the historical inaccuracy ("gross distortions") and "esthetic prettification". In the penultimate paragraph he relates this to the "lyrical slow motion" of the climax, but suggests this is "inconsistent with the previous naturalism in mutilations and gore."

Hence, Simon maintains his criticism of the film on moral grounds, remaining equivalent to Crowther's critical position, with the focus on romanticization of the protagonists, historical inaccuracy, and inconsistency. I considered his adjusted view of the film's innovation in the previous section on references to the film in reviews for other films.

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[283] Milne *Sight and Sound* Autumn 1967.

Charles Thomas Samuels from *Hudson Review* 21 no. 1 Spring 1968 pp16-22 reprinted in Cawelti *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* pp 85-92

Opening by qualifying his criticism in relation to the "technical polish" of the film, in acting, pace and editing, Samuels diminishes the film in respect of its inconsistent tone and characterisation, as well as the violence. Characterising the film as a "lurid example of a vulgar, worn out genre" Samuels makes clear his moral position upon the Gangster film. He proceeds to relate this to a moral position on the values of contemporary society, and "the stream of anarchic art." Here another critic mobilises similar moral objections to the film, albeit couched in terms of its contemporaneity and unquestioned technical merit. However, the focus on inconsistency or 'confusion' combines moral and formal objections, albeit echoing Crowther's final review.

Peter Collier *Ramparts* 6 no. 16 May 1968, pp16-22 reprinted in Wake and Hayden (eds.) *Classic Film Scripts: Bonnie and Clyde* pp26-31

Beginning by discussing the phenomenon of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Collier then introduces his analysis of the film by stating it "is not a gangster movie." Instead he implies a closer correspondence with the Western. Proceeding to characterize *Bonnie and Clyde* as a "fantasia", he devotes the remainder of the article to denying the significance or relevance of *Bonnie and Clyde* to contemporary society. Clearly this review repeats tropes from the theme group of reviews, and contests characterisations of the film mobilised in the Movie Mailbag and by some critics such as Sarris suggesting the contemporary resonance of the film.

Robert Steele 'The Good-Bad and Bad-Good in Movies: Bonnie and Clyde and In Cold Blood' *Catholic World* May 1968 pp76-80 reprinted in Cawelti *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* pp117-121

Steele characterizes *Bonnie and Clyde* as a "fresh amalgam of the domestic-comedy, western and gangster movie," echoing Carolyn Geduld's review (see above). This is evaluated as "dazzling". However, Steele suggests this quality has obscured the film in criticism, saying that critics have not fully explored "beneath the surface" of the film. Denying it the status of tragedy, and dismissing the climax, Steele states that his "grievances" with the film are artistic rather than moral. However, he concludes praising *In Cold Blood*, and a hypothetical work of art, for being "honest, clear and moral in [its] execution." Hence, his artistic criticism is morally circumscribed, as well as being defined in relation to honesty and clarity. These criteria clearly relate to the film as a message, and its communicative function.

William J. Free 'Aesthetic and Moral Value in Bonnie and Clyde' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54 October 1968 pp220-225 reprinted in Cawelti *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* pp99-106

Free opens by addressing *Bonnie and Clyde* as "the *cause celebre* of contemporary American film making." Considering both the critical contestation around the film, and the extreme division amongst critics between evaluating the film as "cheap and tawdry" or a "landmark", Free states "undoubtedly" that it is "a work of art of quality and wide appeal." He then suggests the contestation around the film has been based upon irrelevant grounds, and critics using irrelevant criteria to judge the film including its relation to historical fact.

Free suggests one difficulty is due to the film's structure, which is "radically unlike our expectations." Again, he characterizes the film as transcending the conventions of the classic American gangster film, partly through keeping separate its moral and artistic values. In particular, he associates the first half of the film with its emphasis upon a comic world "of pure aesthetic value". After the shooting of the bank teller, however, Free suggests the moral intent of the film emerges fully. In relation to this, he associates the climax of the film with the "catharsis of tragedy." In conclusion, he suggests the climax of the film brings the "moral recognition", specifically "that these beautiful people and their beautiful world are essentially false." Free, whilst engaging explicitly with the contestation around the film, thus justifies his classification of the film as art, and "radically" new, in relation to this available moral reading. Hence, the film is positioned as innovative and a work of art by means of a moral approach that is antithetical to the moral concerns of the theme group of reviews.

Jim Hillier 'Arthur Penn' *Screen* vol. 10 no. 1, January/February 1969 pp5-14

This article is an exploration of Penn and his work, making use of previous interviews. *Bonnie and Clyde* is initially associated with his films' concern "with American violence and morality now." Subsequently, the article references the film in relation to its description of social morality, and in connection with Penn's films' use of myth. The structure of the film is then characterized in terms of a ballad structure, and the climax of *Bonnie and Clyde* classified as "endowing" a "mythic dimension." Finally the article quotes Penn in justifying the film's treatment of its protagonists as folk heroes. The article includes few evaluative terms in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, but it is implicit that the film, and the work of Penn, is deserving of critical attention. The characterisation of the film as 'concerning' violence and morality, as well as using myth, implicitly classifies the film as art, and Penn's expressive approach is related to key themes or motifs. However, the film is seen alongside Penn's other works, to some degree elevating their status by association with *Bonnie and Clyde.*

Jim Cook 'Bonnie and Clyde' *Screen* vol. 10 no. 4/5 July/October 1969 pp101-114

Similarly to the earlier *Screen* piece, this article opens by suggesting Penn enjoyed his "greatest personal and creative freedom" in making *Bonnie and Clyde*, excepting *Mickey One.* This "confident control" is then associated with the opening of the film, which is read as "recreating" Bonnie and Clyde, with "contemporary modes of film narrative – quick, almost flip sequences, zestful pace with contemporary techniques." Continuing his description of the film, Cook refers to the "Belmondo-like Clyde", making an implicit connection not only with that actor but presumably Godard and the French New Wave.

The initial associations of the opening of the film, with contemporary cinematic techniques and French New Wave cinema, as well as Penn's creative control, establish parameters for characterising the film as art.

There follows description of further plot details, but with these related to "dramatic irony" and the "subjective treatment" of plot events. In addition, the "tensions in the film" are referenced. Each of these qualities might be understood as being simply descriptive, characterising the film without evaluative connotations, or as implicitly associated with positive values of an artwork. Again, in relation to the available motivations for Clyde's behaviour, Cook suggests "Penn offers a synthesis" of these, relating the film to Penn's expressive capabilities. In the context of the critical contestation around *Bonnie and Clyde*, often anchored to aesthetic values in terms of inconsistency even when moral issues are at work, this trope of synthesis also carries potentially positive connotations.

Following his interpretation of the plot, Cook returns to the trope of "tensions" to characterize the film's narrative technique, "structured to set up the tensions between illusion and reality." The following paragraph suggests Penn "strictly controls these tensions", and elaborates the trope in connection to the "nervous rhythm" of short scenes, "linked rhythmically to the rest of the scenes" through editing and music. Control of these qualities, particularly tension, is again attributed to Penn, with possible positive connotations for the film. Cook then develops this to include the shifts from "humorous" to "grotesque" or "harsh and violent". This kind of shift is related to several scenes. Later, the "serious undertones" are qualified in relation to Penn's ability to "impose a domestic intimacy on to the tensions", albeit in a "grotesque parody" of normality. Tensions, and control, are hence maintained as key tropes for characterising the film as a work. Cook introduces related tropes, considering scenes that "complement" or "counterpoint" others.

In returning to discussion of the ambush on the gang, when Buck and Blanche are hit by bullets, Cook again emphasises "Penn's control over his audience's reactions." This is also specifically related to the counterpoint, of horror and the "bold" reintroduction of "jaunty banjo music." This reference to "now ironic music" also makes an anaphoric reference to the trope of irony established earlier in the article.

In the concluding paragraphs of the article Cook contextualises the film more generally in relation to the gangster film, and its relation to American society. The most explicit evaluative paragraph, the penultimate, begins by classifying the film as "schematic", but qualifies the negative connotations of this since it is not "felt" by the viewer. Instead, the "*experience* is highly controlled and centres on the tension between our exhilaration with their quest for freedom and invulnerability, and our realization that it is all in vain." Hence, the tropes of control and tension, and the contrasts in the experience of viewing, are further emphasised, also with the implicit suggestion that this constitutes art or a film work of value. In part this is established by the overall intent of the article, to treat the film seriously within a detailed analysis. Whilst the article does not directly address the contestation around the film's violence, or return to consideration of its contemporary techniques, or French New Wave borrowings, these omissions are marked and the film can be seen as transcending these kinds of concerns as well as analysis solely in relation to the Gangster genre.

Paul Schrader 'They're young...They're in Love...They Kill People" *Cinema* (U.S.) vol. 5, no2, pp28-30 previously LA Free Press date unknown

Schrader's article discusses a shift in movie killers, from fifties' psychotics to late nineteen sixties' psychopaths in films "like *Point Blank*, *In Cold Blood*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Pretty Poison*, and *The Big Bounce*." He proceeds from his introductory paragraph to contextualise this shift in conventions in relation to "a cycle of repetition, revival and reversal." *Bonnie and Clyde* is hence initially referenced in terms of its "killer" protagonists, albeit that Schrader soon provides an evaluation of both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Pretty Poison* (1968) as "probably the best American films of their respective years." The article thus begins from a non-moralising focus upon the representation of killers and from the assumed canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde.*

The three films that Schrader focuses on are connected by a single theme, "the Beautiful People as psychopaths", encapsulated by the advertising tag line for *Bonnie and Clyde* which is used as the title for the article. Further into the article, in considering the insanity or irrationality of the psychopath protagonists of *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Pretty Poison* and *In Cold Blood*, Schrader relates them to Hamlet, another character whose insanity is not clearly defined. Schrader, following Warshow's description of the Gangster, associates the killers' motivations with their environments. He also relates the "success, effect, and sheer excitability of films like *Bonnie and Clyde*" to relaxation of the Production Code. However, Schrader also emphasises the contemporary quality of the film, not just its reaction to the past, specifically its relation to the "folk heroes of the Sixties."

In concluding the article, Schrader again emphasises the status of both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Pretty Poison* as "art" which offers "perspective" on the contemporary world. He finally associates this with their success in adapting "the pleasures of the past to the sensibilities of the present." Hence, both films are evaluated as art, and considered symptomatic of shifts in artistic and social conventions, and a reaction against the Production Code. Contemporary salience, and the "effect" of these movies is valued, whilst however the analogy with Hamlet suggests a more timeless, canonical aesthetic value. In this respect, Schrader's article implicitly combines recognition of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovation as well as its potentially canonical artistic status. Further, in grouping these three films, and featuring a series of stills from each with clear compositional similarities, Schrader intimates the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* upon the later films.

John G. Cawelti 'Bonnie and Clyde Revisited' *Focus* no. 7 Spring 1972 pp13-15, 39 and no. 8 Autumn 1973 pp51-54. Adapted from the intro to *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* Cawelti (ed.)

This article opens with the statement that "the primary source of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s artistic power is its compelling story." This is expanded with the second source, the film's creator's use of "cinematic means" to "fully express the story." Hence, the assumption of the artistic status, and 'power', of *Bonnie and Clyde*, its affective capability, is associated with its narrative and cinematic style. Finally, this opening paragraph relates the film to "the traditional American fantasy of violence and outlawry", without specific reference to the Gangster or Western genres that are nevertheless implied.

The second paragraph opens by thematising the "richness and power" of *Bonnie and Clyde*, which is characterized as dependent upon "the complex integration of five major strands." Again, the affective capability of the film is foregrounded, but this time expanded upon in relation to its "richness" or 'complexity'. The article then proceeds to address the first strand, the classical gangster narrative that "has inspired as many important American films as any other subject." The genre is hence valorised, as important, and the article continues to relate "effective" examples of the genre to "tragedy", adding more canonical art connotations to the genre. Cawelti continues by supporting this position, citing Aristotle and Robert Warshow, and considering tragedy in relation to contemporary literature and society.

Cawelti introduces the second strand, "the use of comic effects", and makes specific reference to the Keystone Cops, as well as generally to "the slapstick cops-and-robbers tradition", but also to the "older traditions of country humor and the tall tale." Again, he suggests a significant aspect or characteristic of *Bonnie and Clyde* and contextualises it in terms of cinematic and artistic traditions. Extending his consideration of comedy and chaos to include the turn "to horror", Cawelti addresses the critical contestation of the film in terms of the trope of "inconsistency" and "confusion of tone." He denies a "decisive turn from comedy to tragedy" as an "oversimplification." Following discussion of various illustrative scenes of comedy or tragedy, Cawelti concludes that the film features "the careful development and integration of comic elements in a basically tragic form." Indeed, he suggests the comedy intensifies the tragedy. This conception of tragedy is further developed in relation to examples from Shakespeare (Lear) and Greek tragedy.

Cawelti doesn't simply valorise the tragic elements of the film, a "Mack Sennett-like" chase scene is "the supreme moment of chaotic, exuberant comedy." He also addresses the role of comedy in contributing to the film's "characterization." This is developed in relation to the "mythic quality" of Clyde in particular, which contrasts *Bonnie and Clyde* from "gangster films like MACHINE GUN KELLY." [capitals in original] Cawelti concludes that Penn creates a character "more complex and powerful." It is interesting in this respect that Penn, rather than Beatty or the scriptwriters, is attributed the creation and quality of the character of Clyde. The first section of the essay ends with this, echoing the opening paragraphs that emphasised the complexity and power of the film as a whole.

The second part of Cawelti's essay opens by addressing the third strand of the film, "the most distinctive aspect of the film", the significance of Bonnie as the "true protagonist." The development of the character in the film is related to the film's structure, and understood in relation to a "serious quest for the common human goal of dignity and fulfilment." Cawelti hence validates *Bonnie and Clyde,* and differentiates it, in relation to humanist values, "common human goal[s]". He also relates this to the comic treatment of character, with the "indignity and limitation" of the other characters in particular. Having elaborated upon the other characters, Cawelti suggests that the film's focus on Bonnie's development "unifies" other elements of the film, and also contributes to the fourth strand of the film, the tragic love between Bonnie and Clyde.

Cawelti qualifies his overall positive evaluation of the film in relation to the doomed romance, "the sentimental contrast between the increasing chaos of their lives and the increasing happiness" they find together. These aspects culminate in the "most artificial and conventional romantic scene", but it is "introduced with great skill and developed in a deftly ironic manner." Again, Cawelti follows an auteurist approach to the film, and valorises the potentially conventional scene in terms of its skilful development. This development of the romance is characterized as "manifesting the tragic stature of the characters."

The final strand of the film that is discussed in the essay is the treatment of the public legend around the protagonists. Cawelti relates this to Penn's favoured theme from *The Left-Handed Gun*. However, he also relates this to the other key strands of the film, suggesting in his conclusion that each of the strands is of interest, but "the special power" of the film is constituted by the interrelation of the strands, the "powerful artist's pattern that is greater than the sum of its individual parts." Cawelti thus concludes again, as he did the first section of the essay, by reiterating the artistic "power" of the film. This has been stressed repeatedly throughout the essay, and since it is associated with tragedy and complexity contributes to the canonical art status of the film within the essay. Cawelti differentiates *Bonnie and Clyde* from other Gangster films, so innovation in respect of transcending the genre is at least implicit. However, the serious treatment of the film most clearly enforces the status of the film as a work of art.

John Cawelti 'The artistic power of Bonnie and Clyde' introductory essay from *Focus on Bonnie and Clyde* Cawelti (ed.)

The essay in *Focus* is a shortened version of this introductory chapter from Cawelti's book on *Bonnie and Clyde*. I will hence concentrate on those elements in this chapter that deviate from, or add to, the treatment in the earlier essay. One key difference is in Cawelti's attribution of three main sources of the "extraordinary power" of the film – the "drama of its story", the cinematography, and the relationship between the "traditional American fantasy of violence and outlawry" and American values. This last source reiterates the earlier essay, implicitly relating the film to the Gangster and Western genres.

The emphasis upon the film's cinematography, and its "visual environment", is resumed later in the chapter, where Cawelti relates it to the "mythical sense of the period." He also relates the look of the film to the paintings of Edward Hopper. This use of the painting analogy is distinct from the earlier essay. Cawelti also relates the 'mythicalised' version of the past in *Bonnie and Clyde* to the use of allusion, and "quotation from Busby Berkeley's *Gold Diggers of 1933*."

In addition to these points on the cinematography and mythic qualities of the film, Cawelti also elaborates further upon certain scenes than in the earlier (shortened) essay. Hence, the shot of the bank teller's shooting is evaluated in terms of the "power of the close up" which most critics noted. Similarly, the Joplin ambush "must be one of the most intricately edited scenes in the history of film." Hence, in this text Cawelti places more emphasis upon the detail of the aesthetic characteristics of the film, but maintains his positive evaluative stance. The climax of the film is also considered in connection with the intricate editing, and its "powerful expressiveness". Towards his conclusion Cawelti suggests the slow motion climax "has an almost unbearable intensity of feeling". He ends by classifying the final shots of the film as "a visual analogue of the choric comment that typically ends tragedy." Hence, Cawelti maintains much the same characterisation of the film as in his earlier essay, focusing on the "artistic power" of the film as a tragedy, but adds to his valorisation of the film in discussing further aesthetic characteristics, particularly the cinematography and editing.

Vivian C. Sobchack 'The Violent Dance: A Personal Memoir of Death in the Movies' *Journal of Popular Film* vol. 3 no. 1 1974

As the title suggests, this article explores memories of violence in the cinema in the context of a serious academic journal devoted to popular film. It opens by addressing the contestation around violence in films, and explains this contestation in terms of "reflective or affective, mimetic or cathartic" conceptions of cinema. She begins to elaborate her memories of violence in films, violence always removed from real life, and initially introduces *Bonnie and Clyde* as instrumental in the shift from this. *Bonnie and Clyde* is the "first film – the film which transcends its surface intentions and burns into us some unstated message with the intensity not of an arc lamp but of a laser." Beside the violent metaphor, "burning" the audience, and use of analogy to emphasise 'intensity', the clause explicitly recognizes *Bonnie and Clyde* as innovative. Sobchack further develops this, qualifying that the film was not the first to "overtly bathe itself in blood", but rather to "create an aesthetic, moral and psychological furor." Notably, in the journal, a still from *Bonnie and Clyde* accompanies the beginning of this paragraph alongside the picture byline: "The kindly stylisation of death. *Bonnie and Clyde.*" Hence, the intensity, affect, and stylisation of violence are the initial associations with *Bonnie and Clyde.* These are also related to the clear recognition of innovation.

Continuing to elaborate *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovation, in respect of violence, Sobchack qualifies the film as "[u]neven in tone yet brilliantly conceived", a "good film" but also a "major film" that introduced "the senseless, the unexpected, the bloody." Echoing the picture byline, Sobchack characterizes the film's "stylised death", the choreography of "a dance out of blood and death," and the way the film "gave meaning and import to our mortal twitchings." The focus remains the violence in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but this is characterized in various ways, in terms of stylisation, by analogy with dance, and in relation to significance. Sobchack proceeds to provide further examples of such "loving treatment" of violence, in *The Wild Bunch*, *The Godfather* (1972), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *The French Connection* (1971). These are also contextualised in connection with incensing "the moralists." Sobchack proceeds to consider the increase in realistic violence in films such as *The Straw Dogs* (1971), but argues their value as messages, saying "something important." Despite omission of further reference to *Bonnie and Clyde*, the article clearly positions the film as innovative in relation to its treatment of violence, and explains the critical contestation around the film in terms of this innovative quality and different critical conceptions of film art. *Bonnie and Clyde* is primarily associated with violence, but the value and significance of its cinematic treatment of violence is stressed.

William Wolf with Lillian Kramer Wolf excerpt from *Landmark Films, The Cinema and Our Century*, sourced from the BFI microfiche on *Bonnie and Clyde*

After reference to the screen writers, and Warner's "subdued" attitude to the film prior to its theatrical release, the authors suggest the "film turned out to be a work of art that engendered heated critical and public reaction." They address the contestation around the film, and contrast its significance with that of *Breathless*, which they state "forecast the mood of the 1960s", whereas *Bonnie and Clyde* "reflected it". The authors expand upon this connection with contemporary moods, suggesting *Bonnie and Clyde* "tapped" the country's moods of "antagonisms, disillusionment, bitterness, and upheaval."

The authors later evaluate the film in a way that explains its polarising effect, "the film functions emotionally on too many levels, however, for those who prefer simplistic stories with one-dimensional characters and viewpoints." Hence, the film is valorised for its complexity, and the critics of the film summarily dismissed.

The authors proceed to comment upon "Guffey's excellent photography" that "achieves a wonderfully authentic look." Besides authenticity, the editing is associated with the film's "surging rhythm", and the authors relate elements such as the humour to "the film's élan." They do mention "[t]he abrupt scenes of violence", but qualify they are not gratuitous, and in relation to their "horror" affect. They also attribute Penn with heightening the terror with the slow motion climax. This is recognized as innovative, having been "copied ad nauseum", but in this scene "was exactly right and inspired." Hence, the authors explicitly recognize the film as an artistic landmark, characterize the film as "art" almost immediately, and suggest its resonance and complexity to justify this status. Besides authenticity and the affective quality of the film, they also suggest the innovative nature of the climax in referring to its imitation.

Eric Rhode *A history of the cinema form its origins to 1970*

This book references *Bonnie and Clyde* in several places. It is initially associated with *The Wild Bunch* and the "reappear[ance]" of *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) style editing. Rhode also associates *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Easy Rider* as the models imitated by "off-beat independent movies" after the success of the later film. Elsewhere Rhode criticizes *Bonnie and Clyde* for its "modishly picturesque" images, and alongside the films of Peckinpah, for its irresponsible "resort to slow-motion photography during scenes of violence."

Peter Waymark 'Films on TV' review *The Times* 20/7/1985 p17

After discussing the historical personages of Bonnie and Clyde, and earlier films based upon them, Waymark introduces *Bonnie and Clyde* that "eclipsed" all of them. He relates the film to "the real history of the Depression criminals" and the "movie gangster" tradition. This qualified characterisation of authenticity is reiterated in the description of the film as "at once a loving recreation" of the 30s, and "an evocation of the troubled decade of Vietnam." Maintaining cohesion in the review Waymark addresses the juxtaposition of "[t]wo elements", the "warm period glow" and "searing violence". This violence is further contrasted with the "stylised" deaths of previous movie gangsters, whereas with *Bonnie and Clyde* the audience "witness the horror of bloodshed and feel the pain of mutilated faces."

Hence, the author initially associates *Bonnie and Clyde* with authenticity, and its affective quality, collocating each of these with respectively the period "recreation" and its contemporary relevance. There follows the clearest evaluative characterisation of the film; it "remains one of the finest achievements of the American gangster genre and many reputations deservedly emerged from it." Whilst qualified in respect of its genre, the clause still explicitly states the film's canonical status. However, in the final paragraphs of the review Waymark further qualifies the "qualities" of the film in relation to the "problem" of its glamorisation of the protagonists. However, he concludes that "*Bonnie and Clyde* is still a throwback to the classic Hollywood gangster film", with its moral denouement. This review thus reworks the tropes of earlier reviews, particularly here in terms of the juxtaposition of antithetical elements. However, the canonical status of the film is assumed, albeit qualified in respect of its genre, and that it is not different by kind from earlier gangster films.

Allen Barra 'Pauline Kael interview' *San Francisco Bay Guardian* 28/8/1991 pp29-31 reprinted in Will Brantley (ed.) *Conversations with Pauline Kael*

This interview with Pauline Kael includes several references to the film. She initially introduces *Bonnie and Clyde* in discrediting the notion of an earlier Golden Age, suggesting "the film really fired up a lot of film enthusiasts" and associating it with the "truly great films" of the next few years. Implicitly then, *Bonnie and Clyde* is characterized as initiating the trend of "*grown-up*" movies, with "a depth and richness that American movies never had before." Although not using the term, Kael is clearly engaging with the notion of New Hollywood or Hollywood Renaissance, and positioning *Bonnie and Clyde* as instrumental in this. She does proceed to define it as "sort of the opening shot of the new generation in movies", at the point in the interview when she is discussing her *New Yorker* piece on the film. Kael maintains her position on the status and significance of the film.

J. Hoberman Review article on *Bonnie and Clyde* in *Village Voice* December 1992 pp6, 18

Hoberman opens the article by quoting some of the contemporary reviews. Again, the contemporary contestation of *Bonnie and Clyde* is a primary association. However, its significance is expanded by the second paragraph of the review, it "redefined screen violence." Hoberman recounts Crowther's "attack" on the film, and contrasts it with *Variety*'s "more practical" review. However, moving beyond the mixed critical reception Hoberman suggests the "movie entered the zeitgeist". This is used to explain the Movie Mailbag response to Crowther, and Joseph Morgernstern's "recanted" review. Hoberman also mentions the two *New Yorker* reviews, quoting Kael in particular.

Hoberman begins a paragraph with his own characterisation of the film as "the original movie that sought to make the audience pay for laughing at its comic violence." Innovation, in relation to its tone and representation of violence is explicitly recognized. Its innovation is again made implicit by Hoberman's reference to *Badlands* as "the 1973 *Bonnie and Clyde* remake."

Hoberman returns to the critical contestation and shift around *Bonnie and Clyde* with his suggestion that the film "epitomized another generational shift", the end of Crowther's era, and beginning for Kael. Further, the film "crystallized a change in attitudes" towards violence and movies. Hoberman describes this as "a new, sophisticated complicity with movies." However, he concludes the article by focusing upon censorial criticism of violence in *Bonnie and Clyde* and other films. The article contextualises the film in relation to its critical contestation, but Hoberman provides his own characterization of the film as a landmark in screen violence. Specifically he emphasises the affective quality and tone of its treatment of violence, and its self-conscious engagement "with movies". Innovation, in these various respects, is made explicit and also related to shifts in criticism.

Brian Case 'Cinefile' column *Time Out* 29/12/93 – 15/1/1994 p119

Bonnie and Clyde is initially introduced after discussing similar 'historical reconstructions' of gangster figures. Case suggests "it takes an effort of the historical imagination to be stunned anew" by various elements of the film. Besides the editing, which "still exhilarates", the other elements have qualified affective capability after time. Case discusses the plot, and in the final paragraph returns to the "gruelling to watch" quality of the death of Buck. He contrasts this with the "ecstatically choreographed death" of the protagonists. Again, he suggests the film "won't hit" as it did twenty five years before, but it is still valorised as "beautifully made, superbly structured and unforgettably performed." Hence, the quality, if not the canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde* is assumed, but for the first time within these retrospective reviews the quality is qualified in terms of the decreasing affective capability of the film after this period. In the last sentence Cases suggests the "French New Wave borrowings" of the film are not as jarring as those of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, possibly implying imitation, or at least an association with that later film. However, innovation is not directly addressed by the review, whereas *Bonnie and Clyde*'s assumed canonical status is clear.

James Gray *The Independent* 17/11/1994 p28

Gray opens by discussing the family picnic in the film, and the change of tone, “to a film that’s profoundly tragic and has very complex political implications.” Hence, the complexity and the tragic quality of the film are established initially, and together these suggest the artistic status of the film. He further describes the scene, again with evaluative connotations, as “it does what you wish movies always did.” He expands upon this characterising the film as working “on the level of the unconscious”, developing an analogy between the film and a dream.

Gray mentions Penn, who is associated with “amazing movies”, and specifically *Bonnie and Clyde* “is a complete masterpiece.” He goes on to discuss Penn’s difficulty with finding work, motivated by the writer’s own experience as a film director. The function of the article is primarily to establish the canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde*, evaluated explicitly as a “complete masterpiece”, but also as not fully explicable, working on “unconscious” levels.

The Times Magazine 19/11/1994 p77 no author give, from the BFI microfiche for *Bonnie and Clyde*

Bonnie and Clyde is referenced in relation to the contemporary controversy around *Natural Born Killers* (1994). The author suggests the film glorifies crime, but is not an ‘imbecilic’ glorification. *Bonnie and Clyde* is still primarily associated with glorifying crime, and violence, but this is not assumed to be necessarily problematic, but rather its treatment is relevant.

Patrick Goldstein *Sunday Telegraph* Review 14/9/1997 p7 previously in *Los Angeles Times* date unknown

Thirty years after its release, Goldstein discusses its passage to the screen. After addressing the stories about Beatty convincing Warner Brothers to fund production, he classifies the film as “the first modern American film.” The canonical, and especially innovative status of *Bonnie and Clyde* is explicitly stated early in the article. He elaborates upon the critical reception of the film, and the turnaround in opinion. Specifically, the film is classified as "[b]rimming with violence, comedy, romance and sexual confusion." In the concluding paragraph, Goldstein also mentions imitation of the film, but in relation to people wearing berets like Bonnie's. The historical account of the film's production, initial reception, and subsequent success only explicitly recognizes the status of the film, as "modern", early on in the article, and doesn't elaborate this in terms of characterising the aesthetic elements of the film.

Lester D. Friedman *Bonnie and Clyde: BFI Film Classic* 2000

Friedman clearly addresses the film as a classic, since the book forms part of the BFI Classic series. Friedman introduces the notion of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovative status by suggesting it "ushered in an era quickly dubbed 'The New American Cinema'". He also classifies this film, *The Graduate* and *Easy Rider* as "watershed films". Again Friedman suggests the film "was perhaps the first full statement of intent of the new cinema's values; it was as influential on the American films that followed it as *Breathless* was in France or *Open City* in Italy." Friedman also cites Gerald Mast in suggesting that the film "inaugurated" the New American Cinema. Subsequently, Friedman also states that the film "impacted upon aesthetic attitudes; the Hollywood studio system; the liberalisation of moral standards; the depiction of violence ..." He also addresses the critical reception of the film, as I have discussed elsewhere, and the "generational" shift amongst the critics partly brought about by the film.

Friedman clearly positions *Bonnie and Clyde* as canonical, a film classic, not even qualified in terms of genre or American film. He also classifies it as innovative, a watershed in several respects.

Matthew Bernstein 'Perfecting the New Gangster: Writing *Bonnie and Clyde*' *Film Quarterly* vol. 53, no. 4, pp16-31

Bernstein, whilst suggesting novelty in *Bonnie and Clyde* in his title, initially introduces the idea of innovation in relation to "European directors" and then "innovative 'smaller' films like *The Graduate* (1967) and *Easy Rider* (1969)." *Bonnie and Clyde* is introduced in connection with "how Hollywood filmmaking tames the stylisation of foreign cinemas." In particular, it is associated with bringing "the French New Wave's free-wheeling riffs on the gangster film" back to Hollywood.

Hence, Bernstein associates *Bonnie and Clyde* with both innovation and similarity to the French New Wave, although these qualities are not contradictory. He then sets out to examine the development of the screenplay to see how the "innovative film" inspired by the French New Wave "became a New Hollywood film." Clearly, then, Bernstein accedes the canonical and innovative status of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and uses this status to provide significance to his analysis.

Bernstein mentions three key elements of the film, the climax, "the upsetting mixture of tones", and the differing "gunfights" in the film, which were each envisioned in the script. He discusses in detail various revisions of the script, and then relates the consequent "quickening of the action" in the later versions to the French New Wave's "'shorthand'" self-conscious approach to genre. In discussing Truffaut's contribution to the script, Bernstein does stress four of his suggestions that "brought the film closer to the playful style of his own films." The French New Wave qualities of the film are thus established but qualified.

Bernstein accounts for Penn's influence on the final film in production, and notes the film "could easily have been shot as a more conventional film." Hence, its innovative, or at least distinctive qualities are also associated with Penn. Drawing to his conclusion Bernstein suggests the "firestorm of critical controversy" was evidence of the film's innovations. He goes on to say that after the shift in critical positions to the film, it was "on its way to becoming a 'classic', as a harbinger of a new sensibility in American filmmaking, one inspired by the French New Wave." The canonical status of *Bonnie and*

Clyde is thus clarified, and its innovation attributed to the scriptwriters, Penn and the French influence.

Stephen Prince 'The Haemorrhaging of American Cinema: *Bonnie and Clyde*'s legacy of cinematic violence' in Friedman *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde*

Prince opens this article by classifying *Bonnie and Clyde* as " a landmark film for many reasons", but emphasising its "graphic violence." This has "unprecedented" detail and ferocity. Prince proceeds to analyse the techniques used to "intensify" the climax of the film, and explore the "legacy" of the film to modern cinema.

Prince also addresses the context for the production of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Penn's audacious use of "slapstick humor" and violence is associated with the young production heads at Warner Brothers-Seven Arts, and the appeal to the youth market of "unconventional films". Prince never explains why the presentation of violence, rather than other elements of the film, marks *Bonnie and Clyde* as a "landmark", nor does he explain why this also explains its appeal to a younger market. He does, however, stress that it was "cutting edge filmmaking, in tune with profound shifts in American culture and employing the forms and techniques of cinema style in daringly new ways." He stresses the "visualisation" of the film's climax as its stylistic innovation with the most lasting impact. Hence the film's innovation is valorised, and not reduced to its depiction of violence, but this is the most significant innovation.

Following detailed description of the ambush scene Prince suggests "Penn was the first American director to demonstrate potency for visualising screen violence." He also describes him as a mentor to later directors like Peckinpah in this respect. However, he qualifies this by stating that Penn borrowed "these techniques" from Kurosawa. Yet Penn's "brilliance" in applying the techniques in the ambush scene "overturned decades of polite, bloodless movie violence in the American cinema."

Concluding the article, Prince again classifies its violence as "epochal, radical", but tame by comparison with later films. He also suggests that the "ultraviolence" that the film inaugurated is creatively bankrupt. Clearly, then, whilst Prince deems *Bonnie and Clyde* a landmark film, and innovative in several respects, he finds its "visualisation" of violence most important. However, Prince qualifies the value of the influence of the film, both upon specific filmmakers who are evaluated positively, such as Peckinpah, and more undifferentiated "ultraviolence".

Conclusions about the retrospective critical accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde*

These retrospective critical accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde* vary both in terms of their function and their specific characterisations of the film. As with the retrospective reviews of other films that referenced *Bonnie and Clyde*, this survey is slightly inadequate in relation to suggesting overall shifts in the critical status of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Most significantly, a number of these accounts are motivated, either explicitly or implicitly, as revisionist evaluations of *Bonnie and Clyde* that are intended to contest aspects of the characterisation of the film in its initial critical reception. There are less instances of critical accounts that concur with the more pejorative perspectives on the film evidenced upon its release. However, it is still useful to consider how the retrospective reviews characterize the film, whether they mobilise tropes that were available in the survey of synchronic reviews, or whether they develop novel characterisations. I will also consider how the tropes they use are collocated with particular positions on the canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde*.

The majority of the retrospective accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde* in this survey either recognize the film as being in some way a landmark, or watershed, indicating the coming of age or renaissance of Hollywood films, or position it as somehow canonical, whether as an American film, a Gangster film, or simply as a work of art. It is worth looking at the exceptions to this to begin. John Simon's 'customary' reconsideration of the film is ironically akin to Crowther's reviews and the theme group. He problematizes the film's romanticization of its outlaw protagonists and its inconsistency. Charles Thomas Samuels likewise follows Crowther's third review in initially recognizing "technical polish" in the film, but then devaluing its inconsistency, as well as the morality of Gangster films in general. Peter Collier also repeats tropes from the theme group of reviews, as well as denying the contemporary significance of the film. Finally, Robert Steele also recognizes a superficial "dazzling" quality of the film, but objects to the film on moral grounds, for its lack of honesty and clarity. These reviews, then, are predominantly dependent on the tropes already developed by the theme group of reviews, and demonstrate a similar mimetic and moral approach. William Pechter differs from these other detractors of *Bonnie and Clyde* since he identifies "brilliant" parts of the film, but also banal scenes and unnecessary European influence. This characterisation of evaluative inconsistency is distinct from the theme group, and is notable for contrasting the film with a canonical example of the Hollywood Gangster film, *White Heat*.

Amongst the reviews that position *Bonnie and Clyde* as canonical, there are more variations in critical approach, and in the tropes emphasised in the film's characterisation and evaluation. In particular, there are reviews that valorise the film using a more mimetic approach, in contrast to the contemporary reviews, as well as accounts utilising an expressive approach. For instance, the *Rolling Stone* review is antithetical to the Crowther reviews despite sharing evaluative criteria such as accuracy, authenticity and the reviewer's moral assessment of the protagonists. The contrast between the reviews marks the generational divide in terms of social values, with the valorisation of "fun" and pragmatism above traditional behavioural conventions by the magazine aimed at a young readership. Another account that stresses the contemporary relevance of the film, "expressing the tension between tribe and town", is provided by Caroline Geduld.

One characterisation of the film that explicitly addresses the divergence of critical approaches to films is Vivian Sobchack's article on movie violence. Sobchack relates the contestation around violent films to "reflective or affective" conceptions of film, but combines these by valorising the affective element of the film as well as considering the film as communicating an important message about violence. Hence, whilst the theme critics denied *Bonnie and Clyde* the status of message, Sobchack accedes this and argues that the stylised climax says something important about death. This is similar to the position of a number of the retrospective reviews that consider *Bonnie and Clyde* in terms of tragedy, and hence attribute significance to the film's climax.

Tragedy is a privileged trope in the revisionist accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde.* It serves to associate the film with canonical art, denying the potential assumption of Hollywood entertainment status for the film, and also commonly foregrounding the affective capability of the film in relation to catharsis. This partially pragmatic approach is important in focusing upon audience response to the violence in the film, and the protagonists, rather than a straightforward moral assessment of these. Hence, F.A. Macklin designates *Bonnie and Clyde* as a tragedy, compared to *Macbeth,* and valorises its artistic "power". In a similar way, William J. Free relates the climax of the film to the "catharsis of tragedy", and stresses the moral impact of this. Finally, John Cawelti most fully develops consideration of *Bonnie and Clyde* as a tragedy, again associated with artistic power. Each of these accounts either explicitly or implicitly recognize *Bonnie and Clyde* as a canonical work of art, although in connection with other qualities in addition to the tragic dimension. In addition, Judith Crist's retrospective references to the film also stress its moral dimension, without explicit recourse to the trope of tragedy. She also stresses its expressive and contemporary qualities.

As well as tragedy, another key trope in the revisionist accounts is that of the lyrical analogy, as foregrounded in the lyrical group of reviews. Hence, in F.A. Macklin's review mentioned in relation to tragedy, it is the "poetic realism" which confirms the film's canonical status. As in its use in the lyrical group, the analogy with poetry emphasises the expressive qualities of the film, although in this case also associated with realism and a message. Albert Johnson also utilises the lyrical analogy to combine expressive and mimetic approaches. Both these accounts explicitly position the film as canonical cinematic art. Another significant revisionist account that explicitly defines the film as a classic, and mobilises the lyrical trope, is Vernon Young's reconsideration, which shifts his position on the film dramatically. Whilst he initially characterized the film as a superficial stylised take on its subject, he later validated its "ballad" rhythm.

Finally, the ballad structure of the film is also foregrounded by Jim Hillier, although alongside his emphasis upon the film's use of myth.

Whereas the analogy with poetry was clearly evidenced as available to the contemporary reviewers, few considered the film in relation to complexity or sophistication.[284] This trope coincides with positive evaluations of the shifts in mood in the film that were most problematic to the theme group of reviews. Notably, several of the reviews that characterize the film as complex or sophisticated also maintain positive generic connotations for the Gangster film, contrary to the moral indictment of violent films in the theme reviews. Hence, an important element of the contestation around the characterisation of *Bonnie and Clyde* that continues in the retrospective reviews is this re-evaluation of the tonal structure or organisation of the film. This reassessment of the film is largely developed within specialist film journals and serious books on film. For example, Philip French writing in *Sight and Sound* associates its "alternation between farce and tragedy" with its "sophisticated" quality. He is primarily concerned with the film in relation to the Gangster genre, but suggests it is a "high-water" mark of the romantic tendency in the genre. Similarly, the two articles by John Cawelti that I have touched upon in relation to the trope of tragedy also elaborate in detail the complexity and richness of the film, also in relation to Cawelti's designation of the Gangster genre as the pre-eminent American cinematic genre. Another instance of the film being characterized as complex, in terms of "emotional levels", occurs in the Wolfs' book on landmark films. The authors also valorise the film in relation to its contemporary resonance, drawing a parallel between *A bout de Soufflé* and *Bonnie and Clyde* in terms of their relationship with the 1960s. Besides the explicit notion of complexity, a further example of accounts in a specialist film journal that intimates complexity in the film is the review from *Screen* by Jim Cook. Cook suggests the film's quality is related to Penn's control of the various tensions within *Bonnie and Clyde.* Whilst this is clearly implicated in a particular historically specific conception of art, or at least film art, inspired by structuralism, it corresponds to the trope of complexity in enabling a positive re-evaluation of the mood shifts, or inconsistency, in the film. Although Cook is less explicit about the canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde*, this is also another example of an academic article devoting serious attention to the film, and in this case contesting the initial characterisation of the film in relation to a highly developed, albeit implicit, conception of film art.

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[284] John Coleman *New Statesman* 22/9/67.

Amongst these accounts that emphasise the complexity or sophisticated quality of *Bonnie and Clyde*, the two related articles by Cawelti are the most fully elaborated. His characterisation combines the tropes of tragedy, complexity and "artistic power", and to some extent serve as a final word in the contestation around the film. However, it is still worth discussing more recent accounts to consider some of the lasting connotations of the film, as well as certain articles that I have so far omitted from this conclusion. Apart from the specialised characterisations of the film that address the film as tragedy or as complex, there are other examples that focus on the film in relation to the Gangster genre but that maintain positive connotations for both *Bonnie and Clyde* and the genre. For example, Robin Wood's monograph on Penn evaluates the film as the culmination of the Gangster genre, although also considering the "determining influence" of the French New Wave upon *Bonnie and Clyde*. Wood implies the film's canonical status by association with Penn's earlier "first indisputable" masterpiece *The Chase*. I have already mentioned Philip French's account of the film in relation to his view of it as the high-water mark of the romantic tendency of the Gangster genre, but his account also validates the mood shifts in the film as sophisticated, and associates these by collocation with the French New Wave. Paul Schrader's generic characterisation is more specific, discussing the changing representation of movie killers and crime. Although Schrader does not explicitly characterize *Bonnie and Clyde* as a tragedy, his association of the films he is discussing with *Hamlet* can be related to both their canonical status and tragic dimension. This clearly applies to *Bonnie and Clyde*, but also *Pretty Poison* and *In Cold Blood*. Schrader also maintains a positive position on the Gangster genre, quoting Robert Warshow in discussing the significance of environment for the characters in Gangster films.

For the later accounts of *Bonnie and Clyde* it is clear to some degree that the film has an assumed canonical status, whether in relation to the Gangster genre, American film, the New Hollywood, or more specifically in relation to representations of movie violence. However some of these reviews still rehearse the tropes and arguments of the initial contestation around the film. For instance, Peter Waymark's television review differs slightly from the theme group of reviews since it recognizes contemporary resonance in *Bonnie and Clyde* as well as suggesting authenticity in its recreation of the Depression period. Despite this, Waymark utilises a similar critical position to John Simon in suggesting the film's glamorising representation of the protagonists is problematic. He further differentiates the climactic depiction of their deaths from earlier violence and deaths in the film. For Brian Case, in contrast, whilst the canonical status of *Bonnie and Clyde* appears indisputable, it is nonetheless qualified by his comments that the impact of the violence and climax is much reduced after time. Hence, although this is the only clear example of this, we have the recognition of a dated canonical film.

The remaining retrospective accounts I have considered above are focussed on elaborating the canonical status of the film. These each explicitly recognize the film as significant in respect of New or Modern Hollywood or more specifically in relation to movie violence. Hence, J. Hoberman concludes that the film was a landmark for screen violence, and likewise Stephen Prince has expanded upon this at length. Finally, Lester Friedman, Patrick Goldstein and Matthew Bernstein all begin from the assumption of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s landmark status, "the first modern American film", "the first full statement of the new cinema's values", exemplifying New American Cinema, and "a New Hollywood film". To some extent, then, the remaining primary connotations for *Bonnie and Clyde* are New Hollywood, stylised violence, and its resonance for its time, its relationship to the changing zeitgeist or values and discourses of the late 1960s. These connotations have been cemented by time and the accumulated recognitions that the film is in some way or other innovative. This innovation might be limited to its stylised violence, or the graphic quality of the climax, or to narrative and tonal differences from Classical Hollywood, or related to its revival of the Gangster genre. The violence, the mood shifts, the beautiful imagery, all assumed to have positive values or redeeming qualities, novelty, complexity, a lyrical or tragic dimension.

In the final section of the thesis I will consider the aesthetic innovation of the film in relation to its recognition in the contemporary and retrospective reviews. However, I should make mention of the shifts in review criticism and more academic critical approaches to film that accompanied the acceptance of *Bonnie and Clyde* into the cinematic canon. As I have mentioned previously, *Bonnie and Clyde* was a clear example of the application of the nascent critical practice of auteurism being applied to Hollywood films, and not restricted to Hollywood films by a select few directors. My survey of the synchronic reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and particularly my discourse analysis, explored the pronounced differences between reviewers using primarily mimetic approaches from those with more expressive emphasis. This survey of the retrospective references to *Bonnie and Clyde* in reviews and other critical accounts is inadequate to evidence the gradual shift towards the expressive approach, or to speculate the reasons for this. However, it does also show that similar concerns to those of the theme group of reviews remain significant to more recent critics. Similarly the persistence of mimetic approaches of criticism is made clear by the controversies around films such as *Crash* (1996) and *Natural Born Killers*.

The Influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* on other filmmakers' practices

Aesthetic characteristics of selected Hollywood genre films during the Hollywood Renaissance

Within this section of the thesis I will consider the shared aesthetic characteristics of *Bonnie and Clyde* and subsequent Hollywood genre films which feature aestheticization. I will concentrate on specific aesthetic characteristics, but also consider how these are combined in each film. I intend to demonstrate the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and hence to show both the recognition of innovation in my case study film by filmmakers, and the adoption of its innovative elements within filmmaking practice. Initially I will address those films that seem to be the clearest examples of imitation, or adoption of the innovation of aestheticization in Hollywood genre films. I will analyse each film in chronological order in order to address shifts in Hollywood conventions, for instance the wider adoption of zoom shots during the Hollywood Renaissance. Finally I will consider several films more briefly, where these films share characteristics with films of the Hollywood Renaissance, but where the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* is less marked.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969)

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid does not share any creative personnel with *Bonnie and Clyde*, but with its mythmaking treatment of its eponymous heroes and its approach to the past, particularly evidenced in the opening credits sequence, it is clearly comparable as an aestheticized Western. Some of the aesthetic characteristics shared with *Bonnie and Clyde* are strikingly similar.

Archive snaps and sepia images

The opening sequence of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* suggests the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* since it shares close similarities with the credit sequence of the earlier film. The succession of faux archive sepia photos in *Bonnie and Clyde* is accompanied by a clicking sound to suggest a camera or slide projector. In *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* there is faux archive silent film footage, in sepia, beginning with leader film and then presenting images depicting the hole in the wall gang. This 'archive' footage appears on the left hand side of the screen, at a slight angle to suggest it is being projected diagonally in relation to the plane of the screen. The whirr of a projector is audible, and as in *Bonnie and Clyde* music begins as the credits sequence continues. The sequence lasts around two minutes thirty seconds, and closes with an iris in effect to further suggest its status as early cinema (0:02:36). The film's narration continues in sepia, only gradually developing into a full colour palette. Later in the film further sepia sequences feature, maintaining the motif but differing slightly from the opening sequence. For instance, in one sequence the camera zooms in, and pans or tilts across a succession of still images (1:03:26) and all are accompanied by jaunty music. Some of the shots feature the faces of Butch, Sundance and Etta superimposed over the main shot, and there are dissolves between many of the photos. A flash effect follows, suggesting that the three characters are having their photograph taken, with the still photos alternating with the white screen to signify the flashes (1:05:27). The same device is used to show Etta shooting bird targets at a fair (1:06:21).

Within the sequence there is another allusion to the origins of cinema, as a zoetrope/flicker effect is used to suggest movement from still images (1:05:27) with the cylinder containing the images becoming visible after several flickering shots. This segues into a further succession of still images, and within these motion is also suggested by the blur of focus of dancing figures in the still photos. The editing also includes cuts between shots taken from the same photo, isolating parts of the pre-filmic photograph in close up (1:05:55). Again, the following scene appears in sepia to begin. Hence, whilst the opening sequence differs from *Bonnie and Clyde* in using moving sepia images, this later sequence follows the device used in that film, but continuing the motif of connoting early cinema. The motif briefly recurs with the culmination of the film, as the freeze frame final image shifts to a sepia coloration, before the camera zooms out (1:44:13).

Passing, framing close ups and extreme close ups, and other hazy and out of focus shots

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid features a variety of passing and framing shots, lelouches and other out of focus effects. The first of these occurs early on in the film, a shot past an out of focus figure to Sundance, which is followed by an out of focus figure crossing the frame in front of Sundance (middle of shot, 0:05:50). This is used to conceal an invisible edit, to a closer shot of Sundance, in a similar way to the overlap shots preceding the ice-cream parlour meeting of Homer and C.W.'s father in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Another intrusion into the frame occurs in a shot with Butch and Sundance in extreme long shot with a rifle entering the frame in the immediate foreground (0:09:32).

Lelouches feature on several occasions in the film, with an early example including rapid overlap shots, a rapid lelouche effect as Sundance runs behind bushes to jump on the Union Pacific train (0:14:51). The fast pan combined with the overlap blurs the image until Sundance lands on the train. Lelouches also feature persistently in the 'Raindrops keep falling on my head' episode. As Butch rides the bicycle with Etta sat on the handlebars, the camera passes behind leaves, trees, a timber fence, and greenery that obscures the protagonists, and then a succession of wooden slats (0:25:44, 0:25:50, 0:25:56, 0:26:05, 0:26:08, 0:26:16, 0:26:18, 0:26:30 and 0:26:36). The effect is enhanced by soft focus, and the bright sunlight in the shots. Further lelouches feature as the train carrying the super posse approaches, a shot from behind a flower in close up and out of focus, revealing the smoke from the train (0:32:36), another with an undefined object in the foreground as the train enters the frame (0:32:45), and again a flower in the foreground out of focus with a closer shot of the train (0:33:00). Less use is made of lelouche effects as the film progresses, but another instance features Butch and Sundance climbing a hill trying to elude the posse, seen from behind a tree (0:53:09), while another use of overlap, combined with a zoom, is used when Butch thinks he sees the lawman's white straw boater (1:19:07). Hence, the film makes use of lelouche effects to enhance lyrical shots, and uses overlap to obscure some action.

Slow motion and freeze frame

There is use of slow motion to represent the effects of violence, as in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and the alternative use of the freeze frame for the climactic ambush. There is one shot that appears to feature fast motion, as in the earlier film, as Butch and Sundance ride down a hill, with dust rising behind them (0:34:44). The main uses of slow motion show the falls of the Bolivian bandits, with seven slow motion shots edited together before a crosscut to Butch, and then to Sundance, at normal speed, and finally two more slow motion shots (1:28:52, finally 1:29:10). The slow motion sequence is set against normal speed sound, but this sound is a Leone-like echoing cry as the figures fall rather than the sound of gunfire. Finally, the last shot of the film is a freeze frame, albeit the sound continues, gradually fading bullet fire, and the image changes to sepia before the camera zooms out. Clearly this combines elements of the closing sequences of *Bonnie and Clyde* and *400 Blows* (1959).

Episodes

I have already referred to the episode when Butch rides a bicycle, carrying Etta. This is demarcated initially by the Burt Bacharach song ‘Raindrops keep falling on my head’, and includes a succession of soft focus and out of focus shots. The music shifts into a more slapstick style with ragtime piano as Butch fools around on the bike (0:25:40). Yet another episode is marked by a song, this time continuing from a chase sequence to a sequence of Butch, Sundance and Etta robbing banks. This episode concludes as soldiers appear to ride in opposite directions, with rapid edits used to convey this. As in *Bonnie and Clyde*, episodes are marked off from the narrative by the soundtrack, and feature little or no dialogue, as well as being distinguished by persistent use of particular aesthetic techniques such as the lelouches in the ‘Raindrops’ episode.

Rapid edits

Whilst the scenes of violence in *Bonnie and Clyde* feature very rapid edits, whether the shootings or both of the altercations, between Clyde and Hamer and the butcher respectively, I did not focus on the editing when discussing these scenes. However, the inclusion of rapid cuts is more pronounced in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, especially in the part of the film set in Bolivia. The first marked instance is the succession of discontinuity shots of soldiers riding in opposite directions that I referred to above (1:18:23). This uses an edit that 'rocks' between shots of the soldiers riding diagonally toward the screen, and shots of the same soldiers riding away along the same diagonal. Hence, the rapid cuts are emphasised by the discontinuity edit. In the other instance of fast editing a similar effect is achieved. A succession of rapid shots of the Bolivian soldiers shooting, each from an unestablished location, prefigures the finale of the film (1:39:25).

Zoom

Zoom and rack focus shots also recur throughout *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and I have already referred to some uses of zoom in or zoom out from still images in the sepia sequences. These are used as searching and revealing zoom to emphasise details in the still images. Besides these, there is persistent use of zoom with various functions, but for the most part these are similar to the functions of the zoom in *Bonnie and Clyde*. An early instance that stands out is the sudden zoom in on the bull's eye near the end of the episode with Butch riding a bicycle (0:28:08). This follows two shots of the bull, and suggests a shock effect as the bull begins to move, and this functions to punctuate the episode, shifting the mood. Further zoom shots are used to reveal detail, to show reactions of characters, and as establishing shots. Hence, a zoom in on the super posse in extreme long shot reveals the number of riders (0:34:35). A zoom in on Sweetface, the old man who points to the room where Butch and Sundance are ensconced (0:38:49), follows a rack focus shot of him initially misdirecting the posse, which then shifts out of focus (37:42). Further examples of rack focus are used to show the reactions of both Butch and Sundance. Hence, a rack shifts between Sundance and Butch as they react to Etta declaring she won't watch them die (1:02:49). Likewise, another two uses of rack focus show the reactions of Butch and Sundance to Etta's suggestion they become farmers. The initial shot of Butch's reaction shifts with rack focus to Sundance, and then racks back again to Butch (1:30:23 and 1:30:35). Another use of zoom to show a reaction presents Sundance's reaction to Etta, when she says that the posse have been hired just until they kill Butch and Sundance (1:00:51).

A slow zoom out from the lit fuse on a piece of dynamite is used as an opening shot within the bank robbery sequence in the Bolivian section of the film (1:18:01). This use of establishing shot is again used to punctuate the episode, altering the pace. In contrast is the zoom in on the white straw boater, a shot that I have previously discussed because it combines with overlap shots, with out of focus figures crossing the shot (1:19:01). This is a rapid zoom, which is obscured by the overlaps. As in *Bonnie and Clyde*, zoom and rack focus are used primarily to reveal details, reactions or significant elements in the mise en scene, but these are instances of overt cinematic narration even though such uses of zoom were becoming more conventional in the films of the Hollywood Renaissance.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid shares particularly close similarities with *Bonnie and Clyde*, with the use of slow motion sequences and faux archive sepia sequences. With its episodic sequences and other specific techniques such as freeze frame it follows *Bonnie and Clyde* in adopting aesthetic characteristics of the French New Wave, but blending these with the generic elements of the Western.

McCabe and Mrs Miller (1971)

McCabe and Mrs Miller, the revisionist Western directed by Robert Altman, shares various characteristics with *Bonnie and Clyde*. I will analyse specific shared aesthetic characteristics, particularly those that contribute to an aestheticized quality of the film and its approach to its genre. Additionally there are several explicit similarities between the film and *Bonnie and Clyde* that provide supporting evidence for the argument that *McCabe and Mrs Miller* adopts the aesthetic innovation of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Featuring within yet another eponymous couple, Warren Beatty stars as John McCabe. His character bears a passing resemblance to Clyde Barrow, as a flawed hero with sexual insecurities and troubled esteem. He stresses at a late stage in the film that he has "got poetry in me", which is loosely equivalent to Clyde's elation at being the subject of Bonnie's ballad. Whilst *McCabe and Mrs Miller* does not include the slapstick elements of *Bonnie and Clyde* it does feature strong shifts of tone, and also includes several instances of McCabe telling jokes, akin to Buck Barrow's repeated joking. *McCabe and Mrs Miller* shares with *Bonnie and Clyde* an aestheticized approach to its genre subject matter, most obviously in its slow motion violence, but also permeating its shot and scene construction, its episodic structure, and particularly the look of the film. I will outline specific aesthetic characteristics that correspond to those I analysed in relation to *Bonnie and Clyde*, as well as noting techniques that are equivalent to those featured in the earlier film.

Passing, framing close-ups and extreme close-ups, and other hazy and out of focus shots

In my analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde* I gave detailed and lengthy attention to the variety of shots that featured characters and objects in different planes, often with one plane out of focus. I also noted mobile close-ups, as well as 'lelouches' and other techniques that introduced a degree of obscurity to elements in the frame. In *McCabe and Mrs Miller* we have various instances of lelouches and out of focus shots that are foregrounded within the film from the outset. The initial pan shot of the tree filled landscape is hazy, with dull natural lighting, and the detail of the trees is not clear (0:00:12). As this shot continues the horse bearing the figure of McCabe appears in the distance in extreme long shot, obscured by the credit for Julie Christie, and more emphatically obfuscated by the trees in the near distance functioning as a lelouche. As McCabe comes into view the camera is tilted down more and the image is generally dull, with a low level of light. Following a cut, another lelouche occurs, McCabe obscured by out of focus green foliage in the immediate foreground for the duration of the panning shot (0:01:12). This use of lelouches, muted by dull natural lighting is more akin to their use in the wheat field scene in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and differs from their use in *The Graduate* where they often fill the frame with bright, strong colours.

The opening sequence is echoed around fifteen minutes into the film, with more shots of McCabe riding across the landscape accompanied by the Leonard Cohen soundtrack. This is immediately preceded by a zoom shot that I will consider below, but which zooms in to a musical instrument in such a way that the shot is past McCabe who becomes out of focus (0:15:01). This kind of passing shot, as I have termed it, was frequent in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and was also combined with overlap shots. In this sequence another passing shot features an overlap as the camera moves behind a wagon and people standing around, whilst the camera continues to pan and track following McCabe (0:15:54). Again McCabe is obscured by a figure and object in the foreground that is out of focus. Another passing shot of McCabe, past Miller's arm at the bottom of the frame and out of focus in the foreground, occurs in the scene when McCabe interrupts her opium haze (1:01:52).

Yet another lelouche opens another sequence as McCabe rides back to the town. Brown, out of focus foliage obscures McCabe and the 'Bearpaw whores'[285] (0:17:45). This device is repeated two shots later (0:18:02), with these shots interspersed with a formal composition, a magic hour shot of the church spire. Again these shots are accompanied by the Cohen soundtrack, which I will consider in relation to the episodic structure of the film. Still another lelouche features a few minutes later, although this time as a shot of the preacher who is obscured by the flicker of flame slightly out of focus in the foreground. Again this coincides with the use of a Cohen song, here functioning as a sound bridge across scenes. These uses of lelouches in episodic sequences, whilst differing in their visual quality, are equivalent to those featuring in *The Graduate* in the episodes with successive dissolves and the songs of Simon and Garfunkel. Similarly, these predominantly feature earlier in the film, although other out of focus effects follow later in the film. There is one later instance that is not technically a lelouche since it features foliage with water drops falling from the leaves in the immediate foreground, which is in focus, and a slightly out of focus wagon approaching in the distance (0:37:45). A lelouche that is combined with rack focus is used in an establishing shot of the killers' horses approaching (1:07:08). The initial shot of bare twigs, with the glare of reflected light from the out of focus stream in the background, is transformed as focus shifts to the horses' feet in the stream. A similar instance occurs later, a shot of the bathhouse obscured partly by the icicle clad tree in the foreground which is slightly out of focus, with the snow falling between also barely visible (1:35:11). The camera tilts down and the shot ends with McCabe exiting the building, seen in long shot but slightly out of focus and also obscured by the shadows. The continuing snow falling during this scene, as McCabe eludes the 'killers', contributes to the dappled effect of the image, with the elements of the image sometimes barely visible when out of focus. This is most marked when it features in a point of view shot through the window of the saloon (1:40:47). The snow, the low levels of light and the intervening window, as well as selective use of out of focus, all contribute to the texture of the image that is privileged above clarity.

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[285] As they are credited.

Although the lelouche shots and overlap shots most markedly correspond to their use in *Bonnie and Clyde*, in *McCabe and Mrs Miller* they are combined with other effects that contribute to the obscurity of the image. Hence, as well as the dappled effect in the final scene, several other shots have a hazy quality to the image, or use out of focus elements in different ways. One instance is a shot of a worker astride the timber frame of the saloon during its construction (0:19:38). The worker is partly in silhouette, whilst some of the timbers are out of focus and frame his figure within a geometric division of the image. The hazy quality is maintained in shots in the bathhouse, combining the steam, darkness and soft focus (0:40:16). This is functioning slightly differently to the filtered and soft focus sequences of the homecoming picnic and the hobo encampment in *Bonnie and Clyde*. They are less emphatically lyrical, but are equivalent in overtly showing the produced nature of the image. The hazy quality, and various means of obscuring elements of the image, also supplement the emphasis upon darkness and lighting effects, chiaroscuro and glare that I will consider next.

Glare, lens flare, darkness and chiaroscuro glow

Within my analysis of *Bonnie and Clyde* the key obtrusive lighting effect I considered was the inclusion of lens flare and glare in the image in scenes with natural lighting.

McCabe and Mrs Miller features even more marked attention to lighting, and particularly to the use of darkness and low levels of light. The quality of the light also contributes significantly to the construction of mood in the film. This is controlled by both alternating and combining low levels of light and darkness with warm, soft lighting on the characters in interiors. This warm lighting is perhaps best described as a glow, and is most frequently associated with Julie Christie's character Mrs Miller, particularly in and around her opium use. Instances of low light levels that obscure the action, as well as this glow, feature early on in the film. Early shots of McCabe have low levels of natural light, and when the camera tilts down as McCabe climbs off his horse and then enters the town the frame becomes filled with the dark trees and buildings and the image has a gloomy quality (0:02:30). This gloom is exemplified by the shots on the footbridge to the hotel (0:03:44), and emphasised by McCabe lighting a match (0:03:46) and then the lighting of a candle inside the hotel (0:04:42). This overt inclusion of a change in the lighting and a visible source for key light is repeated with an early use of warm glow, in this instance the soft lighting on the faces of McCabe and the other poker players as the lantern is lit in the hotel bar (0:07:14). This combines general darkness and the contrasting warmly lit faces of the characters, a chiaroscuro effect that features frequently throughout the film. A similar effect results when McCabe first meets with Miller, in the part built saloon. In this case the lighting is motivated by natural light penetrating the building through the unfinished open sides of the building, and through the slatted gaps in the exterior wall (0:27:40). Whilst the protagonist's faces are key lit, the backgrounds in the interior are dark, apart from the thin strips of the sky visible between the slats.

As stated already, the predominant use of glowing, warm light upon a character's features is associated with Mrs Miller's opium consumption. Instances include the first time we see her drug taking paraphernalia (0:54:40), when she is interrupted by McCabe; the shot of the lantern flame, an out of focus orange blur in the frame, which is followed after the zoom out by the shot of Miller inhaling from an opium pipe (0:58:21); and finally, the penultimate and last shots of Miller in the Chinese opium den (1:53:40). These last shots alternate with the final shot of McCabe, and I will address the disjunction of tone effected by these shots. Both shots of Miller feature zoom, as I will consider, and are accompanied by the final song of the soundtrack. Besides these instances of a key lighting effect, this 'glow', the film does feature glare, notably twice in a shot I have previously referenced in relation to the inclusion of a lelouche. This shot of the killers approaching the town, opening with the image of twigs in the foreground, and circles of glare with reflected light from the out of focus stream (1:07:08), continues with lens flare as the camera tilts up to show the horses and their riders (1:07:23). The lens flare bisects the frame vertically, and as the camera pans is replaced by a diagonal succession of lens flare spots and marked over exposure towards the edge of the frame from the bright sky. The riders cross the frame in near silhouette, so again the use of light and shadow is contrasted within the same image.

Zooms and rack focus

Whereas in the cases of *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* the use of zoom and rack focus were marked as obtrusive and unconventional for Hollywood, the use of zoom soon became established as a norm for the Hollywood Renaissance. *McCabe and Mrs Miller* features repeated use of zoom, in some instances with persistent uses of zoom in and/or zoom out in successive shots. It is worth distinguishing the uses of zoom within the film, and how these correspond to the way zoom was used in *Bonnie and Clyde*. I noted both 'searching and revealing' zoom and the use of zoom out after opening close ups in *Bonnie and Clyde*, as well as the use of subjective zoom as a point of view shot technique. Each of these variations feature in *McCabe and Mrs Miller*, but there are also distinctive uses of zoom for closing scenes, and for closing the film, as well as for emphasis and a shock effect. Hence, although the use of zoom would be less unconventional at the time of production for *McCabe and Mrs Miller*, the number of zoom shots and the ways these are used are still significant, and demonstrate aestheticization in relation to foregrounding the produced, and selective, quality of the image and cinematic narration in the film.

The first uses of zoom in the film correspond to the notion of searching and revealing zoom, as featured in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Hence, the initial zoom in on McCabe, in to a close up of his smile, with his cigar held between his teeth, and his look to the camera (0:09:01), is similar to the zoom and rack focus that revealed that Clyde was pretending to sleep early in *Bonnie and Clyde.* Notably this shot in *McCabe and Mrs Miller* is accompanied by the sound of the mandolin, and the next instance of revealing zoom is used to highlight the mandolin player. Zoom in, moving past the poker players and McCabe until they are out of shot and he is out of focus, finishes in close up on the instrument and the mandolin player's fingers (0:14:55). However, this use of zoom differs since it closes the scene. Another instance of zoom that marks a scene transition features as a reaction shot, and follows immediately a revealing zoom shot. One of the 'Bearpaw whores' says; "I have to go to the pot", and a slow zoom in on her speaking (0:22:00) is followed after a cut by a zoom in on McCabe's reaction, a zoom which speeds up until his expression is in extreme close up (0:22:05). This use of zoom in successive shots, or closely linked shots, is repeated in the next sequence that features zoom, a zoom out from the steam engine revealing the crowd watching its arrival, with overlap of the steam engine by people passing in front of the camera (0:26:05), followed by a cut to a tracking shot of the crowd and a cut to a zoom in to the Bearpaw sign on the front of the engine (0:26:18). Only a few more shots later a zoom in shows the reaction of Bart Coyle (0:26:38), to his 'mail order bride'. Another instance of zoom involving a shot of a musical instrument, this time opening a scene with a medium close up of the fiddle player, uses a zoom out to show the lighting of a lantern, and the other customers in the hotel bar (0:28:40). Again, this kind of revelatory zoom, to present authenticating detail from the mise en scene, features in a zoom in to close up on a shot of Miller's meal of eggs, which is combined with tilt and pan (0:31:20). Later in the film another two uses of zoom out function as establishing shots that open a scene. In the first the zoom out follows on from lelouche shots of foliage, which are combined with the use of tilt to reveal a wagon behind brown leaves (0:37:40). In the second instance, the shot that first reveals the killers uses a combination of rack focus and zoom in on their horses (1:07:08).

A series of zooms features in a sequence beginning with McCabe in Miller's room, after she has taken opium and is acting in a coy manner. Revelatory zoom to show her smoking the opium pipe (0:58:21) is followed in the subsequent scene with them both, with a zoom in on her smile (1:01:30), slow zoom in on her eyes, when she hides her face behind the bed sheet (1:01:47), and to show McCabe leave her money (1:02:02). This last action that is emphasised by the use of zoom in culminates the scene. Following a cut, accompanied by a sound bridge of fiddle music, another zoom in shows the representatives of the Harrison Shaunessy company. A succession of zooms are also used in McCabe's initial meeting with the cowboy (Keith Carradine), with zoom in from extreme long shot of the cowboy (1:06:34), followed by slow zoom in on McCabe (1:06:38), another zoom in on the cowboy to close up (1:06:40), and finally a slow zoom on McCabe (1:06:43). Hence zoom is used in a shot/reverse-shot construction. These zooms arguably approximate point of view, but several more zoom in shots are used as subjective point of view later in the film. Hence as McCabe tries to keep away from the killers, a zoom in corresponds to his glance at the church spire, after he hears the whinny of a horse (1:35:58), then pan and zoom in represents McCabe's obscured view from inside the saloon (1:40:47), and zoom in approximates another point of view shot of the church on fire (1:43:21) (this time the point of view of another of the townspeople). Between these shots zoom out is used to follow McCabe moving furtively around the town (1:41:40 and 1:42:20) and to show the women at the windows of the bathhouse after the alarm is called (1:45:40).

There is less frequent use of zoom in the following shots until two striking uses near the end of the film. The first of these is the shock effect of a very rapid zoom in as McCabe surprises Butler, shooting him in the forehead (1:51:39). This contrasts with the use of slow motion to mark earlier instances of violence, which I will discuss in the section on slow motion below. Finally, as I have already intimated, zoom features in the closing sequence, with zoom in on Miller in the opium den (1:53:39), followed by slow zoom in to close up of McCabe being covered by snow (1:53:59) and further slow zoom on Miller (1:54:37) to close up, and extreme close up on her eye (1:54:50). Persistent zoom features throughout the film, functioning in several ways, but consistently demonstrating the overt cinematic narration.

Slow motion

Slow motion is used in several instances to represent violence, or rather the effects of violence, in a lyrical fashion in *McCabe and Mrs Miller*. Clearly this is a significant characteristic shared with *Bonnie and Clyde* and its use of aestheticized violence. The first uses of slow motion are for the shooting of the cowboy, and as with *Bonnie and Clyde*, as well as various films of Sam Peckinpah such as *The Wild Bunch*, slow motion images are intercut with normal speed footage. Hence the long shot of the cowboy falling off the bridge into the river (1:30:33) is followed by a shot of the saloon keeper and others watching, and then another slow motion shot of the cowboy struggling in the water (1:30:38). After several more shots of the killer a slow motion shot of the cowboy sinking in the water is followed by a further shot of the watching figures (1:30:52). Whereas the final shot of the cowboy submerged in the water, almost still, also appears as if it might be slow motion but the movement of a shadow from a tree suggests it is normal speed.

The other instance of slow motion violence shows the preacher being shot by Butler, in the church. The explosion of his lantern, and squibs on the preacher's arm, as well as his fall, are captured in a single shot (1:39:46). As I previously described the final acts of violence, particularly the shooting of McCabe and Butler, are shot at normal speed but with the use of zoom to emphasise Butler's shock.

Formal compositions

Whilst many shots of the landscape and interiors in *McCabe and Mrs Miller* are obscured, there are some instances of images composed to be beautiful. Particularly early on in the film, magic hour shots of the church spire combine strong framing and the orange glow of sunset. The initial shot has the spire vertically bisecting the frame, in silhouette, with trees on either side of the frame, and the sun setting behind clouds on the horizon (0:17:52). A figure, presumably the preacher, is seen climbing the spire with a cross attached to his back. The shot is maintained for a few seconds, and after another shot of McCabe and the 'Bearpaw whores', a slightly closer shot shows the cross being raised and fixed on top of the spire, and in this shot the sun has fallen slightly further (0:18:11).

I previously considered the shot of the timber frame of the saloon, with the timbers dividing the frame geometrically. This features abstract division of the frame with strong contrast between the silhouetted timbers and the blue sky (0:19:38).

An interior shot that has a formal composition occurs in the bathhouse. A music box is in close up central in the frame, and the sound of it dominates the sound track, but in reflection in its glass frontispiece can be seen the figures of a customer and one of the whores slow dancing (0:46:54). The camera slowly zooms in, so the reflected figures become more apparent than the hole-punched disc in the machine.

The second shot of the cowboy is another example of a magic hour shot, with the figure and trees mostly in silhouette and bands of orange sky running horizontally across the frame. This shot features zoom, as previously discussed, with a later shot in close up retaining the cowboy on the right hand side of the screen, but having the trees on the left out of focus, and a single band of orange in the sky, also fuzzy and out of focus (1:06:47). A further example of an exterior shot that beautifies the sky is the shot of Bearpaw that includes snow-capped mountains in the background, and a blue tint to the sky and mountain peaks (1:22:40). As the camera tilts down to show the town this shot becomes more gloomy and mundane.

Overlapping sound

Whilst sound bridges are used particularly frequently in *The Graduate*, and figure most prominently in the interview insert sequence in *Bonnie and Clyde*, they feature in a few instances in *McCabe and Mrs Miller*. These are marked when diegetic music or dialogue from one location continues over shots of another location, but to counterpoint the images. This is used to inflect shots of the bathhouse, and shots of violence. The saloon conversation about a Chinese girl at the bathhouse overlaps the hazy images of the women (0:40:02). Later, after the music box scene, the music continues over shots of the town, but including the fight that leads to Bart Coyle's death, after his wife is mistaken for a prostitute.

Episodic structure

These uses of overlapping sound enhance the episodic quality of the film, but primarily this episodic quality is constructed by the use of the Leonard Cohen songs that accompany lengthy sequences, and evoke particular moods. Thus the opening sequence, from the credits (0:00:12) and segueing through McCabe's arrival at the town, continues for four minutes. Both the song that accompanies this sequence as well as the lack of dialogue and repetition of similar images of McCabe mark off this episode. A parallel sequence encompasses McCabe's trip to Bearpaw (0:15:01), although this is shorter. Another sequence organised around a song follows Miller as she walks through the town at night (1:33:13). The sound of the wind, and then subsequently the sound of flute which develops into the final song, mark the climactic sequence, combining Miller in the opium den and McCabe lying in the snow which also has an episodic quality (1:52:02). This is similar to the uses of Foggy Mountain Breakdown in *Bonnie and Clyde* that demarcate the slapstick episodes, and the use of Simon and Garfunkel songs which contribute to the episodic sequences in *The Graduate.*

Contrasts and shifts of mood

Whilst *Bonnie and Clyde* was criticised for rapid and disjunctive shifts of mood, particularly in relation to the juxtaposition of slapstick, scenes of violence and lyrical episodes, in *McCabe and Mrs Miller* the organisation of the mood is more consistent. However, particularly towards the end of the film there are shifts of mood between scenes that provide counterpoint, and these are emphasised by formal and aesthetic contrasts. For instance, immediately following the harsh and cold death of the cowboy, presented in lyrical fashion (1:31:10), is the scene of awkward intimacy between McCabe and Miller in her room, in which the warm glow on their faces dominates (1:31:15). This in turn leads to the poignant episode as Miller walks around the town.

Most striking is the alternation of mood in the climactic sequences. The townsfolk's elation at saving the church from the fire (1:51:40) follows McCabe shooting Butler (1:51:39) but is crosscut with the dying McCabe struggling across the snow (1:52:04). Successive shots contrast the isolated McCabe, against the snow with only the sound of the wind prominent in the sound track, with the community grouped together in the frame, as well as being joined by their raised voices. Then the cut to the exterior of the opium den introduces the final song, and the camera zooms in on the warm glow of Miller's face. Strong visual contrast, in spite of the parallelism of zoom in on McCabe and Miller, marks the intercut shots (1:53:40). Notably the credits follow close up shots of Miller's carefree reverie and the extreme close up of the ornamental egg she is examining.

Folklore and authenticating details

In *Bonnie and Clyde*, the authentic but nostalgic approach to history was introduced by the archive snaps during the opening credits. *McCabe and Mrs Miller* strives for a greater degree of authenticity whilst maintaining an overt cinematic narration, and in addition to qualities such as the gloomy appearance of the town and interiors, this is most evident in shots of the social activities of the townsfolk. These offset the purely generic concerns of the Western, for instance when secondary characters are more concerned with whether one of them should shave their beard than the arrival of a stranger and the type of gun he carries. The inclusion of shots of people lighting the lanterns in each interior location, particularly the hotel bar, contributes to the authenticity, but shots of auxiliary characters playing musical instruments and dancing on the ice are also significant. Hence, there is a zoom in on the mandolin player, closing a scene (0:14:54), the zoom out from the fiddle player, and subsequent pan to the character who has shaved his beard (0:28:38), and the shots of the feet of dancers on the ice (1:08:58). This is crosscut with the shots of the initiation of Shelley Duvall at the bathhouse (1:10:21), and the second time with the arrival of the killers that leads to silence and the end of the dance.

In general, then, *McCabe and Mrs Miller* adopts specific aesthetic characteristics from the Hollywood Renaissance, and *Bonnie and Clyde* in particular. The inclusion of lelouches, frequent use of zoom, slow motion for the depiction of violence, formal compositions and an episodic structure suggest close similarities with *Bonnie and Clyde*. In addition, in *McCabe and Mrs Miller* the transformation of genre, and approach to representation of the past, are also equivalent to the approach of the earlier film. This clear aestheticization of the Western genre, alongside the use of Warren Beatty in the star role, suggests the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, albeit not derivative imitation by *McCabe and Mrs Miller*.

Badlands (1973)

It could be suggested that *Badlands* self-consciously imitates *Bonnie and Clyde*, with its lovers on the lam narrative and their self-mythologizing, and there are specific allusions to *Bonnie and Clyde* within the film as well as an expression of thanks to Arthur Penn in the credits (as well as to other Hollywood Renaissance figures). The film was produced by Warner Bros., the same production studio as *Bonnie and Clyde*, and features a South Western U.S. setting, and a female protagonist from Texas. I will consider several aesthetic characteristics shared between the two films, and also address the later film's allusions to the earlier. The aesthetic characteristic of *Bonnie and Clyde* that is most prominent in *Badlands* is the emphasis on formal compositions, images that are made beautiful. These combine in some instances with strong graphic matches between successive shots, which further emphasise the composed quality of the image. In addition, *Badlands* features sepia sequences redolent of the opening credits in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and persistent use of passing shots and lelouches.

Formal compositions

As in *Bonnie and Clyde*, particular shots in *Badlands* can be distinguished in respect of their formal qualities, balance, contrast between elements in the image, symmetry or asymmetry and so on, and also in relation to how long the shot is maintained. From the outset, *Badlands* features frequent shots that are marked by their formal compositional qualities, and many of these use magic hour lighting, as in *Bonnie and Clyde*, to enhance their beauty. An early shot of the street (0:00:50), with the vanishing point central in the frame, with receding trees and one red bin on either side of the road towards the edge of the frame, is repeated when Kit (Martin Sheen) reaches that stretch of the road (0:03:20). This second shot dissolves to a similar shot with a graphic match of one bin within the image. The use of red against a more muted background and this subsequent graphic match evokes Yasujiro Ozu, in films such as *Ohayo*, as referenced in relation to abstraction in chapter one of this thesis. Shots down a road are a recurrent motif in *Badlands*, but not all are so clearly formally composed. An early instance of magic hour footage is the shot of the bright red balloon against a bright blue sky (0:14:10). The camera tilts and pans to follow the balloon, keeping it centre frame, until the camera stops panning and the balloon crosses the frame to the right and recedes in the distance before a fade. Another shot that is held, with a similar calm quality, is the shot of the river as the bag containing Holly's (Sissy Spacek) dog floats down stream (0:15:09). The bag containing the body of the dog is fairly central in the frame, against the shadow from the bridge above that bisects the frame laterally. Clearly, the formal composition and still quality is counterpoint to the mood of the action. Images that include bright or strongly coloured sky, and most commonly the landscape beneath the horizon, are another prominent visual motif in the film. Hence, a shot of the otherwise empty landscape featuring the almost completed billboard against the sky, which is being painted by Holly's father (Warren Oates), has strong contrast and asymmetry, and minimal movement in the image (0:18:03). Other instances that are similar to these shots of the road, the river and the sky include; the magic hour shot of the river immediately following the sepia sequence, with the background out of focus (0:35:10), a shot of the landscape, with the frame divided laterally by the horizon, with the bottom corner comprising the land and the car appearing and approaching (0:39:17), a shot of the landscape containing Cato's isolated house, and the sky taking up the top portion of the image (0:42:30), and another shot of the sky in the top third of the frame and the earthy landscape filling the remainder of the frame, and with Kit and Holly fairly central in the image (0:42:50), but which is repeated with their respective individual figures central. Several further shots of the landscape follow, which are also emphasised by dialogue references during each shot. A shot of an empty landscape, filling two thirds of the frame, into which the car appears crossing from the right edge of the frame, coincides with reference to 'that region known as the great plains' (1:00:23). A shot of another landscape, with telephone poles and lines diagonally crossing the frame which the car follows (1:01:04), has Holly speak the words; 'through desert and mesa, across endless miles of open range, we made our headlong way, steering by the telephone lines towards the mountains of Montana'. This shot dissolves to a shot of a landscape with mountains on the horizon (1:01:15), and this dissolves to another landscape shot near sunset, with the sky filling the top half of the frame, into which the car appears entering the frame at the right and crossing directly to the left (1:01:18). After one more shot, another dissolve to a landscape shot has the road and vanishing point central in the frame with the car receding toward the horizon, but this is a crane shot with the camera rising up as the car moves into the distance (1:01:27).

There follow several more shots in the magic hour with strikingly coloured sunset shots of the sky. A shot of the landscape, with Kit and Holly in long shot and the burnished pinkish sky filling over half the frame (1:01:58), cuts to a panning shot of the landscape and horizon that pans left to include Kit in silhouette seen from behind in full shot with a yellowish sunset in the distance (1:02:34). Two shots later there is a shot of the orangey sky filling almost the entire frame, with the mountains on the horizon at the foot of the frame (1:02:38), and there follows another shot with Kit in silhouette in long shot, and an orange moon in the blue sky, with the sky taking up over half the frame (1:02:52). The image of Kit in silhouette against the sunset notably features in the promotional materials for the film.

There are still further landscape shots that maintain this motif, as well as a shot of the sky that concludes the film. A shot of the landscape with a train crossing the frame (1:03:55), from right to left, across the middle of the frame, coincides with another dialogue reference by Holly to seeing a train 'in the distance'. Another landscape shot at sunset follows, with mountains on the horizon, featuring the car entering the bottom corner of frame right and moving to the centre of the frame, with dust thrown up behind it (1:07:04). A later shot features the car in silhouette at sunset, crossing the frame from right to left along the horizon, which delineates the bottom quarter of the frame (1:10:16). The car disappears below the silhouette of the landscape. The final shot in the film reprises the sunset motif, but with an aerial shot above the clouds, with the setting orange sun on the horizon (1:26:50). Besides the persistent use of composed shots of the landscape and sky, particularly sunset or magic hour shots, there are other forms of formally composed shots in the film. One kind is the use of frame within frame shots, as also used in *Bonnie and Clyde* in the first successful bank robbery. These include an interior shot in Cato's house that has the window frame central in the shot, so the brighter landscape and sky beyond is framed within the frame (0:45:24). Similar to this is a shot from inside Cato's barn, with the open door central in the frame and framing a vertical band of sky and landscape, and Kit carrying Cato's body in silhouette (0:49:16). One further kind of formally composed shot is equivalent to another aesthetic characteristic of *Bonnie and Clyde*, the shots of characters heads isolated against a black background in that film. In *Badlands* a single shot sequence features Kit and Holly dancing centrally in the frame, to the sound of a Nat King Cole song, with them enveloped by darkness and the ground beneath them only visible towards the end of the shot (1:08:53).

Sepia sequences

As I previously mentioned *Badlands* features two sepia sequences, including a sequence of still stereopticon images, which are similar to the opening credits in *Bonnie and Clyde.* The stereopticon images begin with an image including the surrounding frame and its written description, but the camera zooms in so the image alone fills the screen (0:34:30). There follow further sepia still images, and one tinted colour portrait, and zoom in is used for one further image. The other sepia sequence approximates newsreel footage of the hunt for Kit and Holly, narrated by Holly (0:51:01). This features apparent scratch marks and lines on the image to suggest its archive status. This is analogous to the use of authenticating sounds in the *Bonnie and Clyde* credits, the artefactual crackle of the record and click of the projector.

Graphic match

I referred above to the graphic match shot of the road with bins on either side, early in the film. The initial shot of the road is repeated from a few minutes earlier, but with the added inclusion of Kit central in the frame. A dissolve to further down the street then retains Kit, and one bin in the same position on the bottom right hand edge of the frame, in a clear graphic match (0:03:34). Another instance of a graphic match is combined with a lelouche shot, and again echoes the use of graphic match shots by Ozu. An interior shot of Holly at a table is followed immediately by a shot of Kit at the same table, with the camera moved around 180 degrees (0:53:12 and 0:53:17). At the foot of the frame is an out of focus table arrangement, which overlaps Holly's hand and the glass she is holding. She is rubbing the rim of the glass to make a tone, so this sound also draws attention to this part of the image. The cut to Kit features the same object as a lelouche at the foot of the frame, and Kit rings a bell which he replaces on the table, his hand passing behind the out of focus object. Kit speaks, and as he finishes raises his eyes directly towards the camera to suggest direct address. These uses of graphic match are almost subliminal but are emphasised by other formal means.

Allusions to *Bonnie and Clyde*

Badlands self-consciously imitates the subject matter of *Bonnie and Clyde* as well as its aestheticized approach to genre. Particular similarities of the plot include the initial conversation between Kit and Holly, in which he asks her to take a walk with him (0:04:20). A later passing shot of Holly's reflection, seen past her hair, with the ground out of focus behind the mirror, is also reminiscent of the opening sequence with Bonnie in *Bonnie and Clyde* that features a shot of her reflection past her (0:35:55). Finally, a mobile shot from the front of the car, with the ground lit up by headlights, is similar to the succession of mobile shots during the dawn ambush in *Bonnie and Clyde* (1:07:20)

Passing shots, overlaps and lelouches

Badlands features frequent use of lelouches and other out of focus techniques, particularly early on in the film. The lelouches are predominantly shots including out of focus foliage in the immediate foreground which overlap figures or other elements in the background. Additionally, I have already referred to the use of a lelouche in the graphic match shots of Holly and Kit at the table (0:53:12). There are also passing shots, similar to those used in *Bonnie and Clyde* that I will consider in more detail. Furthermore, there are overlaps shots, with some of these similar to the lelouches but including objects that are in focus in the immediate foreground obscuring the characters. Hence, overlapping shots of cars passing in front of the camera during a tracking shot of Kit and Holly walking down the sidewalk occur in their initial walk into town (0:09:12 and 0:09:33). Similarly, as Kit and Holly walk along the riverbank the camera passes behind a bush, which is partially in focus (0:13:40).

Lelouches are more frequent, beginning with a shot of weeds in the garden, with the closest leaves out of focus, when Holly throws away her pet fish (0:11:50). Lelouches featuring reeds, out of focus in the foreground in a medium shot of Holly, occur as her father shoots her dog (0:14:47). Another shot of a plant in extreme close up features in a sequence of shots of nature (0:30:14). Likewise, another lelouche with foliage out of focus obscuring a deer functions as a point of view shot for Holly (0:33:52). A similar shot past out of focus foliage is used for a shot of Kit (0:34:24), and yet another when Kit is looking out for the bounty hunters having heard their approach (0:36:20). Finally, the closing shot of this scene features a lelouche with out of focus foliage central in the frame as Holly walks away in medium shot (0:38:32).

In addition to these different types of overlap shots, including the lelouches, there are a few instances of passing shots that are marked within the film. As well as the shot of

Holly's reflection seen past her hair, there are two passing shots of Holly's father, as he lies dying. The first features a close up of his head as Holly reaches out to him, and the shot has Holly slightly out of focus filling the left hand side of the frame in the immediate foreground (0:20:55). The second is a shot of his body into which Kit's arm intrudes, to check the father's pulse (0:22:00).

Badlands adopts various specific aesthetic characteristics from *Bonnie and Clyde*, as well as sharing narrative similarities and including allusions to the earlier film. Particularly with its emphasis on beautiful compositions, analogous to the homecoming, wheat field and hobo camp sequences in *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Badlands* continues the innovation of aestheticized genre films.

Further examples of aestheticized Hollywood genre films

In addition to the above films that seem to clearly adopt the innovations of *Bonnie and Clyde*, or imitate the aestheticization of that film, there are further examples of films from the Hollywood Renaissance that share certain aesthetic characteristics but seem less directly influenced by *Bonnie and Clyde*. For instance, *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* makes use of lelouches, jump cuts, soft focus effects and a final freeze frame. Whilst this film features Michael Pollard as well as Robert Redford's self-mythologizing eponymous co-protagonist, it is generically distinct from *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, the use of similar aesthetic devices to those of *Bonnie and Clyde*, in this case applied to aestheticize its motorcycle racing subject matter, makes *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* an example of an aestheticized 'sports' film. Similarly, *Junior Bonner* (1972) uses slow motion to aestheticize the rodeo.

I have not discussed in detail the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde* upon the films of Sam Peckinpah. This is primarily because Stephen Prince has considered this issue at length, as I have previously mentioned. Also, the principle shared aesthetic characteristic between several of his films and *Bonnie and Clyde* is the use of slow motion for scenes of violence, or at least the effects of violence. Prince does address the differences between the uses of slow motion in the films of Peckinpah, Penn and Kurosawa, both in terms of filmmaking practices such as multiple camera set-ups and in terms of the aesthetic characteristics of such scenes in their films. I have referred to the shift within criticism of later films between reviews referring to *Bonnie and Clyde* to connote stylised or graphic violence whereas later reviews use *The Wild Bunch* more frequently in this respect. I have also suggested within this thesis that the inclusion of aestheticized violence is simply one element of the more general aestheticization in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and hence I have been considering films that share other aesthetic characteristics beside this with *Bonnie and Clyde.*

There are also further examples of revisionist genre films, primarily Westerns and Gangster films, such as *Tell them Willie Boy is Here*, *Little Big Man*, *Bad Company* and *The Getaway* that share specific aesthetic characteristics with *Bonnie and Clyde* or a similar approach to their generic subject matter. However these are less convincing as examples of the direct influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and rather evidence the wider adoption of both filmmaking practices and specific aesthetic characteristics within the Hollywood Renaissance. I have stressed that the notion of innovation does not require *Bonnie and Clyde* to be entirely novel, and I have discussed how it adopts aesthetic characteristics from the French New Wave and 'offbeat' cinema, but similarly the significance of *Bonnie and Clyde* is not bound to its direct influence on such films as these. Rather the success of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and later of *The Graduate*, *Easy Rider* and other films from the Hollywood Renaissance all contributed to the wider adoption of specific aesthetic characteristics and filmmaking practices in later films. In the cases of *Bad Company* and *Little Big Man* there is another direct link with *Bonnie and Clyde*, since they are directed respectively by one of the writers of *Bonnie and Clyde* and by Arthur Penn. Furthermore, several generically similar films share a graphic treatment of violence with *Bonnie and Clyde*, such as *Dillinger*, *Bloody Mama* and *Pretty Poison*, but these films are better understood as much in relation to the introduction of the Ratings system as in connection with the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and any such influence is not simply aesthetic. A wider survey of films, and a different thesis, might consider the significance of *Bonnie and Clyde* in relation to these other films and shifts within

Hollywood filmmaking. Instead I have analysed those films that most clearly suggest the influence of *Bonnie and Clyde*, in respect of their shared aesthetic characteristics, and other shared elements such as creative personnel, generic qualities and marketing approaches.

Films with titles apparently inspired by *Bonnie and Clyde*

One final clear indication of imitation, of films inspired in some way by *Bonnie and Clyde*, is the continuing production of films about the protagonists, or making an analogy between another outlaw couple and the more familiar characters. These films are presumably primarily generic descendents of *Bonnie and Clyde*, rather than films that adopt its aesthetic innovations. Hence I will not address the extent to which these films imitate *Bonnie and Clyde*, or counter its romanticization of the protagonists.

Teenage Bonnie and Klepto Clyde (1993)
Bonnie and Clyde: The True Story (1992, Television movie)
Bonnie and Clyde Italian Style (1982)
The Other Side of Bonnie and Clyde also known as *Bonnie and Clyde: Myth or Madness* (1968, an exploitation documentary intended to cash in on the controversy around *Bonnie and Clyde*)
A & E Biography: Bonnie and Clyde (2000, Television movie)
Bonnie vs. Clyde (1998)
Miskolc Bonnie es Clyde (2004, 'The Hungarian Bonnie and Clyde')
Bonnie, Clyde na glaunam Koldvom (1998, Croatian documentary produced on Video)

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Recognition of aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* and conclusions

Although only a few critics explicitly recognized innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* upon its initial release, over time more critics came to view the film in terms of synonyms for an innovative status, 'landmark', 'watershed', 'coming of age' and so on, or as canonical, a 'classic'. My analysis of the contemporary reviews and retrospective reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* makes it clear that certain tropes were significant in the reviews that valorised the film, as well as an emphasis upon an expressive approach to film rather than a mimetic approach. More specifically the lyrical analogy and tropes of sophistication or complexity were frequently collocated with recognition of innovation, whilst the trope of tragedy was utilised by several of the accounts that positioned the film as canonical. However, in addition other critics related the innovation to specific aspects of the film, particularly the treatment or representation of violence, and also related to this the shifts of mood or tone in the film. I will now draw some conclusions about which aspects of the film the critics explicitly designated as innovative, and how these relate to the aesthetic characteristics of *Bonnie and Clyde.* I will also address the elements of the film that the critics predominantly elided, or solely referenced implicitly or in terms of general or non-specific observations about the film.

Not only retrospective accounts of the film emphasised the climactic ambush scene and its use of slow motion. This scene, and the use of the device, was probably the element most referenced in the contemporary reviews, and remained emphasised in retrospective accounts. Additionally, as I have mentioned in considering the retrospective references to *Bonnie and Clyde* in reviews of other films, the slow motion violence was consistently the primary connotation for the film, as well as being seen as an influence upon later films. Even amongst those critics who denied *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovative or artistic status, such as John Simon or Stanley Kauffmann, the poeticised or 'balletic' final scene was still assumed to be significant. Clearly much of the contestation around the film was focused upon its treatment of violence, and possible glamorisation of its protagonists.

However, I would argue that the aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* was not restricted to its aestheticized violence, and furthermore that the recognition of innovation applied to other aesthetic characteristics of the film that can be conceived as elements of aestheticization.

Amongst the contemporary reviews that explicitly recognized the innovative status of the film, the treatment of violence is invariably addressed, but this is not necessarily recognized as the film's only innovation. For instance, Alexander Walker's account, which I have discussed in detail in my discourse analysis of specific contemporary reviews, associates innovation with the violence, mood shifts and look of the film. Notably Walker does not use the analogy with poetry, but rather values the film in relation to an analogy with painting. Similarly, John Coleman's *New Statesmen* review, also discussed in the discourse analysis, also associates the film with painting, stressing the cinematography as well as the climactic violence in his valorisation of the film. The shifts of tone are also associated with the film's innovation by other contemporary critics who explicitly recognized innovation, or at least originality, and considered the film by analogy with poetry. Some of these critics characterized these shifts by association with the French New Wave, but this did not serve to invalidate their original quality for a Hollywood film.

It is amongst the retrospective critical accounts of the film that the expressive approach and analogy with poetry were more crucial to recognizing aesthetic innovation in the film. The trope of poetry, or sometimes more specifically the ballad, enabled retrospective critics to evaluate the shifts in tone, and overall tonal organisation or structure of the film positively, rather than characterizing the shifts as inconsistency. As well as this, the tropes of complexity and sophistication were mobilised to characterize the tonal organisation of the film, and explicitly distinguish *Bonnie and Clyde* from either conventional Hollywood or Gangster films.

Besides the mood shifts and aestheticized violence, there were a host of aesthetic characteristics that I identified as significant in my analysis of the film. I will now consider the extent to which these were addressed in the film's reception, either explicitly or implicitly. I noted the self-conscious approach to history in *Bonnie and Clyde*, exemplified and established by the opening archive snaps. These were also mentioned by a variety of reviews, although not necessarily fully elaborated in terms of the film's style and treatment of history. Furthermore, this self-conscious approach also relates significantly to the tropes of anachronism and inauthenticity mobilised by Crowther and other detractors of the film. Further elements that relate to the influence of the French New Wave on *Bonnie and Clyde* include the use of inserts and jump cuts. These were not addressed explicitly in reviews of the film, except in so far as the reference to mood shifts encompass the inserts, and Crowther's characterisation of the 'helter skelter' construction of the film might be associated with either. Still more aesthetic characteristics that relate to the deviation from Classical Hollywood conventions by *Bonnie and Clyde*, and devices that can be associated with disjunctive shots, include the overt defamiliarised shots, zoom and rack focus shots, whip pan and hand held camera sequences, as well as the self-conscious framing and inclusion of glare in certain images. Again, these were predominantly elided by the critics, with only more generalised characterizations, such as Andrew Sarris' reservations about the 'oscillation' between close ups and long shots possibly related, or the underdeveloped praise for the film's alluring or 'dazzling' cinematography. That the latter characterization was mostly confined to the reviews that considered the film by analogy with painting, particularly realist painting, suggests that various of the aesthetic characteristics of the film exceeded articulation by contemporary critics but might have contributed to the general recognition of artistic qualities or quality in the film.

In connection with the recognition of beautiful images or painterly qualities in *Bonnie and Clyde*, the formal compositions and certain aestheticized scenes and shots were considered by several critics. This was particularly salient for those considering the film by analogy with painting or poetry, some of whom variously referenced the Parker family picnic or hobo encampment scenes in terms of beauty or poetic resonance. These scenes are also examples of aesthetic characteristics of the film that relate to the aestheticization of experience – the episodic construction of the narrative and nostalgic reconstruction of the Depression era. They also potentially relate to the shifts of mood that I have already elaborated.

Finally, in summarising the aesthetic characteristics of the film and relating these to its critical reception, the diversity of styles and stylised characterizations of the protagonists are also relevant. The diversity of style was addressed by critics of the film primarily in terms of inconsistency or incongruity, often in connection with the slapstick or Mack Sennett-like sequences. The stylised characterisation was similarly addressed mainly by the derogatory critics, commonly in relation to the characterization of Beatty or Dunaway's performance as Clyde or Bonnie as anachronistic. However, Pauline Kael notably praised the film in association with the 'kind of genius' in Beatty's 'bad' actor's timing, valorising his mannered performance in particular.

I suggested previously that the recognition of aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* extended beyond consideration of the aestheticized violence of the climax and included other elements that constituted aestheticization. However, in outlining this selection of aesthetic characteristics of the film I have stressed that the contemporary critics did not for the most part address them, or at least individually and specifically. Despite this I would like to argue in conclusion that in their general characterizations of the film, particularly as poetry, the contemporary critics are engaging with the aestheticization of *Bonnie and Clyde*. However, they lack an available vocabulary to fully articulate a characterization of the film as aestheticized. The key point to stress in support of this argument is the critics' attention to the aestheticized violence and mood shifts of the film that they nonetheless commonly accept as representative for the film as a whole, unless they evaluate the film as inconsistent. Instead analogy provides the primary available critical practice to justify valorisation of the film, whether the analogy with poetry or painting, or less marked the analogy with the French New Wave.

This purported inadequacy of the available critical practices and vocabulary needs to be contextualised in relation to the function as well as practices of review criticism. Reviews ultimately focus upon the potential appeal of the film in question rather than its distinctive aesthetic characteristics. Hence, for example, whilst the climactic scene is frequently addressed by contemporary reviews, albeit not always explicitly described in relation to 'slow motion' imagery, none of the reviews analysed mention the canted shots that feature in this sequence. Similarly, even amongst those reviews that reference the use of slow motion in the film, only one retrospective account also mentions the slow motion in the picnic scene.[286] However, these elided elements can clearly be understood as contributing to the characterization of the film's poetry or formal organisation. The accumulation of aestheticized elements in the film, whether these are marked characteristics that deviate from Hollywood conventions or qualities that are constituted by a combination of conventional devices – the playful approach to history and beautified imagery – are generally summarised by the critics in vague terms, as the ballad structure, the mythologisation of Bonnie and Clyde and so on. Given the practices and conventions of review criticism that foreground identifying salient or significant aspects of the film and relating these to the overall interpretation of the film,[287] it is unsurprising, that the critics do not reference stylistic devices such as the canted shots or slow motion. Critics generally elide specific details where these do not have significance to their interpretation and evaluation of *Bonnie and Clyde* (or Bonnie and Clyde in the case of the mimetic and moral approaches).

Saliency is also a key factor to explain the contemporary critics' focus upon the stylised violence in *Bonnie and Clyde*. The representation of violence in the news media and the introduction of a ratings system by Hollywood both made the violence of *Bonnie and Clyde* even more significant at the time. Critics and respondents to the Movie Mailbag likewise also stress the significance of the depiction of the film's protagonists in relation to current concerns and shifts in values, and implicitly youth or 'counter culture' values. The varied significance of the film to different critics has been commonly reduced to generational differences in the various narrativizations of the contestation around *Bonnie*

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[286] F.A. Macklin 'Bonnie and Clyde: Beyond violence to tragedy' *Film Heritage* vol. 3 no.2 Winter 67-8, pp7-21.

[287] See David Bordwell *Making Meaning*, pp32-33, on critics' selection of salient elements, and critical practices of evaluation and interpretation using template, prototypical and procedural schemata.

and Clyde that I have discussed elsewhere. This generational distinction clearly relates to this perceived 'counter culture' tone to the film.

However, as I have already indicated, the critics who recognized innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* did not simply emphasise the aestheticization of violence. Beside the recognition of wider aestheticization inherent in the analogy with poetry mobilised by several of these critics, the reference by other critics to the influence on *Bonnie and Clyde* from the French New Wave, or particular European Art films and film makers also clearly connotes the overt stylisation of the film. The characterization of the film as 'off beat' by a few critics makes a similar point.[288] It is relevant that Glenn Man and Gerald Mast, as well as others, have retrospectively identified *Bonnie and Clyde* as significant in the Hollywood Renaissance or New Hollywood adoption of Art cinema, specifically French New Wave, cinematic techniques and approaches. Whilst to some critics such as Stephen Prince the film's key innovation is its distinctive representation of violence, to others it marks a broader shift in Hollywood film style.[289]

To conclude, *Bonnie and Clyde*'s aesthetic innovation is specific to its context of production as a Hollywood genre film. It makes use of various techniques previously found in television production and the French New Wave, but it combines these with traditional elements. I have hinted at several points in the thesis that the influence of European Art cinema upon *Bonnie and Clyde* is indirect, mediated by the films that I have characterised as 'off beat', particularly the British films of the mid 1960s. Various films such as those of Richard Lester adopted and innovated techniques and devices similar to those of the New Wave, but most often accommodated by comedy. Specifically, in *Bonnie and Clyde* these self-conscious or overt stylistic devices are combined with an episodic approach to a conventional generic narrative, featuring 'off beat' or 'cool' characters more akin to the protagonists of a Godard or Truffaut film but functioning in the context as tragic gangster protagonists. The emphasis upon the shifts of tone in the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, and particularly the problematization of the comedy in the film by critics such as Crowther, relate to the blend of 'off beat' film and Hollywood Gangster film. That this blend was not fully adopted by many later Hollywood films, apart from clear imitations of *Bonnie and Clyde* such as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, does not invalidate my suggestion that it constitutes the aesthetic innovation of *Bonnie and Clyde*. Rather, whilst *Bonnie and Clyde*'s innovation was its more general aestheticization, its lasting influence upon Hollywood was in enabling more specific aestheticization in genre films, encouraging critics to consider Hollywood films in the same light as European Art films, and initiating the self-conscious transformation of genre, narrative and character in the Hollywood Renaissance.

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[288] Although I have not analysed it in detail the review in *The Daily Cinema* from 8/9/1967, presumably by Margaret Hinxman since she was the editor and it is attributed to M.H., refers to the film as an "Outstanding off-beat trend setter with enormous box-office potential." Whilst he does not use the term 'off beat', Tom Milne in his *Observer* review 10/9/1967, refers to it as the 'sharpest, swingingest' example of recent film, which I take to connote a connection to British off beat films. *Variety* 13/12/1967 also related British 'off beat' films to the opening in Hollywood for experimentation in *Bonnie and Clyde*, whilst Ronald Gold in *Variety* 10/5/1967 had asked "Why can't we make the same kind of picture here?" upon the success of "offbeat-imports".

[289] Peter Kramer in his 'Post-classical Hollywood' does question such a straightforward periodisation of Hollywood, and underlying this a simplistic conception of innovation in Hollywood. However, he does not address the adoption of specific techniques and devices within specific films in this article. It is worth mentioning that there were undoubtedly numerous influential factors contributing to the perceived shifts in film style in Hollywood in the late 1960s and early 1970s, pp175, 177.

Richard Maltby in discussing the notion of a New Hollywood argues that it can be primarily attributed to the influx of young production heads in the studios during the period 1966 to 1973. He associates this with "[w]hat Arthur Krim called 'the new wave of picture making – daring, innovative, imaginative' that the majors sponsored in 1969 'when it appeared that all traditional picture making was outmoded and audiences – mainly youthful – were ready to support only the off beat'."[290] I think the 'off beat' influence on Hollywood is significant in relation to films such as *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Easy Rider*, but that the exemplary status of *Bonnie and Clyde* as an innovative film cannot be entirely explained in relation to this. Although I have stressed the relevance of contemporary and retrospective recognition of aesthetic innovation in *Bonnie and Clyde* by critics, I wish to finally qualify this. Coinciding with a time of significant social change in America, and economic and structural turmoil in Hollywood, the status of

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[290] Richard Maltby *Hollywood Cinema* 2nd Edition (Blackwells, Oxford, 2003), pp175, 176, cites this quote that he sources from Tino Balio *United Artists: The company that changed the film industry* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1987) who in turn cites Krim to John Beckett, February 12 1971. Krim was one of the heads of United Artists from 1951 onwards.

Bonnie and Clyde as an innovative film can be partially attributed to the currency of 'innovation' for describing or accounting for some of the changes in Hollywood film at the time. The innovative quality of the film, and the contestation around it, must be contextualised in terms of the historical moment at which it was initially received. However, whilst *Bonnie and Clyde* was not the first Hollywood film to adopt stylistic devices and techniques from the European Art Cinema (consider *Mickey One* or *Sunrise* (1927) for example), its box office and critical success mark it as innovative in this respect according to my definition of innovation. Neither *Bonnie and Clyde*, nor *The Graduate* or *Easy Rider* say, was entirely novel in Hollywood. Yet whilst they adopted elements from earlier films and filmmaking, whether aesthetic or generic characteristics, their unprecedented success with these characteristics and the wide-ranging recognition that they were novel or distinctive amongst Hollywood films cemented their innovative status. Furthermore, their ongoing influence upon the nascent New Hollywood, or at least the shifting American cinema, has become undeniable. Even though *Bonnie and Clyde* was most consistently recognized as influential in terms of the aestheticization of violence or in generic terms, contributing to a cycle of rural gangster or couple-on-the-run films, at least some critics and industry commentators recognized its wider influence. Whilst Hollywood films did not comprehensively adopt the consistently aestheticized approach of *Bonnie and Clyde*, numerous Hollywood genre films were nonetheless transformed by the adoption of an aestheticized approach to their genre, an expressive approach that could no longer be ignored by critics, studios or filmmakers.

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Bande A Part (1964, Godard)

Battleship Potemkin (1925, Eisenstein)

The Big Bounce (1969, March)

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Bloody Mama (1970, Corman)

Blow Up (1966, Antonioni)

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Brute Force (1947, Dassin)

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969, Hill)

Cat Ballou (1965, Silverstein)

The Chase (1966, Penn)

Un Chien Andalou (1928, Bunuel)

Citizen Kane (1941, Welles)

A Clockwork Orange (1971, Kubrick)

Cool Hand Luke (1967, Rosenberg)

Crash (1996, Cronenberg)

Cremaster 1 (1995, Barney)

Days of Heaven (1978, Malick)

Dillinger (1973, Milius)

The Dirty Dozen (1967, Aldrich)

Dogme#1: Festen (1998, Vinterberg)

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Downhill Racer (1969, Ritchie)

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8 mm (1999, Schumacher)

Exterminating Angel (1962, Bunuel)

Festen [Dogme#1] (1998, Vinterberg)

Five Easy Pieces (1970, Rafelson)

Footlight Parade (1934, Bacon)

For a Few Dollars More (1966, Leone)

400 Blows (1959, Truffaut)

The French Connection (1971, Friedkin)

The Getaway (1972, Peckinpah)

The Godfather (1972, Coppola)

Gold Diggers of 1933 (1933, Le Roy)

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The Graduate (1967, Nichols)

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Gummo (1997, Korine)

Hard Day's Night (1964, Lester)

Harold and Maude (1971, Ashby)

The Honeymoon Killers (69, Kastle)

Hud (1963, Ritt)

The Idiots [Dogme#2](1998, von Trier)

In Cold Blood (1967, Brooks)

I never sang for my father (1970, Cates)

Joe (1970, Avildsen)

Jules et Jim (1962, Truffaut)

Junior Bonner (1972, Peckinpah)

Killers Three (1968, Kessler)

The King is Alive (2000, Levring)

Kiss the Girls (1997, Fleder)

The Knack (1965, Lester)

Last Year at Marienbad (1961, Resnais)

The Left-handed Gun (1958, Penn)

The Life and Time of Judge Roy Bean (1972, Huston)

Little Big Man (1970, Penn)

Little Caesar (1931, Le Roy)

Little Fauss and Big Halsy (1970, Furie)

Little Murders (1971, Arkin)

Lotna (1959,Wajda)

Love Story (1970, Hiller)

McCabe and Mrs Miller (1971, Altman)

A Man and a Woman (1966, Lelouch)

A Man For All Seasons (1966, Zinnemann)

Mary Poppins (1964, Stevenson)

Le Mepris (1963, Godard)

Mickey One (1965, Penn)

Midnight Cowboy (1969, Schlesinger)

The Miracle (1948, Rossellini)

The Miracle Worker (1962, Penn)

Miskolc Bonnie es Clyde (2004, Deak, 'The Hungarian Bonnie and Clyde')

Morgan! A suitable case for treatment (1966, Reisz)

Natural Born Killers (1994, Stone)

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Ohayo (1959,Ozu)

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Patton (1970, Schaffner)

Pierrot le Fou (1968, Godard)

Places in the Heart (1984, Benton)

Pocket Money (1972, Rosenberg)

Point Blank (1967, Boorman)

Pretty Poison (1968, Black)

Public Enemy (1931, Wellman)

Rebel Without a Cause (1955, Ray)

Saving Private Ryan (1998, Spielberg)

Scarface (1932, Hawks)

Se7en (1995, Fincher)

Seven Samurai (1954, Kurosawa)

Sheena (1984, Guillermin)

Shoe Shine (1946, De Sica)

Shoot the Piano Player (1960, Truffaut)

Silence of the Lambs (1990, Demme)

Soldier Blue (1970, Nelson)

The Sound of Music (1965, Wise)

The Straw Dogs (1971, Peckinpah)

The St Valentine's Day Massacre (1967, Corman)

Sunrise – A song for two humans (1927, Murnau)

Superman (1978, Donner)

Teenage Bonnie and Klepto Clyde (1993, Shepphird)

Tell them Willie Boy is Here (1969, Polonsky)

There was a crooked man (1970, Mankiewicz)

They Live By Night (1948, Ray)

The Thomas Crown Affair (1968, Jewison)

Thoroughly Modern Millie (1967, Hill)

To Sir, With Love (1967, Clavell)

Toy Story (1995, Lasseter)

2001: A Space Odyssey (1968, Kubrick)

Wandering Willies (1926, Del Lord)

White Heat (1949, Walsh)

The Wild Bunch (1969, Peckinpah)

The Wild One (1953, Benedek)

Written in the Wind (1956, Sirk)

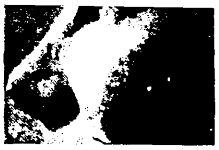
I hope someone will write a history about the influence of the French *film noir* since the Thirties. It's a tantalising, fertile subject, and has implications worth developing at book length. The *film noir* of Carné and Duvivier was usually about a doom-laden pair of lovers: he was often a gangster or gun-runner, she was beautiful and loyal. In some ill-defined way they represented social protest, at a time when protest either at political injustice or at the ugliness of the urban scene seemed to have no practical outlet. The stress was on sentiment and atmosphere: the private life, in a damp and seedy world near its end—an image, it was thought, for French Romanticism at its last gasp. Since then, in fact, French Romanticism has gasped on for three decades and looks like outliving us all. The influence of the *film noir* has been potent, subterranean, hard to pin down. But it did surface again in the Polish cinema and, more wryly, in the work of Jean-Luc Godard. Now the American director, Arthur Penn, has taken these latest manifestations and adapted them to the Mid West in *Bonnie and Clyde* (Warner).

It's a gangster movie set in the early Thirties, very different from the fast-moving, deliberately brutal gangster series of that time. As we see them, Bonnie (Faye Dunaway) is a lively, dissatisfied waitress attracted by the apparent freedom of Clyde Berrow (Warren Beatty in the Gabin/Belmondo role), a rather shifty, amiable young man who holds up shops and small banks. Both accept each other as types—Clyde is able to shame Bonnie by guessing her history after only a brief meeting—and Penn accepts them at their own evaluation, as the heroes of a doggerel ballad which Bonnie sends to a local newspaper. We learn little about their motives, and what we do learn is unsatisfactory. Clyde turns out to be impotent, and it's implied that his gun-play is a substitute for potency, but this well-worn notion is used as a sop to our questioning and left unexplored. They rob and they kill, and you couldn't imagine a more charming and distinguished couple. In fact, the actual Bonnie and Clyde were as gravely ill as the Moors murderers.

The time is the Depression. It's suggested that Clyde might be motivated by his social conditions, might even be standing up for the rights of the dispossessed farmers. But Clyde kills without remorse. The gang's conduct is never compared to a fuller, more adult way of life. They live in isolation, driving from State to State through a rural wilderness, resting at lonely houses, carrying out their crimes blunderingly in small towns. Ostracised, they bolster their confidence by mutual admiration, forever taking photographs of each other. Shopkeepers and bank clerks are viewed with contempt: only the police are felt to be looming presences, unseen stalkers who will fill these lovely, plumed creatures with bullets. Some of the gang end up looking like pillar-boxes, yet their deaths are as decorative as the massacres in Wajda's *Lotna*.

These reservations are serious. Godard at least stands back and comments on his fantasies, and his refractions hardly give a sense of life being copied literally. *Bonnie and Clyde* is a historical re-creation and could, misleadingly, be taken as a document. Yet it's admirably made, a work of some art. Like Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, it reopens the old, nagging question of how we should respond to a style which is both powerful and insidious; and it makes a nice contrast to another new offering, *To Sir, With Love* (Astoria), which is mature and likable in most of its intentions, but lacks force because it's nondescript in craft. *Bonnie and Clyde* is beautifully composed, with a clarity of colour and line that recalls the realist paintings of Winslow Homer. The scrubby cornfields, the gnarled spectral faces, the Roosevelt posters, the old cars, make for a haunting ambience. Penn has certainly managed to create the kind of elegiac ballad that the real Bonnie and Clyde might have wanted, but without self-indulgence. The elegiac is sharpened by the bizarre: by oddities like the inexplicable, effective scene of the snoring sleeper, or the dream-like picnic sequence among desolate sand-dunes, in which Bonnie brings Clyde to meet her mother. And Penn becomes curious about human nature when he shifts his attention to the lesser members of the gang: there's an acute portrait of Clyde's sister-in-law, a genteel preacher's daughter unwillingly drawn into the vortex, who runs screaming through the streets at her first shoot-up, and of squelchy-faced C. W. Moss (Michael Pollard), whose father shouts at him, not for having become a killer, but for having

Why Bonnie and Clyde are more dangerous dead than alive



The Daily Mail 5/10/1967 Anne Scott James

WILLOW TREES dipping their graceful branches in the river. Faraway woods of a misty blue like a Renoir landscape.

Voluptuous hills rounded like breasts, with white roads winding through the valleys.

A girl in black running through a shoulder-high field of golden maize. A tribe of farmers with Biblical faces bringing their harvest home. A lovely face in a 'thirties beret. A slender waist in a 'thirties suit.

A dead girl wan as Ophelia, her white face halo'd by her yellow hair. The purple bruises on an old man's body. Warren Beatty's white teeth.

Bonnie and Clyde, the film which is packing the cinemas and which the young are claiming as the one true revelation of their sorrows, is to me a photographer's film, and as such it's a beauty

But I'm depressed that the young are identifying so closely with the story, for the message is morbid punk.

Old-time MELODRAMA

To me this tale of a boy and girl who take up armed robbery to impress each other, and who kill for kicks, is as celluloid as any of the old-time Hollywood melodramas.

Dietrich in *Song of Songs* . . . Bette Davis in *Dark Victory* . . . Joan Crawford in *A Woman's Face*. Years ago, holding hands in the one-and-sixpennies, our hearts throbbed a little and we shed a tear or two as our favourite film stars, in expensive toilettes, went through the motions of emotion.

But we never took these plastic stories seriously. We were gripped for two hours in the cinema, but shrugged our excitement off as we stopped for coffee going home.

Bonnie and Clyde, on the other hand, is getting serious emotional acclaim. To the young it's not only a film, it's a manifesto. The trouble with the young today is that they don't know rubbish when they see it.

Why do I think it's rubbish and why are young people so moved by it?

I think it's rubbish because the crimes nor the motives are credible, which alone could raise the film from melodrama to tragedy. It is neither moral nor immoral nor even (currently a word of high praise) a-moral. It is simply violent.

No viable reason is given for this handsome and well-dressed couple turning to crime and behaving like beasts.

True, Bonnie was bored with her job and Clyde had sexual difficulties. But Bonnie had a loving family and could probably have bettered herself, and Clyde's temporary impotence (as an episode late in the film makes clear) was nothing that a competent marriage guidance counsellor couldn't have fixed in a single visit.

And if, as I did, you find the motives shallow, then the violence which follows leaves you cold.

Blood flows, bodies crumple, old men clutch their vitals and slump into the gutter.

Cars crash, windows shatter, bullets fly from revolvers, machine-guns, rifles.

Two hours' blood-and-thunder in a pretty package. No more moving than a James Bond.

Personally, at least three shootings before the grand finale I was yawning, and longed for the highly incompetent cops to round up the young criminals and clap them in the cooler.

As you see, it was not my film. But so many young people have taken it so seriously that I mustn't be callous about it. Indeed, I don't *feel* callous—I feel depressed.

I believe that *Bonnie and Clyde* offers what the gurus and the Flower People and their pedlars offer—a way of opting out of responsibility, a comfy denial of the difficulties of free will.

The gurus, who have captured the great prize of the Beatles, offer detachment, hallucination, self-awareness, and communion with the infinite, which sounds lofty enough until you ask yourself what is going to happen, while you are communing with the infinite, to the poor and the weak? ("*People in India*," Beatle Paul has fatuously said, "*were always laughing and smiling, even though most of them were starving.*")

The pot pedlars offer mystery trips into individual happiness, with devil take the hindmost and not a helping finger for your friends.

In the same selfish way *Bonnie and Clyde* provides a great escape clause. *Nothing you do is your fault.*

Fault of SOCIETY

Steal, kill, ruin your friends, break your mother's heart, you're not to blame. Maybe it's the fault of society, maybe of your parents, maybe it's your job, maybe you've some physical infirmity, maybe your home town is dull, maybe you're a waitress and you'd like to be a film star.

Whatever the reason, you're not to blame for your troubles, it's not up to you to work your way out of them, just detach yourself, pity yourself, indulge yourself, and have a good time.

This is why *Bonnie and Clyde* depresses me, or rather the fact that its mawkish non-message is going down so big.

For however much we like or love the young and enjoy their company, however much we concede to their fashions and philosophies, however much we admire their fresh brains and respect their original methods, there is one thing in which the older generation must oppose them.

We must not allow them to throw in the sponge.

7

Street. Shyly, he shows her a gun. Teasingly, she dares him to use it.

Like a lover embarking on courtship, he there and then sticks up a store and takes a wild shot at the first of the 18 people the pair of them will finally kill.

"What's your name, anyway?" she asks in an afterthought as they roar out of town in a stolen car. "I'm Clyde," he says. "I'm Bonnie—pleased to meet you."

This is the opening, chilling in its depiction of casual violence, riveting in its brilliant, shorthand illustration of two psychotic characters, to what is in my considered opinion the most significant film to come from America since On The Waterfront over 10 years ago.

Like that film, Bonnie and Clyde is made by people who are 100 per cent certain of what they're aiming at.

Violence is their theme and, believe me, it is of a nature that will have you reaching for the chain on your front door at nights.

Sadism

It brings an episode of American folk lore alive and bleeding—and bleeding buckets—on to the screen, but with a seriousness of intention that can't be convicted of excessive indulgence in sadism and mayhem.

Add to this direction of the kind that cracks characters wide open for inspection, acting of impact from a largely unfamiliar cast, authentic distillation of Depression Era atmosphere. Above all, constant concern for the social and economic chaos of the time and public enemies who, like some in our time, used it as an alibi for their own criminal natures.

Warren Beatty, making his bow as a producer, may not be history's Clyde Barrow, but he realistically incarnates an all too likely teenage hoodlum living for kicks.

Slack-jointed in the atmosphere of a wild spree, hideously tense in moments of sudden death, he has a "butch" charm that hides a pathetic sexual inadequacy which one astonishingly candid scene makes apparent and adds motive to his reliance on the gun to impress his girl friend.

Notorious

Bonnie Parker is played by Faye Dunaway with a vulpine [illegible] for experience that matches her mate's.

Drinking in their notoriety like oxygen, pulling up at letter-boxes to steal a newspaper and read the communiqués on their progress of robbery and murder, they cut a trail through the South-West—an area of timeless townships and backwoods evoked by Burnett Guffey's polished green, grey and brown photography like an Andrew Wyeth painting.

Travelling companions and partners in crime include a hillbilly boy (Michael J. Pollard) with the face of a fallen angel someone has stepped on.

Clyde's married brother (Gene Hackman), a snap-happy moron who totes a camera as well as a gun, and his wife (Estelle Parsons), a preacher's daughter who stuffs her fingers in her ears during the gunfights, come along for the ride and find they're hanging on to the tail of a comet.

Wounded

Bloody scenes of police ambushes and bank hold-ups alternate almost incredibly with wild slapstick explosions or scenes of delicate comedy as when a courting couple are hi-jacked by the gang for a lark. But director Arthur Penn never fails in his ability to choke the laughter off in your throat.

Many moments will stay in my memory for years: The aftermath of an ambush with the back of the car transformed into a blood-pit of wounded humanity; the rough-and-ready surgery performed by the light of headlamps; the dawn call at a hobos' camp for water when the refugees from the Depression recognise in Bonnie and Clyde their own allies against the society that ruined them.

Most of all I shall remember a daring sequence, shot in pastoral quietness and lit in golden tones like a pointillist canvas when Bonnie goes picnicking with her mother.

Make no mistake: Bonnie and Clyde is a film from which we shall date reputations and innovations in American cinema. Owing nothing to the [illegible] of European "New Wave" [illegible] it has nevertheless been inspired by their example to shake off traditions, to develop a new, confident, exciting approach to movie-making in America. It [illegible]

ENTERTAINMENT FILMS

The following films have been reviewed during the period AUGUST 11 to SEPTEMBER 11. They have been reviewed in the form under which they have been passed and certified for public exhibition by the British Board of Film Censors or by a licensing authority in Great Britain. Authorities and censorship boards in other countries and parts of the Commonwealth may pass the same films for public exhibition in a form different from that in which they were passed in Great Britain.

AUDIENCE SUITABILITY of the films reviewed is indicated as follows: A, adults only; B, adults and adolescents (13-18) only; C, family audiences, i.e., films to which parents can take or send their children in the knowledge that they contain no scenes or characters likely to frighten or disturb children; D, films for children over 7, i.e., films which children will enjoy and which contain no frightening and disturbing elements.

CREDIT ABBREVIATIONS: *Cert*—Certificate. *dist*—Distributors. *p.c.*—Production Company. *p*—Producer. *assoc. p.*—Associate Producer. *d*—Director. *sc*—Script. *adapt.*—Adaptation. *ph*—Photography. *col*—Colour Process. *ed*—Editor. *a.d.*—Art Director. *m*—Music. *m.d.*—Music Director. *choreo*—Choreography. *sd*—Sound. *sd. rec.*—Sound Recording. *l.p.*—Leading Players. *comm.*—Commentary.

LONGER NOTICES

BONNIE AND CLYDE, U.S.A., 1967

Cert: X. *dist:* Warner-Pathé. *p.c.:* Tatira/Hiller/Warner Bros. *p:* Warren Beatty. *p.manager:* Russ Saunders. *d:* Arthur Penn. *assistant d:* Jack N. Reddish. *sc:* David Newman, Robert Benton. *ph:* Burnett Guffey. *col:* Technicolor. *ed:* Dede Allen. *a.d.:* Dean Tavoularis. *set dec.:* Raymond Paul. *sp.effects:* Danny Lee. *m:* Charles Strouse. *cost:* Theadora Van Runkle. *sd:* Francis E. Stahl. *l.p.:* Warren Beatty (*Clyde Barrow*), Faye Dunaway (*Bonnie Parker*), Michael J. Pollard (*C. W. Moss*), Gene Hackman (*Buck Barrow*), Estelle Parsons (*Blanche*), Denver Pyle (*Frank Hamer*), Dub Taylor (*Ivan Moss*), Evans Evans (*Velma Davis*), Gene Wilder (*Eugene Grizzard*). 10,015 ft. 111 mins.

Bonnie Parker first meets Clyde Barrow when he tries to steal her mother's car. Immediately attracted by his amiable manner, she joins him. Clyde loses no time in proving his daring to her: he stages a hold-up, and they both make off in a stolen car, on their way to a life of crime. Working together, they rob banks, steal cars, and generally enjoy themselves. After one of their raids they meet C. W. Moss, a garage mechanic with a passion for cars, and invite him to join them. And after several more raids, some of them unsuccessful, they are joined by Clyde's brother Buck, just out of prison, and Buck's wife Blanche, a preacher's daughter given to hysterics. Bonnie resents Blanche and her girlish manner, but the five of them continue with their raids and have soon established a reputation for themselves throughout the Southern states. Then the police raid an apartment they have rented, and they are forced to shoot their way out. Now wanted for murder, they are pursued from state to state; and on one occasion a sheriff, Frank Hamer, is on the point of taking them when Clyde turns the tables on him. After another police raid in Missouri, a brief rendezvous with Bonnie's mother, and a narrow escape in Kansas, they suddenly find themselves surrounded by a ring of police. Buck is mortally wounded, and Blanche, staying with him, is captured: Bonnie, Clyde and C.W. escape and find temporary refuge with C.W.'s father. When they have recovered from their wounds, Bonnie and Clyde are ready to move off. But C.W.'s father, hoping to get his son off with a prison sentence, has made a deal with the police. In a quiet country lane Bonnie and Clyde are ambushed by Hamer and his men and killed as they sit in their car.

In his previous films (*Mickey One* and *The Chase* in particular) Arthur Penn's considerable talent has been undermined by a tendency to let his imagination run away with itself. So it comes as a welcome surprise to find that in *Bonnie and Clyde* he has made a beautifully modulated film. This is a film of levels, violent, tender and comic by turns, and Penn does a superb job of creating a pattern of moods, so that at the end of the film they coalesce to produce an odd sense of ambivalence. Bonnie and Clyde inhabit a fantasy world, fascinated by the legend they create around themselves, and even at the moment of their death strangely unaware that the fantasy has turned sour on them. Penn suggests this blend of fantasy and reality from the beginning with a series of faded snapshots of the Barrow gang as they stand in front of one of their stolen cars, arrogant and yet curiously innocent. Later we see them in the process of fostering the myth, as Buck snaps them with his Kodak, even posing a harassed policeman between them, and Bonnie sets down their exploits in a poem and sends it off to the newspapers. Their almost childlike belief in their own inviolability finds expression throughout the film, from Clyde's puzzled indignation when a man in the grocer's store he is robbing swings at him with a meat axe, to the simple pride with which he presents his credentials ("We rob banks") to a farmer who shows him the home he has lost in these hard times. Like children, they begin nervously Clyde has to clear his throat before declaring his intentions in a bank; and later, when he holds up a bank which has closed for lack of funds, he brings out the cashier to explain to Bonnie why he is empty-handed. But once success has established itself as the norm, they become intoxicated with it, never dreaming that their violence will one day catch up with them. This is unmistakably the America of the early thirties, of the Depression and the new hope offered by the Roosevelt posters on the walls; but these gangsters are not the faceless hoodlums of the big city. The Barrow gang wreak havoc in the small, broken towns of the South, amateurs in a league of their own. They use their guns like toys, and concern themselves only with having a whale of a time. Penn establishes their essential non-professionalism superbly, bringing to many of the scenes (like the one in which the gang kidnaps a bewildered pair of lovers and Buck regales them with his shaggy dog story) an engaging touch of humour. But behind the comedy there is always an uneasiness, a sense of impending and inevitable doom, beautifully suggested in the extraordinary scene in which Bonnie enjoys a brief reunion with her mother on a sand heap enveloped in mist, or when Clyde chases her across a field and a cloud momentarily blots out the sun as he catches her. Here one senses that their dream is almost over. And when reality eventually overtakes them, it brings with it a violence that is bloody and final: Buck dies with half his face shot off, Blanche is blinded, and Bonnie and Clyde are peppered with bullets as they sit in their car in a quiet country lane. It is a long time since one has seen an American film so perfectly judged as this. *Bonnie and Clyde* is far and away Penn's best film; but credit is also due to the entire cast, and in particular to Burnett Guffey's exhilarating, richly evocative camerawork.

Suitability: A. D.W.

DIVORCE AMERICAN STYLE, U.S.A., 1967

Cert: A. *dist:* Columbia. *p.c.:* Tandem. *p:* Norman Lear. *p. manager:* Howard Pine. *d:* Bud Yorkin. *assistant d:* Rusty Meek. *sc:* Norman Lear. Based on a story by Robert Kaufman. *ph:* Conrad Hall. *col:* Technicolor. *ed:* Ferris Webster. *production designer:* Edward Stephenson. *set dec.:* Frank Tuttle. *m:* David Grusin. *cost:* Bob Mackie. *sd:* Charles J. Rice, William Randall, Jnr. *l.p.:* Dick Van Dyke (*Richard Harmon*), Debbie Reynolds (*Barbara Harmon*), Jason Robards (*Nelson Downes*), Jean Simmons (*Nancy Downes*), Van Johnson (*Al Yearling*), Joe Flynn (*Lionel Blandsforth*), Shelley Berman (*David Grieff*), Martin Gabel (*Doctor Zenwinn*), Lee Grant (*Dede Murphy*), Pat Collins (*Herself*), Tom Bosley (*Farley*), Emmaline Henry (*Fern Blandsforth*), Dick Gautier (*Larry Strickland*), Tim Matthieson (*Mark*), Gary Goetzman (*Jonathon*), Eileen Brennan (*Eunice*), Shelley Morrison (*Jackie*). Bella Bruck (*Celia*), John J. Anthony (*Judge*). 9,758 ft. 108 mins.

Barbara and Richard Harmon, after 15 relatively penurious years of marriage, have for the past two years been enjoying a life of

Sight and Sound Autumn 1967 Tom Milne

"BONNIE AND CLYDE": WARREN BEATTY AND FAYE DUNAWAY.

BONNIE AND CLYDE

Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, of course, were real-life gangsters, genuine Thirties vintage but with a reputation which seems to have been more fantasy than fact; and right from the outset of his film *Bonnie and Clyde* (Warner-Pathé), Arthur Penn firmly roots them in ambiguity. Behind the credits, the sound of a clicking camera shutter ticks off the facts as we watch a series of faded snapshots from the Barrow gang's family albums. Then, in the opening sequence, Bonnie (Faye Dunaway), a restless Southern blonde, peers eagerly out of her bedroom window to catch her first glimpse of Clyde (Warren Beatty), leering and primping in flash tie, tilted hat and tight-fitting suit on the sidewalk below—the myth of Paul Muni's Scarface come to life again.

"Wait there!" she cries, and a moment later he's snapping a casual match between his teeth as she runs a wondering hand over the gun he displays. "You wouldn't have the gumption to use it," she says, so he robs the grocery store across the street, steals a car, and whisks her off with a breathless "Hey! What's your name, anyhow?" From there on, as Bonnie and Clyde prance off on a bumbling life of crime (the first bank they rob turns out to have been closed three weeks previously for lack of funds, and Clyde has to save face by getting the cashier to explain to Bonnie), Penn drives unerringly through a mood and *milieu* which look like the result of a shotgun marriage between *Cat Ballou* and *Bande à Part*.

Inefficiency gives way to a sort of crass efficacy as they gain experience. The gang is swelled by the arrival of Clyde's brother, a firm believer in family solidarity; by the latter's wife, whose main contribution is loud screams and an attack of hysteria whenever the bullets begin to fly; and by a diminutive car expert whose fixed grin of idiot beatitude remains unchanged, whether he's carefully parking his car in a mini-space seconds before an urgent getaway is due, or peacefully watching Ginger Rogers and the Golddiggers singing "We're in the Money" in the cinema to which they all repair for anxious meditation after killing their first cop. And soon they are caught up in a whirlwind spree through the highways of the South, punctuated by violent clashes with the police and oases of calm.

But the ghost of the real-life Al Capone has been keeping a fatherly eye on this marriage of moods. Violence breeds violence, and gradually the fantasy turns sour. First the brother dies in a forest clearing with half his face shot away, his blinded wife is taken off to hospital, and the gang melts away. Then Bonnie and Clyde, still unaware of the reality which has overtaken them, are caught in a crossfire of police bullets which batters on as though it would never stop, refusing to allow their jerking bodies to come to rest (an astonishing use of slow motion, this: it makes Paul Newman's death in *The Left-handed Gun* look like child's play).

Penn handles the shift in mood quite brilliantly—and almost imperceptibly, as an ambivalence towards the characters has been present since the very beginning. Like Godard's heroes in *Bande à Part*, Bonnie and Clyde embark on their life of crime utterly without malice or forethought. ("He tried to kill me," Clyde complains with astonishment when a victim hits back with an axe, "Why'd he do that? I didn't want to hurt him?") They even have a kind of morality of their own, which Penn hints at in a bizarre sequence when they wake up one morning in an abandoned farmhouse to be confronted by the evicted farmer and his family with their possessions loaded on to an ancient truck, "victims of man's inhumanity to man" like the Joads in *The Grapes of Wrath*. The have-nots of the Depression seal a weird, unspoken bargain as Clyde offers the farmer his gun to shoot holes through the bank's takeover sign, explaining in a confidential aside, "*We* rob banks." And the confidence is not broken when the police net begins to close, and a silent, mourning band of poor farmers help the tired, blood-spattered remnants of the gang on their way with food and water.

But more than this, it is the lyricism of the film which guides one's attitudes to the characters, turning amusement (or revulsion, according to taste) into comprehension and finally pity. Turning his back on the urban chiaroscuro of the gangster film, Penn opts for the unexpected with a green and golden landscape of forest glades, cornfields, open roads, bright days and blue skies, to which Bonnie and Clyde escape from the wooden shacks and dusty streets of the small towns where they commit their robberies. There is a kind of unashamed pastoral tranquillity running through the settings which is beautifully caught in Burnett Guffey's stunning camerawork, and which reflects a need of which Bonnie and Clyde only gradually become aware as they realise that they, like Ferdinand and Marianne on their island paradise in *Pierrot le Fou*, are quite alone.

In a superb sequence, ironically tinged (both literally and metaphorically) with a nostalgic mist of regret, Bonnie pays a visit to her home, only to realise, after a family picnic among the sand dunes, that there is no way back. "You'd best keep runnin'," her gentle old white-haired mother says with cold finality. So they keep running, until ambushing policemen startle a flock of birds, and Bonnie and Clyde die together in a quiet country lane.

A few years ago, Truffaut, Godard and the Nouvelle Vague stole the gangster film from America and gave it new blood. Now Penn has taken it back home where it belongs, and in so doing has found a match for his temperament. In the past, particularly with *The Miracle Worker* and *Mickey One*, he has tended to become involved with subjects too hysteria-prone for their own good. But *Bonnie and Clyde* can take all the violence and tenderness he has, and still keep coming back for more.

Tom Milne

The New York Times 14/8/1967 Bosley Crowther

Screen: 'Bonnie and Clyde' Arrives

Careers of Murderers Pictured as Farce

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

A RAW and unmitigated campaign of sheer press-agentry has been trying to put across the notion that Warner Brothers' "Bonnie and Clyde" is a faithful representation of the desperado careers of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, a notorious team of bank robbers and killers who roamed Texas and Oklahoma in the post-Depression years.

It is nothing of the sort. It is a cheap piece of bald-faced slapstick comedy that treats the hideous depredations of that sleazy, moronic pair as though they were as full of fun and frolic as the jazz-age cut-ups in "Thoroughly Modern Millie." And it puts forth Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway in the leading roles, and Michael J. Pollard as their sidekick, a simpering, nose-picking rube, as though they were striving mightily to be the Beverly Hillbillies of next year.

It has Mr. Beatty clowning broadly as the killer who fondles various types of guns with as much nonchalance and dispassion as he airily twirls a big cigar, and it has Miss Dunaway squirming grossly as his thrill-seeking, sex-starved moll. It is loaded with farcical hold-ups, screaming chases in stolen getaway cars that have the antique appearance and speeded-up movement of the clumsy vehicles of the Keystone Cops, and indications of the impotence of Barrow, until Bonnie writes a poem about him to extol his prowess, that are as ludicrous as they are crude.

Warren Beatty in rôle of Clyde and Faye Dunaway as Bonnie

The Cast

BONNIE AND CLYDE, written by David Newman and Robert Benton; directed by Arthur Penn and produced by Warren Beatty, a Tatira-Hiller Production presented by Warner Bros.-Seven Arts. At the Forum Theater, Broadway at 47th Street, and the Murray Hill Theater, 34th Street east of Lexington Avenue. Running time: 111 minutes.

Clyde Barrow	Warren Beatty
Bonnie Parker	Faye Dunaway
C. W. Moss	Michael J. Pollard
Buck Barrow	Gene Hackman
Blanche	Estelle Parsons
Frank Hamer	Denver Pyle
Ivan Moss	Dub Taylor
Velma Davis	Evans Evans
Eugene Grizzard	Gene Wilder

Such ridiculous, camp-tinctured travesties of the kind of people these desperados were and of the way people lived in the dusty Southwest back in those barren years might be passed off as candidly commercial movie comedy, nothing more, if the film weren't reddened with blotches of violence of the most grisly sort.

Arthur Penn, the aggressive director, has evidently gone out of his way to splash the comedy holdups with smears of vivid blood as astonished people are machine-gunned. And he has staged the terminal scene of the ambuscading and killing of Barrow and Bonnie by a posse of policemen with as much noise and gore as is in the climax of "The St. Valentine's Day Massacre."

This blending of farce with brutal killings is as pointless as it is lacking in taste, since it makes no valid commentary upon the already travestied truth. And it leaves an astonished critic wondering just what purpose Mr. Penn and Mr. Beatty think they serve with this strangely antique, sentimental claptrap, which opened yesterday at the Fo[illegible] Hill.

This is the film that opened the Montreal International Festival!

Levitt Puts Albany Mall's Cost Near Billion, Twice the Estimate

Flicked around like bloody puppets as too many bullets stitch them to death, a young psychopath and his moll come to one of the most extraordinary ends in cinema. Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (Warner), dazzlingly photographed in colour by Burnett Guffey, makes the other violent films this week seem like child's play. And yet the Penn film is sophisticated enough to be the most playful. Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker existed, dreamily taking on three members and becoming the Barrow Gang of the Depression years, small-time robbers and killers and takers of group photos: Bonnie even wrote a doggerel ballad about them which made the papers: they literally publicised themselves into the grave. The film frequently behaves as if it were a homage to that ballad, but rarely less than equivocally. It opens with authentic family snaps clicking up between the credits. Then Bonnie, a languorous, Southern blonde waitress, is seen yearning from a window on a hot morning: below, young Clyde in absurd gangsterish rig wants to steal her mother's car. She shoves a wraparound dress on, descends and their amused relationship begins. When he waves a gun at her and boasts, she incites him to rob a store, then a bank. The bank turns out to be fundless and Clyde brings the manager out at gunpoint to explain to her. They take on an accomplice, a witless mechanic apparently shaped from ectoplasm (a great, shifty performance by Michael Pollard), soon followed by Barrow's brother and plain, hysterical wife. The brother tells dreadful jokes and the wife wails of her religious upbringing. As they drive around between jobs, they chat and bicker like any old innocent family group.

The script, by David Newman and Robert Benton, keeps the jokes going, the temper even, cunningly riding such events as Clyde's announcement to Bonnie of impotence. The tone is merry and somehow childlike. An intimation of Robin-Hoodery – the poor, Grant Wood farmer allowed to keep his cash during a bank raid – grips hands with a legendary past. But the killings happen: a shocking, close bullet through a car-window, the grappler's face suddenly red-streaked and terrifying; Clyde's brother screaming with a smashed head; the last horror. The papers have printed stories of people being carried out fainting: I suppose this is possible. But frankly I'm surprised. This brilliantly constructed film – surely the hardest to close your eyes on of any to come from America, or elsewhere, in a long time – may err in building up sympathy for its Bonnie and Clyde (two very pretty and appealing humans in the persons of Faye Dunaway, a stunner, and Warren Beatty), to the extent that one is invited to find some pastoral satisfaction when they sexually consummate in a field just before the big, retributory end. Afterwards, one asks oneself the difficult questions: most notably, what about a similar treatment – remarkable groupings on lonely plains, intimate glimpses of heedless baddies at their nicest – applied to another couple who might have made the broadsheets in an earlier age: Brady and Hindley? With considerable hesitation, I would suggest that for once – this once – the aesthetic values of Mr Penn's film are not there simply to seduce us into accepting untenable or unpleasant moral positions in the cause of entertainment. What that needle-sharp editing of alluring images does is to make sure that we *keep looking* when the foul things happen. Someone might care to find an analogy with the canvasses of Francis Bacon. The attractiveness of shape, focus, colour, makes one attentive, unwilling to duck away. At which point the bullets [illegible] really thud home.

The Times 11/9/1967 John

y John Russell Taylor
ilm Critic

Varner:
onnie and Clyde

Snap. A rather ordinary looking young man in a cloth cap, circa 1930. Snap. A group of agricultural down-and-outs gathered round a battered old car. Snap. A palely pretty young woman, holding a gun with not quite confident defiance. Snap. The young woman again, this time posed against some dark trees. Who or what are these faded remnants from somebody's jokesy book of family snapshots, which silently punctuate the credits of Arthur Penn's new film ? Simple: they are Clyde Barrow, Bonnie Parker and their associates; they took the pictures themselves, in the intervals of robbing a number of banks (not very profitably) and killing 18 people.

It is a bizarrely intimate touch, and it sets exactly the tone of the film itself. For the point about Bonnie and Clyde was that they were not very competent criminals, products of the wave of crime which swept the agricultural mid-West in the wake of the Depression, and that much of their time was taken up reading about their own exploits in the papers and fostering their own myth. The brilliant original screenplay by David Newman and Robert Benton captures perfectly the farcical tragedy of their lives, their sheer incongruity as great figures in the annals of crime. He drifte into crime as a result of failin to return a hired car; she was a waitress until he taught her how to shoot. They never really managed to steal anything big: in the film the first bank they try to rob proves to have failed a week earlier, and Clyde has one of his nearest brushes with death when an enraged storekeeper lunges a him with a meat-axe while he is trying to collect, at gun point, the week's groceries.

The film is often very funny, and under it all very sad, and done immaculately by everyone concerned. Warren Beatty, who plays Clyde and produced it, has never been better in his sympathetic but uneven career; Faye Dunaway, as Bonnie, catches her ever-changing moods with extraordinary spontaneity. The colour photography by Burnett Guffey, who was already winning Oscars when this was all happening in the early 1930s, outdoes the New Wave cameramen at their own game. And Arthur Penn, whose obvious talent has been somewhat muffled of late in the pretentiousness of *Mickey One's* script and the heavy Sam Spiegel's production-values of *The Chase*, here at last confirms his potential as one of the most exciting and talented directors to come out of Hollywood in the last decade or so. Other gangster films have tried, more or less successfully, to play on our nostalgia for the sort of movie they used to make. This abjures nostalgia: it is exact, modern, and impeccably true to its period. After too many false starts, half-successes, and

TITLE BONNIE AND CLYDE
BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
FROM OBSERVER
DATED 10/9/67