“Passionate Detachment”: Technologies of Vision and Violence in American Cinema, 1967 - 1974

By

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Abstract

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My dissertation explores the emergence of graphic, corporeal violence in American films of the late 1960s and early 1970s in order to ground an approach for seeing cinematic brutality today. In particular, I turn to three technologies—multiple-speed montage, squibs and artificial blood, and freeze frames—that make possible the iterative, explicit, and protracted spectacles of violence for which Hollywood filmmaking after the Production Code is known. Doing so, I move the form and logic of screen violence to the center of my investigation. An evident orientation, perhaps, but one surprisingly overlooked by the leading literature, which frequently appeals to narrative structure or authorial intent to lend significance to what it otherwise deems senseless, sadistic excesses.

Refuting these claims, my project uncovers the unremarked logics and complex pleasures that inhere in the formal construction of violence itself. More than mere tools, I argue, the aforementioned technologies also function as figures that speak to the era's broader preoccupation with demonstrative violence. This is the age of Civil Rights, Vietnam, and Watergate, after all, events that stoked public distrust for perceptible appearances and found Americans across the political spectrum demanding, however, paradoxically, visual—and increasingly violent—demonstrations of more authentic realities. Multiple-speed montage, squibs and artificial blood, and freeze frames crystallize this passion, leaning on cinema's indexical capacity for documentation to upend everyday visibility with evidentiary force. As figures, these technologies not only give shape to fantasies of authenticity that characterize this moment, but also permit one to trace the violent political blind spots that unwittingly obstruct these visions. For this reason, I contend, my approach to multiple-speed montage, squibs and artificial blood, and freeze frames affords a heretofore unacknowledged critical position. Marked by what I call "passionate detachment," this position appreciates the fervor for disclosure that animates these visions of violence at the same time that it recognizes the frequently gendered and racialized relations of power from which their promises of authenticity derive. In all, the project unites cinematic and sociocultural histories of film violence to rethink both conventional accounts of cinematic indexicality and the place of sadism in theories of spectatorial pleasure.

For
Scott

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Chapter 1
The Logic of Film Violence or, Figuring the "Sense" in Sensation

> *The movie is 126 minutes long, and I would guess that at least 100 of those minutes, maybe more, are concerned specifically and graphically with the details of … torture and death. … This is the most violent film I have ever seen.*—Roger Ebert on *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), *Chicago Sun-Times*, February 24, 2004

> *But then comes the carnage, full tilt and with no holds barred, filmed in gory slow motion—just like* Bonnie and Clyde*—that records every agonizing moment. … [This film] must surely contain the bloodiest battle ever recorded on film.*—Jeanne Miller on *The Wild Bunch* (1969), *San Francisco Examiner*, June 26, 1969

As Roger Ebert attests, Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) recently earned a place of privilege in the history of cinematic brutality, inspiring fervid statements about "film violence" in the twenty-first century.[1] Foremost among these was the notion that *Passion* permitted spectators to *see more* in the way of corporeal brutality than did other films. "Then comes the Crucifixion," writes *The New Yorker*'s David Denby, "dramatized with a curious fixation on the technical details—an arm pulled out of its socket, huge nails hammered into hands."[2] Adds A. O. Scott at *The New York Times*: "By rubbing our faces in the grisly reality of Jesus' death and fixing our eyes on every welt and gash on his body, this film means to make literal an event that … tends to be thought about somewhat abstractly."[3]

Here, and in other assessments of *Passion*, "seeing more" lies at the intersection of three mutually reinforcing tendencies: multiplication, explicitness, and duration. At issue, in other words, are the iterative possibilities of montage (Scott's "every welt and gash"); graphic special effects (what J. Hoberman calls "filigreed and caramelized blood"[4]); and protracted images of torture and pain (The scourging, writes *Newsweek*, "goes on endlessly."[5]) [Figure 1]. For those who find it objectionable, this "more" represents an unmanageable and twofold "excess." Not only do spectators see *too many* images of violence, but the graphic quality of these views means that they also see *too much*.

Of course, as Jeanne Miller indicates, these tendencies—what one might call the visual code of contemporary cinematic brutality——are indebted to a "seeing more" that goes back to *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967), *The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1969), and the circumstances of another code's, the Production Code's, demise [Figure 2]. Before its reduction to a set of ten general guidelines in 1966, or its total conversion to a G-M-R-X rating system in 1968, the Production Code sought to restrict images of what its administrators called "brutality and possible gruesomeness"—images that foregrounded the graphic, corporeal effects of physical violence. Hence the clichés of "classical" Hollywood violence: shadow-play shootings, clutch-and-fall deaths, strategic cutaways, and symbolic environmental damage.[6]

With the Code's fall in the midst of war, political assassinations, and social unrest, as well as film industry recession, corporate conglomeration, and the solicitation of a freshly conceived "youth market," a new philosophy of visibility emerged, one that, for many critics, spectators, and cultural watchdogs, precipitated another "fall" into the "too many" and "too much" of today's purportedly unredeemable "ultraviolence."[7] In fact, as scholars Stephen Prince, J. David Slocum, and Martin Baker have argued, "violence"—whether in society or on the screen—only arose as a "thing-in-itself" at this historical moment.[8] Before the 1960s, filmmakers, censors, and policymakers spoke of brutal acts and behaviors, but not violence *per*



Figure 1: "Seeing more" violence: *The Passion of the Christ* (Icon Productions, 2004)



Figure 2: *The Wild Bunch* (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1969)

se. By 1968, however, Lyndon B. Johnson had established the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, before which Jack Valenti, then president of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), defended Hollywood's increasingly graphic depictions of brutality against charges of "excess."[9]

In the meantime, another set of images from 2004—that of Iraqi prisoners tortured by American troops at Abu Ghraib—exhibited a conception of visibility and violence not uncommon to the late 1960s and 1970s, when images of war and civil unrest helped establish the conventions of "authentic" revelation for fiction and non-fiction alike.[10] Consider *Medium Cool* (Haskell Wexler, 1968), a "fiction" set in the streets of 1968 Chicago, or *Little Big Man* (Arthur Penn, 1970), which, according to the filmmaker, models its climactic massacre after images of American atrocities at My Lai.[11] Such films disclose the potentially uncomfortable alliances between documentation and entertainment, actuality and illusion, that accompany "seeing more," whether past or present. Susan Sontag links Abu Ghraib's digital photographs to the "fun" of web cameras and reality television.[12] Though separated from *Medium Cool* by time, technology, and tone, these pictures recall the importance of the evidentiary to earlier fantasies of vision and violence and to the relationship between reality and its representation that such fantasies express.

In what follows, I take historical recurrence as provocation, exploring the emergence of "seeing more" in the past so as to ground a method for viewing violence in the present moment. To do so, I propose a thoroughgoing examination of the very technologies, new to commercial American cinema, that are responsible for the "too many" and "too much" of late 1960s and early 1970s violence. Comprising each of three chapters, these technologies—multiple-speed montage, squibs (small explosive devices) with artificial blood, and freeze frames—make possible the respective multiplication, explicitness, and duration of physical violence that one associates with post-Code filmmaking. They also figure, I argue, broader cultural fantasies about vision and violence that characterize the era to which they belong.

This is the age of Civil Rights, Vietnam, and Watergate, after all, events that stoked public distrust for perceptible appearances and found Americans across the political spectrum demanding, however paradoxically, visual—and increasingly violent—demonstrations of more "authentic" realities. In my view, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames evince a similar passion for the revelatory possibilities of demonstrative violence. Leaning on cinema's capacities for documentation, they upend everyday visibility with evidentiary force. In doing so, they not only give shape to fantasies of authenticity that pervade the military as much as the counterculture, but also, I argue, permit one to trace the violent, though frequently unacknowledged, blind spots that obstruct these visions.

Senseless, sadistic excess

By focusing on the technologies that make film violence legible, I move its form and logic to the center of my investigation. An evident orientation, perhaps, but one surprisingly overlooked by the leading literature, which largely turns to narrative structures or authorial intent to lend significance to what it otherwise deems senseless and sadistic excess. In fact, little scholarly work has investigated film violence *per se*, still less its heightened visibility in American cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and almost none the technological means by which that violence is rendered. Instead, most scholars discuss cinematic brutality in the context of particular genres (horror, gangster, or combat films), individual films (*The Wild Bunch, Taxi Driver, The Deer Hunter*), or specific filmmakers (Sam Peckinpah, Martin Scorsese, Oliver Stone), giving violence itself only secondary consideration.[13] When studies do consider the

specific form of film violence, meanwhile, they generally limit their analyses to multiple-speed montage and the few films, particularly those by Sam Peckinpah, that feature it most prominently.[14]

My project widens the scope of previous studies by deepening their focus. Investigating screen violence outside the rubrics of genre and auteur, I uncover broader, less theorized logics that films from the late 1960s and early 1970s share. At the same time, the breadth I seek only emerges in the particularities of cinematic brutality's formal construction. In this sense, Stephen Prince's *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies* and *Classical Film Violence: Designing and Regulating Brutality in Hollywood Cinema, 1930 – 1968* provide models for my work. A prolific scholar of on-screen brutality, Prince privileges style in these accounts, concretizing the vague articulations of "film violence" one finds in other texts.

Still, I part ways with the ahistorical tendencies I see in *Classical Film Violence* and the moralizing oppositions that they invite. I take issue, for instance, with Prince's eschewal of sociohistorical and ideological analyses, which, he contends, "risk … treating movie violence as a dependent variable."[15] Certainly, film violence is no mere epiphenomenon. And yet, Prince's own thesis, which posits that changes in regulatory practices produce changes in film form, points to inescapable links between history, ideology, and style.

The contradiction repeats elsewhere when Prince presents the course of screen violence as both continuous and discontinuous at once. On one hand, that is, violence remains an "essential component of cinema," something toward which filmmakers are "inherently drawn."[16] Style may vary, Prince argues, but cinematic brutality—and the desire for it—remain universal constants. "Hard and graphic violence *was* the dream of many filmmakers in classical Hollywood," he writes. "They consistently pushed and prodded the Production Code Administration."[17] For this reason, Prince insists, "the history of American screen violence … is a history of delaying the inevitable."[18] It is an inexorable teleology, surprisingly ahistorical in its progressive continuity. On the other hand, meanwhile, post-Code brutality breaks with past representations, producing a schism between "classical" Hollywood's concern for acts and behaviors and contemporary cinema's emphasis on style. As the text proceeds, this opposition generates additional antitheses, including moralizing distinctions between screen violence that is ugly or beautiful, meaningful or gratuitous, critical or celebratory, sadistic or humane.

Though incompatible with Prince's continuous account of cinematic brutality, these discontinuities issue from a similarly ahistorical source. After all, violence, as I suggested earlier, only emerges as a category in the 1960s, when differences among physical, psychological, and ideological exertions of power collapsed under a notion of brutality that privileged perceptible, bodily assaults.[19] From this point of view, when Prince gives graphic, corporeal violence the force of teleology, he homogenizes the history of cinematic brutality by way of anachronism. He may acknowledge that "classical" violence is not yet a "thing-in-itself," but Prince nonetheless limits his inquiry to the universal pursuit of "stylistic amplitude," which he defines in such post-"classical" terms as "graphicness" and "duration."[20] At the same time, because only films made after the mid- to late 1960s meet this definition, Prince's continuity actually breeds discontinuity.[21] Post-Code films split from their "classical" counterparts in ways that the late 1960s and early 1970s *themselves* construct.

Indeed, the many distinctions that greet this era's approach to cinematic brutality coincide with its self-conscious and, for many, dangerous preoccupation with violence. "Among the most violent" moments in American history, according to a 1970 report from the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, the late 1960s finds the United States

leading "modern, stable democratic nations in its rates of homicide, assault, rape, and robbery."[22] Asking readers "Why Are We Suddenly Obsessed with Violence?," *Esquire* magazine notes how "our heroes and our leaders arrive and depart in violence; our films and plays and books sing its song; our newspapers report its progress; our artists glorify its style"[23] [Figure 3]. Written before the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the release of *The Wild Bunch*, or the coverage of Tet and My Lai, this article and its digest of brutal newspaper leads and graphic photographs testify to the admixture of fascination and censure that typifies this period's relationship to violence and violent media in particular.

In fact, alongside numerous studies of crime and human aggression, this moment inaugurates the social scientific study of violent media in terms of their (typically negative) "effects."[24] Such "effects" research not only takes the era's newly conceived "violence" for granted, but also, writes Martin Barker, transforms violent images into leading causal agents.[25] In this way, he continues, media such as the cinema acquire "a substantial moral loading," susceptible to the kinds of evaluative oppositions that structure Prince's text.[26]

More than a challenge to Prince, however, my return to the late 1960s and its self-proclaimed violence serves to illuminate the ways in which ahistorical ruptures and moralizing gestures unwittingly frame much of the response to film violence both then and today. Along with Barker, J. David Slocum has begun to address the analytical assumptions that derive from this period. Calling "film violence" a *trope* that has "particularized and delimited discourses of film, violence, and film violence" since its inception, Slocum argues that post-"classical" aesthetics and "effects"-based research have become *the* lenses by which we identify and evaluate cinematic brutality.[27] Even scholars who seek to challenge these discourses "invoke mostly the same … historical, cinematic, and cultural examples from the 1960s and 1970s."[28] In response, he advocates heterogeneous models of style and spectatorship that overdetermine the formal elements and discontinuous conceptions that presently guide research.

I agree with Slocum's diagnosis of film violence scholarship and the recommendations he offers for its diversification. At the same time, however, I wonder what might be gained by examining the rhetoric and style that trouble him, not merely as problems but as *problematics* that one can meaningfully trace. For this reason, I explore the various ruptures and antonymic evaluations that dominate post-"classical" brutality's critical and scholarly reception and disclose the notion of senseless, sadistic excess that, to some extent, animates them all.

As early as 1967, the shift to graphic, corporeal violence marks a fall from Code-era grace. Bosley Crowther's vitriolic response to a "new flock of sadistic pictures," including *The Dirty Dozen* (Robert Aldrich, 1967) and the American release of *A Few Dollars More* (Sergio Leone, 1965), rails at the "gross and bloody nature" of their "irrational" and "excessive" violence, which, he suggests, can only "lead the … public to condone preposterous values" or "deaden their sensitivities" to slaughter.[29] Adds one of his readers: "To see this kind of action again and again tends to harden human sensibilities and to persuade the viewers that brutality is a commonplace of life."[30] Evincing the behavioralist orientation of most "effects"-based research, these reactions take explicit images of violence as stimuli, which provoke and desensitize audiences at once.[31] As with the studies they echo, such responses open a polarized moral field that pits contemporary screen violence against more reasonable, less vicious, and presumably more justifiable depictions.

Even arguments that take post-Code brutality to be warranted, humane, or meaningful frequently subscribe to these moralizing and behavioralist terms. In a retraction of his initial condemnation of *Bonnie and Clyde,* critic Joseph Morgenstern maintains that "distinctions can



Figure 3: "Why Are We Suddenly Obsessed with Violence?," *Esquire*, July 1967

and must be made between violent films that pander and violent films that enlighten."[32] After all, despite its "dazzling artistry," *Bonnie and Clyde* still harbors "gratuitous crudities."[33] Screenwriter David Newman counters:

> Ah, good old gratuitous violence, the phrase used by every outraged critic … who didn't understand that the entire point of the violence … was that it was *not* gratuitous. … We wanted to show that when a bullet penetrates human flesh it hurts like hell and one of the things we intended to do was show that penalty in all its unvarnished truth.[34]

Though he defends *Bonnie and Clyde*'s graphic depictions, Newman implicitly links the significance of cinematic brutality to proper behavioral responses. Because *Bonnie and Clyde* stimulates pain, not pleasure, he reasons, it mitigates the inflammatory or deadening effects one finds in studies of media violence. Pauline Kael concurs. "Spectators "*should* feel uncomfortable," she writes, "but this isn't an argument *against* the movie." Rather, "the whole point of *Bonnie and Clyde* is to rub our noses in … the dirty reality of death."[35] The legitimacy of the film's style, Kael urges, lies in the unpleasurable authenticity of the "blood and holes" that Code-era cinema rejects.[36] Saving *Bonnie and Clyde* from contemporary cinema's alleged sadism and superfluity, she reverses Crowther's condemnation of post-"classical" films. And yet, as much as Newman, Kael draws the logic of her justification from the opposing critique. As a result, she, too, unwittingly preserves the divide between senseless and meaningful violence, lending credence to the notion that on-screen brutality can be viciously gratuitous.

More surprising are approaches that reiterate ahistorical distinctions even as they delineate the social context at hand. Following Valenti's suggestion that "the kind of society we live in today is different from the kind of society we used to live in," many commentators from the late 1960s and early 1970s justify the graphic appearance of cinematic bloodshed by pointing to the war in Vietnam or to the era's putative rise in domestic riots, assassinations, and violent crime.[37] "We are living in a period when newscasts refer casually to 'waves' of mass murders," Roger Ebert muses in 1967. "Perhaps at this time, it is useful to be reminded that bullets really do tear skin and bone."[38] Writing seven years later, Vivian Sobchack likewise connects explicit film violence to its historical circumstances:

> Suddenly, … in the mid-1960s, there was blood everywhere. Politicians became … mortal. People who looked and lived exactly as we did shot at us from water towers, slit our throats, went berserk, committed murder next door. … No place, however ordinary, was safe; blood ran in busy streets, on university campuses, in broad daylight, everywhere.[39]

"The movies today merely reflect our search for meaning and significance—for order—in the essentially senseless," she continues.[40] "Blood and holes" dramatize the violence of everyday life, imbuing it with a logic it otherwise lacks.

Sobchack's appeals to the era's social milieu undoubtedly reach beyond mere stimuli or universalizing teleologies to argue for graphic brutality's sense. At the same time, however, both hers and Ebert's approaches to film violence corroborate fantasies of escalating brutality that drive this period's "obsession," not just with bloodshed, but also historical "breaks" and morally prescriptive research.[41] In their work, screen violence does not put pressure on the period's self-

professed penchant for bloodshed so much as offer viewers a reasonable response to increasingly "irrational" realities. For this reason, I contend, Ebert and Sobchack inevitably repeat Newman's and Kael's selective exculpation of *Bonnie and Clyde* at an epochal level, exonerating the violence of late 1960s and early 1970s Hollywood in general.

More recent film scholarship adopts this exonerating gesture, transposing the idea of "senseless" or "excessive" cruelty from late 1960s cinema to present-day films. "The violence in *Bonnie and Clyde* inherently differs from the casual carnage omnipresent in contemporary movies," Lester D. Friedman declares in 2000.[42]

> Put simply, [Arthur] Penn uses violence as a morally justified conclusion to the actions that precede it. His films have none of the ritualistic sadism of [Martin] Scorsese's *Goodfellas* (1990), … the playful amorality of [Quentin] Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), … or the gratuitous bloodletting of [Oliver] Stone's *Natural Born Killers* (1994).[43]

In a 2000 postscript to the aforementioned article, Sobchack, too, worries that today's films offer "no moral agenda or critique of violence."[44] Instead, they privilege quantity over quality. "Bodies are more carelessly *squandered* than carefully stylized," she argues, "except … insofar as excess, as hyperbole, itself constitutes stylization."[45] Exorbitant and empty, screen violence, it seems, no longer suffuses brutality with significance, but rather, evacuates it of sense altogether.

For this reason, perhaps, most contemporary commentators put cinematic brutality at odds with the more conspicuous logics that inhere in narrative. They do so, moreover, whether they disdain the alleged proliferation of vacuous violence or not. Today's film violence does not index cinema's devolution, suggests Leo Charney; it merely reformulates the sensationalistic attractions that have characterized cinema from the start. "Postmodern" attractions "up the ante" of early cinema's quest for presence, he argues. "Violence becomes more and more intense in the effort to restore the possibility of having an effect, creating a shock, provoking a response."[46] As much as those who bemoan the moral turpitude of on-screen brutality after 1968, however, Charney finds that recent films foreground violent events to the point of decontextualization. Such events "stand on their own, as if for their own sake, no longer the handmaidens of an orthodox cause-and-effect story" to which they refer.[47]

With the rise of special effects technologies in particular, these violent "numbers," as Marsha Kinder calls them, become "so excessive, … their visceral pleasures so compelling" that

> their cumulative effect … threatens to usurp the narrative's traditional function of contextualization through a seriality and an exuberance that render the film comic, no matter how painful, tragic, or satiric its narrative resolution may be.[48]

Here, as in Crowther, spectacular violence undermines sense with sensation, something that threatens to render it *sensationalist*. For Prince, meanwhile, the "sensuousness of the carnage" in contemporary Hollywood cinema "begins to subvert [its] ability … to create a perspective on violence that is other than celebratory."[49] Within the wanton irrationality of bodily thrills, it seems, postmodern attractions and behavioralist "effects" unexpectedly meet.

To curb the deleterious consequences of these sensations, Prince, like Kinder, increasingly turns from the form of film violence to the "surrounding structures" and "statements of intention" that potentially keep them in check.[50] The problem with form, he intimates, lies in

aesthetics, whether as structures of feeling or matters of taste. When Peckinpah answers the universal desire for graphic, corporeal violence by privileging style over reference, he problematically renders brutality sensuously beautiful. The result, Prince argues in his account of Peckinpah's *oeuvre*, "winds up glamorizing the spectacle and inciting the viewer to share in the aggressive fantasy."[51] Collapsing pleasure in form into pleasure in content, Peckinpah puts feeling at odds with thinking and inevitably leads the spectator to a sadistic response.

For Prince, it matters, therefore, that Peckinpah clearly articulated the critical intentions of his filmmaking style. As with *Bonnie and Clyde*'s screenwriter, he "consistently stressed that his goal was not to make violence attractive but to show its horror, not to celebrate it, but confront the viewer with its essential ugliness."[52] Unlike his successors, or even most of his contemporaries, that is, Peckinpah sought to challenge the uncritical aestheticization of brutality that Prince otherwise finds in Hollywood after the Code. Peckinpah's style, Prince wagers, offers a "conscious response to," rather than a "mere reflection of," the era's endemic violence. It remains an exception to the period's senseless celebration of slaughter and the gratuitous repetition of special effects technologies that characterize its legacy.[53] It also enmeshes Peckinpah with his historical moment. "*The Wild Bunch* cannot be separated from the social climate in which it was made because it is inextricably a part of that environment," Prince writes, unwittingly refuting the argument against social context that he will later produce.[54]

As much as he defends Peckinpah's violence, however, Prince seems unable to square his own appeals to authorial intention with the spectatorial pleasures that the filmmaker's graphic aesthetic yields. "The very stylization that Peckinpah thought would wake people up to the horror of violence instead excited and gratified many," he observes.[55] Thus in spite of Prince's early attention to the formal construction of Peckinpah's style, he eventually leaves the techniques that comprise it behind:

> If the montage-based representation of violence were Peckinpah's only artistic contribution to late-sixties cinema and to the dilemmas of social violence wracking American society in those years, he should be condemned as an aesthete of violence, an inciter to aggression, a director whose films reinforced and added to the violence of those years.[56]

Fortunately, Prince urges, Peckinpah also relies upon more cognitive structures, including melancholic characters and narratives, didactic tableaux, and irony, to frame the irrational sensory appeals of his violent sequences and lend them proper moral significance.[57] On this view, the brutal spectacles in a film such as *The Wild Bunch* become detachable "set pieces"—"outward manifestations of violence" largely cut off from the "inwardly spiritual and emotional components and consequences" that Peckinpah wished them to express.[58] They become, in other words, the very senseless, sadistic excesses against which Prince initially situates the filmmaker's work.

So construed, Peckinpah's style permits commentators to have their screen violence both ways. On one hand, intention and narrative guide cinema toward measured, even critical, approaches to bloodshed, while on the other, such principled sobriety remains all but lost to the form of film violence itself. For the most part, meanwhile, American filmmakers generate gratuitous celebrations of physical brutality with the help of increasingly spectacular special effects. Reduced to such empty displays of aggression and cruelty, these visions offer few insights into the social or ideological horizons from which they come. Instead, as Prince suggests

in *Classical Film Violence*, they emerge as mere "symptom[s] of some larger condition" with almost nothing to recommend in and of themselves.[59] It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that scholars such as Prince should take a position against the inextricability of on- and off-screen brutality, since the conception of bloodletting they articulate actually compounds the epiphenomenonal histories of film style they likewise reject.

The "Sense" in Sensation

Refuting the assumption that graphic film violence proffers little but senseless, sadistic excess, my project discloses the unremarked logics and complex pleasures that inhere in the technologies that constitute its formal construction. As I have suggested, these technologies, whether multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, or freeze frames, produce the iterative, explicit, and protracted brutality with which most commentators associate post-Code style. At the same time, I argue, they comprise a visual rhetoric that finds "sense" in sensation. One need not turn to intention or narrative structure to give "gratuitous" feelings significance. Rather, violent aesthetics and the pleasures they generate are themselves primary sites for thinking through meaning. Conceived in this way, screen violence cannot be reduced to mere sensation or the moralistic judgments this discourse implies. Instead, it has something to contribute to diegetic, even extradiegetic, contexts, articulating fantasies of vision and violence that these registers share. Indeed, if cinematic brutality is a "symptom" of some larger reality, it is less for its transparent expression of superordinate structures than for what it discloses about these structures that the given reality does not itself know.

For this reason, I contend, one can no sooner cleave style from its sociohistorical or ideological milieu than one can articulate film's relevance to these horizons without a careful account of technique. Uniting the craft of *techné* with the logic of *logos*, my account of cinematic *technology* permits an investigation of both. Multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames are, after all, the means by which late 1960s and early 1970s cinema makes violence sensible. As such, they supply a cinema-specific approach to the history of film violence, though without, I hasten to add, the problems of universality or rupture that plague other works. In fact, to the extent that each of these technologies predates its appearance in popular post-Code cinema, it recommends a conception of stylistic continuity that does not, at the same time, preclude the possibility for change. Coming from such diverse registers as avant-garde and exploitation filmmaking, European art cinema, television, and even "classical" Hollywood itself, these tools bespeak an entangled history, wherein moving picture violence emerges by way of circuitous borrowings rather than definitive, teleological breaks.

At the same time, I argue, technological appropriation suggests the extent to which recurrence need not produce identity; rather, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames index the specific concerns of the historical moment in which they appear. Offering pragmatic solutions to filmmakers' stylistic intentions, these tools also supply less deliberate answers to more pervasive desires. For this reason, I treat the aforementioned technologies not only as brute instruments, but also as *figures* that communicate significance in their own rights. In doing so, I draw upon Jean-François Lyotard's notion of figures as wish-fulfillments, which, he argues, reconcile reality with pleasure by drawing "real" material into fantasy's formal matrix.[60] Unlike discourse, which represents "a triumph of intellectuality over sensuality," figures correct unsatisfying realities through concrete, perceptible forms.[61]

My own turn to figures serves to underscore this entanglement of reality and desire, as does the notion of fantasy with which I work. In what follows, fantasy does not imply some

subjective illusion that places us "outside" reality as it "actually" stands. Rather, following Eric L. Santner, I regard fantasy as a "means for securing our adaptation" to the world into which we are thrown.[62] To suggest that multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, or freeze frames figure historical fantasies of vision and violence is to attend to how they not only *give sensuous shape* to on-screen brutality, but also *crystallize* the demand to "see more" that characterizes this period's self-conscious "obsession" with violence.

At the crux of this demand, lies authenticity, which, I contend, animates both the desire to "see more" violence and the desire to violently "see more." A mainstay of modern thought, authenticity, as much as violence, pervades the cultural imagination of late 1960s and early 1970s America.[63] Perhaps best known in its more radical formulations, this preoccupation hinges on the idea that modern rationalism alienates individuals not only from each other, but also from their innermost selves. To restore this loss, individuals must turn away from society and immerse themselves in their most intense desires and feelings. What one discovers "inside" becomes more fundamental, more "real," than the social prescriptions offered by the "outside" world. As a result, authenticity implies self-possession and self-realization as much as a rejection of the world as it ordinarily stands. Authentic individuals uncover what remains concealed to most people, particularly those who subscribe to conventional ideals.

For the New Left, such disclosures constitute a politics. "Men have unrealized potential for self-cultivation, self-direction, self-understanding, and creativity," announces the Port Huron Statement. "The goal of man and society should be human independence: … finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic."[64] And yet, as Marshall Berman has noted, the pursuit of authenticity inflects the rhetoric of the far Right as much as the Left.[65] Whether in the form of the "body count" and napalm or demonstrations and Weather Underground bombings, an aggressive desire to "see more" distinguishes much of American politics during this period. It also characterizes the era's countercultural interests, including uninhibited sex, illicit drug use, the occult, and rock music. Deemed increasingly violent by the end of the 1960s, these practices promise to reverse their participants' interior isolation by serving as tools for apprehending alternative realities. As the media popularizes such techniques through record albums, astrology columns, television, and film, the search for authenticity they represent likewise goes mainstream. Television news, in particular, disseminates this logic with stories that document the "reality" of youth violence and the Vietnam War.

In my view, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames consolidate this authenticity and the vision of violence it supplies. When the eponymous heroes of *Bonnie and Clyde* or *The Wild Bunch* die in hails of gunfire, multiple-speed montage gives spectators more than one view of the viscera that squibs with artificial blood produce. For their part, freeze frames extend the time during which viewers of *Gimme Shelter* (Albert and David Maysles, 1970) or *Night of the Living Dead* (George Romero, 1968) can inspect brutality's physical effects. More than heightening spectatorial views of violence, however, these technologies also evince an interest in the revelatory possibilities of violence and the violence of vision itself. Disrupting the films' narrative progress, such spectacles not only break with Code-era representations, but with everyday visibility as well. Like the aforementioned political and countercultural practices, they reject conventional perception to promise spectators heretofore unseen realities and intense sensory and emotional experiences instead.

In doing so, these technologies also draw upon cinema's own "authenticating" body, which distinguishes itself from other media by maintaining existential links to the objects it represents. A recurrent theme in film theory, this idea finds its best-known expression in André

Bazin's "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" (1945), which argues that the mechanical nature of photography and cinema gives them "credibility absent from all other picture-making."[66] Collecting, storing, and *re-presenting* light from the worlds they encounter, these media transport "reality from the thing to its reproduction" like a "decal" or "transfer."[67]

Though Bazin himself never uses the word, film studies has widely adopted American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of the "index" to describe this sense of cinematic representation. Unlike icons or symbols, which, Peirce argues, signify by way of resemblance or abstraction, indices offer physical, spatial, or causal connections to the world that they signify.[68] Marking "the junction between two portions of experience," they are more than just signs.[69] Indices are also brute facts. They are objects. For this reason, Peirce urges, they always point—or pull—in two directions at once: toward concrete manifestations and the no-longer-discernible forces that constituted them.

On one hand, this notion of cinema as index lends documentary force to even the most fictional films. "No matter how fuzzy, distorted, or discolored," Bazin writes, "no matter how lacking in documentary value, the [photographic or cinematographic] image … shares, by virtue of the very process of its becoming, the being of the model of which it is the reproduction; it *is* the model."[70] On the other hand, however, Bazin is no naïve realist. Photography and cinema may substantiate profilmic realities, but they also interrupt and destabilize them, pointing beyond what is *directly* perceivable to disclose "image[s] of a world that we neither know nor can see."[71] Here, cinema's renowned "objectivity" coincides with the subjectivity it purportedly holds at bay. "An hallucination that is also a fact," film's "credibility"—its "true realism," according to Bazin—emerges when mechanical reproduction provokes the beholder's own creative encounters with reality.[72]

A return to Peirce's semiotics supports this reading of Bazin's approach to cinema and reminds us that the "index," though frequently cited in film studies scholarship, is often misunderstood. Interruptive and exclamatory, indices may direct beholders to their referents "by blind compulsion," but they also beget a kind of logical leaping that introduces uncertainty more than it authenticates existence.[73] Peirce appeals, for instance, to the appearance of lightening. "A tremendous thunderbolt indicates that *something* considerable happened," he writes, and though "it may be expected to connect itself with some other experience," ultimately, "we may not know precisely what the event was."[74] Offering themselves as concrete evidence of eminently imperceptible forces, indices are not "proof" of "objective" certainties as much as irreducible, subjective constructions of fundamentally ambiguous events.

Multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames crystallize this structure in its very contradiction, which is why, I argue, they function so powerfully as figures for late 1960s and early 1970s fantasies of authenticity. Leaning on cinema's capacities for documentation, they may reject conventional perception and promise formerly unknown realities, but their claims to "objective" self-sufficiency mask the spectator's mediating role in this project of unconcealment. At the same time, because these technologies generate sensory experience by way of externalized forms, they confound the supposed "genuineness" of this period's celebrated interiority. Indeed, from this point of view, something rather "inauthentic" haunts the era's claims to authenticity, whether in the form of post-Code brutality or the cultural practices—from aerial reconnaissance and television news to the occult and rock music—that it reinforces and represents.

In the following chapters, I explore the extent to which multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames animate and answer desires to "see more" brutality, not

as ends in themselves, but as corroborations of an authenticity they also unwittingly undermine. The result, I submit, not only reveals the constitutive logics and complex pleasures that most accounts of film violence deny, but also points to the gendered and racialized relations of power from which fantasies of authenticity so often derive.

I begin Chapter Two, "A Parallax View: The Violent Synchrony of Multiple-Speed Montage," with *Bonnie and Clyde*, the brutal conclusion of which marks the Hollywood emergence of multiple-speed montage. Interweaving footage simultaneously shot by multiple cameras running at different speeds, distances, and angles to the action, this technique leaps effortlessly from close-up to long shot, high to low angle, and regular speed to slow motion. The resulting sequences offer spectators privileged views of film violence that rival, I argue, the multifarious presence of multi-camera television broadcasts. Indeed, to the extent that it transforms temporal synchrony into a synthetic spatialized field, multiple-speed montage figures fantasies of authentic omnipresence that extend from televisual simultaneity to military technologies to theories of cinematic spectatorial pleasure.

At the same time, I contend, the technology registers a parallax between synchrony and the linear, causal constructions that actually comprise it. As with the parallax that constitutes stereoscopic vision, this one produces a unified perceptible reality from the encounter of unrecognized heterogeneous views. For this reason, I contend, multiple-speed montage "splits the difference" between disclosure and concealment and gives shape to fantasies of unrestricted visual access, including the legibility of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s otherwise unrepresentable suffering and the omnipotent viewing positions attributed to electronic aerial reconnaissance. Ultimately, I turn to Brian De Palma's split-screen compositions in *Sisters* (1973) as expressions of simultaneity that inescapably foreground its constitutive parallax, corroborating and challenging visual mastery at once.

Chapter Three, "Violence Incarnate: Squibs, Artificial Blood, and Wounds That Speak," explores the relationship between post-Code Hollywood's increasingly explicit representations of bloodshed and the televisual depictions of corporeal violence with which they are frequently compared. Departing from theories of cinema's "competition" with television, I argue for the media's mutual contributions to fantasies of authenticity wherein unexpectedly graphic wounds incarnate realities that otherwise remain off scene. America's "television war" in Vietnam exemplifies such fantasies. Here, chance recordings of wounded combatants interrupt journalistic conventions, granting viewers first-hand experiences of an imperceptible, even ungraspable, war. Squibs (small, explosive devices) and artificial blood extend this offer. Breaking with the history of Hollywood gunplay, including its inviolable bodies and clutch-and-fall deaths, they meet and mobilize spectatorial desires for unattainable, if not impossible, views. They do so, in fact, by breaching the very boundaries between documentary and fiction, reality and representation, that seemingly separate narrative cinema from television news.

In Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969) and Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets* (1973), squibs with artificial blood render bloodletting surprisingly tangible. The result, I suggest, underscores cinema's oft-cited indexicality, its status, according to Peirce, as both material fact and referential sign. As with all indices, the films' wounds become provocations, concrete expressions of no-longer-discernible forces that command our attention and challenge us to ask what a given reality proves. For this reason, I contend, squibs with artificial blood not only promise what the Production Code formerly prohibited, but also solicit and satisfy demands for revelation that televisual fantasies of authenticity likewise share. At the same time, however, the technologies undermine cinema's evidential capacities and the limited conception of indexicality

upon which they depend. Returning to Peirce's semiotics, I emphasize the uncertainty he attributes to the index and the provisional, retroactive constructions—not mere reconstructions—it motivates. From this point of view, the wounds in films such as *The Wild Bunch* or *Mean Streets* bespeak cinema's and television's unstable solutions to the problem of capturing the real—a particularly salient discovery, given the masculine and national integrities to which their perceived authenticity is so frequently linked.

Finally, in Chapter Four, "'Hitting the Vérité Jackpot': The Ecstatic Profits of Freeze-Framed Violence," I propose that the conspicuous appearance of the freeze frame in commercial cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s figures the widespread popularization of ecstatic fantasy in American culture in general. Most commonly expressed as the state of being "beside oneself," ecstasy literally means "to cause to stand outside"; it offers momentarily what only death makes permanent—an encounter with what precedes and exceeds the mediation of our individuated consciousnesses. Unexpectedly erupting in the midst of cinema's regular unfolding, the freeze frame, too, implies standing outside conventional experience, violently wrenched from dominant forms. It sets the contingent instantaneity of photography against cinema's relatively abstract and ever-changing construction, promising to circumvent time, space, and even human perception to construct an encounter that stands outside everyday, as well as cinematic, experience. In this, the freeze frame joins the era's other rituals of authentication, including the occult and rock music, which pit "internal" alienation against an "external" and presumably more "authentic" abundance.

And yet, because freeze frames *still move,* however imperceptibly, they also point, I contend, to authenticity's own indeterminate, overlooked, and "inauthentic" origins. Bearing out the historical significance of this discovery, I analyze two films, Albert and David Maysles' *Gimme Shelter* (1970) and George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), both of which use freeze frames to disclose the details of a black man's murder. If, as commentators suggest, these films offer "proof" of this period's violent, even apocalyptic, tendencies, it is not, I argue, for the brutality of their perceptible content alone. Rather, the indiscernible form of the freeze frame reveals the self-serving hypostatizations of "inside" and "outside," self and other, upon which the era's ecstatic fantasies unwittingly depend.

In each chapter, then, technology unites cinematic with sociocultural histories, permitting me to take neither the form, nor the fact, of film violence for granted. Too often, that is, the constitution of graphic brutality is abstractly presumed rather than concretely or historically articulated, while its relationship to broader social or cultural horizons is expressed as a simple, unidirectional reflection. Thinking multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, or freeze frames as figures allows me to emphasize sensuous form and recognize how these technologies both reflect and rejoin unsatisfying realities in ways that a given historical moment may not itself realize. Figures, as I have suggested, crystallize, or concentrate, heterogeneous desires and practices, distilling the fantasies these generate *and* the contradictions that inhabit them. Answering demands to "see more" violence, the technologies I explore here refract its promises, illuminating the troubling political consequences that so frequently attend authenticity.

These consequences resituate the sadism regularly attributed to such views by suggesting that truly troubling brutality lies less in the desire to "see more" violence, or violently "see more," than in the racist or masculinist assumptions upon which authenticity depends. From this point of view, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, or freeze frames afford a heretofore unacknowledged critical position. Marked by what I—following Laura Mulvey's recommendation in "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema"—call "passionate detachment," this

position appreciates this era's curiosity and fervor for discovery while warily attending to the more brutal consequences of demonstrative violence. Though certainly not the avant-garde or political works that Mulvey envisions in her text, the films I explore here do, I think, illuminate what conceptions of senseless, sadistic excess deny: the sociocultural significance—and historical shortcomings—of cinematic brutality for the past and for today.

Chapter 2
A Parallax View: The Violent Synchrony of Multiple-Speed Montage

On December 8, 1967, the cover of *Time* announced Hollywood's "New Cinema" with images of Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) [Figure 4]. America's answer to François Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard, the film, according to the magazine, epitomized contemporary assaults on traditional cinema by drawing together "Violence … Sex … Art …."[1] Coupling nudity and impotence with protracted and bloody deaths, *Bonnie and Clyde* also privileged ambiguity, chance, and incoherence, not unlike "abstract painting, atonal music, and the experimental novel."[2] It may come as little surprise, then, to discover that the aforementioned cover features a Robert Rauschenberg collage based on Penn's film rather than a conventional production still or publicity poster.[3]

In fact, in 1968, Rauschenberg produced a series of six lithographs titled *Reels (B+C)* that variously repeat and juxtapose images from *Bonnie and Clyde* [Figures 5 – 7]. As with much of his collage work during this period, *Reels (B+C)* appropriates photographs from popular sources that index the era's preoccupation with, among other things, violence. One thinks, for instance, of Rauschenberg's 1970 screenprint *Signs,* which brings stills from the Zapruder film together with images of Vietnam, youth protests, the Kennedy brothers, and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dead body [Figure 8].[4] Despite the apparent unity of their content, however, the form of these works frustrates determinate interpretations of its significance. Subject to recursive changes in focus, beholders must navigate incompatible contexts and scales while weighing individual elements against the compositions to which they contribute and from which they distract.

Take the *Time* cover, which situates four images across three horizontal panels, the lowest of which is split into two. Moving from center to periphery, the viewer regards each still separately before conceiving the whole. Yet even this synthesis is troubled by a host of internal incongruities. Foremost among these are the panels that produce separate channels even as Rauschenberg's irregular color flows across their makeshift boundaries. In fact, the painterliness of the color is itself at odds with *Bonnie and Clyde*'s mechanical reproduction, pitting cinematic realism against fantastically garish hues. Disorienting, too, are the moves from medium shot, to close-up, to long shot that accompany each image, not to mention the rotation of Bonnie's (Faye Dunaway's) visage and the flipped negative that *Time*'s title partially obscures. In general, we might say, the cover's components are joined but, at the same time, separate. Challenging beholders to forge connections among them, the images also indefinitely defer this task's completion.

***

I belabor Rauschenberg's take on *Bonnie and Clyde* because the painter's collages resemble—however accidentally—the multiple-speed montage that comprises the film's violent contribution to "new" Hollywood.[5] A technique that interweaves footage shot by multiple, synchronized cameras, multiple-speed montage generates images of varying distances, angles, and speeds. For *Bonnie and Clyde*'s death scene, Penn tethered four cameras to film from roughly the same perspective, then repeated that set-up from

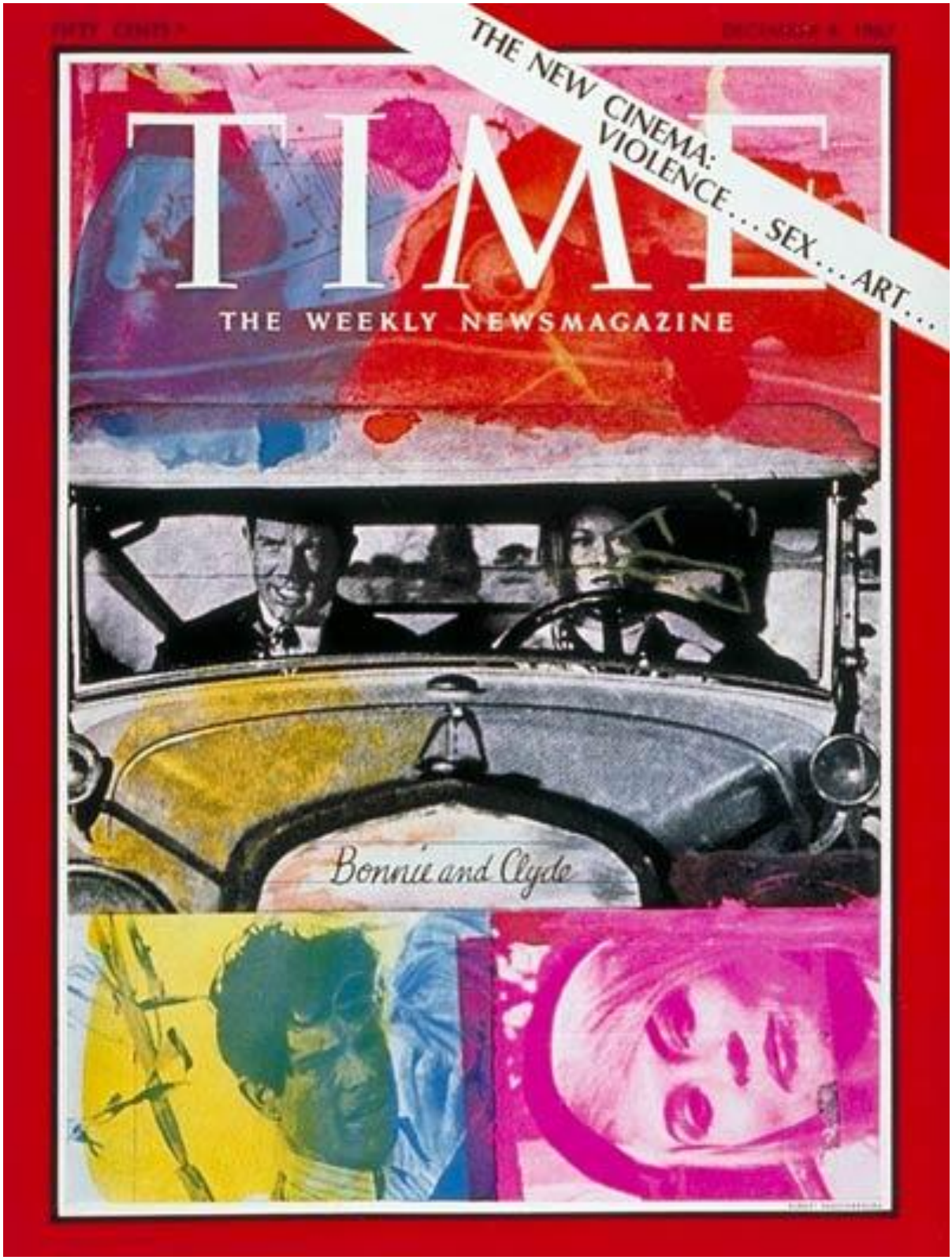


Figure 4: *Bonnie and Clyde* on the cover of *Time*, December 8, 1967



Figure 5: Robert Rauschenberg, *Reels (B+C): Storyline I*, 1968



Figure 6: Robert Rauschenberg, *Reels (B+C): Storyline II*, 1968



Figure 7: Robert Rauschenberg, *Reels (B+C): Storyline III*, 1968

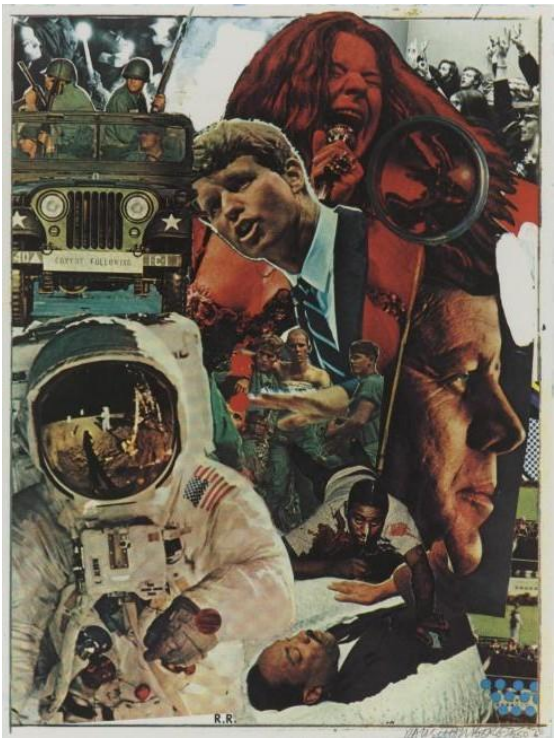


Figure 8: Robert Rauschenberg, *Signs*, 1970

multiple vantage points.[6] The cameras, though they shot simultaneously, recorded the scene at rates of 24, 48, 72, and 96 frames per second, producing footage from standard speed to just one-quarter of it.[7] Edited in postproduction, the resulting film effortlessly leaps from close-up to long shot, high to low angle, standard speed to slow motion, giving the spectator a dizzying survey of machine-gun fire's effects on Bonnie's and Clyde's (Warren Beatty's) bodies.

The sheer number of views produced by multiple-speed montage tends to emphasize their incongruity. Like Rauschenberg's collages, Penn's sequence derives from divergent scales and contexts. Rapid-fire close-ups of Clyde, Bonnie, and the bushes that conceal their opponents give way to wider shots that capture bodily spasms and, later, to long, high-angle framings that reveal the pair's relative positions in space [Figures 9 – 12]. Though eyeline matches between the protagonists initially provide some continuity between cuts, the couple's anxious and isolated looks out of frame prefigure the ensuing perceptual chaos. Indeed, at one point, the film repeats Clyde's fall to the ground from three angles and at two different speeds. Placed in succession, these shots—like the outlaws' inexplicably migrating wounds—permit spectators to distinguish among the incompatible takes that actually comprise the montage.[8]

Despite these incongruities, however, the sequence also strives to synthesize conflicting components. After its split-second start, the editing slows to a somewhat more accommodating pace. Spectators have time to consider the assaults that toss and tear Bonnie and Clyde, something the film's repetitions and use of slow motion likewise facilitate. In fact, its increasingly extended duration, distance, and speed often work against the indeterminate readings that Rauschenberg's lithographs hold open. As the sequence concludes, two of its longest shots underscore this sense of completion. In the first, Clyde's once uncontrollable body rolls 360 degrees in quarter-time before reaching a halt. In the second, Bonnie's arm languidly drops to her side as the machine gun ceases its fire. Together, both shots seem to restore details multiple-speed montage has lost. Smoothing over the gaps privileged by Rauschenberg's collages, they allow spectators to "see more" of life's imperceptible movement toward death.

From this point of view, Penn's film departs from the experimental forms to which *Time* initially compares it. "What matters most about *Bonnie and Clyde*," the magazine urges, "is … its yoking of disparate elements into a coherent artistic whole—the creation of unity from incongruity."[9] Unlike its antecedents in avant-garde or art cinema, the film turns to slow motion's historical affiliation with disclosure to stabilize vision as much as unsettle everyday appearance. Moreover, in transforming the temporal synchrony of its four cameras into a synthetic spatialized field, multiple-speed montage aims at an omnipresent simultaneity that provides spectators with every conceivable view. In this, one finds the influence of a comparatively unexperimental contemporary form: "Oddly enough," *Time* writes, "younger moviemen credit *television* with a major role in paving the way for acceptance of the new in films."[10] Television, after all, also promises revelation and simultaneity by way of slow motion and multiple cameras.

Though certainly less frequent on television than in avant-garde and art cinema, slow motion gives viewers the chance to analyze once unobservable details. Best known for its contributions to "instant replay" during televised sports, slow motion originated with the broadcast of Lee Harvey Oswald's murder in 1963. Originally transmitted live by NBC, Oswald's shooting was repeatedly replayed in slow motion in the hours



Figure 9: Rapid close-ups initiate *Bonnie and Clyde*'s conclusion. (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)



Figure 10: Close-ups give way to wider shots of Clyde (Warren Beatty) …
(Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)



Figure 11: … and Bonnie (Faye Dunaway). (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)



Figure 12: Wide framings reveal the pair's relative positions. (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)

following the event. The result helped assure viewers of "what really happened" by supplying them with what may have been missed during the initial broadcast. Transposed to an Army-Navy football game just five weeks later, this experience of "authentic" disclosure was compounded by sports programming's effortless moves from taped instant replays to the immediacy of simultaneous transmission.[11]

Television's use of multiple cameras is also linked to conceptions of "liveness" and authenticity. Emerging during the "golden age" of New York – based variety and anthology series, multiple-camera setups permitted directors to cut to different angles, characters, and sets without disrupting the "real time" of live transmissions. Even when television moved to Hollywood-produced programs on film in the early 1960s, many shows continued to use multiple cameras for recordings with "live" audiences. To be sure, jumps from camera to camera fragment televisual space, but multiple-camera setups also tend to disguise these leaps by privileging the temporal continuity that simultaneous broadcast requires. In this sense, the move between cameras resembles television's distribution of programming types across a time block, which, *Time* suggests, can "abrupt[ly] leap from news about Vietnam to *Gomer Pyle* to toothpaste ads."[12] This structure, on one hand, corresponds to more experimental forms. "TV is best at … sudden shifts of reality," argues director Richard Lester, who, like Penn, began his career on television. "TV, not *Last Year at Marienbad*, made the audience notice them for the first time."[13] On the other hand, meanwhile, television's discrete units comprise what Raymond Williams has called "flow," which diminishes distinctions among individual programs in favor of "sequences" that offer unified wholes.[14]

In what follows, I trace this tension between fragment and whole, incongruity and synthesis, which, as I have suggested, characterizes multiple media during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Focusing on *Bonnie and Clyde*, I argue that multiple-speed montage figures this tension and the broader fantasies of authenticity that it both corroborates and confounds. Though its divergent and overlapping views do violence to transparently linear sequences, they also unify these pieces to assure spectatorial omnipresence and perceptual mastery. "Seeing more" violence thus implies other forms of brutality, particularly to the extent that multiple-speed montage engages contemporary military technologies and questions of sadistic cinematic pleasure. Still, in splitting the difference between definitive and more indeterminate disclosures, multiple-speed montage registers the parallaxes between authenticity and its heterogeneous sources. What these parallaxes might mean for the fantasies figured by multiple-speed montage is something I pursue through *Bonnie and Clyde*'s introduction of the technique into American cinema.

unity from incongruity

[Bonnie and Clyde] *is … pitilessly cruel, filled with sympathy, nauseating, funny, heartbreaking, and astonishingly beautiful*.—Roger Ebert, September 25, 1967

I want to begin my study of multiple-speed montage with a look at *Bonnie and Clyde*'s historical reception and the technology's contemporary theorization, both of which betray conflicts concerning incongruity and synthesis. In the case of reception, one finds that reviews following *Bonnie and Clyde*'s initial release are preoccupied with the film's more or less successful attempts to reconcile narrative and affective inconsistencies. With regard to narrative, critics frequently collide over *Bonnie and*

Clyde's apparent flattening of historical "fact" and Hollywood fiction. The film, reads *Time*'s review, offers a "purposeless mingling of fact and claptrap."[15] At *The New York Times*, Bosley Crowther dedicates one of three excoriating columns to *Bonnie and Clyde*'s biographical inaccuracies. Warren Beatty's "light-hearted, show-offish" portrayal of Clyde

> is mannered playacting of a hick that bears no more resemblance to Barrow than it does to Jesse James. And the sweet prettified indication of Bonnie that Faye Dunaway conveys is a totally romantic exoneration of that ugly and vicious little dame. … This is an indication of the kind of cheating with the bare and ugly truth that Mr. Penn, his writers, and Mr. Beatty have done in this garish, grotesque film that makes the crimes of Clyde and Bonnie quite hilarious.[16]

Though he overtly denounces *Bonnie and Clyde*'s lack of historical fidelity, Crowther's quest for authenticity apparently indexes graver concerns about the film's mix of violence and entertainment and the spectator's potentially playful relationship to them.

Indeed, anxieties regarding the facticity of Penn's film generally accompany negative reviews of its incompatible affective registers. *Bonnie and Clyde* "incongruously couples comedy with crime," reports a bemused *Variety*.[17] More than bewildered, the *Chicago Tribune* imputes malice to the film's "frivolous approach," which "presents the couple's criminal career as a kind of musical romp."[18] Here, as elsewhere, critics worry that levity trivializes, perhaps even authorizes, the violent acts of the protagonists. Worse, it offers viewers little guidance in how to respond to the bloodshed. "Blending … farce with brutal killings is as pointless as it is lacking in taste," Crowther argues, "since it makes no valid commentary upon the already travestied truth."[19] Those who disagree find purpose in *Bonnie and Clyde*'s shifts from humor to horror, which, according to Pauline Kael, keep the "audience in a kind of eager, nervous imbalance."[20] Spectators are only amused, she writes, until they "catch the first bullet right in the face."[21] Here, the film's tone, though inconsistent, contradictorily consolidates its moral significance.

This play of incongruity and synthesis also characterizes the relationship between discrepancies of fact and fiction and *Bonnie and Clyde*'s violence. Crowther would care less about historical accuracy, he suggests, if spectators saw less brutality. The film's "ridiculous camp-tinctured travesties … 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."[22] This mix of laughter with cruelty is all the more worrisome, he argues, because so many people believe that *Bonnie and Clyde* holds "some sort of meaningful statement for the times in which we live."[23] Authenticity matters, Crowther intimates, when reality and representation do not maintain their properly incompatible identities. Still, for a large number of viewers, these entangled categories secure *Bonnie and Clyde*'s overall significance. "Arthur Penn has not made an educational or historical filmstrip," urges one *New York Times* reader in a letter to Crowther, but "the film makes an intelligent comment … about America's heritage of crime and its penchant for violence, so evident today."[24] Eschewing fact, the film somehow discloses reality by way of fiction. What is "authentic" in *Bonnie and Clyde* is contemporary America's desire to

"see more" violence, something that multiple-speed montage, like the protagonists' own mass-mediated antics, makes all the more visible.[25]

Given this history, it is perhaps unsurprising that theorizations of multiple-speed montage pursue "seeing more" as a question of oppositional aesthetics and divergent spectatorial responses that potentially transcend everyday reality. Such is Stephen Prince's argument in repeated assessments of the technology across his body of work.[26] In fact, though multiple-speed montage is the most thoroughly discussed of the technological figures that comprise this dissertation, Prince offers the only sustained account of its appearance in scenes of Hollywood brutality during the late 1960s and early 1970s. For him, *Bonnie and Clyde* mediates the development of multiple-speed montage in its passage from Akira Kurosawa's experiments with multiple cameras and slow motion in the 1950s and early 1960s to its mature elaboration in Sam Peckinpah's work of the late 1960s and 1970s. Beginning with *Seven Samurai* (1954), Kurosawa regularly employed three to five cameras to extend his coverage of complicated fight scenes. Fifteen years later, Peckinpah would use six separate cameras, running at 24, 30, 60, 90, and 120 frames per second, to film the climactic battle of *The Wild Bunch* (1969). The slow motion produced by five of these cameras also owes to the work of Kurosawa, whose interest in protracted footage of violence and death emerges as early as *Sanshiro Sugata* (1943), according to Prince.[27]

In fact, Prince's investigation of multiple-speed montage focuses on slow motion more than any other technique. Its power, he argues, lies in decelerated motion's conflict with standard-speed footage, incongruously joining aesthetic beauty to corporeal brutality. "By alternating the tempo between slow and apparently accelerated [motion]," Prince writes of *Bonnie and Clyde*, "Penn vividly brings out the alternately balletic and spastic qualities of the scene."[28] Slow motion makes time elastic, extending the duration in which viewers may inspect brutal events, while standard-speed images and sounds supply the dynamism and sensuous physicality it reputedly lacks. Together, this juxtaposition of opposing elements generates a "synthesized collage of activity" that forcefully reveals the once imperceptible details of the body's loss of volition.[29] Whether momentary insert or part of an extended sequence, slow motion permits spectators to note the intimate consequences of physical violence.

In this, Prince's analysis of multiple-speed montage resembles historical accounts of slow motion, which look to avant-garde and art cinemas—the technique's traditional homes—to defamiliarize and potentially redeem everyday reality. "Slow motion not only reveals familiar aspects of movement," Walter Benjamin argues, "but discloses quite unknown aspects with them. … It is another nature which speaks to the camera as compared to the eye. 'Other' above all in the sense that a space informed by human consciousness gives way to a space informed by the unconscious."[30] Prince, however unwittingly, conjures a similarly unconscious optics when he insists that Hollywood's slow-motion inserts divulge more than external, bodily damage. "It is not just the moment of violent death which is extended [by decelerated movement]," he writes, "but the mysteries inherent in that twilit zone between consciousness and autonomic impulse."[31] Indeed, to the extent that it captures the body's invisible instincts, Prince's conception of slow motion surpasses even Benjamin's account of what the device can make visible.

The closest analogue, in this sense, may be Linda Williams' account of the "money shot," modern pornography's requisite display of the man's ejaculating penis. Promising spectators visual evidence of sexual ecstasy, the money shot appears to arrive at "the mechanical 'truth' of bodily pleasure caught in involuntary spasm," writes Williams, "the ultimate and uncontrollable—ultimate *because* uncontrollable—confession of sexual pleasure in the climax of orgasm."[32] In *Bonnie and Clyde*, slow motion purports to expose the body's irrepressible admission of pain as it submits to the violent, though typically imperceptible, extinction of consciousness. At stake is a "privileged glimpse at the metaphysical mysteries of violent death," argues Prince.[33] In this "frenzy of the visible," as Williams calls it, following French film historian Jean-Louis Comolli, one senses the late 1960s and early 1970s preoccupation with intense subjective experiences as that which provides something more "authentic" than perceptible, external reality.[34] As with *Deep Throat* (Gerard Damiano, 1972), *Bonnie and Clyde* extends this intensity to its spectators, who, though they do not witness "real" violence, certainly experience fervid feelings of desire and disgust.

Of course, as Williams is quick to suggest, the money shot's authentic revelation of sexual pleasure requires that the man disengage from the very act that presumably imparts it. Moreover, because pornography uses male ejaculation to substantiate the woman's comparatively invisible and unverifiable orgasm, the attempt to document bodily "truth" is compromised still further. The money shot's spectacular visibility "extends only to a knowledge of the hydraulics of male ejaculation," she writes, "which, though certainly of interest, is a poor substitute for the knowledge of female wonders that the genre as a whole still seeks."[35] Bonnie's and Clyde's death throes may only profess to divulge their own brutally painful extinctions, but the "metaphysical mysteries" slow motion presumably supplies still aim to hide the splits between inside and outside, mind and body, visible and invisible, upon which these disclosures actually rely.[36] From this point of view, the synthetic union of opposites appears just that—*synthetic*, a rather inauthentic fusion of what the film otherwise designates as separate.

In his analysis of Peckinpah, Prince makes sure to emphasize the filmmaker's unabashed artificiality, then liquidates this claim by reasserting slow motion's authenticity. "It is notable that critics have discussed Peckinpah's work as if its use of bloody squibs and slow motion was more realistic than previous generations of Hollywood gunfights. It certainly is bloodier," he remarks, "but Peckinpah's is far from a realist's aesthetic."[37] His comments recall Comolli's own warning that the "frenzy of the visible" evinced by cinema's "accumulation of technical processes" does not make film content "more real," but rather and quite simply, "more visible."[38] Peckinpah's use of slow motion also "demands a continuing perceptual reorientation from viewers," writes Prince, who, like Kael in her review of *Bonnie and Clyde*, seems to believe the film's many incongruities keep spectators off balance and thus preclude a self-possessed, even composed, attitude toward violence.[39] At the same time, however, Peckinpah's or Penn's work—not to mention Prince's estimation of it—lays claim to the "truth" of corporeal brutality as much as it strives to destabilize reality. On this point, a film such as *Bonnie and Clyde* departs from its precedents in avant-garde and art cinema, which typically used slow motion's revelations to suggest the indeterminacy of reality and human perception. Instead, Penn's film approaches the apparently definitive depictions of

violence on television news, which, by their own accounts, proved more pressing for Hollywood filmmakers.

Both Penn and Peckinpah expressly connect their films' synthetic constructions to the electronic medium and its representations of political assassinations, urban unrest, and, in particular, the war in Vietnam. "Every night on the news we saw kids in Vietnam being airlifted out in body bags, with blood all over the place. Why … the cinema had to be immaculate, I'll never know," Penn later told interviewers.[40] In this "real-world context," Prince asserts, "Penn considered the film's make-believe violence appropriate and justifiable."[41] Peckinpah, meanwhile, went further, explicitly contending that multiple-speed montage subverted televisual brutality's purportedly dangerous consequences. The filmmaker, Prince writes, "felt that people had become inured to violence through the medium of television, which domesticated the violence of the Vietnam War and, by sandwiching it between commercials, insinuated it into the daily routines of consumer life."[42] To interrupt this flow, Peckinpah turned to multiple-speed montage, which would "alternately immerse viewers in the spectacle on screen and then realign their perspective through the nonrealistic slow-motion insertions."[43] Accompanying this decidedly incongruous and indeterminate aesthetic, however, was an impulse to show, as Peckinpah put it, "violence as it *is*."[44] Inadvertently abetting the authenticity one associates with television news, this impulse partakes of the "reality" it seeks to correct by subsuming slow motion's disruptive effects under a totalizing vision of what constitutes violence and death.

Television's relationship to multiple-speed montage does not end—or, for that matter, most immediately begin—with slow motion, however. Rather, Penn's and Peckinpah's use of multiple cameras also owes a debt to the televisual medium. Far less examined by Prince than slow motion, multiple cameras make possible the extensive crosscutting between film speeds that he does explore in detail. As with his analysis of the slow-motion insert, Prince's take on what he calls "montage set-pieces" begins by underscoring the incompatible elements of crosscutting, which interrupt spatiotemporal linearity to produce a "collage-like structure" that supports formerly unthinkable relations among segments.[45] A film such as *The Wild Bunch* effects "an artistic transformation of space, time, and perception by rendering space and time as totally plastic and unstable entities."[46] To the extent that "the resulting stylistic transcends a naturalistic presentation of violence," however, it also implies the metaphysical promise of slow-motion inserts.[47] Penn or Peckinpah unsettle spatiotemporal realities by using multiple cameras to capture a single event, but they also tend to transform that synchrony into a vision of authentic omnipresence that aims to preserve every line and detail of the action.

In the end, Prince argues, this attempt to show "violence for *what it is*" can only fail, not because it aims at an impossibly commanding ideal of authenticity—with this, he apparently agrees—but rather, because it unavoidably places viewers in sadistic spectatorial positions.[48] "The very stylization that Peckinpah thought would wake people up to the horror of violence," Prince contends, "instead excited and gratified many."[49] When authenticity fails, he seems to suggest, sadism is the inevitable result. And yet, I submit, Prince does not recognize the extent to which his account situates spectatorship between two equally totalizing and violent conceptions. Whereas authenticity implies omnipotent distance, sadism connotes inescapably brutal visual pleasures. In either case, the dislocations that promise to realign spectatorial relationships to violence are lost to an

all-encompassing singularity that, as I shall demonstrate, fantasmatically partakes of televisual simultaneity, Vietnam-era reconnaissance technologies, and burgeoning theorizations of cinema's repressive pleasures. For this reason, my analysis of multiple-speed montage does not investigate slow motion and its revelatory successes or failures. Instead, it interrogates *Bonnie and Clyde*'s use of synchronized multiple cameras, which, I argue, crystallize the conflict between incongruity and synthesis that comprises authenticity and its constitutive parallaxes.

see more now

Despite its massive heterogeneity, there does seem to us a single, coherent language of television to which all its different practices can be referred.—Stuart Hall, *Sight and Sound*, 1976

Multiple cameras are not unique to television or to post-Code Hollywood filmmaking, though their appearance in both media follows a rather lengthy hiatus in "classical" cinema of the mid-1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Earlier, during the industry's conversion to sound, multiple cameras allowed editors to cut within scenes without compromising a film's dialogue or diegetic sound effects. Before postsynchronization became widespread in the early 1930s, cinema modeled itself on the live radio broadcasts from which it borrowed technology and personnel. Sound and image were captured at the same time to preserve the illusion of audiovisual synchronization. This was particularly true for the Vitaphone system, which recorded sound directly onto autonomous, non-filmic discs. To preserve more than one view of an actor's performance meant employing multiple, synchronous cameras, which could be situated at varying angles and distances to the "live" action.

Jack Robin's (Al Jolson's) numbers in the Vitaphone feature *The Jazz Singer* (Alan Crosland, 1927) provide an early example. While singing "Toot Toot Tootsie" before a small, diegetic crowd, Jack begins to hand whistle the song's chorus. Initially depicted in medium long shot, this performative detail motivates the film's cut to a close-up, which, to maintain audiovisual continuity, Crosland shot at the same time as the wider framing. Also filmed simultaneously was the full shot to which *The Jazz Singer* leaps when Jack begins to dance. Preserving, once again, the performer's uninterrupted vocal recording, this cut also underscores his most visually significant movements.

Developed by cinematographer Ed Du Par for shooting programs of Vitaphone shorts, this multiple-camera technique rests somewhat uncomfortably in *The Jazz Singer*, a largely single-camera, non-vocal feature. The result, argues Charles Wolfe, is a strikingly incongruous film, a "hybrid text," that is both silent and "talkie," feature and short, fiction and documentary.[50] Rapidly replacing cinema's live vaudeville and musical prologues between 1927 and 1929, Vitaphone shorts anthologized the images and sounds of popular entertainments with fully synchronized recordings. Vitaphone features, meanwhile, offered spectators extended linear narratives accompanied by independently recorded and postsynchronized soundtracks and loosely diegetic sound effects. In most ways, they resembled silent films, except that their once live musical accompaniments now emanated from discs. With *The Jazz Singer,* the two forms met in a fictionalized plot punctuated by vocal performances that, to varying degrees, interrupted the feature's overwhelmingly "silent" unfolding with synchronized sound and near documentary recordings of "live" musical numbers.

The simultaneity of the film's camerawork only compounds these disruptions, which imply an immediacy, a presence, that the larger narrative lacks. When *The Jazz Singer* jumps from long shot to close-up, its aim, argues Wolfe, is not to subjectify space. Rather, its multiple cameras preserve audiovisual continuity across cuts to emphasize the living corporeal embodiment of the sound's source.[51] As a result, these images attenuate the loss of the live performer that Vitaphone shorts actually introduced. They seek "to make an absent figure at once audible and visible," Wolfe writes, "to demonstrate—despite a technological divorcement of camera-projector and microphone-speaker—an original unity and causal relation between body and sound at the moment the sound was produced."[52] Corroborating this cohesive presence, he adds, is Jolson's own persona—"authenticated by his singular voice"—which, along with the conspicuous frontality and direct address of his performances, ensures his "factual" self outpaces his status as the fictional Jack Robin.[53]

This is not to suggest that *The Jazz Singer*'s narrative does not, in some sense, decrease the gaps between itself and the vocalized passages. The plotting of the fictional feature certainly helps suture the ruptures that its documentary "shorts" introduce. Moreover, as Wolfe suggests, the musical numbers themselves exhibit a kind of latent fictivity, particularly when, as in the "Toot Toot Tootsie" sequence, the film employs a diegetic audience and rudimentary shot, reverse shot structures to supply a modicum of continuity. More interesting for my purposes, however, are the unifying efforts that characterize the synchronized segments themselves. As much as these numbers introduce an incongruous immediacy, even "liveness," into their comparatively "canned" narrative frame, their simultaneous recording of sound and image generates a sense of "authentic" presence that not only synthesizes past and present performances, but also permits one to have the best possible account when multiple vantages combine without compromising the film's auditory stability.

Multiple-camera setups returned to prominence in early 1950s television, where they created new fantasies of immediacy and authenticity by corroborating the medium's "liveness" through somewhat unexpected means. On one hand, multiple cameras lent television a conventionally "cinematic" appearance, granting live anthology series such as *The Philco Television Playhouse* (NBC, 1948 – 1955) the basics of continuity editing [Figure 13 – 14]. The result, which disarticulated space to preserve the broadcast's "real time," allowed television to accomplish "with enviable ease" what, according to Charles Barr, "cinema might have to do rather laboriously."[54] On the other hand, of course, it is precisely this ease, which, by circumventing the labors of postproduction, distinguishes multiple-camera broadcasts from Hollywood montage. When live television cuts between dislocated spaces, it does so "here and now," unlike cinema, which subjects its images to delays of film development and editorial reordering. Even Vitaphone shorts, which rely upon multiple, synchronous recordings at the level of production, *re-present* the past when it comes to exhibition. Television, meanwhile, purports to *present* the present at the very moment the apparatus records and transmits it. Production and reception become virtually simultaneous.

Though distinct from Vitaphone's "liveness," this simultaneity is no less contradictory; television's multiple cameras assure omnipresence by disguising its unavoidable disruptions. At first glance, for instance, multiple cameras seem to insure live television against the threat of broken transmissions; if one camera stops working,

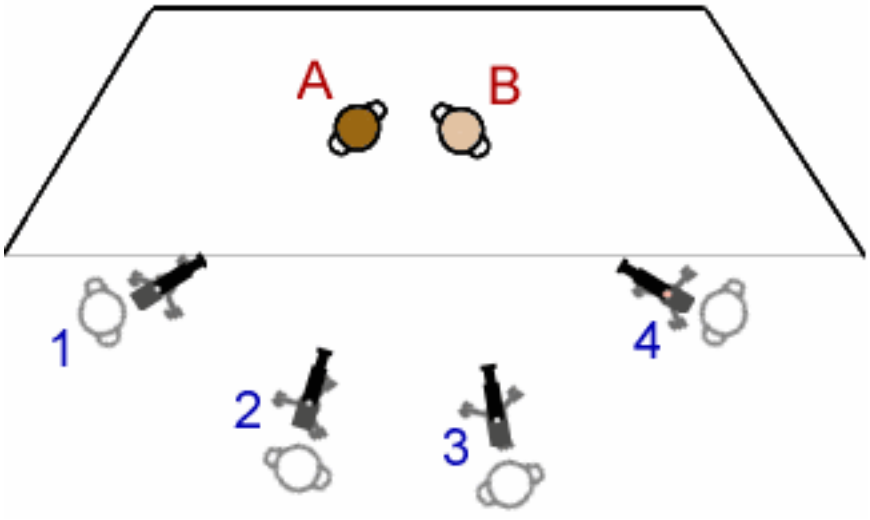


Figure 13: Diagram of a multiple-camera setup

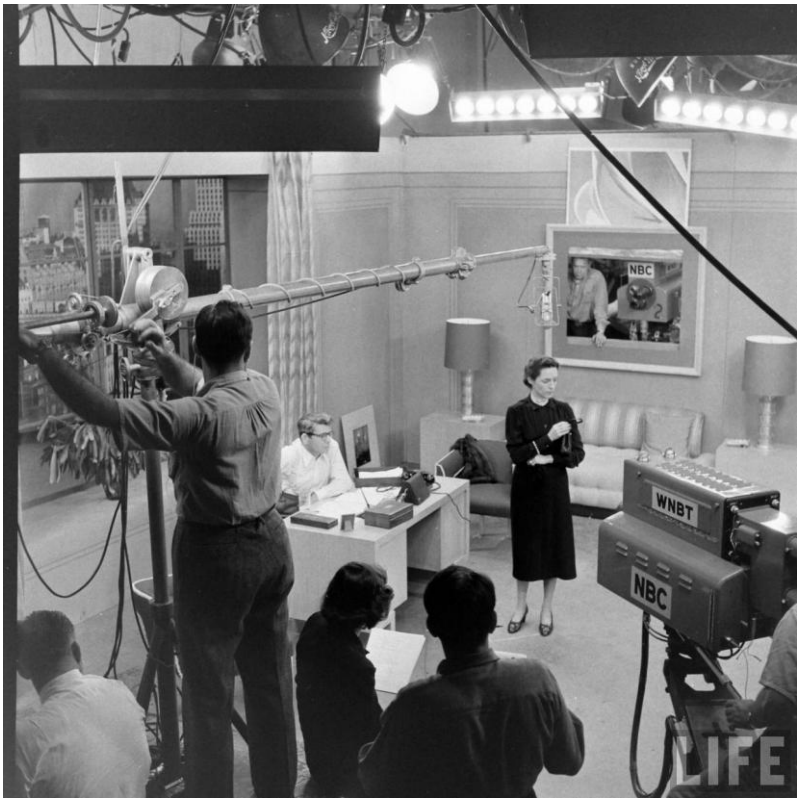


Figure 14: *The Philco Television Playhouse* (W. Eugene Smith, 1948)

another takes its place.[55] In reality, however, these setups offered no respite from the broadcast clock and its prohibition against retakes. They also weakened the director's compositional control and introduced opportunities for error during exchanges between cameras. From this point of view, multiple cameras *retained*, rather than restrained, the "dangers" of live transmission. Missed cues or forgotten lines only strengthened television's claims to instantaneous broadcast and simultaneous reception. Mary Ann Doane makes a similar point in her own account of the medium's "liveness," which, she submits, gathers its urgency from the temporality of catastrophe.[56] Implying technological failure and unexpected death, catastrophe names the violently unassimilable moments that accompany events such as plane crashes. These moments, Doane argues, supply television with its claims to immediacy, yet in covering them, the medium necessarily extends their duration, compromising the very presence it otherwise seeks.

Live transmissions are, in this sense, always too late; they render visible an inescapably past and imperceptible "now." The coverage of President Kennedy's assassination offers a formative—perhaps *the* formative—example in this regard. For four days following the shooting, networks used live broadcasts to "anchor" myriad field reports, interviews with witnesses, and hurriedly compiled documentaries. Spatializing catastrophe to secure immediate access to "authentic" realities, television transposed an irreducible instant into heterogeneous locations and a variety of sources and media. At the same time, however, this heterogeneity managed, even delimited, the discontinuity and indeterminacy that accompanied the violence and attempts to report it.[57] Television embraced "breaking news" to exploit then deny the incongruities and impediments its simultaneity actually "contains."

In the world of live fiction, multiple cameras served a similar purpose, fracturing "here" so as to make more "now" visible. To edit a scene in "real time" propagated the present while incompatibly extending its duration. It also turned exigencies at the site of production toward the spectator's immediate reception at home. For this reason, I argue, multiple cameras not only recouped "lost" time, but also unified space. They intensified the efforts to overcome distance that characterizes "tele-vision" both in practice and in name. With television, writes Samuel Weber, viewers "see things from places—and hence, from perspectives and points of view (*and it is not trivial that these are often more than one*)—where his or her body is not (and often never can be) situated."[58] This may be true of cinema, too, but television aims to guarantee the "now" of both *here* and *there*. It "splits" vision, Weber contends, to surmount the divorce between viewer and viewed. Multiple cameras compounded this action for viewers of "golden-age" drama. Dividing perception across diverse views, they transformed "seeing more" into "seeing more now."

In the late 1950s and 1960s, when television increasingly abandoned live broadcast, multiple cameras persisted among particular series. Programs such as *I Love Lucy* (CBS, 1951 – 57) and, later, *The Dick Van Dyke Show* (CBS; 1961 – 66), for instance, shot on film and with three cameras before a "live" studio audience. As in the "golden age," these performances were largely continuous and, except in emergency circumstances, filmed without retakes. Editing, meanwhile, "was a largely mechanical process," according to Barr, and followed "the pattern of cuts between cameras that would have been done on air … had it been transmitted live."[59] Ostensibly, the system

was motivated by considerations such as error and the quality of future rebroadcasts. Film and videotape abated the threat of technological failure that accompanied live transmissions. Still, this reason alone does not explain the recourse to multiple cameras, single takes, and in-studio viewers on the part of some programs. Rather, these techniques seem to emerge as supplements to television's "new" lack of imminent catastrophe. To the extent, moreover, that shooting on film did not diminish the quality of simultaneous transmissions like earlier off-air recordings, it provided networks with comparatively "*live*-like" images for rebroadcasts on future dates and in multiple time zones.

From this point of view, the loss of broadcast to film and, later, videotape, did not blunt, but rather, sharpened fantasies of televisual simultaneity. Live or not, multiple cameras animated and answered demands to "see more now" by synchronously recording more than one view of a given performance. Along with studio audiences, whose laugher substantiated the place of production, they infused reception with the multifarious presence that "authentic" simultaneity demands and disguises. In this way, post – "golden-age" television unexpectedly resembled one of the chief repositories of "liveness" after the late 1950s: *sports coverage,* which, in the case of football, often employed twenty or more cameras inside a single broadcast.[60]

Unlike dramatic programming, simultaneous reception was a hallmark of televisual sports. And yet, its sheer number of vantages suggested that live transmission was inadequate to capturing and delivering immediate presence. Integrating discontinuous views that, as Margaret Morse notes, resembled neither the crowd's nor the players' perspectives, sports coverage constructed an impossible spectatorial position that turned incongruous fragments toward synthetic omnipresence.[61] Betraying this fact, even as they supported it, were play-by-play commentators and instant replays. As with in-studio audiences, sportscasters imbued broadcasts with on-the-spot presence, particularly since, by definition, they had to play catch up to events as they occurred. At the same time, however, these commentators—not unlike the images they narrated—managed the game's intrinsic violence and uncertainty with determinate views about what was "actually" happening. Instant replays went further, meanwhile, foregoing "liveness" to return to the past and disclosing what, in the present, "direct" reception could not guarantee.

Throughout the 1960s, "live" as much as "canned" television thus contributed to fantasies of simultaneity by exploiting then denying differences between here and there, present and past. Multiple cameras, I submit, codified this structure not only when they predominated television's "golden age," but also—and especially—when the medium appeared to be losing its "liveness" for the first time. By corroborating instantaneous reception for previously recorded, even single-camera, productions, multiple-camera setups helped television "reclaim" authenticity and differentiate itself from cinema. Indeed, Barr remarks, filmed television dramas, while never broadcast immediately, were typically conceived as cheap one-offs during this period. In the face of Hollywood newsreels, non-fiction programs also retained television's characteristic urgency no matter how many times a network replayed them.[62]

Still, because simultaneity no longer belonged to live productions alone, cinema could potentially partake of the fantasies of authenticity that "seeing more now" generated. Accordingly, one finds Hollywood reappropriating the multiple-camera

techniques it had originated forty years earlier into both documentaries and fictions that, like *Gimme Shelter* (Albert and David Maysles, 1970) or *Bonnie and Clyde,* depicted potential catastrophe, if not intensely explicit violence. Though the results differed from television in significant—and, as I shall demonstrate, revelatory—ways, they signal the extent to which "seeing more" violence reflected and refracted the desires and anxieties of this era's wide-ranging pursuits of authenticity.

a parallax view

The philosophical twist to be added (to parallax) … is that the observed difference is not simply "subjective," due to the fact that the same object which exists "out there" is seen from two different stations, or points of view. It is rather that … subject and object are inherently "mediated," so that an "epistemological" shift in the subject's point of view always reflects an "ontological" shift in the object itself. —Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View*

Bonnie and Clyde opens with a series of thirty-two sepia-tinted photographs that, interspersed with credits, emerge on a black background one by one. Though the sound of an imperceptible shutter accompanies them, these images do not capture a present, but instead, represent the past. Save for the last two, they are records of the Depression, the era in which *Bonnie and Clyde* is set. Evoking the work of Dorothea Lange or Walker Evans, the photographs index a strangely mythic documentary impulse: austere women, uncertain children, ramshackle homes, and disheveled men [Figure 15]. Later, as generic portraits give way to snapshots of the "real" Barrow gang, then, finally, to Dunaway and Beatty, this mix of fact and fiction grows, along with indications of violence. In one picture, two men hold rifles in front of a car; in another, three squat with guns raised [Figure 16]. Together, the images recall photographs, published by Joplin police in 1933, that secured the legend of a gun-toting Clyde and cigar-smoking Bonnie [Figure 17]. Hollywood stars conclude this patchwork of the past with a synthetic portrait of history [Figure 18]. Prefiguring the film's interest in mediated violence—the gang cultivates celebrity and tracks their own headlines—these pictures also aim to draw *Bonnie and Clyde* into an authentic former reality.

Still, if *Bonnie and Clyde* is a film about the imbroglios of reality and representation, violence and media, then it is so with respect to the present as much as the past. More allegory than chronicle for its creators, *Bonnie and Clyde* was conceived and received as an account of and about the late 1960s. It matters, therefore, that the film begins by invoking photography but ends by appropriating multiple cameras from television for its brutal conclusion. The most prominent purveyor of violence for the late 1960s and early 1970s, television was also the era's predominant source of simultaneity and "direct" reception. Penn himself began his career during the electronic medium's "golden age" and directed numerous episodes of live and multi-camera anthology series such as *The Gulf Playhouse,* also known as *First Person* (NBC; 1952 – 53), and, later, *The Philco Television Playhouse.* Indeed, both of his early cinematic endeavors—*The Left-Handed Gun* (1958) and *The Miracle Worker* (1962)—first appeared as teleplays on the small screen.[63] Taking his experience with multiple cameras to Hollywood long after television itself had begun to shoot on film, Penn unleashed assurances of simultaneity the industry had not seen since the conversion to sound in the late 1920s. The result, which yoked Vitaphone's union of past and "presence" to television's purported



Figure 15: Austere women, uncertain children, disheveled men (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)



Figure 16: *Bonnie and Clyde*'s title sequence offers a mix of fact and fiction alongside indications of violence. (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)



Figure 17: The "real" Bonnie and Clyde, 1933

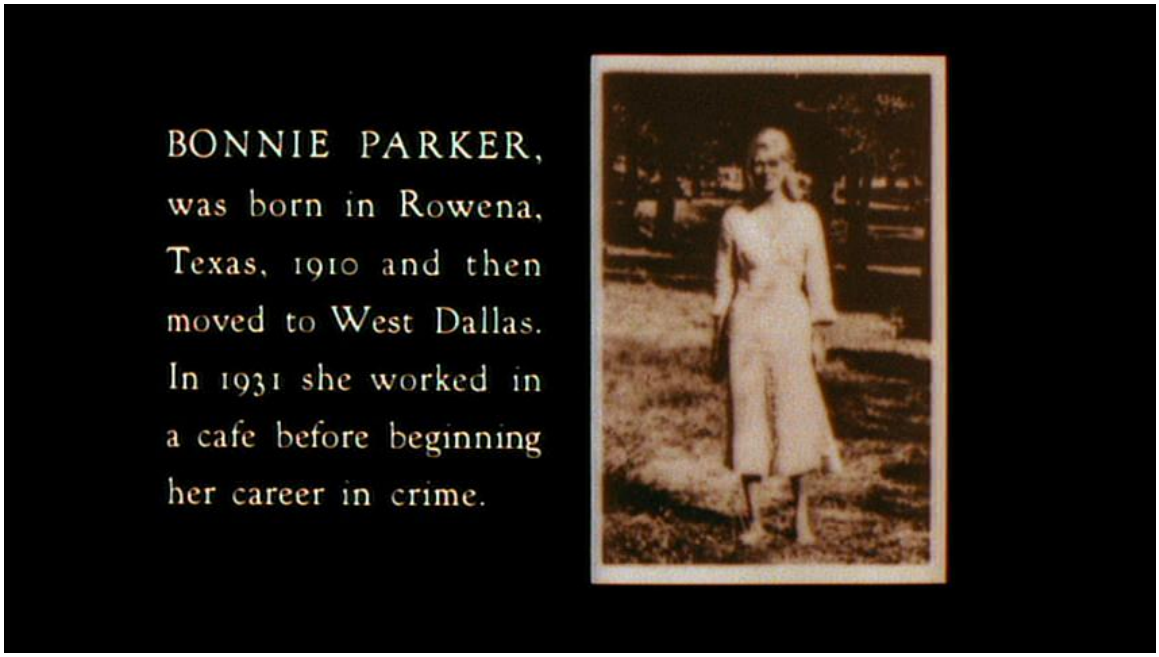


Figure 18: Faye Dunaway as Bonnie (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1967)

immediacy, promised spectators of *Bonnie and Clyde* relatively "direct" and omnipresent access to the deaths of its protagonists.

To begin, *Bonnie and Clyde* exploits multiple cameras for the heterogeneity it will likewise deny. With 38 shots in 48 seconds, the spectator struggles to accommodate the film's death scene—and this before taking stock of the abrupt shifts in location, distance, speed, and angle that shooting with more than one camera makes possible. Most jarring, as I have suggested, are the close-ups that introduce the sequence. Flashing rapidly from a tight shot of Bonnie, who turns away from the spectator with anxiety, the film cuts to a reverse angle of Clyde, who crouches as if preternaturally aware of the danger. The mood of this exchange contrasts sharply with preceding scenes that, however hackneyed, feature the pair consummating their relationship for the first time or, more convincingly, intimately sharing a pear. As if to recall these moments, the next three shots—in equally rapid succession—present an extreme close-up of Bonnie, who briefly smiles, followed by Clyde's tender worry and her own gentle resignation. These changes in tone, along with the utter speed of the images, heighten the spectator's disorientation as well as the scene's indeterminate threat.

Thus, without any pretense to "liveness," *Bonnie and Clyde* generates the immanent catastrophe that television cultivates through the likes of single takes and in-studio audiences. Though not cut in "real time," multiple-speed montage retains some of its danger, since any error in shooting the scene would have required laborious changes of wardrobe and makeup, props, and special effects to launch a new take.[64] The film's plot also contributes to this urgency, since the sequence in question depicts an eruption of violence, however historically or narratively anticipated. As bullets knock Clyde to the ground or shake Bonnie's blood-spattered body, spectators hunt for that unassimilable instant when death intervenes and turns volitional into non-volitional movement. "There's a moment in death when the body no longer functions," Penn told Jean-Louis Comolli and André Lebarthe in a 1967 interview with *Cahiers du Cinéma*, "when it becomes an object and has a certain kind of detached ugly beauty."[65] For Comolli, who, in four years, would describe cinema's contributions to a modern "ideology of the visible," *Bonnie and Clyde*'s attempts to recover this moment for vision probably confirmed his emerging position. Rendering in space what is—even in fiction—unavailable in time, the film aims to represent the inescapably imperceptible.

In doing so, *Bonnie and Clyde* again invokes television, using multiple cameras to split "here" so as to unify "now." With four cameras running in tandem and at different speeds, the film turns an irreducible instant into manifold "presents." Spectators watch Bonnie convulse in medium shot or close-up, while high- and low-angle images of Clyde's tortured torso intervene in the action. Then, at unanticipated moments, wide shots of the pair draw their agonies together. The result differs from "classical" continuity editing in emphasis and effect. Rather than an illusion of consistency alone, multiple-speed montage underscores both the diversity of fragments with which it begins and the unity they ultimately construct. In addition to this diversity, the technique also underscores its sources' synchronous production. If these generate cohesion, it is less from one moment to the next than across all spaces and times at once. Multiple-speed montage seeks coverage, in other words; it privileges omnipresence, not linearity.

As a result, multiple-speed montage reinforces the disclosures that attend the slow-motion inserts it engenders. Aggregating space as they extend time, it expands the

moment in which spectators discover brutality's once imperceptible details. In doing so, however, omnipresence manages, even masters, the discontinuity by which it breaks with everyday perception. As with slow motion—or television news—the "coverage" it tenders, works to *cover* indeterminacy and incongruity with "authenticity." In *Bonnie and Clyde,* this work becomes increasingly complex, if not overwrought. While multi-camera television shoots one performance from a few different places, multiple-speed montage interweaves footage shot by a number of cameras over several takes and in many locations. *Bonnie and Clyde*'s conclusion, for instance, combines the work of four cameras in at least five different setups with an unknown number of takes. To suggest omnipresence, the film must synthesize at least twenty accounts of the violence, while multi-camera television typically joins but three.

As much as it draws them together, therefore, this proliferation of views introduces crucial distinctions between how cinema and television turn "seeing more" into "seeing more now." Unlike television, cinema does not seek instantaneous reception or even its impression. Though it certainly exploits synchronous recording to create a synthetic spectatorial field, multiple-speed montage does not deny the divorce between here and there, now and then, like the small screen. Slow motion, repetition, and inconsistencies across cuts resist the suggestion that perception itself is placed before the spectator of the montage. When Bonnie's wounds bleed in one shot, but not in the next, the film attests to the many takes—the many spaces and times—that actually comprise it. The nature of cinematic representation also contributes resistance. Like the photographs that introduce *Bonnie and Clyde,* films evoke "pastness" by virtue of photochemical processes that, as André Bazin puts it, "embalm time."[66] Compared to television's facility for "liveness" and the ephemerality it implies, cinema emphasizes sources and archival abilities. It is this evidentiary capacity, in fact, which reinforces multiple-speed montage's claims to presence, which might be described as a return of Vitaphone documentation by way of televisual simultaneity. Though not instantaneous, multiple-speed montage purports to provide spectators with "direct" evidence of a former "all-at-once-ness" by synchronously preserving as much "now" as the film could record at that moment.

Still, because this "all-at-once-ness" avows discrepancies between past and present, production and reception, it points to the hybridity that animates television's and cinema's assertions of authenticity. Both media turn fragmentation toward synthetic wholeness, but only multiple-speed montage registers the parallaxes that subtend this supposed omnipresence. In *Bonnie and Clyde,* these parallaxes are, at times, quite literal. The differential placement of the film's cameras frequently produces jump cuts when their footage is edited together. Indeed, the use of multiple cameras in *Bonnie and Clyde* remains far more discontinuous than what one typically finds on television during this period. Single- and multi-camera setups are often indistinguishable on the small screen. Cinema's more demonstrable incongruities, meanwhile, suggest a figural as well as literal relationship between multiple-speed montage and parallax, one that hinges on the latter's role in stereoscopic vision. As with human depth perception, multiple-speed montage forges unified realities from heterogeneous views. We "see more" brutality in *Bonnie and Clyde* because vision itself is divided. And yet, because multiple-speed montage makes these fractures visible, it unintentionally unsettles the perceptual mastery and metaphysical "depth" that the film proposes.

From this perspective, *Bonnie and Clyde*'s conclusion comes nearer the Rauschenberg collages from which it initially seems to depart. Its parallaxes in "view," multiple-speed montage also presents elements that are joined but at the same time separate. In fact, according to Peter Bürger, montage owes its conceptualization to avant-garde collage, which first drew upon "reality fragments" to disrupt the artwork's "wholeness."[67] Depriving these fragments of the contexts that formerly gave them meaning, collage forges new relationships and possibilities for signification among them. In turn, the fragments, which always precede and exceed the image to which they contribute, prevent it from achieving any determinate significance. Unlike works that "make unrecognizable the fact that [they have] been made," collage announces the artificiality of its composite construction.[68] Though cinema, by its very nature, involves the montage of images, Bürger makes a distinction between films that use it to reproduce illusionistic realities and those that, like collage, avowedly recombine and reconstitute the world.[69] Though hardly avant-garde, *Bonnie and Clyde* suggests, however inadvertently, the extent to which "seeing more now" splits the difference between disclosure and concealment, presence and pastness. With its numerous takes and discontinuous editing, multiple-speed montage indexes the parallaxes—the constitutive excesses—that transform "authenticity" into indeterminate acts of mediation.

On this point, the film's content is formally instructive, since as I have noted, *Bonnie and Clyde* thematizes the Barrow gang's preoccupation with their representation in newspapers. Finding pleasure in press accounts that transform actual events into the stuff of overblown legend, the outlaws not only contribute photographs and poems to the media's cause, but also take advantage of the power it grants them. During one heist, for instance, Clyde arrests his victims' attention by simply announcing the identities of himself and his colleagues. As the group executes the robbery with a professionalism they seem to have only accrued with fame, Clyde's brother (Gene Hackman) tells one security guard, "Take a good look, Pop; I'm Buck Barrow." Moments later, a different guard returns this boast, enthusiastically telling reporters, "There I was, staring square into the face of death," as he eagerly poses for photographs. In other scenes, the film turns such ambiguous realities toward less pleasurable ends. Just before the aforementioned sequence, Clyde's brother reads from a newspaper that overestimates the scope and severity of the gang's crimes. Though Buck makes light of the account, Clyde grows increasingly anxious, conscious perhaps of the deadly manhunt the report will warrant despite its inconsistencies.

Conflicts between reality and representation, violence and entertainment, distinguish *Bonnie and Clyde*'s historical reception as much as its narrative. Expressing, by turns, their own anxieties and pleasures, critics unwittingly invoke problems of incongruity and synthesis that characterize multiple-speed montage and the televisual fantasies it appropriates and figures. When Crowther demands authenticity because *Bonnie and Clyde* mingles fact and fiction with incompatible affective registers, he inadvertently points to the indeterminacy that "seeing more now" strives to contain. Though multiple-speed montage may ground its "presents" in cinema's evidentiary capacities, these "reality fragments" betray the film's efforts to mediate the discrepancies that comprise omnipresence. On this view, Crowther's complaint that *Bonnie and Clyde* "makes no valid commentary upon the already travestied truth" extends his concern beyond historical accuracy or graphic brutality alone. He seems equally unsettled by the

film's inability to offer an authoritative position on the violence it renders. Kael, meanwhile, sanctions the film's mix of cruelty and comedy, but her approval issues from the moral integrity toward which she believes spectatorial displeasure gathers multiple-speed montage's divergent fragments. She disagrees with Crowther, yet only by discovering the authority he otherwise recommends.

The decisiveness both critics demand of *Bonnie and Clyde* thus links them and multiple-speed montage to some unexpected compatriots in the U. S. military. Vietnam, as Paul Virilio notes, marked America's "first electronic war" and the prodigious incorporation of televisual technologies into the military's arsenal.[70] Many of these borrowings drew upon television in quite straightforward ways. Gunships such as the "Pave Spectre" used low-light level television as its primary sensors and a corresponding screen instead of a conventional gun sight.[71] Other examples include the television cameras employed by pilotless "drones" and some of the nation's first "smart bombs." Most interesting for my purposes, however, are strategies that deployed the structure of television if not its explicit equipment. Foremost among these is an operation known most consistently as Igloo White, which combined the "liveness" of televisual transmission with synthetic imaging technologies that resemble multiple-speed montage.

Conducted from January 1968 through February 1973, Igloo White was an operation of the U. S. Air Force that combined electronic sensors, relay aircraft, and computers to collect and collate reconnaissance data about the Ho Chi Minh Trail in southeastern Laos. Ultimately serving the destruction of North Vietnamese troops and trucks that supplied the Vietcong, Igloo White aimed to make visible what darkness, jungle, and weather rendered imperceptible. To this end, it consisted of three central phases [Figure 19]. The first involved thousands of battery-operated acoustic and seismic sensors that Air Force planes dropped at strategic intervals for maximum coverage.[72] Next, aircraft, which orbited the sensors twenty-four hours a day, relayed their signals to the Infiltration Surveillance Center at Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, by "live" radio feed. Finally, at the surveillance center, two powerful IBM 360-65 computers processed and assembled the disparate information into synthetic images and maps that assessment officers interpreted on television screens in "real time." Once targets were confirmed, technicians radioed coordinates to aircraft, the navigation systems of which guided the planes to the area for bombing. "When the 'target' was destroyed," notes James William Gibson, "the lights on the screen went out."[73]

Joining televisual simultaneity to the compositing capabilities of multiple-speed montage, Igloo White not only linked Penn's and Peckinpah's films to the medium and war that influenced their representations of violence, but also generated fantasies of omnipresence that, as I have demonstrated, belonged to both television and cinema during this era. In Vietnam, of course, the perceptual mastery these fantasies articulate was borne out in strategic bombing campaigns rather than spectatorial pleasure. And yet, striking similarities emerge in descriptions of these spheres and their seemingly discrepant consequences. In the case of the military, Virilio and others have linked electronic combat to America's increasingly disembodied engagement with its enemies, whom it attacks with technologies that consolidate vision and mediate violence. "With the advent of electronic warfare, … the fusion is complete, the confusion perfect," writes Virilio," nothing now distinguishes the functions of the weapon and the eye."[74] The "confusion" of the fusion results when the tension between incongruity and synthesis

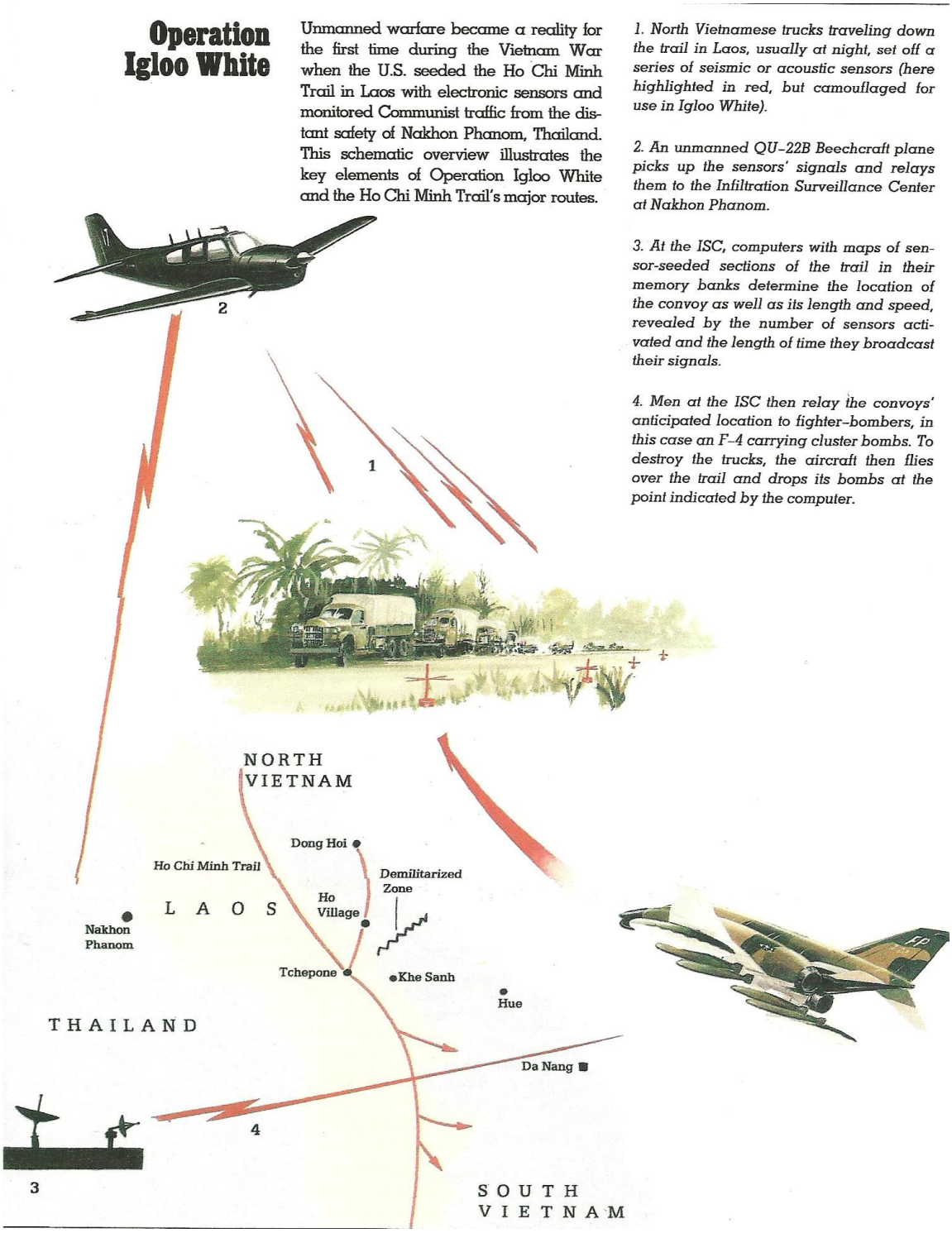


Figure 19: Operation Igloo White (*Tools of War*, 145)

collapses under the sign of authenticity. Without reckoning its parallaxes, Igloo White extinguishes distinctions between vision and weapon, body and eye, even reality and representation. As with the Barrow gang, this confusion brings with it heady pleasures such as power and ubiquity at the same time that it introduces the anxieties that accompany an apparently inescapable system. Because Igloo White so fully mediated the relationship between military personnel and their targets, disputes about its success rate quickly plagued Air Force reports. "We never actually 'see' the trucks [we target]," Brigadier General William G. Evans explained in a 1971 news briefing.[75] Confirming the number destroyed or damaged thus remained a matter of interpretation, even—and especially—with the assistance of photographic supplementation.[76]

At the same time that Igloo White was operating in Vietnam, French film theorists such as Comolli, Jean-Louis Baudry, and Serge Daney were rethinking the nature of cinematic spectatorship in terms that anticipated later critiques of electronic warfare.[77] Central to their considerations was the disembodied and assumedly omnipotent subject position constructed by the cinematic apparatus. Though an illusion, this position allegedly ensnared spectators in ideologically suspect pleasures by encouraging them to identify with the continuous and coherent reality offered by a film's characters and camera. "Film lives on the denial of difference," Baudry writes in his 1970 treatise "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus." "Difference is necessary for it to live, but it lives on its negation."[78] A description that suits television and Igloo White as much as Hollywood cinema, Baudry's account denies the medium's constitutive excess nearly as much as it does. Indeed, with no "parallax view," distinctions between perception and signification are lost to Comolli's "ideology of the visible." Spectators enjoy cinema's inescapably omnipotent subject positions, and pleasure turns unredeemingly and unavoidably sadistic.

Though separated from "apparatus theory" by a term of nearly thirty years, today's most prominent treatments of multiple-speed montage resemble these and other historically contemporaneous accounts. In his work on the technology, Prince picks up where Kael and Baudry leave off, suspecting any experience of *Bonnie and Clyde* or its successors that generates pleasure rather than displeasure. In fact, to some extent, his consideration of slow motion reverses the stakes of earlier film theories only to confirm the faith in determinate vision that they critique. A challenge to conventional representations of violence, he argues, multiple-speed montage discloses brutality's instinctual, imperceptible, and implicitly repugnant details. When this falters, as the "excited and gratified" spectators of Peckinpah's films suggest, Prince joins theorists of the late 1960s and early 1970s in decrying cinema's ideologically inescapable fantasies of omnipresence and perceptual mastery. As with Baudry, his position seems to codify the very power it condemns. It also erects, like Igloo White, a logic of success or failure that shuttles between two all-encompassing and singular visions of multiple-speed montage's effects. Either spectators experience the pain of what violence is "really like," Prince suggests, or they find themselves uncontrollably immersed in its more sadistic pleasures.

With these excursuses on military reconnaissance and theorizations of cinematic pleasure, I mean to underscore both the breadth of the fantasies multiple-speed montage figures and their political consequences. When the technology, as I have argued, bears the traces of parallaxes that mediate omnipresence, it registers—even if unintentionally—the inconsistencies and indeterminacies that television, the military, and apparatus theorists

acknowledge less readily. To attend to these parallaxes is to restore conflicts between fragment and whole, incongruity and synthesis, to "authenticity," opening closed systems up to something in excess of sadism and success or failure. Parallaxes are, after all, never "right" or "wrong." They express the embodied partiality that characterizes all human vision. This lesson in view, the violence of multiple-speed montage belongs less to the demand to "see more now" than in its assurances that it can provide spectators with totalizing, disembodied disclosures of brutality and death.

Chapter 3
Violence Incarnate: Squibs, Artificial Blood, and Wounds That Speak

It is not often that a television cameraman … gets on film happening right there before your eyes one man blowing another man's brains out. … It was kind of the supreme melodrama, … a kind of super pornography. … It was a kind of ultimate horror story that you captured in living color.—Peter Braestrup on NBC's February 2, 1968, coverage of the Tet Offensive in Saigon

But then comes the carnage, full tilt and with no holds barred, filmed in gory slow motion … that records every agonizing moment. … [This film] must surely contain the bloodiest battle ever recorded on film.—Jeanne Miller of *The San Francisco Examiner* on Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969)

In Parras, Mexico, in March 1968—just weeks after NBC aired color footage of Nguyen Ngoc Loan's execution of a suspected Vietcong guerilla in the streets of Saigon—filmmaker Sam Peckinpah and special-effects director Bud Hulburd began strapping small explosive devices called "squibs," latex bags filled with artificial blood, and even chunks of raw meat to the stars of their upcoming film [Figures 20 – 21].[1] The result—virtual fountains of blood that erupt from simulated gunshot wounds—not only rivaled the aforementioned news film, but also made *The Wild Bunch* (1969), along with Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), a landmark of late 1960s Hollywood violence.

Before this time, bloodletting rarely appeared in mainstream depictions of gunplay and warfare. Strategic cutaways and stunt falls concealed bodies ruptured by violence, while distant camerawork refused to linger on wounds from which little blood seemed to flow. With the release of *The Wild Bunch*, however, one item—more than any other—dominated contemporary reviews: blood. "It is by several thousand red gallons the most graphically violent western ever made and one of the most violent movies of any kind," writes Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times.*[2] "Thanks to recent advances in special effects," Roger Ebert adds, "the blood actually spurts when somebody gets shot; there are geysers of blood everywhere."[3] Even when critics mention other aesthetic features of the film, bloody squibs remain integral to their observations. "When [characters] bleed, fall, and die, they do so in beautifully obscene slow motion," *Newsweek* declares, "each victim a star swimmer in his own aquacade of blood."[4] Slow motion may underscore the act of wounding, but bloodletting remains what viewers remember most.

It is surprising, therefore, that few studies of screen violence have interrogated this union of explosives and artificial blood, especially when most acknowledge its significance for the history of Hollywood gunplay. "Probably more than any other effects tool," writes Stephen Prince, "squibs changed the way screen violence looked."[5] And yet, his own analyses of *The Wild Bunch* primarily attend to slow motion, multiple-speed montage, and, as I suggested in Chapter One, the narrative structures that keep their sensational appeals in check. Multiple-speed montage certainly figures prominently in post-Code depictions of corporeal brutality. At the same time, however, I believe that any approach to *The Wild Bunch*—or the films that succeeded it—cannot dismiss what appears to have most concerned contemporary viewers: graphic, bloody eruptions from the human body.



Figure 20: *Saigon Execution* (Eddie Adams, 1968)

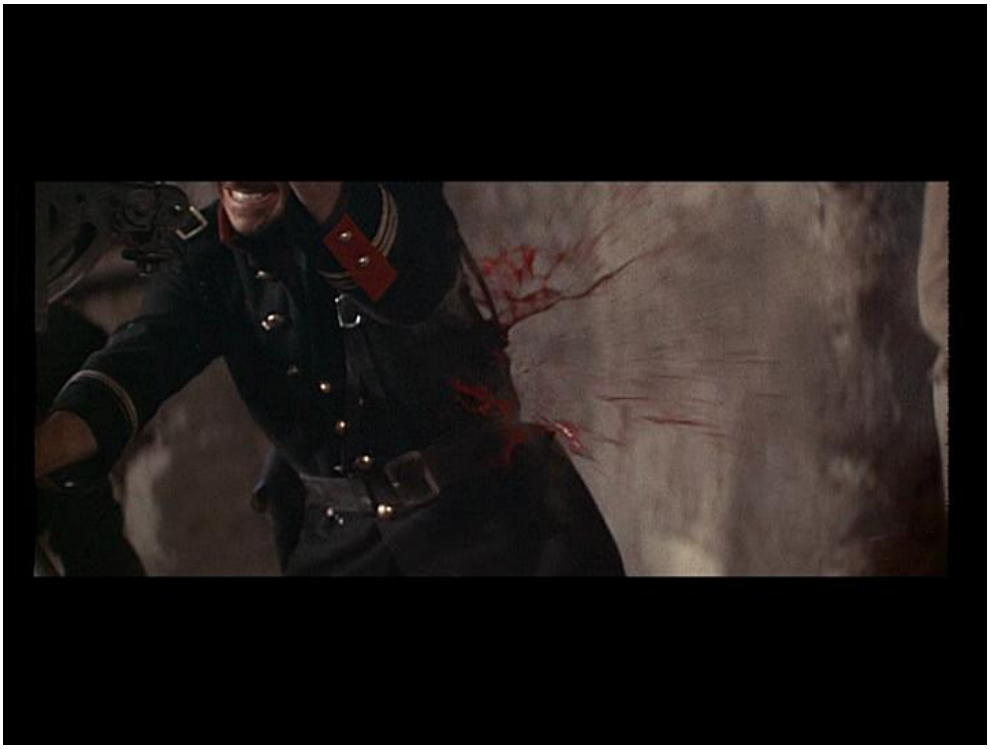


Figure 21: *The Wild Bunch* (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1969)

For this reason, I want to extend my consideration of multiple-speed montage in Chapter Two to explore the squibs and artificial blood that generally populated such sequences. After all, though gelatin capsules of artificial blood date back to the 1930s and squib-like detonator caps had simulated gunfire on walls, trees, and tables for years, their combination and application to the human body were new to the extended scenes of wounding that conclude *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Wild Bunch*.[6] With the transition to the early 1970s, squibs and artificial blood moved beyond the confines of multiple-speed montage alone, offering spectators momentary, punctuated explosions of blood and viscera in films such as *Little Big Man* (Arthur Penn, 1970), *The French Connection* (William Friedkin, 1971), *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1972), and *Mean Streets* (Martin Scorsese, 1973), which, along with *The Wild Bunch*, will command my attention here.

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I want to begin with *The Wild Bunch* and Sam Peckinpah, who in 1972 expressed the following to *Playboy* magazine: "We watch our wars and see men die, really die, every day on television, but it doesn't seem real. … What I do is show people what it's really like—not by showing it as it is so much as by heightening it, stylizing it."[7] His suggestion here is twofold. On one hand, the nightly news exposes spectators to scenes of lived brutality they might otherwise miss, while on the other hand, squibs and artificial blood do television's job better, providing authentic visions of violence by virtue of their very illusionism. Taken together, both views contribute to conceptions of cinematic violence that circulate during this period.

With respect to the first, there exist numerous references to the idea—held both then and now—that television journalism regularly brought graphic displays of Vietnam and violent events such as urban riots and protests into American homes. Broadcast via satellite and in "living color," the Loan execution offers one such spectacle, its "super pornography," as Peter Braestrup suggests, bringing the obscene brutality of an imperceptible war *on scene*.[8] With regard to the second, there is what I call the "competition thesis" of television's relationship to cinema. Espoused by historical critics as well as contemporary scholars, it holds that television news coverage became so graphic by the late 1960s that Hollywood had no choice but to compete with such viscerally documentary images. Writes historian David Culbert:

> Nobody who sees the television newsfilm [of the Loan execution] forgets the blood spurting out of the terrorist's head. Such compelling reality is the despair of every Hollywood special-effects man who ever placed plastic covered packets of ketchup on the bodies of intended victims.[9]

Here, realism means bloodletting, an equation with which Peckinpah and his audiences seem to agree, even if they also acknowledge—and sometimes disdain—the stylization that makes this "authenticity" possible.

And yet, televised documents of late 1960s and early 1970s violence were rarely as bloody as popular memory imagines. Despite evidence that television news organizations disproportionately sought the "supreme melodrama" of Americans in combat—what correspondents referred to as "bang-bang" coverage—their reports rarely

contained the sensational brutality that this deliberation implies.[10] Writes Army historian William M. Hammond: "From August 1965 to August 1970, only 76 out of more than 2,300 television news reports originating in Vietnam depicted … soldiers in combat, incoming artillery, [or] dead and wounded on the ground."[11] From this point of view, images of an execution in Saigon or riots in the streets of Chicago stand as exceptions to the rule of conventional television coverage. Moreover, the "competition thesis" seems wrong on at least two counts. Not only do those who remember graphic violence recall a world that television did not generally show, but also, as Peckinpah suggests, Hollywood's use of squibs and artificial blood handily surpassed what spectators typically found on television.[12]

Still, if the letter of the competition thesis is wrong, its spirit points to a central tenet of my analysis here. To the extent that cinema and television evince an interest in exceptional, sensational violence—in both senses of those terms—they share fantasies of authenticity in which unexpectedly graphic wounds disclose realities that otherwise remain unseen. Hence the rhetoric of realism and revelation that attend visions of bloodletting in the two media however stylized they may be. Hence, too, the preoccupation, both past and present, with linking Hollywood cinema to violent events and the televisual reports that documented them.[13] Indeed, the very persistence of the competition thesis would appear to index a desire to "see more"—of the war, of wounds, of realities that lie beyond the spectator's purview—that enfolds television news and commercial cinema alike.

In what follows, I argue that squibs and artificial blood offer more than gory *eruptions* of the human body; they also index desire's *irruption* in popular film. Meeting and mobilizing demands for unattainable, if not impossible, views, they speak to a world beyond the film's diegesis and promise to incarnate, to make flesh, realities that presumably lie off scene. Appropriately, this incarnation hinges on the perceived materiality of the wounds in question. It matters, in other words, that *The Wild Bunch* and *Mean Streets* render bloodletting remarkably tangible, isolating squibs and artificial blood through color, close-ups, and slow motion. Compounding cinema's indexicality—its status as both object and sign—these wounds disrupt everyday fields of perception to effect "authentic" experiences of violence that breach the boundaries between documentary and fiction, reality and representation, that seemingly separate narrative cinema from television news.

Of course, in blurring these distinctions, squibs and artificial blood also undermine the very authenticity they otherwise secure. Underscoring film's ephemeral ethereality even as they deny it, cinematic wounds, like all indices, remain present and absent, material and immaterial, persistent and evanescent at once. For this reason, I contend, bloodletting in *The Wild Bunch* or *Mean Streets* bespeaks cinema's and television's mutually unstable solutions to the problem of capturing the real—a particularly salient discovery, given the masculine and national integrities to which both media's perceived authenticity is so often linked.

"bang-bang" television

For the first time in the history of this country, people are exposed to instant coverage of a war in progress. When so many movie critics complain about violence on film, I don't think they realize the impact of thirty minutes on the Huntley-Brinkley newscast—and that's real violence.—Jack Valenti, February 1968

Before turning to the eruptions of blood that typify Hollywood gunplay after the Code, I want to explore television news and the "real" violence that purportedly justifies, challenges, or lags behind cinematic brutality during this period. Indeed, for administration officials and protesters alike, television became a privileged witness to violence at this historical moment, airing living images of war and civil unrest that, in a previous era, might have gone largely unseen. Consider the phrase, "The Whole World Is Watching." Protesters repeatedly invoked this expression during moments of police brutality at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. In doing so, they not only drew attention to the presence of camera crews at the event, but also disclosed a more pervasive belief in the revelatory, if not antagonistic, visibility of violence on television news. For administration officials, meanwhile, this conception of televisual disclosure supported "oppositional media" theories that blamed the press in general—and television journalism in particular—for the failure of U.S. policy in Vietnam.[14]

In either case, television news became the means by which far-flung brutalities allegedly entered the homes of millions of Americans, directly documenting lurid details of violence and death for doves as well as hawks. Vietnam was, after all, the nation's "television war" or, as Michael Arlen called it in the pages of *The New Yorker*, a "living-room war," and much has been made of the preponderance of day-to-day combat footage that appeared in nightly news reports.[15] "A really great piece of war film [is] … irresistible," reports one CBS executive.[16] Given the choice, adds another at ABC, "a good fire fight is going to get on over a good pacification story."[17] Violence is desirable for its sensory appeal, attracting audiences with vivid depictions of conflicts and enemies that were—in the case of Vietnam—infamously elusive. "The public does indeed want and need … something concrete amid the chaos," writes Arlen, "something [they] can reach out to over the morning coffee and almost touch."[18] In this context, arrest numbers, body counts, and other material "facts" certainly helped make specific battles or protests more palpable, but graphic displays of wounded soldiers or clubbed students promised authentic, almost first-hand experiences of imperceptible, even ungraspable, events.

And yet, as I have already suggested, images of corporeal brutality offered uncommon exceptions to news reports that were hardly as adversarial as oppositional media theories would have it. In the case of Vietnam, political scientist Daniel C. Hallin notes that the number of broadcasts featuring American casualties first declined, then stayed relatively steady, throughout the period from 1967 to 1971.[19] On the domestic front, the media also sought violence for its visual interest and sensory appeal, and clashes with authority—actual or anticipated—figured prominently in reports about youth movements and protests.[20] As with coverage of the war, however, most images of civil unrest lacked the graphic brutality that characterized events such as the Democratic convention in Chicago. To account for this infrequency, we might identify three factors that helped shape televisual depictions of violence at home and abroad: governmental pressure, contemporary journalistic practices, and the vagaries of chance.

Though governmental pressure definitely influenced what visions of violence reached American homes during the war in Vietnam, the United States military never adopted an official program of censorship as it had during World Wars I and II or in Korea. Instead, reporters, photographers, and cameramen were presented with a system of voluntary guidelines, the transgression of which resulted in loss or suspension of the correspondent's accreditation, something that rarely happened. Among these guidelines,

which included restrictions on reporting troop movements and casualty figures, were limits on photographs and moving pictures taken in the field. The Military Assistance Command in Vietnam (MACV) worried that images of dead or wounded Americans might appear before their families could be notified. Television footage was of particular concern. Officials were "convinced," writes Hammond, "that sound-on-film pictures of dying Americans could have a strongly adverse emotional impact on families with husbands and sons serving in the war."[21] Thus on April 24, 1966, the MACV met with the three major networks and warned them that any complaints regarding images of dead or wounded Americans would result in the exclusion of cameramen from combat zones.

The networks acted accordingly. In fact, thanks to fear, decorum, or the demands of market share, most television reports did more than obscure the identities of soldiers who had been injured or killed in combat. They frequently framed or edited footage so as to avoid depictions altogether. An NBC film from February 14, 1968, provides a typical example. Here, four Americans on stretchers are hurried past the camera, which makes no effort to register their faces or wounds.[22] Similarly, another film—this time from CBS in April 1970—shows medics attending two injured soldiers. Captured in medium long shot, their work obscures the men's bodies, save for a glimpse of bandages on one soldier's leg [Figure 22].[23] Shot during and after the Tet Offensive, when American concern for U. S. casualties began to mount, these reports and others like them appear surprisingly benign—and this despite complaints by both the Johnson and Nixon administrations that television coverage of Tet helped turn the tide of public opinion against the war.[24]

Perhaps even more than governmental pressure, however, basic practices of "objective" journalism contributed to television's fairly anemic reporting strategies. Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, the mainstream media practiced little of what we now call "investigative journalism." Most information about the war or its opposition came unchanged and unchallenged from military and governmental sources.[25] Correspondents conceived of themselves as passive transmitters of information more than active political analysts. They put their faith in "hard" facts derived from "official" briefings and reports, and editorial comment largely stood outside the limits of acceptable "objectivity."[26]

Of course, "objectivity" is, in this case, highly relative, something the formal conventions of network news only compound. Hinging on brevity and visual interest, televisual reports rely upon easily digestible, dramatic themes. In the case of antiwar and other radical movements, these themes included the idea that leftists aided enemy agendas overseas as much as they disrupted law and order at home."While Americans fight and die in Vietnam, there are those in this country who sympathize with the Vietcong," Peter Jennings reported on October 27, 1965.[27] Even after the Tet Offensive, most domestic criticism of the government came from official sources. Protesters generally appeared in news stories about dissent, not administration policies or governmental institutions.

For its part, war coverage generally focused on simple tales of soldiers, technologies, and individual acts of heroism. Images of dead or wounded Americans had little place inside such formulas. When they did appear—as in a pre-Tet report by CBS correspondent Charles Kuralt—they typically reinforced narratives of American strength and mastery. In the December 1965 film, the camera lingers, rather uncharacteristically,

on the wounds of one Sergeant Floyd, who has inadvertently tripped a Vietcong mine. Before and after unveiling the large red holes in his legs, however, the film cuts to a medium close-up of Floyd narrating the event and smoking a cigar [Figure 23]. "All I gotta say," he remarks, smiling, "[is] that little Charlie fella, runnin' around out there, bothern' us all. I hope they get 'em."[28] After Tet, such trends continue, even if, as we shall see, stories of masculine competency also became increasingly complex. Representations of combat, in particular, turn formulaic, according to Arlen, who finds most feature

> a distanced overview of a disjointed conflict, … composed mainly of scenes of helicopters landing, tall grasses blowing in the helicopter wind, American soldiers fanning out across a hillside on foot, rifles at the ready, with now and then (on the soundtrack) a far-off ping or two, and now and then (as the visual grand finale) a column of dark, billowing smoke a half mile away.[29]

Along with the networks' deliberate, yet contradictorily limited, attempts to capture images of violence, predictable scenes like these are at odds with conceptions of television as the purveyor of authentic and unmediated views of the world.

Perhaps this is why *chance recordings* occupy a place of privilege in notions of televisual authenticity. Incidents like the Loan execution, demonstrations in Chicago, or the inadvertent napalming of children in Trang Bang, explode with quaggy, unscripted revelations that interrupt dominant journalistic conventions. One thinks of the moment in February 1968, when NBC journalist Howard Tuckner was himself wounded on film. Bemused by the brutality, Tuckner, who provided commentary for the Loan shooting just one week earlier, hunkers low in the frame, muttering, "I'm hit. … I'm hit."[30] Similarly iconic events include Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc's self-immolation in Saigon, violence and looting in the Watts district of Los Angeles, and Morley Safer's infamous report from Cam Ne in 1965, during which American soldiers set fire to a small Vietnamese village despite the pleas of its elderly inhabitants.[31]

Still, the very contingency that renders such moments "authentic" also subjects their capture to the vagaries of chance. "Reality" becomes something after which networks and viewers clamber, a "lost" object of desire infrequently incarnated and too quickly receding. Writes Arlen:

> [Viewers] look at Vietnam, it seems, as a child kneeling in the corridor, his eye to the keyhole, looks at two grownups arguing in a locked room—the aperture of the keyhole small; the figures shadowy, mostly out of sight; the voices indistinct, isolated threats without meaning; isolated glimpses, part of an elbow, a man's jacket (who is that man?), part of a face, a woman's face. Ah, she is crying. … One counts the tears. Two tears. Three tears. Two bombing raids. Four seek-and-destroy missions.



Figure 22: Most television reports framed or edited footage to avoid graphic depictions of wounded Americans. (*CBS Evening News*, April 1970)



Figure 23: Sergeant Floyd smoking a cigar.
(*CBS Evening News*, December 1965)

> Six administration pronouncements. … One searches in vain for the other grownup, but, ah, the keyhole is so small, he is somehow never in the line of sight.[32]

Combining inscrutable, almost illusory, elements with war's material details, Arlen's vision of television news distinctly recalls Sigmund Freud's primal scene in which the child fantasizes answers to his or her own enigmatic origins. As with all primal fantasies, this one arises in retrospect, the product of "deferred action" that unexpectedly recalls and recodes "repressed" events according to later experiences. The result, Freud writes, is a mix of unscripted reality and psychic illusion that may be in part or wholly invented yet also exists prior to any meaning it retroactively gathers.[33]

Televisual authenticity, as Arlen's comment suggests, also commingles reality and illusion, locating "lost" realities in retroactive encounters between "objective" facts and subjective desires. Departing from conventional reports, graphic, unanticipated images of violence unite concrete bodies with demands for disclosure they animate after the fact. Television news may carry the force of reality, but the answers they offer brutality's apparent repression also remain unstable at best. NBC's August 1968 coverage of the Democratic convention in Chicago provides a salient example. Watched by an estimated 90 million viewers, the black-and-white footage appears confusing and, at times, nearly unintelligible, not unlike Arlen's scene before the keyhole of Vietnam. Outside the Conrad Hilton Hotel, fixed cameras capture police officers beating protesters in long shots filled with swarming, unidentifiable bodies, occasionally zooming in to capture more ascertainable details.[34] While viewers can sometimes hear demonstrators chanting, the soundtrack features surprisingly little commentary from correspondents Aline Saarinen and Gabe Pressman, who frequently trail off and leave spectators to interpret the happenings for themselves.[35] As a result, public response to the violence seems to have varied widely, from the Walker Commission, which declared the conflict the result of a "police riot," to a post-convention Gallup Poll in which Americans supported the police 56 to 31 percent.[36] In all, the divergent reactions to these chance recordings suggest the extent to which televisual authenticity remains an ambiguous and overdetermined fantasy, a meeting of documentary and fiction, reality and representation, "objective," perceptible images and subjective desires that go unseen.

violence incarnate

The era of escapism is over; the era of reality is here.—Phil Feldman, producer of *The Wild Bunch*

It is 1913. The frontier—and the possibility it promised—have closed. Edged into Mexico by railroad industrialists, an army surrounds four obsolescent outlaws. The world is silent. They decide to fight. With one shot, the scene explodes into four and a half minutes of unrelenting brutality, the battle for which *The Wild Bunch* has been excoriated and revered. Here, blood bursts from an officer's front and backside, arching, like his body, as it glides through the air. There, a chunk of shoulder unloosens, an artery opens, or a geyser of viscera leaps from another man's side. In the end, the gesture receives more than twenty repetitions, and the Bunch, who have seemingly killed hundreds, lie dead with bright red blotches spattering their clothes.

The sequence has little precedent in mainstream American cinema, surpassing even *Bonnie and Clyde*, its nearest forerunner, in bodies and blood.[37] European and Japanese cinema provided variegated influences—Jean-Luc Godard's *Pierrot le fou* (1965) and *Week End* (1967), Sergio Leone's spaghetti westerns, and the surfeit of blood that concludes Akira Kurosawa's *Sanjuro* (1962) all come to mind. And yet, as with the exploitation traditions of Britain's Hammer Studios or American International Pictures, these films, though sometimes bloody, never underscored the site or sight of wounding as such.[38] Instead, it took Hollywood's combination of squibs and artificial blood to bring national attention to a shift in the visibility of screen violence that, in the United States, the fall of the Production Code in 1968 helped to formally instate.

Of course, the end of traditional censorship practices coincided with the same incidents of violence—war, riots, political assassinations—that preoccupied television journalism.[39] The concurrence was not lost on the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, which called Jack Valenti, then president of the Motion Picture Association of America, to testify about the relationship between social and cinematic violence in December 1968. Telling legislators that "the kind of society we live in today is different from the kind of society we used to live in," Valenti sketched portraits of a "new breed of filmmaker," who searches for "new dimensions of expression," and a "new audience" that seeks "new fulfillment" in the movies it sees.[40] Mirroring television's pursuit of exceptional combat, this self-conscious concern for heretofore unknown images and experiences of film violence corroborates the idea that more than rivalry linked the two media. Rather, they shared a fantasmatic horizon in which ruptured bodies delivered authentic experiences that, however real or imagined, disrupted what conventional forms appeared to repress.

On television, chance recordings of brutal realities provided such fantasies, cutting through formulaic depictions of war or civil unrest with sensuous, though ultimately indeterminate, force. Cinema, meanwhile, may have lacked the "reality" of television, but as Peckinpah suggests, its recourse to unmistakably stylized bloodletting promised hyperreal, even surreal, returns of the historically and representationally repressed. Squibs and artificial blood, I wager, distill this indeterminacy between reality and representation, seen and unseen, reducing fantasies of authenticity to a repeatable figure: the wound. In doing so, they not only make flesh formerly imperceptible brutalities, but also—and however unintentionally—incarnate the contradictory, unstable logic upon which revelation in both media depends.

Central to the wound's authenticating power is, as I have suggested, its perceived materiality. Squibs and artificial blood render bloodletting astonishingly palpable. Take Dutch's (Ernest Borgnine's) wounding near the end of *The Wild Bunch* [Figures 24 – 25]. Hit simultaneously in the hip and shoulder as he runs to Pike's (William Holden's) side, Dutch's initial injury is brief. Peckinpah underscores the bright red bursts, however, by slowing the speed of their action. Erupting first in lateral view, Dutch's blood lurches as he spins toward the camera before slowing to a lethargic dribble. Peckinpah twice repeats this turn between cutaways to Pike, foregrounding the crimson in close-up. Against the dusty environment, this color leaps from its background, giving sensuous immanence to the blood, the tactility of which grows as it trickles, pools, and sticks to clothing.

In this, the blood conjures its precursors in art and exploitation cinemas, particularly the rather disparate works of Jean-Luc Godard, Haskell Wexler, and



Figure 24: Dutch's (Ernest Borgnine's) fatal wounding (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1969)



Figure 25: Dutch's death (Warner Brothers / Seven Arts, 1969)

Herschell Gordon Lewis. "It's not blood; it's red," Godard famously remarked of his primary-color palette in films such as *Contempt* (1963), *Pierrot le fou,* or *Week End.*[41] Placing color's phenomenal address before any meaning it gathers, Godard's comment points to how *The Wild Bunch*'s blood complicates conventional relationships between actuality and artifice. On one hand, the film's reds emphasize its illusionism, while on the other, they short-circuit signification in favor of a more immediate reality. A similar tension pervades Haskell Wexler's *Medium Cool* (1968), a film that mediates the concerns of Godard's and Peckinpah's work as well as the meeting of documentary and fiction I mean to highlight here.[42]

Released between *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Wild Bunch, Medium Cool* quite literally intermingles documentary and fiction, setting its narrative against the backdrop of Washington's Resurrection City or, most famously, Chicago during the Democratic convention.[43] In scenes shot in Grant Park on August 28, 1968, Wexler's protagonist, Dede (Christine Bergstrom), weaves in and out of clashes between police and protesters in a spectacularly bright yellow dress. Arresting the spectator's attention each time she enters the frame, Dede's artifice interrupts the "actual" event, which, for its part, originally aired on television only in black and white. At the same time, however, her yellow dress draws reality toward representation, encouraging spectators to link its phenomenal immanence to that of police officer blues and activist blood reds.[44] The result lends immediacy to Wexler's "staged" narrative, but it also overdetermines the historical event with new and unexpected possibilities, since Dede's storyline brings uncertainty to a past most spectators know. Bearing this out, Dede is, at one point, stopped by a soldier who questions her before letting her pass. An unscripted accident, she becomes, in that moment, Dede / Bergstrom, a fictional character and historical player at the same time. Will her encounter derail the narrative? Influence the protest? Such questions demonstrate the extent to which documentary and fiction, television and cinema, suspend and satisfy spectatorial desires together, even if they never fully coincide [Figure 26].

Though he, too, works in outrageous shades of red, Lewis's exploitation approach to cinematic bloodletting tends to accentuate tactility.[45] *Blood Feast* (1963) opens, for instance, with the murder of a bathing Playmate, from whom the killer takes both her leg and one of her eyes. Presented to the camera for the spectator's inspection, her ocular cavity's red, slippery contents dangle, then slip, from the murderer's knife. Later, when he extracts brains, then tongue, then heart from additional female victims, the focus remains on the touch and texture of these organs. Again and again, the killer turns his trophies toward the camera, squeezing, poking, and fondling the (assumedly animal) innards from which blood drips onto porcelain or soaks into sand [Figure 27]. To be sure, the film's low production values and poor acting underscore the glossy intensity of its fake blood, but the palpability of the viscera adds sensuous density to its shocking defiance of mainstream cinema's Code.[46]

In the case of *The Wild Bunch*, squibs and artificial blood exert the force of "real," touchable blood by yoking art and exploitation influences to cinema's ontological bond to the world. Best exemplified by André Bazin's "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" (1945), the idea that photography and cinema quite literally re-present the objects they signify stems from mechanical modes of their reproduction. Unlike painting, which, even at its most mimetic, relies upon the artist's hand, photography and cinema use lenses



Figure 26: A soldier questions Dede / Bergstrom in *Medium Cool* (H&J, 1968)



Figure 27: *Blood Feast*'s killer presents red, slippery organs to the spectator.
(Friedman-Lewis Productions, 1963)

and photochemical emulsions that, Bazin argues, delimit subjectivity's role in signification. "For the first time," he writes,

> between the originating object and its reproduction there intervenes only the instrumentality of a nonliving agent. … The photograph as such and the object in itself share a common being, after the fashion of a fingerprint. Wherefore, photography actually contributes something to the order of natural creation instead of providing a substitute for it.[47]

An object as much as a sign, the photographic or cinematographic image, much like the fingerprint, gives beholders immediate material access to realities that remain otherwise off scene.

Though Bazin never makes the connection, film theorists have frequently linked his conception of cinematic reproduction to the philosophies of American logician Charles Sanders Peirce. Oft cited, though frequently misunderstood, Peirce's idea of the "index" seems to support the foregoing description of Bazin's work. According to his semiotics, the index is a sign by virtue of its existential link to its referent. Unlike icons and symbols, which signify through simple resemblances or arbitrary relationships, indices—like fingerprints—remain physically, spatially, or causally linked to what they denote. They are, in this sense, singular, material traces evacuated of content. They are brute facts, objects as well as signs. Their "mood," writes Peirce, is irruptive, "exclamatory," a kind of "See there!" or "Look out!"[48] Like Dede's dress, indices solicit curiosity, perhaps even anxiety, drawing perceptible, concrete material toward the imperceptible, uncertain possibilities that inhabit it.

For this reason, indexical configurations beget a kind of logical leaping that Peirce calls abduction. By startling us, by refocusing our attention, indices, he argues, reorganize our relationship to the world and its constitutive forces. He offers the following example: "Fossils are found; say, remains like those of fishes, but far in the interior of the country. To explain the phenomenon, we suppose the sea once washed over this land."[49] Shifting from "facts of one kind" ("These are fossils.") to "facts of another" ("There must have been a sea here."), abduction begins with indices—what Peirce calls "curious circumstances"—that point to something beyond direct perception.[50] As opposed to logical induction, which reasons from observable "cases" to overarching "rules," abduction arises in mystery, in uncertainty. It moves backward from the "rule." In this way, it motivates the production of new explanations, new knowledges that remain—and this is crucial—conjectural, provisional constructions, not simple re-constructions of formerly inaccessible events.

Frequently lost in Peirce's adoption by film studies, the uncertainty that defines indexicality and abduction can also reorient the discipline's reading of Bazin. He is no naïve realist, after all. Rather, photography and cinema interrupt as much as incarnate profilmic realities, pointing beyond what is directly perceivable to disclose "image[s]," Bazin writes, "of a world that we neither know nor can see."[51] As with all indices—whether fossils, yellow dresses, or, as I shall soon demonstrate, wounds—photography and cinema "mark the junction between two portions of experience": "objective" and subjective, reality and representation, seen and unseen.[52] More than merely compelling

reality, they exert "the irrational power … to bear away our faith" and reveal an immanently irreducible world.[53]

Surrealists, Bazin observes, bring a similar view to the sphere of aesthetics, often turning to photography and cinema in their efforts to unveil the irreducibility of the everyday.[54] In fact, we might, following Rosalind Krauss, take surrealism as a rigorously indexical practice.[55] "I am concerned … with facts which may belong to the order of pure observation, but which on each occasion present all the appearances of a signal."[56] This from André Breton, whom, I submit, cultivates "curious circumstances" with methods of "objective chance" such as the *trouvaille.* Frequently discovered at flea markets, the "found object" is an outmoded material item, mysterious for having been torn from the circumstances that once gave it meaning. When discovered by the surrealist, however, it answers repressed, subjective desires, indexing, at least for a moment, possibilities "other" than its former, "objective" utility implies.

Photography and cinema make these experiences repeatable, not simply because they reproduce indexically, but because they also—to borrow Breton's term—"convulse" reality, turning it into a sign. Writes Louis Aragon:

> All our emotion exists for those dear old American adventure films that speak of daily life and manage to raise to a dramatic level a banknote on which our attention is riveted, a table with a revolver on it, a bottle that on occasion becomes a weapon, a handkerchief that reveals a crime, a typewriter that's the horizon of a desk, the terrible unreeling ticker tape with its magic ciphers that enrich or ruin bankers.[57]

Freed from their contexts by the disruptive power of close-ups, these images "rivet" Aragon's attention with "magic ciphers" that "reveal" crimes. They become "curious circumstances" in Peirce's sense of the term: "real" objects that command notice as well as signs that indicate more. Following this lead, surrealist photographers and filmmakers often submit their own works to various optical and postproduction techniques, including double exposure, negative printing, slow motion, and non-continuous editing. Leaning on indexicality to "guarantee" an object's "reality," these procedures also demand the spectator's attention, troubling the object's referential or narrative grounding and retroactively transforming it into a signifier for alternative constructions that the everyday world appears to repress.

At first glance, a Hollywood film such as *The Wild Bunch* would seem to share little with surrealist practice, save, perhaps, for Peckinpah's interest in violently shocking his spectators. Still, the 1960s and early 1970s mark a conspicuous return to interwar art movements such as dada and surrealism in the work of New York's underground filmmakers and practitioners of minimalist, pop, and conceptual art. The period also finds Hollywood "rediscovering," even remaking, Code-era *films noir,* which, for the French critics who first named them, exhibited distinctly surrealist sensibilities.[58] An avowed admirer of Luis Buñuel, Peckinpah's links to surrealism are less explicit, though no less compelling.[59] When he suggests that he stylizes violence to show how it *really* is, for instance, Peckinpah, like Breton, cultivates chance, incarnating off-screen realities that television discovers by happenstance. In doing so, he also leans on cinema's indexical

links to reality, which along with slow motion and close-ups, effect the acute tactility of bloodletting in films like *The Wild Bunch*.

At the same time, the film's heightened materiality tends to reveal its wounds for the constructions they are. Hyperbolically red and filmed in slow motion, squibs and artificial blood offer a "real" that is always "more than real"—"surreal"—and, thus, threateningly "unreal" at once. A look at *The Wild Bunch*'s historical reception evinces this indeterminacy, as critics struggle to define the verisimilitude of the film's violence. "The bullets, the blades, and the blood [of *The Wild Bunch*] look as real as in a documentary," writes Art Seidenbaum of the *Los Angeles Times.*[60] Vincent Canby agrees: "This is about the strongest, most terrifying comment on real-life violence that I've ever seen in a movie."[61] Still, Canby's review also notes "the obviously artificial representation of blood and violence" in Peckinpah's film.[62] Realism does not come at the expense of incredulity, it seems. Rather, the two frequently commingle inside a single account. "Peckinpah has very intricate, contradictory feelings," suggests Pauline Kael. "He got so wound up in the aesthetics of violence that what had begun as a realistic treatment … became instead an almost abstract fantasy."[63] Reversing this gesture, Roger Ebert argues that "the extreme realism of *The Wild Bunch* actually reminds you that it's a movie."[64] Reality and representation, he argues, paradoxically meet.

Exploring a similar contradiction in her own account of cinematic tactility, Lesley Stern counts smoke, raindrops, and tears among substances that—like blood—become particularly palpable on film. This material force owes, she writes, to cinema's facility for isolating movement, for underscoring gesture. And yet, these capabilities can also privilege an object to the point of defamiliarizing rupture. Film's registration of movement secures physical presence, that is, but it also "renders that presence potentially unstable and ephemeral."[65] In fact, this vacillation between solidity and ethereality, reality and illusion, is precisely what produces spectatorial affect, according to Stern. We react to images as if they were objects, even though we distinguish them as signs—an experience of incredulous credulity that Tom Gunning, in his analysis of early train films, also refers to as "shock."[66] Shock emerges, in other words, when we apprehend cinematic illusion at the very moment of our visceral response. It sits at the limits of spectatorial disavowal, potentially convulsing reality.

In the case of *The Wild Bunch,* squibs and artificial blood deliver sensory shocks that arrest spectatorial attention, commanding the force of the "real" in spite—or even because—of their attendant irreality. Momentarily freed from the profilmic and narrative bonds that typically constrain their significance, these "curious circumstances" provoke abductive constructions—fantasies—that irrupt their original contexts and erupt with new meaning. Promising what the Production Code formerly prohibited, *The Wild Bunch*'s wounds overcome its apparent repression to speak authenticity, soliciting and satisfying the demands to "see more" that cinema shares with television. As a result, they corroborate relationships to vision and violence that circulate in as well as outside the cinema, from the Bunch's last stand to the living-room war.

wounds that speak

A river of blood flows between what The Wild Bunch *wanted to be and what it is.*—Joseph Morgenstern, *Newsweek*, July 1969

If, as I have suggested, *The Wild Bunch*'s wounds speak authenticity beyond the confines of cinema, then what, one wonders, do they say? The answer is a source of perennial antagonism among historical and contemporary commentators, who find the film's position on violence as contradictory as its assertions of realism. Typically discussed in terms of *The Wild Bunch*'s critical or celebratory stance toward the brutality it depicts, this contradiction expresses itself in polarized confirmations and condemnations of the film's violent conclusion.[67] For the *Chicago Tribune*, "[That conclusion] is brutal, it is unrelenting, and it also just may be the strongest five minutes of anti-violence ever filmed."[68] Thirty years later, Christopher Sharrett calls *The Wild Bunch* "an extraordinarily adversarial work, … savaging the Western genre and the American civilizing experience it has mediated."[69] At the other end of the spectrum, the *San Francisco Chronicle* finds Peckinpah's "massacres … glorious rather than distasteful," while Devin McKinney believes they undermine the film's "disturbing and innovative use of violence by trading it in for an affirmation that … is conventional, formulaic, and unconvincing."[70] Evincing the extent to which "seeing more" elicits divergent reactions to cinematic as much as televisual violence, these and other, similar accounts recall the public's irreducible response to NBC's coverage of the Democratic convention.

Indeed, the debate surrounding *The Wild Bunch*'s attitude toward violence cuts to the heart of indeterminacies that, I argue, define cinematic indexicality and the fantasies of "authentic" incarnation it generates. Squibs and artificial blood crystallize this structure in its very contradiction, which is why they function so powerfully as figures. Both objects and signs, cinematic wounds substantiate material realities at the same time that they point to the immaterial illusions that make these "presences" possible. Vacillating between solidity and ethereality, reality and illusion, they point to authenticity's rather "inauthentic" constitution at the limits of documentary and fiction. The result, I contend, has tremendous consequences for both cinematic and televisual representations of violence, particularly to the extent that these are conjoined to politically troubling fantasies of masculine and national integrities.

It is the case, in other words, that *The Wild Bunch* yokes authenticity to the kind of mastery we find in broadcast news—from CBS's interview with Sgt. Floyd in 1965 to ABC's January 1969 newsfilm on America's "hunter" helicopters.[71] Like these reports, which recoup military competency that is increasingly subject to question, Dutch and the Bunch capture "lost" glory—however briefly—at the close of the frontier. Knowingly smiling to one another before instigating the bloodbath, the outmoded outlaws throw their bodies in the path of hundreds of inescapable guns. By the end of the sequence, the resilience of the Bunch reaches almost impossible proportions, as first Lyle (Warren Oates), then Pike, man the Gatling gun they previously procured for the Mexican army. Assaulted on all sides by enemy bullets, these two clutch the gun as it spits fire in several directions, their attacks nearly as automatic as its own. Their blood, meanwhile, increasingly dampens the men's clothing, clinging to them as if refusing to flow.

All this would seem to support readings of the film that emphasize its glorification of masculine redemption, even in the face of overwhelming suffering and loss. "The hundreds of victims in *The Wild Bunch* are … not the point," Ebert urges in 1969. "It is William Holden's mastery over them that is the point, and in dying they simply oblige him."[72] The film, adds Stephen Farber, exhibits "admiration of these men

for their refusal to submit to time and inevitable decay. They are outsiders, failures, with nowhere to turn and no place to go, but they have … the strength to endure."[73] In a world in which Vietnam lay within the confines of John F. Kennedy's "New Frontier," and soldiers referred to the conflict as a game of "Cowboys and Indians," the fantasmatic horizon that separates *The Wild Bunch* from television news reports somehow appears less vast.[74] Indeed, the Gatling gun that sits at the center of Peckinpah's climactic set-piece was itself specifically reengineered for combat in Vietnam.[75]

Of course, like all fantasies, the narratives of loss and recovery that join cinema and television bring "objective" reality together with subjective desires. They are but retroactive, provisional constructions, similar to the logical leaps that, according to Peirce, any index provokes. In the case of *The Wild Bunch*, the same indeterminacy both substantiates and undermines the film's claims to apparently repressed realities. Poised at the limit of reality and illusion, the wound's capacity for materialization is "equaled," as Stern would put it, "only by [its] capacity to … unhinge the solidity and certainty of things."[76] It may speak authenticity, but it presents a challenge to semiotic as well as corporeal integrity by signifying its own unstable and overdetermined character.

One might imagine, therefore, that the pleasure of the Bunch's last stand lies in dissolution—in getting "lost" in loss—as much as in the restoration of masculine integrity. During the film's conclusion, the men's bodies may demonstrate remarkable resilience, but they also turn soft and messy, susceptible to invasion and pain. The blood that leaps from Dutch's wounded—and, relative to the rest of the Bunch, already feminized—body may signal ejaculatory prowess, but also suggest ecstatic resignation as he slumps to the ground, shouting "Pike!" Indeed, neither Dutch nor Pike die on their feet in a firestorm of bullets, but rather, expire with soundless cries in slow-motion close-ups that register every agonized and expressive detail. "*The Wild Bunch*," writes Sharrett, "is involved in more than homage for a dead past; it is a recognition of how that past was probably always a deceit."[77] Even the epilogue, which flashes back to scenes of the Bunch wildly laughing together, recalls lost energies at the same time that it recodes them as desperate hysteria.

In the end, the film, like the wounds that populate its climax, liquidates the authenticity it likewise secures. From this point of view, squibs and artificial blood evoke an alternative line of surrealist thought represented by Georges Bataille, whose notion of *informe* seeks to disintegrate rather than simply overdetermine dominant forms and meaning. Far from the opposite of form, for this would imply form's possibility, *informe* is best described as an action. Categorically denying categories, it permits one to think the nonexistence of "objective" and subjective, reality and representation, rather than how to negotiate their contradiction. *Informe* hinges, moreover, on what Martin Jay—borrowing from Julia Kristeva—calls "a materialism of the abject."[78] It turns to base objects and substances—like blood—to disturb boundaries between inside and outside, self and other, and thus render the orders that depend on these categories shockingly indeterminate.[79]

Bringing *informe* to *The Wild Bunch* underscores the desubtantializing tendency that precedes—perhaps even exceeds—cinema's and, I submit, television's "authentic" incarnations. In fact, the assault to self-possession that accompanies abject encounters seems especially relevant in light of the wounds one finds in late 1960s reports. Images of Sgt. Floyd or Howard Tuckner notwithstanding, broadcasts with graphic physical

violence generally featured Asian, rather than American, bodies. "The standard for coverage of dying bodies and corpses was to treat American casualties with care while treating the North Vietnamese roughly," argues film scholar Bernie Cook.[80] Even when depictions of American casualties outnumbered those of NVA soldiers or Vietcong guerillas, the most vicious images of wounding and death were reserved for the Vietnamese. In this regard, the Loan execution or the napalming of Trang Bang are, like CBS's coverage of Tet, quite typical. In the latter reports, viewers see, in less than twenty seconds, seven wounded and dead Vietcong fighters, including the bloodied faces of at least three. While seconds before, it shot two dead American military policemen face down and from a distance, the newsfilm pushes into the face of one Vietnamese operative and lingers longer on the broken bodies of each.

On one hand, these kinds of images contribute to military and governmental narratives about U.S. proficiency and progress in Vietnam. Pitting silent Vietnamese corpses against footage of walking, talking, and fighting Americans corroborated narrative formulas that conceived of the war in Manichean terms. "American television networks sought to appropriate the dead bodies of the North Vietnamese in order to reinvest them with new meanings," Cook argues, "including the power and rightness of the American cause in Vietnam."[81] The Vietcong's aim during Tet, according to one CBS correspondent, was "to destroy the embassy. In that purpose," he continues over images of American soldiers carrying a wounded guerilla, "they did not succeed."

On the other hand, however, one might imagine that these views permit spectators to imaginatively experience the deaths of Vietnamese soldiers and civilians and / or retrospectively construct the thousands of American deaths that remain, for the most part, off scene. To "see more," in this case, is to "open up" to fantasies "other" than mastery—to experience losses that overdetermine, perhaps even disintegrate, dominant narratives about U. S. military personnel and the war.[82] One thinks, for instance, of Cook's reading of a CBS report on the 1968 siege at Khe Sanh, which features images of damaged American helicopters followed by footage of five NVA dead. The "images of grounded, 'crippled' aircraft suggest a loss to America's 'military capability,'" he argues, "but importantly they shield viewers from the sight of damaged and dead American bodies, a much more destabilizing sign."[83] While Cook's interpretation fits the overwhelming absence of American casualties in Vietnam-era newsfilms, it also overlooks the fantasmatic possibilities the report's fetishistic displacement affords. Precisely because "the *body* of one grounded helicopter, … *full of holes* and broken glass" precedes three shots of wounded Vietnamese fighters, the former invite recursive, retroactive constructions that mingle "objective" and subjective, documentary and fiction, in ways that the latter provoke.[84] To the extent that post – Tet coverage increasingly editorialized against the war—consider Walter Cronkite's prediction that Vietnam would end in "stalemate"—or provided photographs of American soldiers alongside the "body count," these encounters between reality and representation seem all the more possible.[85]

All of this is not, of course, to forget the fantasies of self-possessed authenticity that meetings of documentary and fiction also—and perhaps more often—produced during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Nor is to overlook the fact that less determinate spectatorial experiences still imply some kind of racial displacement. It is to suggest, however, that the wounds that so preoccupied historical spectators represent more than cinema's attempts to "compete" with television. Rather, they figure fantasies of

authenticity to which both media contribute, even if the realties they incarnate remain unstable solutions to desires they animate in turn. Squibs and artificial blood permit us today to trace this instability, which drives the era's distrust of the visible and contradictory faith in violent disclosure. They also point to the brutality that lies in the racist and masculinist assumptions that drive authenticity as much as in images of bloodshed themselves.

***

To conclude, I want to turn to the use of squibs and artificial blood after the late 1960s, when the lengthy sequences and innumerable wounds that characterize *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Wild Bunch* give way to brief, punctuated explosions. As the use of these technologies contracts so, too, do the fantasies of authenticity they figure, particularly in a film such as *Mean Streets*, the narrative of which hinges on irreconcilable tensions that constitute both masculine privilege and its alternatives. If, as I have argued, graphic wounds crystallize authenticity in its contradiction, then these momentary eruptions further distill that conflict to speak the indeterminacy that characterizes both "authentic" incarnation and its potential liquidation.

As with Peckinpah's Wild Bunch, Scorsese's protagonists face a world of limitation and enclosure, particularly Charlie (Harvey Keitel), who is caught between religio-familial privilege and his wish to relinquish its requirements.[86] A small-time money collector for his Uncle Giovanni (Cesare Danova), Charlie entertains notions of moving Uptown with the epileptic girlfriend (Amy Robinson) of whom his uncle disapproves. Yet, much like his attraction to Diane (Jeannie Bell), a black dancer at his friend's club, Charlie never acts upon these desires because they are at odds with the promise of masculine authority that accompanies fidelity to the Church, the neighborhood, and his uncle. In this sense, his predicament represents the inverse of the Bunch's entrapment. While Peckinpah's protagonists seek to recover "lost" authority through vainglorious resistance, Charlie believes authenticity lies outside patriarchy's social constraints.

Still, for *Mean Streets* as much as *The Wild Bunch*, violence offers these men the means to redemption, however unstable. Charlie, who befriends the volatile and aggressive Johnny Boy (Robert De Niro) to inflate his own sense of saintly paternity, also uses this relation to get nearer the reckless violations he simultaneously craves. With the film's climax at the frontier of Manhattan and Brooklyn, this flirtation bursts into a scene of explosive bloodletting that mingles Charlie's escape from masculine codes with his allegiance to them. Fleeing from Michael (Richard Romanus), a small-time bookie to whom Johnny Boy owes money, Charlie fulfills fantasies of paternal authority at the same time that he literally drives himself toward the brutal reckoning he perpetually courts. In fact, because the very terms of Charlie's transgression partake of the social order he wants to deny, the spectator feels these categories draw closer together and anxiously anticipates the violence.

When it arrives, the blood that spews from Johnny Boy's neck or Charlie's forearm is distinctly touchable, though this palpability comes by different means than one finds in Peckinpah's film. Foregoing slow motion, Scorsese's scene is wild and frantic. Spectators watch as wet, slippery blood leaps through Johnny Boy's fingers, spills from

Charlie's wrist, and rains down the out-of-control car [Figure 28]. The brevity of the violence compared to *The Wild Bunch*'s nearly five-minute conclusion compounds the film's already frenetic rapidity. Lasting less than a minute from first shot until Charlie's car hits a hydrant, the climax of *Mean Streets* offers but two brief squib explosions. Whereas Peckinpah cultivated chance, in part, through the novelty of his film's brutality, by 1973, Scorsese must heighten these shocks by concentrating their effects. The spectator of *Mean Streets* expects violence, but precisely when it will come generates the sudden and "unexpected" sensations it shares with televisual bloodshed. Like the Loan execution, these wounds infrequently materialize and too quickly retreat. Promising to make flesh formerly unavailable realities, they momentarily recover the "lost" objects after which spectators clamber.

From this point of view, squibs and artificial also substantiate Charlie's belief that "authentic" existence lies outside patriarchal repression. He may eschew paternal privilege, but Charlie's fantasies of escape partake of the logic that governs *The Wild Bunch*'s self-possession. Still, Scorsese's bloody eruptions—like the broken hydrant they precede—index the irruption of more fluid categories into the scene [Figure 29]. Heightening the indeterminacy of the wound's ethereality come tactility, the film's succinct and frenzied climax unsettles Charlie's answer to masculine authority by deferring the retroactive and provisional mastery it unwittingly shares with *The Wild Bunch.* Indeed, *Mean Streets* throws this lesson back upon its audience with a dissolute conclusion that rejects narrative certainty. As Johnny Boy and Charlie desperately stagger from the crime scene, the film jumps from Teresa to Diane to Uncle Giovanni, underscoring the extent to which these relationships persist until Charlie conceives them anew. Not coincidentally, perhaps, *Mean Streets* also leaps to a scene from Fritz Lang's *The Big Heat* (1953), which draws Hollywood violence into its own diegetic "reality." Confronting the spectator with this commingling of "objective" and subjective, reality and representation, Scorsese's film recalls the meetings of documentary and fiction that, I have argued, deliver and destabilize the era's fantasies of authenticity both in and outside the cinema.



Figure 28: Spectators watch as wet, slippery blood leaps through Johnny Boy's fingers.
(Warner Bros. Pictures, 1973)



Figure 29: Like the film's broken hydrant, *Mean Streets'* wounds index fluidity.
(Warner Bros. Pictures, 1973)

Chapter 4
Hitting the "*Vérité* Jackpot": The Ecstatic Profits of Freeze-Framed Violence

> But how does one review this picture? It's like reviewing the footage of President Kennedy's assassination or of Lee Harvey Oswald's murder. This movie is into complications and sleight-of-hand beyond Pirandello, since the filmed death at Altamont—although, of course, unexpected—was part of a *cinéma-vérité* spectacular. The free concert was staged and lighted to be photographed, and the three hundred thousand people who attended it were the unpaid cast of thousands. The violence and murder weren't scheduled, but the Maysles brothers hit the *cinéma-vérité* jackpot.[1]

So writes Pauline Kael after screening *Gimme Shelter* (Albert and David Maysles, 1970), the Rolling Stones concert film with a brutal buttoning point: the murder of an eighteen-year-old black man named Meredith Hunter.[2] Though it begins rather routinely, Kael's review soon stymies—arrested by the violence that apparently unmoors her conventional critical approach. As if to recover, she reminds herself that this is a "picture" like any other, a Pirandellian mingling of reality and illusion that not only stages and lights the events, but also edits them for maximum "suspense factor."[3] Indeed, she warns, one must not "get suckered into reacting to motion-picture footage that appears to be documentary as if it were simple truth."[4]

But why, then, the predicament? Why is *Gimme Shelter* so difficult to review? Because, it seems, Kael dismisses her own notes of caution, discovering contingency amid overwhelming construction. Hence her citation of the implicitly "unreviewable" footage of John F. Kennedy's and Lee Harvey Oswald's deaths—images popularly conceived as visual evidence of historical events. Such documents, at least in Kael's formulation here, marshal a direct and faithful account of reality that stands opposed to *Gimme Shelter*'s more abstract, narrative structuration. And yet, as if *beside herself,* Kael—in a moment of critical hesitation—draws the three films together, cleaving contingency from construction and replacing *Shelter*'s formerly calculated, interpretive representations with an immediate and authentic instantiation of the past. No longer a "picture" like any other, *Gimme Shelter*—91 minutes, edited, with titles and asynchronous sound—is reduced to a single moment of "unmediated" violence. It hits the "*cinéma vérité* jackpot."

Far from settling the matter, however, this "jackpot" merely compounds Kael's consternation. On one hand, that is, jackpots imply unpredictability. Chance is a hallmark of contingency, and the Maysles' inadvertent capture of an unanticipated murder offers the most demonstrable link between their film and its counterparts from 1963. On the other hand, meanwhile, *Shelter*'s jackpot seems to exceed spontaneity, since the Maysles, Kael urges, deliberately raise its stakes. If, she implies, they seek to stage the spontaneous, then do they not also paradoxically cultivate—even dangerously orchestrate—contingency?[5] Were this the case, spontaneous violence alone would no longer account for the film's jackpot; rather, the very form of that violence would also motivate Kael's response.

Though conspicuously underexamined by Kael, this form haunts her primary utterance of uncertainty: "How does one review this picture?"*Picture,* as I have suggested, marks Kael's stab at Hollywood parlance. She is stumped by a *movie.* At the same time, the word implies stillness—a discrete image like a painting, a photograph, or in this case, one of three *freeze frames* that arrest Hunter's murder, not to mention Kael's review. These stops reinforce the film's content—violently disrupting life's movement with the unforeseen stasis of death. And yet, as much as the murder, they emphasize its media: singular instants drawn and repeatedly printed from cinema's photographic base. Though moving at the level of projection, these images, or *photograms,* share the immobile appearance of photography, itself allied, even more rigorously than the cinema, with contingency, immediacy, and authentication—the very stuff Kael attributes to *Gimme Shelter.*[6] The freeze frame, in this sense, inspires disavowal of its status as cinema, citing photography to overwhelm, at least for the moment, the filmic construction of which it is part.

***

I begin with Kael's efforts to disentangle contingency from construction less for their success or failure than for what they reveal about the cultural significance of the freeze frame at this historical moment. After all, a number of American films from the late 1960s and early 1970s—most of them fictional—conspicuously employ freeze frames in scenes of protracted brutality. *In the Year of the Pig* (Emile de Antonio, 1968), *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (George Roy Hill, 1969), *Joe* (John G. Avildsen, 1970), and *The Parallax View* (Alan J. Pakula, 1974), as well as the primary subjects of this essay—*Gimme Shelter* and *Night of the Living Dead* (George Romero, 1968)—are but a few.

The desire to capture contingency extends, in other words, beyond the Maysles or *cinéma vérité* to other directors and genres and even to spectators themselves. We find this desire not only in Kael's unreviewable "picture"—which elides, yet implicitly names, her investment in the freeze frame—but also in calls for eyewitness accounts following the Altamont event. "We were there. We didn't see *it*. But we did see a lot. We want to know what you saw," KSAN radio demands after the concert—"it" bearing the mark of contingency lost.[7] *Rolling Stone* envisions a technological recovery of the concert's violence, suggesting "an instant replay would have been useful," since "the action was so thick and heavy."[8] In each case, the freeze frame becomes desire's ideal response and solicitation, circumventing time, space, and even human perception to construct a missed encounter that *stands outside* everyday, as well as cinematic, experience.[9]

For this reason, I contend, freeze frames from the late 1960s and early 1970s figure spectatorial fantasies of ecstasy that compound the ecstatic experiences of violence they likewise depict. By ecstasy, I mean the sudden loss of self-possession to which both the subjects and spectators of freeze-framed brutality succumb. Most commonly expressed as the state of being "beside oneself," ecstasy literally means "to cause to stand outside"; it offers momentarily what only death makes permanent—an encounter with all that exceeds the mediation of individuated consciousness.[10] Undermining conceptions of inside and outside, self and other, this glimpse of what Georges Bataille calls the

"continuity" of being violently upsets everything with which one makes sense of the world.[11] And yet, as Bataille also suggests, such *petites morts* excite one's fascination.

Excitation is, I argue, the motor force of ecstatic experience. It implies *citation*, a summons or call that comes from "outside" (*ex*-) to set something in motion.[12] That something, writes Eric L. Santner, is the very structure of desire, since one frequently interprets these calls from "outside" as something that has "gone missing" from everyday life.[13] Turning to the domain of cinema, I suggest that freeze frames in *Gimme Shelter* or *Night of the Living Dead* effect their own summons from "outside," *citing* the sphere of photography so as to *excite* the spectator of film. As with the deaths they render, these freeze frames, too, imply standing outside conventional experience, violently wrenched from dominant forms. They evoke the contingent instantaneity that has apparently "gone missing" from cinema's abstract and ever-shifting construction, holding the filmic body—material, diegetic, and spectatorial—rapt in a state of lingering excitation.

While ecstasy may appear an arbitrary, even ahistorical, means for approaching the freeze frame's cultural significance, it actually provides a compelling account of the demands to see more violence *and* violently see more that characterize this particular historical moment. In fact, the freeze frame's rise in commercial American cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s contributes to ecstasy's broader popularization during the same period. Whether as occultism or the proverbial sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, ecstatic experience becomes a prominent feature of the era's cultural landscape. Deemed increasingly violent by the end of the 1960s, these practices pit society's "external" prescriptions against an "internal" and presumably more "authentic" abundance that paradoxically belongs to "others," such as women, people of color, and historical figures like cowboys and frontiersmen. As the media disseminate such techniques through astrology columns, record albums, television news, or Hollywood films, the search for authenticity they serve likewise goes mainstream.

Given this context, the freeze frames that surface in commercial American cinema mark a departure from their historical precedents. Appearing alongside slow motion or superimposition in experimental works of the 1920s, the first freeze frames signaled the transformative power of cinematic vision, which promised to unveil alternatives to conventional perception and experience.[14] Freeze frames from the late 1960s and early 1970s share this revelatory spirit, but the relationship between photography and cinema they mobilize also reflects and reaffirms the quest for authenticity that animates the period's preoccupations with ecstatic practices and violence. *Gimme Shelter* and *Night of the Living Dead* supply salient studies in this regard. Frequently cited as "proof" in the era's apocalyptic fantasies of violence, these films inventory ecstatic experiences from rock music to occultism alongside freeze-framed depictions of two black men's murders. Consolidating the logic that motivates these ecstasies, the freeze frame discloses death's "lost" details through cinema's photographic interior. In this way, it, too, posits escape from established realities by appealing to an authentic internal "other."

The certainty with which *Gimme Shelter* and *Night of the Living Dead* make these appeals also distinguishes the freeze frame's popular use from its deployment in European art cinema and the American avant-garde. To be sure, films such as *La jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962), *Blowup* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966), and *Persona* (Ingmar Bergman, 1966) influence their American successors when they couple still images with diegetic incidents of violence. However, these films tend to employ photograms to

heighten subjective uncertainties rather than produce an experience of "documentary" facticity. Even *Night of the Living Dead*, which shares art cinema's status as fiction, likens its freeze frames to historical photographs. A similar distinction attends the relationship between commercial and experimental American cinema. Both will turn to photograms to render perceptual or experiential extremes, but works by Maya Deren and Kenneth Anger or, later, Hollis Frampton and Paul Sharits emphasize the destabilizing force of these images, not the "objective" alternatives they seem to secure.

My point, then, is not to link all freeze frames to ecstasy or to suggest they are ecstatic in the same ways. Rather, I submit that the freeze frame's popularity during the late 1960s and early 1970s renders it a poignant figure for ecstasy's own proliferation at this historical moment.[15] Giving shape to the logic of ecstatic experience, freeze frames reduce distinctions between "inside" and "outside" to discernible differences between photography and cinema. In doing so, they concentrate heterogeneous desires and practices, distilling both the fantasies these generate and the contradictions that inhabit them. Indeed, to the extent that freeze frames *still move*, however imperceptibly, they point to the indeterminate, overlooked, and rather "inauthentic" origins of ecstatic authenticity. For this reason, I contend, freeze frames offer more than transparent reflections of their cultural horizon. Crystallizing ecstasy's answer to unsatisfying realties, they also refract its promises and permit one to trace the blind spots that unwittingly obscure its vision.

ecstatic profits

The Photograph is violent: not because it shows violent things, but because on each occasion it fills the sight by force, *and because in it nothing can be refused or transformed. … Cinema participates in [the] domestication of Photography.*—Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*

"Can you roll back on that David?" someone asks over images of yet another fray in the audience at Altamont. Shot from above and at a distance, the details of this skirmish are as imperceptible as the questioner, who, by virtue of a cut, we identify as Mick Jagger, sitting now at a Steenbeck. More than the speaker, however, this sound bridge and subsequent cut register *Gimme Shelter*'s complex construction, which negotiates, in this case, multiple, though inextricable, spaces and times.

Then, as if to underscore the force, and source, of its own mediation, the film cuts again—this time, to a medium shot of the Steenbeck, which re-rolls the previous scene's footage as a frame within our frame. As the sounds and images move across this monitor, smaller, quieter, and less colorful than before, we can see the celluloid strip that produces them winding its way through the apparatus. The view is significant, for when we jump, moments later, to three vibrant, full-screen arrests of the violence, we remember that strip and believe it has stopped [Figure 30].

The Steenbeck points, then, to more than *Shelter*'s abstract duration. It also primes us—by foregrounding framing and the material print—for the intrusion of an alternative spatiotemporal relation: the freeze frame, which transcends the monitor's comparatively obscure views. "Could you see what was happening there?" asks David Maysles, returning the footage, by Jagger's request, to the film's former scene. That we, too, have been addressed by his question is made clear by the cut that accompanies Jagger's reply. With the words, "No, you couldn't see anything," *Shelter* jumps back to

our initial full-frame view of the violence, which, as we recall and Jagger confirms, was and is chaotically unclear.

But then—suddenly—the film freezes, and off-screen, we hear the Steenbeck pause. "There's the [Hell's] Angel right there with the knife," Maysles announces, and yes, there they are, the weapon clearly suspended, where we could not see it before. The disclosure is startling. So, too, the film's unexpected arrest. Yet as the image lingers for seven full seconds of immobile silence, it inspires contemplation in addition to shock [Figure 31]. "Where's the gun?" asks Jagger, and Maysles, rewinding the Steenbeck, responds: "I'll roll it back and you'll see it against the girl's crocheted dress." He does and, of course, we, like Jagger, do—again for seven seconds of stillness and quiet, before advancing back to the knife for seven seconds more.

As with slow motion, freeze frames extend the interval in which viewers may inspect events, and yet, by momentarily eschewing film's photogrammic displacement, they also interrupt the illusion—even occlusion—of cinematic movement itself. In addition to time, in other words, freeze frames transform motion into visibility, bringing more than imperceptible content to the viewer's attention. Besides murder tucked way amid chaos, *Shelter* unveils the photograms that line its otherwise interminable flow. Like the shot of the Steenbeck, however, these images also exceed any simple reflexive significance.

Drawing us toward *Shelter*'s indiscernible constitution in photography, freeze frames also turn our apprehension of, and about, the illusions of cinema into absorption by other apparently non-cinematic means. If they encourage us to "recoil from the image," writes Raymond Bellour, the retreat "goes hand in hand with a growing fascination."[16] Fascination, in this case, belongs to the violence that the freeze frame uncovers as well as to the explicitly photographic properties—stillness, silence, determinate framing—upon which that revelation depends. Repudiating cinematic mediation both by *what* we see and *how*, the photogram becomes, at least for the moment, a "stop within a stop, a freeze frame within a freeze frame," a photographic "outside" inside the film.[17]

After all, relative to cinema's abstract and ephemeral unfolding, photography has long aroused in beholders the contingent encounters that *Gimme Shelter* wishes its spectators to share. Christian Metz attributes this experience to photography's "past presence," which not only refers us to a present now inaccessible and already past, but also, I argue, carries *then* forward, making "past presence" equally a presencing of the past.[18] Photography, that is, reproduces indexically, collecting, storing, and re-presenting the light from an object such that the resulting image is, as André Bazin argues, less likeness and more the "object itself."[19]

Certainly cinema, too, is an indexical medium, but as Metz and others suggest, it tends to overwhelm our experience of pastness with an ever-shifting and diegetic present in which "nothing can be kept, nothing stopped."[20] With photography, by contrast, the referent stubbornly adheres to its sign, touching us with the contingency—the word itself implies touching—of a slice of space-time.[21] We hear this in Jagger's and Maysles' reception of the freeze frame in which *then* and *there* merge contradictorily with *here* and *now*. "*There's* the Angel right there with the knife," says David; "Oh, *it's there, isn't* it?" Mick replies upon seeing the gun. In each case, a weapon *is* present before them, even if *there* registers its spatiotemporal past.



Figure 30: The Steenbeck re-rolls the previous scene's footage as a frame within our frame. (Maysles Films, 1970)



Figure 31: "There's the Angel right there with the knife." (Maysles Films, 1970)

Contingency also contributes to the evidentiary force of photography relative to cinema, which, for its part, tends to minimize the index as *object* in favor of its status as *sign*. The freeze frame exacerbates this difference between representation and authentication, even in a "documentary" like *Gimme Shelter*. Coming before editing, before voiceover, the photogram draws us closer to the film's point of inscription, potentially eluding the significance these structures seek to provide. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that Roland Barthes—in the very year of *Shelter*'s release—would draw upon the photogram to elucidate cinema's "third meaning," which "blunts" a film's more purposeful and "obvious" significance.[22] With stills, writes Barthes, it is "their stupidity [that] touches me," and the same might be said for the freeze frame.[23] Its singular and contiguous relationship to reality resists the disseminating abstraction of signification, seizing both cinematic motion and the act of interpretation itself.

Finally, if contingency evades deliberate signification, then this also aligns it with chance. "It is through photography," Walter Benjamin tells us, "that we first discover the … optical unconscious"—that mechanism which marks the limits of conscious perception, manifesting facts otherwise unseen.[24] When faced with a photograph,

> the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the here and now, with which reality has (so to speak) seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long-forgotten moment the future nests so eloquently that we, looking back, may rediscover it.[25]

Linking the contact between light and photochemical emulsion to unexpected encounters with the stowaways of time, Benjamin unites, by way of photography, contingency as "touching" with contingency as "chance." And while he also extends these powers to the cinema, *Gimme Shelter* ups film's revelatory ante by forcing chance's hand.[26] Compelling an "accidental" encounter with reality, "unmediated" by cinematic construction, the film's freeze frames point beyond the limits of everyday human perception to promise, by way of photography, the unforeseen secrets—the "optical unconscious"—of cinematic representation itself.

"Only a spectacular killing … has the power to reveal what normally escapes notice," writes Bataille, the spectatorial ecstasy of which the freeze frame seems only to compound.[27] Brutal deaths have a *demonstrative* function, disclosing what lies beyond everyday consciousness, particularly, writes Bataille, when enacted in ritualized forms. Free of the "precarious and random luck" that makes accidental death possible, religious sacrifices—not unlike freeze frames—contradictorily cultivate chance so as to point to the existence of what otherwise remains unseen.[28] What is more, both ritualized violence and freeze frames extend the experience of ecstasy from victim to audience. "A violent death disrupts the creature's discontinuity," its discrete alienation, writes Bataille; "what remains, what the tense onlookers experience in the succeeding silence, is the continuity of all existence with which the victim is now one."[29] Continuity is, in other words, manifestly "*proved by death.*"[30] So, too, with the freeze frame, which by violently arresting *Shelter*'s more abstract duration, promises the spectator, like Hunter himself, evidence of what lies "outside" available perception and experience.

occult technologies

The cinema has an unexpected and mysterious side which we find in no other form of art. … There is also a sort of physical excitement which … moves beyond the power of representation.— Antonin Artaud, "Witchcraft and the Cinema"

"What could you do for an encore to human sacrifice?" asks music journalist Stanley Booth in his account of the Rolling Stones concert at Altamont.[31] The question, which forges a connection between ritualized violence and Hunter's unexpected death, is representative of many contemporary reactions to the event.[32] Linking film and concert alike to a ritual of ecstatic violence, critics contribute to preexisting accounts of the Stones' own interest in occult practices—an interest profitably turned toward their 1967 psychedelic album, *Their Satanic Majesties Request,* as well as the 1968 single "Sympathy for the Devil," which they perform in *Gimme Shelter* under the protection of no less than the Hell's Angels themselves. Referring to Jagger as the "Prince of Darkness"[33] or "the showbiz Lucifer,"[34] most reports of Altamont and *Gimme Shelter* delight in connecting the Stones and their "violent *Walpurgisnacht*"[35] to Satanism and witchcraft.

Their delight is significant, for while the Stones—the self-proclaimed bad boys of rock—represent a dark and violent vision that defies the purported peacefulness of Woodstock, the discourse surrounding Altamont and *Gimme Shelter* evinces a broader fascination with the occult and its demonstrative practices. The late 1960s and early 1970s mark, after all, a conspicuous resurgence of interest in the occult in the United States, one that the mass media help document and promulgate. A March 1969 *Time* magazine cover story hails "Astrology and the New Cult of the Occult" and announces that astrological calculations are

> being taken up seriously and semiseriously by the most scientifically sophisticated generation of young adults in history. Even the occult arts of palmistry, numerology, fortunetelling, and witchcraft—traditionally the twilight zone of the undereducated and overanxious—are catching on with youngsters.[36]

Embracing the supernatural in spite or, perhaps, even because of their knowledge of science, America's youth, *Time* reasons, contradictorily mingle urbane sophistication with backwater naiveté. And while university courses in witchcraft or Anton LaVey's 1966 establishment of the Church of Satan in San Francisco may attest to the occult's special province with countercultural youth—a subject to which I will return—the appearance of astrology columns in 1,200 of the nation's 1,750 newspapers suggests widespread curiosity about its apparently irrational and paranoiac claims.[37]

Indeed, as Martin Marty argues in his 1970 contribution to the proliferating discourse on the occult, there exists an "Occult Establishment" that further entangles a superstitious periphery with the enlightened mainstream.[38] This "safe and often sane 'aboveground' expression" of such practices as astrology, telepathy, and even voodoo "gives every sign," writes Marty, "of being beamed at what is now usually called 'middle America,' 'the silent majority,' or 'consensus-USA.'"[39] What sustain their manifest quest for secret knowledge, however, are the illicit, shadowy "others" that this establishment

helps to foment. Conjuring images of a dark, dangerous, and patently youthful occult "underground," these accounts, not unlike Kael's attack on the Maysles, give their authors the means to disavow their own transgressive desires. "If there is one devastating aspect to the documentation … [of a] purportedly ominous underground," writes Marty, "it is this: the turned-on, black magical, Satanist, and otherwise disturbing sector of the population is always written about and *never* written to."[40] The situation fantasmatically disentangles what are, in fact, entwined cultural expressions. "Aboveground" practitioners indulge in the occult they also seek to contain, while those who identify as underground corroborate the plane from which they likewise depart.

The commingling of rationality and irrationality that comprises occultism in the late 1960s and early 1970s typifies its history in American culture, as do its frequent associations with modern technologies. Tracing the contemporaneous development of telegraphy and Spiritualism in the mid – nineteenth century, Jeffrey Sconce notes how telegraphs model the female "medium's" ability to overcome bodily constraint at the same time that they provide psychologists with analogues for the electrical origins of her purported insanity.[41] For Sconce, this meeting of science and supernaturalism, conservatism and critique, characterizes the divergent paranormal fantasies that arise with subsequent technologies such as radio, television, and the Internet. Though certainly distinct from the history of electronic media that Sconce undertakes, freeze frames occupy a similarly overdetermined fantasmatic horizon, keyed to the demands of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Along with horoscopes, tarot cards, and satanic iconography, freeze frames contribute to this period's store of "occult technologies," sociologist Marcello Truzzi's term for ritualized instruments that disclose "supernormal" realities.[42] That cinema should provide this kind of technology is in keeping with its own emergence at the intersection of science and magic. Touting the apparatus to commercialize an overpowering illusion, cinema compounds the rationalized antimodernism one finds in such turn-of-the-century pursuits as dime museums and magic theaters. "The cinema reveals a whole occult life," writes Antonin Artaud in his "Witchcraft and the Cinema" (1928), but one "must know how to divine [it]."[43] It comes, he warns, "not by a succession of images so much as by something more imponderable which restores them to us with … no interpositions or representations."[44] Artaud's prescription, which opposes the occult to cinema's abstract and uniform construction, resembles the photographic contingency that freeze frames from the late 1960s and early 1970s promise.

Revealing the photography in cinema, freeze frames, too, reclaim once inaccessible worlds. Some forty years after Artaud, underground filmmaker Kenneth Anger turns cinema's photographic capacities toward his own occult interests. For Anger, the physics of light and film's photochemical emulsion give cinema the luciferian power to bedevil everyday appearance. In films like *Invocation of My Demon Brother* (1969), which features both Rolling Stones and Hell's Angels, photographic processes link objects to their beholders and "impose upon the mind of the watcher an alternative reality" [Figure 32].[45] "Centuries before photography, there were talismans," notes Anger, "which actually anticipated photographs. A talisman was a sticky fly-paper to trap a spirit—cunningly you printed on it a 'photograph' of the demon you wanted to capture in it."[46] In less "underground"—and, as we shall see, even popular narrative—films,

photograms trap unseen forces that, when freeze frames release them, summon ecstatic visions for cinema's spectators. And while they expose the dark "other" scene that makes cinema possible, these films also enforce distinctions between cinematic representation and photographic authenticity.

rituals of authentication

The goal of man and society should be … finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic.—The Port Huron Statement, Students for a Democratic Society

We demand the Politics of Ecstasy!—Yippie slogan

As its relationship to occult ritual has already begun to suggest, the freeze frame conjures a veritable litany of ecstatic fantasies that characterize the period to which Altamont and *Gimme Shelter* belong. Sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll are, for instance, the holy triumvirate of this cultural moment, harbingers of ecstasy for the very youth who increasingly and, by many accounts, violently turn on to Satanism, cinema, and the Stones. For many of these young people, especially participants in the era's countercultural movements, such experiences promise a glimpse of the authenticity that is, they believe, otherwise denied them by the structures of postwar America.

Indeed, as much as ecstasy, authenticity occupies this era's cultural imagination, not only in the counterculture, but also on the Far Right and in the academy. Arising in tandem with modern rationalism, authenticity historically implies renouncing the world in the service of self-possession. What interior desires and feelings offer is more fundamental, more "real," than the prescriptions of external society. Though unquestionably more complicated in the theoretical critiques that circulate during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the authenticity that proliferates in this period's popular culture tends to share the concern with "loss" and "insides" and "outsides" that defines its conceptions of ecstasy.[47] In the case of the counterculture, young, predominantly white members of the middle class conceive of themselves as existentially alienated from an inner, more personal, wholeness, unlike the poor or people of color, who are largely socially and politically estranged from external power structures."This inner wholeness," writes Doug Rossinow, "[is] the state of authenticity" and capturing it means recovering the immanent instincts and spontaneous experiences that have been lost to widespread affluence and bureaucratization.[48]

In this context, uninhibited sex, illicit drug use, and rock music become themselves *rituals of authentication*, tools for apprehending an alternative reality that simultaneously precedes and exceeds interior isolation. Returning its listeners to the contingency of sensation, rock—like an unrestrained libido or that "new technology of the mind," LSD—promises momentary communion with originary, even "primitive," instincts and experiences that redeem one's social indoctrination.[49] Like freeze frames, these techniques revitalize the past *in*, *as*, and *for* the present moment, opening an inner space that stands outside the repressive institutions of modern, everyday life.[50] Hence, perhaps, the turn to pre-industrial clothing and practices, whether indigenous (buckskins, peyote, cowboy boots) or "exotic" (saris, Zen Buddhism, Arabian robes) among members of the counterculture in the early to mid-1960s [Figure 33].



Figure 32: *Invocation of My Demon Brother*, featuring both the Rolling Stones and British Hell's Angels (Kenneth Anger, 1969)



Figure 33: Rock music: one of the era's many rituals of authentication (*Gimme Shelter*, Maysles Films, 1970)

As the decade advances, the demonstrative power of "authentic" experience fascinates more than just "hippies." The New Left, for instance, begins to fold countercultural practices into its political programs.[51] Consequently, hippies and leftists alike "put their bodies on the line," using external appearance and perceptual experience to challenge the boundaries of dominant culture. Reaching the mass media, images of bearded or braless young people, dancing wildly and smoking dope, soon unite a generation—and those that preceded it—with the style and intoxicating habits of their ecstatic subjects. "*Life, Time,* and the trendspotters of the evening news outdid themselves trumpeting the new youth culture," Todd Gitlin writes. "Alarmists and proselytizers alike collaborated in the belief that American youth en masse were abandoning the stable routes of American society."[52] Films such as *Easy Rider* (Dennis Hopper, 1969) and songs like the Stones' "Street Fighting Man" further corroborate this fantasy, their popularity drawing casual dabblers and faithful practitioners together through the rituals of authentication they share.

Still, the widespread rebellion that joins dominant to counter- culture—the latter increasingly and contradictorily mainstream—also exacerbates distinctions between the two spheres, particularly as ecstasy turns violent in the popular imaginary. It is the case, of course, that small segments of American youth do participate in acts of physical violence as the 1960s come to a close. Riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention and the Weather Underground's 1969 "Days of Rage" are, like the Stones concert at Altamont, only the most prominent examples. It is also the case, however, that American media increasingly cover only the most violent youth actions, cleaving them from "non-violent"—though certainly confrontational—activities like marches, strikes, and sit-ins. "Even when events were virtually violence-free," writes historian Melvin Small, "journalists pointed that out at the beginning of their stories or in headlines, … reinforcing the notion that demonstrations meant violence" and—I would add—that "non-violent" tactics somehow evaded coercion.[53] Thus fracturing the youth movement, popular accounts give prominence to its most immoderate factions, the participants of which heighten their own presence by answering the press in kind.

As a result, young people seem to stand more and more outside the confines of conventional culture, consolidating fantasies of extremity among those who support and oppose them. For one side, marginality promises authentic rebellion, or so people of color, especially African Americans—from Harlem hipsters to Civil Rights activists to Black Power militants—appear to attest.[54] At odds with the "silent majority," young radicals believe themselves similarly subjugated—recipients, not deliverers, of violence. To respond to violence *with* violence, they posit, is to generate a repressive, and thus revelatory, response. For the other side, meanwhile, their provocations disclose but a generation bent on apocalypticism for its own sake.

And yet, because each side sees only the other's self-serving brutality, they misrecognize the vision of violence—popular, apocalyptic, and articulated in otherness—that actually entwines them both. In particular, they miss the way in which people of color—and African Americans in particular—define their cultural differences. According to Rossinow, urban riots between 1965 and 1968 "left a deep imprint on many conservative Americans, driving them further to the political right. They associated violence," he continues, "with black Americans, not whites."[55] So, too, with leftist

radicals, though in ways they admire rather than malign. Notes former Weatherman Jeff Jones:

> People like the Vietnamese and, in this country, people in the black community, especially people like the Black Panther Party, were in a state of revolutionary warfare. The question was: Were we going to join that war on terms equal to what black people or Vietnamese people were doing, or were we going to continue to use our privilege as white people as an excuse for not accepting the same level of risk?[56]

Here, overcoming alienation means emulating those whose lives are on the line. And while doing so may challenge middle-class banality, it contributes to fantasies of violence as authentically "other" at the same time.

gimme shelter

Let's get it together. ... Keep it together. ... Hell's Angels, everybody. Let's just keep ourselves together. You know, if we are all one, let's show we're all one.—Mick Jagger to the crowd at Altamont

Cataloguing the era's many rituals of authentication, *Gimme Shelter* compounds popular fantasies of apocalypse to become, like the concert it renders, a symbol of youth violence writ large. "Altamont was … an end to innocence," writes Charles Champlin in his *Los Angeles Times* review of the film, "its brutal murder an all-too-apt symbol of the death of a dreamy vision of a lifestyle drug-soothed and peaceful."[57] Indeed, compared to Woodstock, held just four months earlier, Altamont spells the "End of the Sixties." It marks a shift from amity to enmity, hippie to militant, Beatle to Rolling Stone.[58] And yet, to the extent that *Gimme Shelter* cites *Woodstock*'s (Michael Wadleigh, 1970) own idyllic imagery, it appears also to "prove" that the counterculture in general—and rock music in particular—have always harbored this ecstatic Armageddon.

More popular than drugs or "free love," rock promises to liberate the senses of young people throughout America—evidence, for many, of its potential danger. This is particularly the case with such bands as the Rolling Stones, MC5, or The Doors, whose interest in sex, violence, and the occult coincides with the counterculture's more aggressive manifestations.[59] "Rock and roll is one of the most vital revolutionary forces in the West," writes John Sinclair, manager of MC5 and founder of the Detroit-based White Panther Party. "It blows people back to their senses and makes them feel good, like they're *alive* again in the middle of this monstrous funeral parlor of western civilization."[60] Calling for "Satisfaction" as early as 1965, the Stones lean on hard-driving rhythms and explicit lyrics to out-menace their compatriots and revitalize youth's instincts. In doing so, they excite the desire of fans as well as detractors, representing, like the era's various "undergrounds," all that stands "outside" mainstream institutions.[61]

Whether promise or threat, rock invokes ecstasy for all, including those who, at first glance, seek to inauthenticate its rituals. As before, apparent adversaries converge at a mutual blind spot, unwittingly defining each other's position by affirming ecstatic "otherness." Evident in the antagonism between dominant and counter- cultures, this shared logic of exclusion draws upon established racialized fantasies. Rock emerges, after all, under the influence of black music, which has long meant authenticity for white

Americans. First as "race music," then as "rhythm and blues," rock 'n' roll was variously embraced and reviled, writes Brian Ward, for its relationship to an "unremittingly physical, … emotional, and, above all, sexually liberated black world."[62] This holds true for black as well as white performers, who, in anticipation of later, political radicals, cite black, Southern influences to thrill popular audiences.[63] Take Elvis Presley, whose "waist-up" appearance on Ed Sullivan crystallizes "black" aggression as much as "race riots" at several high-profile black concerts. In either case, Ward suggests, rock is "inextricably linked … to desegregation and black insurgency"—to fantasies, that is, of African American transgression.[64]

In the mid- to late 1960s, this history finds new expression, when bands like the Rolling Stones tap American blues to revitalize white music.[65] Called "devil's music" in its own time, the songs of Muddy Waters, Bo Diddly, and Robert Johnson help Jagger's group cultivate their own satanic personas. In fact, the band's alchemical fusion of blues, rock, and country-western prompts extreme fantasies of racial transubstantiation. Asking "Why Do Whites Sing Black?" just eight days after Altamont, music critic Albert Goldman describes the adoption of "black shouts and black lips, black steps, and black hips" by a growing number of white performers and their audiences.[66] A kind of modern blackface, this "adventure of transvestism" encompasses the complex, and often contradictory, pleasures of the earlier practice.[67]

Indeed, as scholars such as Eric Lott suggest, blackface implies more than racial antipathy. Offering spectacles of "black" vulgarity and violence, these fetishized displays are also projections of white America's untenable desires.[68] As such, they secure "white spectators' positions as superior, controlling … figures" at the same time they permit these audiences to indulge and master their own ecstatic impulses.[69] As with any fetish, in other words, blackface—like the burnt cork it employs—only partially screens out what white consciousness disowns.

A similar structure characterizes rock's blues revival, which likewise reanimates pleasures that exceed establishment limits. Still, whether one abhors or welcomes this "infiltration" into white culture, the music offers listeners the chance to domesticate its "surplus." For some, "singing black" reaffirms the very boundaries it transgresses, while for others, it revives, then replenishes, their corresponding "lack." And though my point is not to conflate rock's supporters with its detractors or declare them all equally racist, it is to suggest that a neglected logic of exception underlies these cultural expressions. If, I contend, *Gimme Shelter* and the rituals of authentication it renders are brutal or self-serving, it is less for their efforts to test the status quo than for the violent blind spots they share with it.

The Stones' number "Love in Vain" is particularly significant in this regard. Penned by Robert Johnson—a "paragon of blues authenticity" with mythic links to Satanism and the occult—the song opens on a crowd of young, white fans at Madison Square Garden who undulate in slow motion, all bathed in red light.[70] With hands raised, heads bobbing, and eyes half-closed, they appear lost, mesmerized by waves of music and the first calls of a voice. At this point, the film cuts to Jagger, who with parted lips and pulsing hair, advances, trancelike, to a song he does not seem to be singing—possessed, from the outside, by the sound of his voice.

Reanimating Jagger as he does Johnson, the film suspends the former between body and voice, stillness and motion, black and white. Then, as if to compound these

temporal and psychic dislocations, *Shelter* leaps from urban North to rural South. There, at Muscle Shoals Sound Studios—Alabama's "unspoiled" home to country-western and the blues—the Stones stand, quite literally, beside themselves, listening to, though never performing, the song that unites the two scenes.[71] In fact, as the camera passes over the band mates, withdrawn to various parts of the studio, they remain silent—transfixed and apparently transported by their own, yet "other," music.[72]

In this moment, the group reiterates Jagger's position both on and in front of the Steenbeck, images of which not only follow "Love in Vain," but also comprise *Shelter*'s structure in general. On one hand, this structure would seem to challenge the "authenticity" of otherness, since it portrays the Stones as both producers and receivers of the "black" music they imitate. On this view, ecstasy derives from retroactive rather than extant distinctions, the excitations of which mutually constitute "insides" from which their "outsides" have apparently "gone missing." On the other hand, however, *Shelter* eschews such indeterminacy, enforcing a gap between body and voice, white and black, that disentangles "outside" from "inside" and hypostatizes "otherness" in the service of "self." Here, ecstasy offers a "fix" for the supposedly alienated subject, "authenticity" donned or dropped like Jagger's strut or Keith Richards's prominently framed cowboy boots.

Thus carving a space between self and other, white and black, the film—like the cultural fantasies it documents—unwittingly gives shelter to some at the violent expense of the few. Suggests one black resident of New York's East Village: "The hippies really bug us because we know they can come down here and play their games for a while and then escape. And we can't."[73] Correspondingly, perhaps, Mick Jagger can sing the blues *and* watch himself do so, while Meredith Hunter remains fixed, forever "outside," at the moment of his death.

still **moving**

Forms will circulate around that which they lack, the expression that they cannot express, articulations that cannot be articulated; and yet these limits will be experienced *through the new possibilities opened by the radical sharing of form. … Forms that expose their outside are not simply cut off or disconnected.*—George Baker, "Reanimations (I)"

Returning to *Shelter*'s "picture" of Hunter and the occult technology that makes it possible, I want to argue that the freeze frame reduces the era's rituals of authentication to a single, perceptible figure. In doing so, it crystallizes the violent exceptions upon which ecstatic experiences depend, particularly because the freeze frame, too, harbors a constitutive blind spot. Though apparently static, that is, freeze frames are always *still moving.* They give the lie to cinematic abstraction while simultaneously occluding their own. As a result, I propose, the freeze frame evinces an impossible split between motion and stillness, construction and contingency, that compounds the psychosocial exclusions one finds elsewhere in *Shelter.*

"There's the Angel right there with the knife." As I have previously suggested, these words announce the freeze frame's claim to ecstatic experience. Matched to the arrest of Hunter's once indefinite image, they bespeak the contingency and immanent facticity of an instant that unsettles signification as much as the spectator. In this, the freeze frame recalls the "disruptive force" of the "filmic," that third or "obtuse" meaning

that, for Barthes, lies in the still's capacity to exceed film's manifest representation.[74] A cinematic analogue to photography's *punctum*, the filmic "appears to extend *outside* culture, knowledge, information," what in *Camera Lucida*, Barthes refers to as *studium.*[75] Central to my argument, however, is the extent to which Barthes distinguishes cinematic "stills" from photographic images, which, he warns, cannot disclose third meaning because they "lack the diegetic horizon" that photograms deride and embody.[76]

It matters, therefore, that the still—like the freeze frame—sits at the limit of cinematic semiosis, exciting constructions of meaning that contingency reciprocally challenges. The freeze frame signifies, I proffer, but in excess of signification, hailing viewers from inside the film while remaining, paradoxically, what they add to it. Thus, as with Barthes' *punctum*, indeterminacy would seem to constitute the freeze frame's "madness," entwining photography's "objective" past ("that-has-been") with the subjective present of cinema ("there-it-is") to ecstatically reveal what cannot be directly or determinately represented.[77]

Yet it is precisely here that we discover *Shelter*'s logic of exception, since the film denies the freeze frame its "mad" irreducibility. Focusing on "knife" and, later, "gun," *Shelter* promises a murder's contingent details, but in divulging "what really happened," it disavows its own delimitation of these once imponderable particulars. Hunter's death may precede, even exceed, signification, but it remains recognizable *as such* only in its retroactive cinematic construction. In this way, the murder becomes an *event* in Mary Ann Doane's sense of the term, a place "where time coagulates and where the contingent can be readily imbued with meaning through its very framing *as* event."[78] More than a slice of space-time, *Shelter* gives us its signs—discernible "facts" that the film has already harnessed *as* contingency, *as* authenticity, *as* an encounter with death itself.

When, therefore, the freeze frame "proves" there is more than meets cinematic, if not everyday, experience, it is because *Shelter* tames that "more" by rendering it fully apprehensible. Ecstasy comes less by *what* the freeze frame reveals than by *how*, since the film both depends on, then ignores, the photogram's fundamentally indeterminate composition. For this reason, I argue, the freeze frame resembles the era's other rituals of authentication, whether astrology, sex and drugs, or rock's blues revival. These set otherness "outside" white, middle-class alienation, while *Shelter* relies on the freeze frame to master photography for cinema.

Of course, to the extent that the freeze frame makes legible these sociocultural exceptions, it threatens the authenticity they aim to secure. In fact, *Shelter*'s very pronouncement of photographic contingency cannot help but betray the image's unacknowledged and imperceptible debt to cinematic construction. "There's the Angel right there with the knife." The utterance evinces a fantasy of "unmediated" authenticity, binding photographic excitations to Kael's *vérité* jackpot. At the same time, however, it unravels this possibility, the words unfolding in time to reveal the freeze frame's abstract duration. This, too, is a "jackpot," though of another kind, since it discloses the freeze frame's incommensurable relationship to motion and stasis, cinema and photography, "inside" and "outside."

On this view, indeterminacy rather than antimony defines ecstatic experience, for here, "outsides," as I have previously suggested, merely comprise the "insides" from which they have retroactively gone missing. With respect to the freeze frame, we might

call this "dual articulation," George Baker's term for the incommensurable sharing that takes place among media.[79] As much as people, that is, forms seek what they ostensibly lack, what for any one medium appears inexpressible. Still, writes Baker, media that discover their limits are "not simply cut off or disconnected."[80] Rather, they meet despite, even through, such restrictions, communicating together what each fails to alone. Dual articulation does not, then, describe "a collision of mediums as opposed 'essences'"; it envisions the product of forms that "interpenetrate without losing their specificity."[81]

Take *Shelter*'s voiceover. On one hand, it compromises the freeze frame's contingency, disclosing a gap between the film's asynchronous sound and comparatively "live" performances. On the other hand, voiceover preserves the freeze frame's "event-ness," constructing the kind of significance that contingency undermines. To synchronize soundtrack and photogram would produce an unintelligible stutter, while leaving the spectator in silence too long risks losing authenticity to a profusion of subjective interpretations. Sound, in this case, produces meaning where image cannot, while image reciprocally grounds sound in an ascertainable reality. Only by gathering around their shared limitations do sound and image, cinema and photography, begin to articulate "authentic" experience.

Thus, as figure, the freeze frame does more than render logics of exception. It also registers the indeterminacy that motivates these structures. In fact, by directing us toward another, more entangled relation, the freeze frame potentially challenges conceptions of ecstasy at work in this period. When we unveil the imperceptible point where photography and cinema commingle, we trouble the integrity of "inside" and "outside" and expose the blind spot of occult technologies. Ecstasy no longer issues from "genuine" sources, but rather, from the revelation of authenticity's rather "inauthentic" origins. Such a discovery, I suggest, works to resituate the violence of this era's numerous rituals, testing the limits of perception and experience without hypostatizing "otherness" or overlooking its immanent entanglement with dominant realities.

resurrecting the dead

*They Won't Stay Dead! —*Tagline for *Night of the Living Dead,* 1968

At first glance, *Night of the Living Dead* and *Gimme Shelter* seem incongruous films. One exploits horror thrills. The other documents history. And yet, *Night* not only engages occult realms of zombies and voodoo, but also depicts a black man's murder through a series of full-frame photographs. These images, though patently "staged" compared to *Shelter*'s own "pictures," partake, I maintain, of their counterparts' authenticating effects. At the same time, they draw documentary and narrative together, compounding encounters between contingency and construction that I have previously identified. Indeed, to the extent that *Night*'s freeze frames give incommensurability shape, they suggest how reality and fiction commingle in images of "actual" violence—from Altamont to JFK's assassination—as much as in cinema.

Night's freeze frames come the morning after the film's eponymous assault by zombies. As daylight breaks, spectators find a posse of armed men aptly killing all "undead" stragglers. They soon reach a farmhouse, where Ben (Duane Jones)—a black man and the residence's sole survivor—hides in the basement. Hearing commotion outside, he furtively leaves this shelter, only to be shot between the eyes by a white

vigilante's rifle. In this instant, the film stops its regular unfolding and offers, instead, a montage of twenty-five grainy, black-and-white freeze frames. Underscoring shock at our unlikely protagonist's death, the shift also produces astonishment in excess of narrative.[82]

As with *Shelter,* that is, *Night*'s conclusion sacrifices motion for visibility, pitting photography against cinema to disclose murder's heretofore unexamined details. Among these are the posse's police badges and pistols, artillery belts and meat hooks—violent accoutrements that, along with helicopters and hunting dogs, conjure Vietnam, the American South, and other contemporary scenes of racialized brutality. With each revelation, the spectator is touched by a slice of space-time, the apparent facticity of which interrupts cinematic signification with photography's obdurate existence. The grain of the images, too, heightens their relative contingency, connoting an amateur's chance recordings or, as in *Blowup,* the recovery of unintentional material by photographic enlargement.[83] In all of this, then, *Night* shares *Shelter*'s promise of ecstasy, offering spectators missed encounters both with the film and with historical events that stand outside its purview [Figure 34].

Unlike *Shelter,* however, *Night* must contend with its status as fiction, which transfigures the freeze frame's claims to authenticity. When *Night*'s freeze frames draw us toward contingent points of inscription, they also potentially turn our attention to the film's artificial construction. They give us time to uncover evidence of Ben's murder, but as a result, risk underscoring the actors and props, costumes and make-up, that comprise such material. It matters, therefore, that Romero does not suspend, then release, *Night*'s movement as the Maysles did *Shelter*'s, but rather, more strenuously brackets the cinematic by employing full-frame photographs.[84]

Going further, *Night* supplements its freeze frames by way of allusion, referencing well-known photographs of actual events that lend documentary force to the film's fictional images. When, for instance, freeze frames disclose Ben's wounds and the meat hooks that transport his dead body, *Night* summons, however unintentionally, images of Emmett Till, the Birmingham "riots," and other photojournalistic "proof" of white-on-black violence.[85] In this way, *Night,* as much as *Shelter,* guarantees authenticity, resurrecting "lost" instants that return, zombie-like, to threaten the film's "living" representations.

As before, this assault relies upon logics of exception. *Night* clears a space between "inside" and "outside," cinema and photography, then mobilizes them at will. At the level of plot, the farmhouse's topology evinces this logic. Exterior shots depict "undead" gathering at windows and doors, while the film's leaps inside uncover humans defending these limits. At the level of form, meanwhile, *Night*'s freeze frames redouble the fantasies we find in *Shelter*, citing two "outsides" for work inside the film's narrative. The first of these, photography, excites ecstasy by opposing contingency to construction, while the second, history, corroborates the first by bringing "external" reality inside the fiction.

And yet, at the same time that *Night* refers to historical photographs to heighten the freeze frame's contingency, it also necessarily lends significance to the "facts" it recovers. Dragged to a bonfire, Ben's body recalls those found in lynching souvenirs, which return from the past to animate *Night*'s freeze frames with the force of the real. In doing so, however, such images—in spite of their stillness—set into motion determinate frames for interpreting their meaning. Actual brutality, in other words—or better, the

photographs that permit it to circumvent time and space—entwines the film in apocalyptic fantasies that characterize this era. "*Night of the Living Dead* was not only an instant horror classic," write J. Hoberman and Jonathan Rosenbaum, "but a remarkable vision of the late 1960s—offering the most literal possible depiction of America devouring itself."[86] Ben's race, meanwhile, only compounds historical associations between blackness and violence for advocates as well as detractors of "authentic" attacks on dominant culture [Figure 35].[87]

So conceived, the ecstasy of *Night*'s spectacular killing emerges less from a polarizing state of exception than from the audience's shared investment in its incommensurably dual articulation. As with *Shelter*, *Night* does not recover "lost" contingency as much as construct its significance *as such* and in retrospect. Reality meets fiction to evince the facticity the latter presumably lacks, while fiction grants this reality its import as "evidence." The result draws documentary and narrative cinema closer together. Both *Shelter* and *Night* package time as recognizable instants at the same time that they disavow how cinematic duration or historical allusion signify "event-ness."[88]

The freeze frame, for its part, distills this relation. Commingling photography and cinema, it articulates authenticity by "inauthentic" means. To discover these means, I have argued, potentially transfigures ecstatic experience from that which restores "outsides" to "insides" to that which recognizes their fundamentally entangled existence. It matters, therefore, that *Night,* like *Shelter*, bears the traces of the freeze frame's dual articulation, not only in sound and image, but also through editing and camerawork.

Night composes its freeze frames in montage, after all, suturing the images with a series of lap dissolves. Along with the film's eerie, postsynchronous soundtrack, such editing belies the freeze frames' manifest stillness and points to the latent, repetitive movement that, in fact, helps produce it. Even more legible—and certainly more responsible for constructing the freeze frames' significance—are the pans, tilts, and zooms that cut across their otherwise static surfaces. Consider, for instance, the film's zoom into a high-angle photograph of Ben and his wounds, which precedes a close-up of one posse member looking down at his body. Panning left, the camera reveals a second man's similar posture, then following a cut, tilts down to disclose the meat hook he clutches. At this point, the film leaps to a second hook, then tilts up to a third, before pulling back to unveil a white policeman, worker, and hunter surrounding Ben's corpse.

Undoubtedly more mobile than its counterpart in *Shelter*, this montage still makes evidentiary claims, privileging, by way of contrast, the freeze frames' relative impassiveness. At the same time, however, its camera movement necessarily organizes spectatorial response and thus registers, as much as "knife" or "gun," how the film narrativizes the crime scene after the fact. For this reason, I contend, *Night*'s freeze frames compromise the very mastery they purport to offer, unhinging any interpretation they might otherwise "prove."

This is not to suggest that Romero—any more or less than the Maysles—deliberately challenges the rituals of authentication that characterize their historical moment. Nor do I believe that spectators, in every—or any—case, consider the freeze frame's incommensurability. Dual articulation generates *vérité* jackpots as much as it undoes them. Instead, what I propose is the freeze frame's potential for figuring substrata of doubt that run counter to this era's explicit faith in authenticity. Despite its blind spot, the freeze frame marks where photography and cinema, documentary and narrative,



Figure 34: *Night of the Living Dead:* conjuring contemporary scenes of racialized brutality (Image Ten, 1968)



Figure 35: Dragged to a bonfire, Ben's (Duane Jones') body summons, however unintentionally, Emmett Till, the Birmingham "riots," and lynching souvenirs. (Image Ten, 1968)

reality and fiction, meet. Ecstasy, on this view, no longer cleaves "outside" from "inside" or makes one the instrument of the other. Rather, when occult technologies do violence, it is to fantasies that retroactively bind excitation to ever-recoverable "external" excesses. In conclusion, then, I revisit the popularization of ecstasy in the late 1960s and early 1970s and explore its conception of "otherness" in light of this occluded photogrammic countercurrent. Ultimately, I turn to the historical imagery that *Night* cites and to which it contributes—photographs that, fictional or real, revive "lost" instants to stand, like zombies, as apocalyptic icons.

reanimating the undead

Between one death and the other, the absolute inside and the absolute outside enter into contact, an inside deeper than all the sheets of past, an outside more distant than all the layers of external reality. Between the two, in the in-between, it is as if zombies peopled the brain-world for a moment. —Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*

Because they give life to the dead, zombies are frequently compared to cinema. And yet, as any horror aficionado knows, zombies are never fully living, nor fully dead. They are, rather, "on the cusp of each"; they are "undead."[89] As a result, zombies make better analogues for freeze frames, which do not recover moments that would otherwise go missing so much as reinvigorate photograms that have never departed. Freeze frames *reanimate*, that is, as much as they *resurrect* by which I mean they revitalize what exists more than they merely end death.[90] From this point of view, neither zombies nor freeze frames restore "outside" to "inside"; instead, they give new life to the "undead" otherness that already haunts it.

To view *Night of the Living Dead*, is, at first glance, to regard zombies quite simply as "other." Embodying the profound alterity of corpses, they stand outside every boundary the living erect. As the film unfolds, this exteriority, as I have suggested, accrues a racial dimension. Most notable when white vigilantes kill the film's only African American character, articulations of "inside" and "outside" as white and black also affect relationships within the farmhouse. When, for instance, the basement door first menacingly opens, it reveals no zombie, but rather, Mr. Cooper (Karl Hardman), Ben's distinctly white, human rival.

Racial difference is, in fact, integral to zombie lore, whether indigenous or as translated by Hollywood cinema. Originating in the voodoo rituals of colonial Haiti, zombies did their possessor's bidding, rendering them uncannily similar to the African slaves cultivating the island. Later, when they entered American culture during the U. S. occupation of Haiti, zombies retained this subjugated position. In Victor Halperin's misleadingly titled *White Zombie* (1932), for instance, black zombies labor at the behest of a white sorcerer named Legendre (Bela Lugosi). Indeed, in nearly every horror film before 1968, zombies are either black or caught up in the occult practices of Afro-Caribbean culture.[91]

Night, for its part, marks a dramatic shift in the popular representation of zombies. Here, the undead are white cannibals lumbering *en masse* and free of any magician or master. Vacant and listless, they clearly hunger for vitality, but, as the living dead, they are also already "beside themselves." To the extent, meanwhile, that these zombies occupy an historically racialized position, their ecstasy, like that of blackface performers,

makes "otherness" a palliative for internal alienation. Thus while zombiism, as much as blackness, might be construed as abject or lacking, both also have surplus value as desirable repositories of irrepressibly "authentic" instincts. One might even imagine whites "yearning for possession," Ken Gelder suggests in an essay about the West's fascination with voodoo.[92] Zombiism permits whites to lose control while displacing their own anxious wishes onto "other" bodies.

In this sense, zombiism perpetuates the exceptional logic we likewise discovered in *Shelter*. It may offer apparent transgression but likewise retains dominant structures. In her aptly titled "Eating the Other," bell hooks describes a similar structure in the contemporary commodification of black culture:

> To make one's self vulnerable to the seduction of difference, to seek an encounter with the Other, does not require that one relinquish forever one's mainstream positionality. … One desires contact with the Other even as one wishes boundaries to remain in tact.[93]

Similarly, in *Night*, "possession" promises self-possession and maintains one's mastery over others. Distinctions between living and undead, white and black, self and other, disavow how internal disequilibria are brutally externalized.

Still, residues of this violent fantasy remain, including, most demonstrably, the manifest whiteness of zombies and Ben's human murderers.[94] With this in mind, Mr. Cooper's refuge in the basement also seems conspicuous, implying how "otherness" arises from distinctly internal, not external, foundations. Indeed, as Santner suggests in his discussion of excitation, "outsides" only emerge when subjects seek self-containment. Confronted with a world of excess stimulation, the subject seeks shelter from the "other" it, in effect, produces. The result, on one hand, motivates fantasies of authenticity, wherein one pursues what one has "lost" in cleaving "inside" from "outside." On the other hand, however, this cleavage leaves countervailing traces, including an "internal alien-ness" that marks selfhood's articulation in and through "otherness."[95] In a striking coincidence, Santner actually refers to this alien-ness as the psychic "undead," which, as much as Romero's zombies, complicates too-easy divisions among apparent oppositions.[96]

From this point of view, the self's violent, even cannibalistic, efforts to resurrect what has "gone missing" harbor "undead" indeterminacies that encounters with "otherness" necessarily reanimate. Inviting relationships between "inside" and "outside" that liquidate self-possession and mastery, the "undead," like freeze frames, potentially transfigure popular expressions of ecstasy from zombies to the blues. This is the case, moreover, with rituals of authentication that rely upon conceptions of "otherness" that extend beyond race, including fantasies about sexual difference and the historical frontier that freeze frames also express. Racial violence does not, in other words, comprise all of the freeze frame's "pictures," though it has been my interest here. Films such as *Joe* or *Who's That Knocking at My Door?* (Martin Scorsese, 1969) arrest brutality against women, while those such as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* or *The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1969) do the same for the cowboys that the counterculture privileges.

Beyond cinema, similar confluences of race, gender, and history inform the photojournalistic instants that, like freeze frames, render moments of violence from this

period particularly memorable. In addition to the images of Emmett Till or Birmingham I have already mentioned, there are, for instance, photographs of Nguyen Ngoc Loan's execution of a communist guerilla in the streets of Saigon and Phan Thi Kim Phúc's escape from a South Vietnamese napalm attack. Though cameramen captured each of these events in moving as well as still pictures, the atrocities' photographic "proof" has circulated with far greater frequency.[97] As with the occult, moreover, the authenticity of photography relative to cinema has its conservative as well as liberal expressions. Take the television advertisements for Richard Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign, which urged voters to "Vote Like Your Whole World Depended on It." Created by documentarian Eugene Jones, the spots feature photographic montages of civil unrest and the war in Vietnam that, along with their dissonant soundtracks, resemble *Night*'s disturbing conclusion.

Whether fictional or "real," right or left, these images stand as privileged icons in the era's apocalyptic self-conception. They are, in this sense, always repetitions of the "event" culled from Zapruder's footage, *vérité* jackpots that promise to reveal devastating violences that viewers cannot perceive directly. Freeze frames, meanwhile, because they are dually articulated, contribute to this fantasy while undermining the relationships to temporality and history it evinces. Like zombies, they index an alternative logic of ecstatic experience, one that exposes the "undead" moments that haunt returns to select "authentic" instants. To get at this alternative, I extend the encounter between photography and cinema upon which *Shelter* and *Night* depend to one of "poses" and "snapshots" that moves both freeze frames and photojournalism toward less apprehensible, but also less fixed, pasts, presents, and futures.

To describe freeze frames or photojournalism as "iconic" is to illuminate the ritual value of these static representations, which literally incorporate their referents as contingent slices. At the same time, "icon" underscores the extent to which these "pictures" participate in the sacredness of the "events" they substantiate. Freeze frames and photojournalism are, finally, overwhelmingly meaningful images. They make contingency discernible, but in so doing, endow it with an abstract and summary significance. In this sense, Bellour argues, freeze frames and photographs offer privileged instants that are "pregnant" with "both the average and the acme of a dramatic action."[98] They are, he continues, like paintings or "poses," classical postures that recompose movement as essential, transcendent moments.

What matters, then, are the instants when vigilantes suspend Ben's body by meat hooks or Phan Thi Kim Phúc screams with outstretched arms, not the incidental transitions between these and other moments that the cameras may well have captured. Excerpted from the continuum from which they derive, these instants are cited precisely for their capacity to excite meaning. For this reason, Bellour opposes freeze frames and photographs to the "snapshots" that he, following Gilles Deleuze, attributes to cinematic motion. Snapshots are not privileged moments, Deleuze argues; they are "any-instants-whatever," the equidistant selection of which constitutes cinema's impression of continuity.[99] Cinema "does not give us a figure described in a unique moment," but rather, "the description of a figure which is always in the process of being formed or dissolving."[100] This is not to suggest that cinema does not seek iconic poses. *Night*'s and *Shelter*'s freeze frames do just that. It is to posit, however, that photograms, whether

"regular *or* singular, ordinary *or* remarkable," are fundamentally exchangeable slices that inhere in movement and change.[101]

To claim freeze frames as poses is to, from this point of view, impossibly exempt them from the snapshot's ever coming and going. Bellour acknowledges this, though he nonetheless argues that films with photographs or freeze frames divide their time between the two modes. He does so, he specifies, to get at the spectatorial experiences that such arrestations produce, including a vision of time characterized by anteriority and reversibility—or as I have put it, by its availability to resurrection. While I certainly agree that freeze frames aim to restore moments past and passed, it is instructive to recall that they also reanimate all the virtual instants that remain immanent to such exceptions. For this reason, I proffer, films such as *Shelter* and *Night* do not "alternate" between poses and snapshots, as Bellour suggests, but rather, commingle privileged instants with any-instants-whatever.[102] Freeze frames use cinema to "fix" photography's meaning at the same time that their equivalence to all other photograms sets such significance back into motion.

This structure has consequences for the era's returns to particular photojournalistic images, which, I contend, index history's indeterminacy even as they render it iconographic. On one hand, these repetitions manifest a ritualized, recursive temporality that provokes and satisfies desires for lost material. They are, in this sense, memorializing gestures, much like the wreath that Barbara and Johnny leave on their father's grave at the beginning of *Night*. On the other hand, meanwhile, such photographs pluck but one instant from its innumerable equivalents, elevating it above others and retroactively according it meaning. Johnny, in fact, corroborates this view when he suggests that he and his sister most likely repurchase the same wreath year after year. Challenging the wreath's assertion, "We Still Remember," he speaks of time as irretrievable duration upon which one cannot get a handle.

The freeze frame, for its part, embodies this meeting of perdurance and ever-change, as it does photography and cinema. In fact, one way to conceive of the period's fascination with recurrent pictures of violence is to consider the freeze frame's own relationship to repetition. The device is constituted, after all, in images repeated on celluloid.[103] From the vantage of photography and privileged instants, such iterations are characterized by identity. To produce the appearance of stasis, each photogram must be indistinguishable from those that precede and succeed it. Approaching the filmstrip as any-instants-whatever, however, one discovers that equivalence need not conjure identity. Though correspondent in content, each photogram remains its own imperceptible entity. Indeed, the camera movements that traverse *Night*'s concluding photographs render this coincidence particularly legible. Each freeze frame reduplicates a single image while the film's pans, tilts, and zooms lend the photograms incremental differences.[104]

As a result, the freeze frame unites two visions of repetition—one that manifests sameness and one that registers difference. In the former, freeze frames resurrect events spectators have missed, offering them visible icons about which they may gather. To be sure, these returns extend opportunities for remembering, perhaps even redeeming, past brutalities, but in so doing, they also delimit the significance of such violence to eminently apprehensible moments. As such, they partake of the mastery I have attributed to other rituals of authentication that promise recoveries by violently cleaving "inside" from "outside" and self from other. To recognize the latter vision, however, wherein

difference inheres in repetition, is to reanimate the indeterminacy at the heart of this period's ecstatic states of exception. The result, I suggest, discloses all the inapprehensible and unfixed instants that remain immanent to reified poses, turning stagnant repetition compulsions toward fresh traversals of new relationships to "otherness" and to history.

For this reason, I argue, freeze frames permit us to resituate the apocalypticism to which they likewise give shape. Rendering the devastation of events such as Altamont, they recover "proof" of the "End of the Sixties." And yet, because freeze frames also uncover the incommensurable logic upon which authenticity depends, they figure unknown futures as well as perceptible presents and pasts. In each case, occult technologies upend everyday perception and experience, but the latter's violence brings unrealized beginnings out from cover as much as actualized ends. Perhaps this is one way to understand why freeze frames so frequently come at conclusions, where they can leave spectators with the possibilities of ecstasy's popularization in addition to its cataclysmic limits.

Epilogue
"Passionate Detachment"

The ironic centerpiece to Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film, *A Clockwork Orange,* features the rehabilitation of rapist, murderer, and aesthete Alex (Malcolm McDowell) in, of all places, the cinema. Strait-jacketed, his eyes held wide by bizarre optometry equipment, Alex is strapped to his seat before a series of violent films. The first, which depicts a young gang beating an already bloodied older man, strikes him as "a very good, professional piece of 'ciné.' Like it was done in Hollywood." His interest piqued, a smile spreads across Alex's face as he proclaims the brutality "beautiful" and unwittingly paraphrases Sam Peckinpah: "It's funny how the colors of the real world only seem *really* real when you [watch] them on a screen." Just following this declaration, however, Alex admits to feelings of increasing sickness and distress—the result, the spectator knows, of drugs administered to him before the screening began. As the first film gives way to a scene of gang rape then, on the next day, to footage of a Nazi Party rally, Alex succumbs to the visual-visceral associations of the narrative's "reprogramming" technique. His pleasure in cinematic violence transposed to a politically preferable disgust, Alex carries his newfound revulsion for sadism into "real" life.

A dark parody of behaviorist psychology, *A Clockwork Orange* also speaks to the reception of film violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s. After all, as I have demonstrated, media "effects" research not only suggested links between cinematic and everyday brutalities, but also established antonymic and moralizing conceptions of violence as *stimuli* that influenced critical and scholarly discourse outside the social sciences. Whether in the popular or academic press, supporters and detractors of cinematic brutality appealed to notions of "proper" response in their accounts of post-Code Hollywood. Central to this propriety was spectatorial *displeasure,* which marked the distinction between senseless, sadistic excesses and their more reasonable, humane, or otherwise meaningful alternatives. Even more contemporary approaches to screen violence suspect the pleasures that come with aestheticizing brutality. To lend sensuous appeal to violent acts dangerously puts sense at odds with sensation. As a result, scholars frequently commend the few films that use narrative and other cognitive structures to sublimate threats posed by feeling. Like Alex's treatment in *A Clockwork Orange,* these measures manage uncertain alliances between reality and representation by tying the "gratuitous" pleasures of vision and violence to more determinate organizations.

Countering the assumptions that drive these recommendations, my dissertation has disclosed the constitutive logics and multifarious pleasures that attend graphic corporeal violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As *figures,* I suggested, technologies such as multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames do more than give shape to on-screen brutality. They also distill demands to "see more" violence—and violently "see more"—that characterize heterogeneous practices in and outside the cinema. Transforming incongruous fragments into a synthetic perceptual field, multiple-speed montage crystallizes promises of omnipresence that distinguish televisual simultaneity, military surveillance, and emergent "apparatus" theories during this period. Squibs and artificial blood similarly engage historical fantasies of disclosive violence, joining television news in the quest to incarnate imperceptible realities through

images of extraordinarily graphic wounds. Finally, freeze frames, which set photographic contingency against cinematic abstraction, figure the ecstasy of countercultural practices such as the occult and rock music as well as photojournalistic "proof" of the era's violent racial apocalypse.

At the center of these fantasies lies authenticity, which, I proffer, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames undermine even as they consolidate it. On one hand, that is, the technologies corroborate authenticity's rejection of everyday perception, breaking with Code-era depictions to multiply, extend, and render unprecedentedly explicit cinema's conventional representations of violence. They also compound the privilege authenticity accords intense emotional experiences with images of brutality that shock spectators both physically and emotionally. On the other hand, meanwhile, these technologies unsettle the very genuineness they otherwise secure by registering the contradictorily "inauthentic" sources from which authenticity derives. In the case of multiple-speed montage, parallaxes index the extent to which simultaneity splits the difference between disclosure and concealment by exploiting then denying differences between here and there, now and then. Squibs and artificial blood, meanwhile, heighten the tactility of cinematic bloodletting, but they do so precisely by drawing material and immaterial, reality and illusion, together. Lastly, the fact that freeze frames *still move* bears witness to the ways in which cinematic construction imperceptibly delimits the photogram's irreducible contingency.

In the end, I suggest, multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames do not merely reflect, but also refract the historical fantasies they figure. Permitting spectators to "see more" violence, they inadvertently reveal authenticity's fundamental indeterminacy. My reading of cinematic indexicality in Chapter Three only redoubles this discovery. Always objects and signs, film images may document "lost" events, but in doing so, they inescapably join "objective" facts to irreducibly subjective constructions. Thus when the foregoing technologies turn indexicality toward authenticity, they unintentionally magnify the extent to which perceptual mastery suppresses uncertainty. For this reason, I argue, they express the politically fraught and often violent repressions that attend authenticity in the military, news media, and counterculture as well. Indeed, the brutality of multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames derives more from their attempts to hide indeterminacy than their efforts to expose violence.

To conclude, I want to pursue this indeterminacy further because, I believe, it resituates sadism for accounts of film violence as well as theories of cinematic pleasure more broadly. In fact, sadism's fate in the first body of literature parallels its history in the second. When critics condemn or condone post-Code violence according to the relative delight or disgust it supplies viewers, they mirror the concerns of their film theorist contemporaries, for whom spectatorial pleasure was also a site of suspicion. In Chapter Two, I described the omnipotent subject position that French theorists of the late 1960s ascribed to the cinematic apparatus, a position that immersed spectators in ideologically abusive relationships with the world. The sadistic pleasures that issue from this vision of the cinematic apparatus are most famously articulated by Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema" (1975), which had a profound influence on American film theory of the mid-1970s and beyond. In this essay, Mulvey argues that the visual pleasure of commercial, narrative cinema comes at the expense of the female

image, which is rendered passive spectacle to a rigorously male gaze.[1] Spectators enjoy narcissistic identifications with active, male protagonists who engage spectators in voyeuristic or fetishistically scopophiliac pleasures, which, according to Freud's early work on the subjects, derive from a specifically sadistic instinct toward mastery.[2] What is more, Mulvey, like her French forbearers, presumes that sadism, while ideologically more heinous, is the preferable subject position. Neither she nor they entertains the idea of masochistic identifications with the female image.

In the study of screen violence, this approach to film pleasure has had striking longevity in popular and academic accounts, even as others began to conceive of the masochistic possibilities that theories from the 1970s discount. As I suggested in Chapter One, Stephen Prince argues that filmmakers who stylize on-screen brutality are but mere "inciter[s] to aggression," unless, like Peckinpah, they curb these irrational sensory pleasures with more rational, even didactic, forms of discourse. Still, he and others, including Lester Friedman, Vivian Sobchack, or Marsha Kinder, find such gestures increasingly difficult in contemporary Hollywood cinema, which uses special effects to produce large numbers of bodily thrills that threaten narrative's capacity to contain their senseless and morally dubious excess. Alongside these conceptions of screen violence, however, a theoretical alternative to spectatorial pleasure has emerged. Espoused by the likes of Tom Gunning, Linda Williams, and Carol Clover, it uncovers a constitutive, not ancillary, logic to these "excessive" thrills and situates the pleasures they offer as fundamentally masochistic.[3] Bringing Gunning's notion of the "cinema of attractions" to post-1960 Hollywood, Williams argues that the visual and bodily thrills of contemporary filmmaking comprise its primary interest for spectators who masochistically enjoy the rhythms of anticipation, shock, and release it provides.[4] In her examination of modern horror, meanwhile, Clover draws upon Freud's theories of primary masochism to argue for the masochistic returns—and origins—of the genre's apparently sadistic spectacles.

Transposed to considerations of film violence writ large, these theorizations of horror films and postmodern thrills help ameliorate the moral and ideological suspicion that has historically accompanied cinematic brutality. From their perspectives, when multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames answer demands to "see more" violence, the technologies not only provide *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Wild Bunch*, or *Gimme Shelter* with their fundamental attractions, but also upset cinematic, even everyday, visibility in ways that are necessarily—and not unpleasurably—destabilizing for spectators. Indeed, as I have noted, it is precisely this kind of volatility that fantasies of authenticity both capitalize on and work to restrain.

In rethinking cinema's more dubious pleasures, however, the theories retain some of their predecessors' distrust of active as opposed to passive viewing positions. When politically viable pleasure comes, it belongs to the spectator's pleasure in "pain." But is there, I wonder, a way to imagine enjoyment and screen violence *between* these historical options? Are active omnipotence and passive surrender necessarily ideological contradictions?

An answer lies, I submit, in shifting focus from sadistic and masochistic pleasures to the determinate and indeterminate fantasies that film violence introduces. My analyses of the technologies that comprise this dissertation illustrate the results of such a shift. When multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames assault everyday perception and shock spectators' senses, they fulfill, by turns, sadistic and

masochistic desires. Each seeks to unsettle, and, as I have noted, both serve authenticity. What matters for a critique of on-screen brutality, then, is the meeting of disintegration and order inside the resulting fantasies—how, to borrow the terms of Chapter Four, they bind or unbind excitation. Given these criteria, authenticity's promises of mastery appear more troubling than sadism's transgressions or masochism's overwhelming effects. Such assurances delimit the ambiguity that both forms of pleasure supply. From this point of view, there is value in the demand to "see more" violence even if one assumes masochism's ultimate priority. The aggressive *curiositas* that animates multiple-speed montage, squibs with artificial blood, and freeze frames serves indeterminacy—the possibility for unbinding perceptual mastery—as much as self-shattering origins or returns. With this in mind, it seems doubly dangerous to contain film violence through narrative sublimation—unless, that is, the "sense" of both sadistic and masochistic sensations is held open to alternative organizations. This is, I contend, another way to conceive "passionate detachment": enjoying film violence actively *and* passively without pursuing *or* submitting to its politically treacherous consequences.

References

CHAPTER 1

[1] The horror genre's most recent cycle—dubbed "torture porn" by *New York* magazine's David Edelstein—also serves as a charged site for discussions of contemporary film violence. (See Edelstein, "Now Playing at Your Local Multiplex: Torture Porn," *New York*, January 28, 2006.) In fact, there seems to be much conceptual traffic between films such as *Saw* (James Wan, 2004), *Hostel* (Eli Roth, 2005), or *Captivity* (Roland Joffé, 2007) and *The Passion of the Christ.* Mark Kermode at *The Observer* calls the *Passion* "a quintessential horror film," while A. O. Scott notes the "slasher-film dread" of Gibson's Garden of Gethsemane. Even the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops believes that *Passion* displays a "recurring tendency to slip into horror movie conventions." (See Kermode, "Drenched in the Blood of Christ," *The Observer,* February 29, 2004, and Scott, "Good and Evil Locked in Violent Showdown," *The New York Times*, February 24, 2004, as well as Richard Goldstein, "The Backlash Passion: A Messianic Meller for Our Time," *The Village Voice*, February 17, 2004, and David Denby, "Nailed," *The New Yorker*, February 23, 2004.) Of particular note for the forthcoming argument are contemporary reworkings of 1970's horror "classics," including Andrew Douglas's 2005 remake of *The Amityville Horror* (Stuart Rosenberg, 1979), Alexandre Aja's 2006 reworking of *The Hills Have Eyes* (Wes Craven, 1977), and Rob Zombie's return to John Carpenter's 1978 landmark slasher film, *Halloween*, in 2007. Salient as well is Zombie's *The Devil's Rejects* (2005), which is set in 1978 and deliberately models its technical style—desaturated Super-16, slow motion, and freeze frames—after films from the late 1960s and early 1970s, whether *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Tobe Hooper, 1974) or *The Last House on the Left* (Wes Craven, 1972). Indeed, as David A. Cook reminds us, the 1970s mark the moment at which horror "moved from the margins of the exploitation field [and] into the mainstream." (See Cook, ed., *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970 – 1979* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) 220.)

[2] Denby.

[3] Scott.

[4] J. Hoberman, "Flogged to Death," *The Village Voice*, February 17, 2004.

[5] David Ansen, "So What's the Good News?" *Newsweek*, March 1, 2004.

[6] Stephen Prince designates five general means by which Hollywood upheld the Production Code's "general ban … on imagery detailing wounds to the body": spatial displacement, metonymic displacement, indexical pointing, substitutional emblematics, and emotional bracketing. See Prince, *Classical Film Violence: Designing and Regulating Brutality in Hollywood Cinema, 1930 – 1968* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 205 – 251. While I disagree with Prince's implication that such means are necessarily superior to the more explicit representations that followed them, I do find these categories useful.

[7] A result of overproduction during the late 1960s, the Hollywood recession of 1969 – 1971 not only led to the conglomeration of all but three major studios by decade's end, but also to a new "lower-risk" industrial-economic configuration—focused on financing and distribution, marketing and ancillary merchandising—which, in its pursuit of the potentially lucrative "youth market," would foster both the art-cinema aspirations of the early 1970s (the so-called "Hollywood Renaissance" or "New Hollywood") *and* the emergence of high-concept, blockbuster filmmaking by mid-decade ("New Hollywood" or "*New* New Hollywood"). My interest here is the way in which these developments, along with the fall of the Production Code; the importation of exploitation practices into mainstream production, distribution, and exhibition; and the increasingly mediated nature of actual social violence, helped change the face of mainstream cinematic violence in the United States, beginning with *Bonnie and Clyde* in 1967 and extending through the late 1970s. Underscoring the significance of this time frame, Cook writes: "The American film industry changed more between 1969 and 1980 than at any other period in its history, except, perhaps, for the coming of sound." See *Lost Illusions,* 1.

[8] See Prince, *Classical Film Violence*, as well as J. David Slocum, "The 'Film Violence' Trope: New Hollywood, 'the Sixties,' and the Politics of History," and Martin Baker, "Violence Redux," both in *New Hollywood Violence*, ed. Steven Jay Schneider (Manchester University Press, 2004), 13 – 33 and 57 – 79.

[9] Acknowledging that some Americans believe "there is *too much* violence" in Hollywood, Valenti challenges this assertion, asking, "How much is *too much*? … When does the balance tip from violence

which is honest to portrayals which are *excessive* and overweighted with violence? … Where does one draw the line?" After all, he suggests, "the line between what is enough and what is *too much* … is so extraordinarily difficult to measure." See Valenti, "Statement by Jack Valenti, MPAA President, before the National Commission on the Causes and *Prevention* of Violence," in *Screening Violence*, ed. Stephen Prince (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 62, 63. Emphases mine. It is also worth noting that, in the wake of *Passion*'s release, Congress called Valenti to testify once more, this time at a hearing of the "Family Movie Act of 2004."

[10] The photos from Abu Ghraib, which first appeared on "60 Minutes II" in April 2004—two months after *Passion*'s theatrical release and two weeks before a video of American Nick Berg's decapitation by Islamic militants appeared on the Internet—are frequently linked to Gibson's film in critical commentary by virtue of their mutual representations of bodily torture. See, for instance, John S. Nelson, "The Passion of the Film," *Poroi* 3, no. 2 (December 2004): 94 – 108; Robert Gehl, "'Why Aren't We Seeing This Now?': Publicized Torture in *The Passion of the Christ* and *Fahrenheit 9/11*," *Nebula* 1, no. 2 (September 2004): 37 – 47; and W. J. T. Mitchell, "The Unspeakable and the Unimaginable: Word and Image in a Time of Terror," *ELH: English Literary History* 72, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 291 – 308.

[11] One might add to this list the presumably apocryphal story of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s "homage" to John F. Kennedy's assassination, wherein a loosened fragment of Clyde's skull is supposed to recall that of the murdered president. One also finds echoes of Eddie Adams' 1968 photo *Saigon Execution* in the Russian roulette scenes of Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978).

[12] See Susan Sontag, "Regarding the Torture of Others," *The New York Times*, May 23, 2004.

[13] The most prominent treatments of cinematic violence in contemporary film studies are *Mythologies of Violence in Postmodern Media*, ed. Christopher Sharrett (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999); *Screening Violence*, ed. Stephen Prince; *Violence and American Cinema*, ed. J. David Slocum (New York: Routledge, 2001); *Classical Film Violence* by Stephen Prince; and *New Hollywood Violence*, ed. Steven Jay Schneider. Of these, only *Classical Film Violence* and a handful of essays from the other four volumes consider film violence in excess of individual genres, films, or filmmakers. Moreover, as its title suggests, Prince's *Classical Film Violence* stops short of the period under examination here. His *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998) does explore violent representations from the late 1960s and early 1970s, though largely through the lens of Sam Peckinpah's work alone. J. David Slocum's introduction to *Violence and American Cinema* offers an excellent overview of the history of film violence scholarship at the same time that it laments the fact that "few have attempted to relate contemporary films or controversies to broader contexts or histories, or to provide more sophisticated accounts of cinematic forms of violence." See "Violence and American Cinema: Notes for an Investigation," 1.

[14] I am thinking here of the two most prominent works on the subject: Stephen Prince's *Savage Cinema* and David A. Cook's "Ballistic Balletics: Styles of Violent Representation in *The Wild Bunch* and After," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, ed. Stephen Prince (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 130 – 54. Prince has also published a shorter treatment of his argument from *Savage Cinema*, "The Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence in the Films of Sam Peckinpah," in *Screening Violence*, 175 – 204.

[15] Prince, *Classical Film Violence*, 2 – 3.

[16] Ibid., 3. William Rothman argues that the history of film theory has regularly associated cinema with an inherent violence. He points, for instance, to Sergei Eisenstein, for whom "montage, with its percussive, violent power, was the essence of the film medium"; to André Bazin and Stanley Cavell who explored cinematic representation in relationship to death; and to apparatus theory, which emphasized "film's supposed ability to force malignant ideological effects upon viewers." See Rothman, "Violence and Film," in *Violence and American Cinema*, 39.

[17] Ibid., 287.

[18] Ibid., 114. Elsewhere Prince argues that "historical continuity speaks to an imperative—an inherent dynamic within the forms of cinema that has given the history of screen violence the force of teleology" (288).

[19] See Slocum, "Notes for an Investigation." Martin Baker also underscores the historical categorization of violence, which, he argues, offers "an arbitrary re-labeling of behaviors, and then also of representations of

those behaviors." See "Violence Redux," 57, as well as *Ill Effects: The Media / Violence Debate,* eds. Martin Baker and Julian Petley (New York: Routledge, 1997).
[20] Prince, *Classical Film Violence,* 35.
[21] Earlier films privilege referentiality, not style, Prince argues—a contention he has difficulty maintaining throughout *Classical Film Violence.* In the book's fifth chapter, for instance, Prince schematizes the "substitutional poetics" by which "classical" filmmakers adhered to the Production Code, including patterns of editing and framing and such visual displacements as silhouettes or shattered glass. While they may not aestheticize the acts of violence themselves, these techniques still imply style. To render violence less perceptible is not, in other words, to render it less stylistic. Similarly, to the extent that the stylistic amplitude of post-Code violence presupposes "the numerous ways of detailing the convulsive and traumatic responses of the human body under force," it encompasses both content and form, referentiality and style.
[22] National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, *To Establish Justice, to Insure Domestic Tranquility: The Final Report of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), xxv.
[23] "Why Are We Suddenly Obsessed with Violence?," *Esquire,* July 1967, 39.
[24] In his "The 'Film Violence' Trope," Slocum offers a bibliography of summaries of early "effects" research, including such film specific studies as Leonard Berkowitz and Edna Rawlings's "Effects of Film Violence on Inhibitions against Subsequent Aggression," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 66, no. 5 (1963): 405 – 12, and Berkowitz and Russell Green's "Film Violence and the Cue Properties of Available Targets," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3, no. 5 (1966): 525 – 30. Anthropological and psychological investigations of human aggression from this era include Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative: A Personal Inquiry into the Animal Origins of Property and Nations* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1967), Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression,* trans. Marjorie Kerr Wilson (New York: Bantam, 1967), and Desmond Morris, *The Human Zoo* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969). For more, see Baker, "Violence Redux," 78 – 79*n*19.
[25] Baker, "Violence Redux," 58.
[26] Ibid., 67.
[27] Slocum, "'Film Violence' Trope," 14.
[28] Ibid., 28.
[29] See Bosley Crowther, "Movies to Kill People By," *The New York Times,* July, 9 1967, and "Another Smash at Violence," *The New York Times,* July 30, 1967. *Variety* also notes rising concern over the "insertion of excessive violence and sadism in current films" ("Escalation of Pix Violence Hit by Theatre Owners at Convention," September 27, 1967.
[30] See "Movie Mailbag: Where Will the Violence End?," *The New York Times,* August 13, 1967.
[31] See Slocum, "The 'Film Violence' Trope" for more on the relationship between "effects" research and the centrality of behavioralism in the rise of communication studies after World War II.
[32] Joseph Morgenstern, "The Thin Red Line," *Newsweek,* August 28, 1967.
[33] Ibid.
[34] David Newman, "What's It Really All About? Pictures at an Execution," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, ed. Lester D. Friedman (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2000), 35. Newman, a staff writer and editor at *Esquire* magazine, wrote the script for *Bonnie and Clyde* with *Esquire*'s art director, Robert Benton. Both men contributed to the aforementioned *Esquire* cover story on violence with a four-page spread on popular culture titled "Now Let the Festivities Proceed." "The national love affair with the arts of bloodletting has now been given the official okay," they write. "Our best writers, artists, playwrights, directors, and actors are intent on the kill" (55).
[35] Pauline Kael, "Bonnie and Clyde," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, 188.
[36] Ibid., 188.
[37] "Statement by Valenti," 65.
[38] Roger Ebert, "Bonnie and Clyde," *Chicago Sun-Times,* September 25, 1967.
[39]Vivian C. Sobchack, "The Violent Dance," in *Screening Violence,* 113. Excerpted from the *Journal of Popular Film* 3 (Winter 1974): 2 – 14.

[40] Ibid., 117. Compare this to her conception of the "classical" era, during which "to few of us in the audience (our parents included) felt threatened enough by the presence of death and violence outside the theater to need the comfort of a microscopic inspection on the screen. … Our relationship with violence and death in those Saturday movies was the same relationship we had with them in life" (112).
[41] Note how Sobchack's defense crosses paths with Crowther's disdain. "It is precisely because there are vast areas of violence and bloodshed in our world … that our media of so-called entertainment should strive for balance and moral truth," Crowther writes. "It is the fallacious idea that violent movies are playing an important cultural role as ironic reflection and commentators on these sad events or are offering release for anxieties and torn emotions with their excessive fantasies that some thoughtful critics and philosophers use to rationalize this trend." See "Another Smash at Violence."
[42] Lester D. Friedman, "Introduction," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, 7.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Sobchack, "The Violent Dance," 122.
[45] Ibid., 121. Elsewhere she suggests that the "quantified treatment of violence and bodily damage" in contemporary filmmaking "is as much about 'more' as it is about violence, … more blood, more gore, more characters … blown up or blown away" (120).
[46] Leo Charney, "The Violence of a Perfect Moment," in *Violence and American Cinema,* 49.
[47] Ibid., 48.
[48] Marsha Kinder, "Violence American Style: The Narrative Orchestration of Violent Attractions," in *Violence and American Cinema,* 68.
[49] Prince, *Classical Film Violence,* 189.
[50] Prince, *Savage Cinema,* 107.
[51] Ibid., 101.
[52] Ibid., 32.
[53] Ibid., 27. When contemporary filmmakers use "Peckinpah's techniques—the squibs, slow motion, and montage editing," they remove them "from the contexts in his work that gave them meaning" and thereby render them "superficial and mechanical," Prince writes (230).
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid., 98.
[56] Stephen Prince, "The Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 199.
[57] See Prince, *Savage Cinema,* 103 – 212.
[58] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 199.
[59] Prince, *Classical Film Violence,* 2.
[60] Jean-François Lyotard, "Figure Foreclosed," in *The Lyotard Reader,* ed. Andrew E. Benjamin (Oxford: Blackwell Publishes Ltd., 1991), 72.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Eric L. Santer, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 40.
[63] For more on late 1960s and early 1970s expressions of authenticity, see Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), and Marshall Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), which traces the idea to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Berman's text joins other investigations of authenticity from the era in question, including Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), an anthology of his 1970 lecture series at Harvard University, and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity,* trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, I.L.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), which critiques the concept's circulation in postwar German thought. Martin Jay offers a compelling account of this critique in his "Taking On the Stigma of Inauthenticity: Adorno's Critique of Genuineness," *New German Critique 97* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 15 – 30.
[64] See "The Port Huron Statement," in *Takin' It to the Streets: A Sixties Reader,* eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 50 – 60.

[65] Berman cites the following from Barry Goldwater's *The Conscience of a Conservative:* "Every man, both for his own individual good and for the good of society, is responsible for his own development. The choices that govern his life are choices he must make: they cannot be made by any other human being, or by a collectivity of human beings" (xviii).
[66] André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *What is Cinema? Volume I,* trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 13.
[67] Ibid., 14.
[68] See Charles Sanders Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," *Philosophical Writings of Peirce,* ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1986), 98 – 119.
[69] Ibid., 109.
[70] Bazin, 14.
[71] Ibid., 15.
[72] Ibid., 16. A similar commingling of "objective" and "subjective" distinguishes other well-known accounts of photography's and cinema's ontologies, from Walter Benjamin's notion of the "optical unconscious" to Roland Barthes' conception of *punctum.* See Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version," *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 3: 1935 – 1938,* trans. Edmond Jephcott, Howard Eiland, et. al., eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 117 – 18, and Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).
[73] Peirce, 108.
[74] Peirce, 109.

CHAPTER 2
[1] The quoted material appears as a banner on *Time's* December 8, 1967, cover. Both Truffaut and Godard considered directing *Bonnie and Clyde* during its early development. For an engaging account of these negotiations, see Mark Harris, *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008).
[2] "Hollywood: The Shock of Freedom in Films," *Time,* December 8, 1967, 67. Representatives of the "new cinema," *Time* asserts, "no longer need adhere to the convention that a movie should have a beginning middle and end. … Plot can diminish in a forest of effects and accidents, … as the audience, in effect, is invited to become the scenarist's collaborator. … The soundtrack [meanwhile] can muddle a conversation or over-amplify it to incoherence. … Comedy and tragedy are no longer separate masks; they have become interchangeable, just as heroes and villains are frequently indistinguishable" (66).
[3] Corroborating *Time*'s intermedia links still further are Rauschenberg's collaborations with composer John Cage and, later, Alain Robbe-Grillet.
[4] Though largely textual, *Surface Series* (1970) evinces similar concerns. Juxtaposing clippings from the January and February 1970 editions of the *Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Minneapolis Tribune,* and *New York Times,* the eighteen screenprints feature headlines about antiwar protests, military violence, and environmental pollution.
[5] In another startling coincidence, both Robert Rauschenberg and Arthur Penn attended the experimental Black Mountain College in 1948. At the school, Penn directed Erik Satie's *The Ruse of Medusa,* starring Buckminster Fuller, with music and choreography by longtime Rauschenberg collaborators John Cage and Merce Cunningham and set design by Willem de Kooning.
[6] Arthur Penn, as quoted by Gary Crowdus and Richard Porton, "The Importance of a Singular, Guiding Vision: An Interview with Arthur Penn," *Cineaste* 20, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 9 – 10.
[7] David A. Cook, "Ballistic Balletics: Styles of Violent Representation in *The Wild Bunch* and After," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, ed. Stephen Prince (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 140 – 41.
[8] Viewers may also notice that Bonnie's and Clyde's wounds stop bleeding when the film intercuts takes with and without the use of artificial blood.
[9] "Shock of Freedom," 67.

[10] Ibid. Emphasis mine. In this context, it is interesting to note John Cage's description of Rauschenberg's collages, which, Cage argues, resemble "many television sets working simultaneously all tuned in differently." See Cage, "On Robert Rauschenberg, Artist, and his Work," in *Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Middletown, C.T.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 105.
[11] For more on the connection between Oswald's televised murder and the development of instant replay, see Cook, 140.
[12] "Shock of Freedom," 67.
[13] Ibid.
[14] See Raymond Williams, "Programming: Distribution and Flow," in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (New York: Shocken Books, 1974), 78 – 118. "It is evident," writes Williams, "that what is now called 'an evening's viewing' is in some ways planned, by providers and then by viewers, *as a whole*; that it is in any event planned in discernible sequences which in this sense override particular program units" (93). The emphasis is Williams'.
[15] "Cinema," *Time,* August 25, 1967.
[16] Bosley Crowther, "Run, Bonnie and Clyde," *The New York Times,* September 3, 1967. Crowther's other pieces on *Bonnie and Clyde* include his initial review of the film, following its premiere at the International Film Festival of Montreal ("Shoot-Em-Up Film Opens World Fete," *The New York Times,* August 7, 1967), and a follow-up column that accompanied its New York opening ("Screen: 'Bonnie and Clyde' Arrives," *The New York Times*, August 14, 1967).
[17] Dave Kaufman, "Bonnie and Clyde," *Variety,* August 9, 1967.
[18] Clifford Terry, "Bonnie and Clyde are Glamorized Killers," *Chicago Tribune,* September 25, 1967.
[19] Crowther, "Bonnie and Clyde."
[20] Pauline Kael, "Bonnie and Clyde," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, ed. Lester D. Friedman (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2000), 181. The review was originally published in *The New Yorker* on October 21, 1967.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Crowther, "Bonnie and Clyde."
[23] Crowther, "Run, Bonnie and Clyde."
[24] Excerpted from a letter by Joseph H. O'Mealy, as published in "'Bonnie and Clyde'—Facts? Meaning? Art?," *The New York Times,* September 17, 1967. "Years from now it is quite possible that *Bonnie and Clyde* will be seen as the definitive film of the 1960s," adds Roger Ebert. "It was made now, and it's about us." See Ebert, "Bonnie and Clyde," *Chicago Sun-Times,* September 25, 1967. Similar sentiments are expressed in Teresa Hayden's letter to Crowther in "Movie Mailbag: Bonnie, Clyde," *The New York Times,* August 27, 1967, as well as in Charles Champlin, "'Bonnie & Clyde': Glamorous Heels," *Los Angeles Times,* August 20, 1967 and "Flaws in a Savage Satire," *Life,* October 13, 1967.
[25] According to *Bonnie and Clyde* screenwriter David Newman, "What first attracted [he and co-writer Robert Benton] in the mythology was hearing about the photos Bonnie and Clyde took of each other and mailed to the newspapers, doggerel poetry that Bonnie wrote, the business of Bonnie posing with a cigar, and so on. It was, I still believe, one of the first examples of the now ubiquitous element of American life in which people become famous merely by being famous. It was Andy Warhol's 'fifteen minutes of fame' long ahead of its time." Co-author, with Benton, of *Esquire*'s "The New Sentimentality" (July 1964) and a contributor to the magazine's "Why Are We Suddenly Obsessed with Violence?" (July 1967), Newman adds: "We felt … that an entirely new culture was taking hold in America, … and it led to further exploration of the themes that became the soul of *Bonnie and Clyde.* What we were talking about was what is now known as 'the Sixties.' … If the film is 'really about' something, it is about that most of all." See David Newman, "What's It All Really About?: Pictures at an Execution," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, 38 – 39. Other contemporary accounts reinforce Newman's reading. See Lester D. Friedman, *Bonnie and Clyde* (London: BFI Publishing, 2000) and Steven Alan Carr, "From 'Fucking Cops!' to 'Fucking Media!': *Bonnie and Clyde* for a Sixties America," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and Clyde, 70 – 100.
[26] See, for instance, "Aestheticizing Violence," in *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998), 47 – 102; "The Hemorrhaging of American Cinema: *Bonnie and Clyde*'s Legacy of Cinematic Violence," in *Arthur Penn's* Bonnie and

Clyde, 127 – 147; "The Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence in the Films of Sam Peckinpah," in *Screening Violence,* ed. Stephen Prince (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 175 – 204; and "Introduction: Sam Peckinpah, Savage Poet of American Cinema," in *Sam Peckinpah*'s The Wild Bunch, 1 – 36.

[27] For more on the history of Akira Kurosawa's use of multiple-speed montage and its influence on filmmakers such as Penn and Peckinpah, see Cook, 138 – 147, and Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 178 – 187.

[28] Prince, "Hemorrhaging of American Cinema," 135 – 137.

[29] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 192.

[30] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 3: 1935 – 1938,* trans. Edmond Jephcott, Howard Eiland, et. al., eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 117.

[31] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 185.

[32] Linda Williams, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the 'Frenzy of the Visible'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 101.

[33] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 189.

[34] Williams, 36. See also Jean-Louis Comolli, "Machines of the Visible," in *The Cinematic Apparatus,* eds. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 121 – 142. In this context, it is interesting to note the money shot's emergence in feature-length pornography of the early 1970s.

[35] Williams, 94.

[36] Though *Bonnie and Clyde* uses multiple-speed montage to figure the violent deaths of a man and a woman, it is worth noting in light of Williams' discussion that most of its immediate successors use the technology to represent male deaths exclusively. The most notable case may be Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch,* which employs multiple-speed montage with ejaculatory fountains of blood that rival the money shot. I explore this film and its copious bloodletting in the following chapter.

[37] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 196.

[38] Comolli, 132, 137.

[39] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 191.

[40] Crowdus and Porton, 8 – 9.

[41] Prince, "Hemorrhaging of American Cinema," 130.

[42] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 176.

[43] Ibid., 191 – 92.

[44] Peckinpah, as quoted by Stephen Farber, "Peckinpah's Return," *Film Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (Autumn 1969): 8. Peckinpah repeated this assertion in a 1971 *New York Times Magazine* piece. With reference to *The Wild Bunch,* he declared: "I tried to make a film that showed violence as it is, not as some goddamn Hollywood piece of _____." See Dan Yergin, "Peckinpah's Progress: From Blood and Killing in the Old West to Siege and Rape in Rural Cornwall," in *Sam Peckinpah Interviews,* ed. Kevin J. Hayes (Jackson: University of Mississippi, 2008), 87.

[45] Prince, "Aesthetic of Slow-Motion Violence," 193.

[46] Ibid., 195.

[47] Ibid., 196.

[48] Ibid., 178.

[49] Ibid., 197.

[50] Charles Wolfe, "Vitaphone Shorts and *The Jazz Singer,*" *Wide Angle* 12, no. 3 (July 1990): 67.

[51] Ibid., 62.

[52] Ibid., 65.

[53] Ibid., 69.

[54]Charles Barr, "'They Think It's All Over': The Dramatic Legacy of Live Television," in *Big Picture, Small Screen: The Relations Between Film and Television,* eds. John Hill and Martin McLoone (Luton: John Libbey Media / University of Luton, 1996), 59. Central to this ease was the development of instantaneous cuts between cameras during the mid-1940s. Before, this time, Barr reports, leaps from camera to camera required transitions such as the dissolve-like "mix" or fade-outs and fade-ins (58 – 59).

[55] Failures during live, single-camera transmissions were not uncommon, Charles Barr suggests. Arthur Penn had the experience himself during his years directing television. See Barr, 49 and 72*n*1.
[56] See Mary Ann Doane, "Information, Crisis, Catastrophe," in *Logics of Television,* ed. Patricia Mellencamp (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 222 – 239.
[57] Indeed, according to Thomas Doherty, the state of broadcast journalism in 1963 "militated against the coverage of live and fast-breaking events in multiple locations" for a number of reasons: "TV cameras required two hours of equipment warm-up to become 'hot' enough for operation. Video signals were transmitted cross-country via 'hard wire' coaxial cable or microwave relay. 'Spot coverage' of unfolding news in the field demanded speed and mobility and since television cameras had to be tethered to enormous wires and electrical systems, 16 mm film crews still dominated location coverage, with the consequent delay in transportation, processing, and editing of footage." See Doherty, "Assassination and Funeral of President John F. Kennedy," The Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopedia of Television, http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=kennedyjf. Barbie Zelizer offers a similar account of broadcast technology in her "'Covering the Body' by Mediated Assessment," in *Covering the Body: The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 67 – 85. She also suggests that eyewitness accounts and location reports helped journalists reclaim a "scoop" they believed had been lost to amateurs like Abraham Zapruder .
[58] Samuel Weber, "Television: Set and Screen," in *Mass Mediauras: Form, Technics, Media* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 116. Emphasis mine.
[59] Barr, 62.
[60] Margaret Morse, "Sport on Television: Replay and Display," in *Regarding Television: Critical Approaches—An Anthology,* ed. E. Ann Kaplan (Los Angeles: The American Film Institute, 1983), 48. For more on the relationship between television and sports, see Joan M. Chandler, *Television and National Sport: The United States and Britain* (Urbana, I.L.: University of Illinois Press, 1988) and Benjamin G. Rader, *In Its Own Image: How Television Has Transformed Sports* (New York: The Free Press, 1984).
[61] Ibid., 51.
[62] Barr, 69.
[63] Leslie Stevens based the screenplay for *The Left-Handed Gun* on Gore Vidal's teleplay "The Death of Billy the Kid," which appeared on *The Philco Television Playhouse* in 1955. Robert Mulligan was the director, and Paul Newman, who reprised the role in Penn's film, played Billy the Kid. Penn directed both the television and film versions of *The Miracle Worker,* which first appeared on *Playhouse 90* (CBS; 1956 – 61) in 1957 with a teleplay by William Gibson.
[64] Indeed, for this reason, multiple-speed montage has become a mainstay in the Hollywood action film, where it makes extensive coverage possible for costly or unrepeatable effects such as explosions, car accidents, and the like.
[65] André Labarthe and Jean-Louis Comolli, "The Arthur Penn Interview," in *The Bonnie & Clyde Book,* eds. Sandra Wake and Nicola Hayden (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), 169. The interview originally appeared in *Cahiers du Cinéma* in December 1967.
[66] André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *What is Cinema? Volume I,* trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967) 14. If, as Roland Barthes suggests, the *noeme* of photography is "that-has-been," and that of television, according to Doane, "this-is-going-on," then cinema's essence may be "this-is-going-on," though it "has-been." See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 77, and Doane, 222.s
[67] See Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 72 – 82.
[68]Ibid., 72.
[69] Ibid., 73. Brian Henderson makes a similar distinction nine years earlier in an essay about Jean-Luc Godard's *Week End* (1968). There he distinguishes between "montage," which subordinates its components to coherent constructions such as narrative, and "collage," which "seeks to recover its fragments *as fragments*." See Henderson, "Toward a Non-Bourgeois Camera Style," *Film Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (Winter 1970 – 71), 5.

[70] Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception,* trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Verso, 1989), 82.
[71] See Edgar C. Doleman, Jr., *Tools of War* (Boston: Boston Publishing Company, 1984), 147. Other accounts of similar technologies used during the Vietnam conflict include *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia, 1961 – 1973: An Illustrated Account,* ed. Carl Berger (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1984); John T. Correll, "Igloo White," *Air Force Magazine* 87, no. 11 (November 2004): 56 – 61; Paul Dickson, *The Electronic Battlefield* (Bloomington, I.N.: Indiana University Press, 1976); and James William Gibson, *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam* (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986).
[72] According to Correll, the sensors were generally dropped in strings of five to six units to assure that at least three in each batch would successfully activate to cover the area in question (58).
[73] Gibson, 397.
[74] Virilio, 83.
[75] As cited by Correll, 60.
[76] This kind of supplementation was extensive, according to U. S. Air Force documentation on Igloo White: "The area where the acoustic and seismic sensors were to be implanted had to be photographed in detail so they could be put into the best locations. Sensor drops were likewise photographed so the exact position of each could be accurately plotted. Each significant signal return required visual or photographic evidence to prove the existence of a valid target before strikes were approved." See *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia,* 213.
[77] Martin Jay provides a thoroughgoing account this movement's history and central tenets in "The Camera as *Memento Mori:* Barthes, Metz, and the *Cahiers du Cinéma*," in *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 435 – 92.
[78] Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology,* ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 290.

CHAPTER 3
[1] Aired as part of the *Huntley-Brinkley Report*'s coverage of the Tet Offensive on February 2, 1968, the Saigon execution footage—shot by cameraman Vo Suu and narrated by NBC correspondent Howard Tuckner—was transmitted via satellite from Tokyo to New York moments before its broadcast. Upon airing, NBC trimmed seventeen seconds from the end of the original film, which, according to Suu's notes, included a "zoom on [the prisoner's] head, blood spraying out." While the version seen by roughly 20 million viewers on February 2 cut to black after the corpse fell to the ground, a March 10, 1968, rebroadcast on the *Frank McGee Report* restored the previously excised footage. Associated Press photographer Eddie Adams also captured the execution; his black-and-white photograph aired on NBC the evening before Suu's color film and appeared in number of national newspapers on the morning of February 2. See George A. Bailey and Lawrence W. Lichty, "Rough Justice on a Saigon Street: A Gatekeeper Study of NBC's Tet Execution Film," *Journalism Quarterly* (Summer 1972): 221 – 229+ and David Culbert, "Television's Visual Impact on Decision-Making in the USA, 1968: The Tet Offensive and Chicago's Democratic National Convention," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33 (July 1998): 419 – 449.
[2] Charles Champlin, "Violence Runs Rampant in *The Wild Bunch*," *Los Angeles Times,* June 15, 1969. Similar reviews come from *Time* magazine and the *San Francisco Chronicle*: *The Wild Bunch* contains the "bloodiest battle ever put on film," writes *Time,* while the *Chronicle*'s John L. Wasserman declares that Peckinpah has created "the most vivid, bloody, stunning battles between men I ever seen." See "New Movie—Man and Myth," *Time,* June 20, 1969, and Wasserman, "*The Wild Bunch* and Violence," *San Francisco Chronicle,* June 25, 1969. Blood also figured prominently in reviews of *Bonnie and Clyde* two years earlier. See, for instance, "Hollywood: The Shock of Freedom in Films," *Time,* December 8, 1967; Bosley Crowther, "Bonnie and Clyde," *The New York Times,* April 14, 1967; "Low-Down Hoedown," *Time,* August 25, 1967; and Richard Gilman, "Gangsters on the Road to Nowhere," *New Republic,* November 4, 1967.
[3] Roger Ebert, "The Wild Bunch," *Chicago Sun-Times,* August 3, 1969.
[4] Joseph Morgenstern, "The Bloody Bunch," *Newsweek,* July 14, 1969, 85.

[5] Stephen Prince, "Graphic Violence in the Cinema: Origins, Aesthetic Design, and Social Effect," *Screening Violence,* ed. Stephen Prince (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 10.
[6] For more on the history of Hollywood gunplay, see David A. Cook, "Ballistic Balletics: Styles of Violent Representation in *The Wild Bunch* and After," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, ed. Stephen Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 130 – 154.
[7] William Murray, "Playboy Interview: Sam Peckinpah," *Playboy,* August 1972, 68.
[8]Peter Braestrup, as cited by Culbert, 424. I mean to play here on Linda Williams's distinction between "ob/scene" (to describe what should remain imperceptible, or "off/scene") and "on/scene" (to describe the prevalence of explicit sexual representations in public life) in her well-known study of pornography, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy of the Visible"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 281 – 82. The idea that news footage like the Loan execution or films such as *The Wild Bunch* presented spectators with a "pornography of violence" circulated widely at this time. Writes Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.: "In recent years, the movies and television have developed a pornography of violence far more demoralizing than the pornography of sex." See *Violence: America in the Sixties* (New York: Signet Books, 1968), 53. Adds Tom Wolfe: "The new pornography depicts practitioners … ripping guts open [and] blowing brains out." See "Pause, Now, and Consider Some Tentative Conclusions about the Meaning of this Mass Perversion Called Porno-Violence: What It Is and Where It Comes from and Who Put the Hair on the Walls," *Esquire,* July 1967, 59.
[9] Culbert, 434. Adds film scholar Jason Jacobs: "The representation of gunfire [in Hollywood] was required to become both more visceral and out of control to be realistic," since television brought "firefights in the jungles of Indochina" into people's homes." See Jacobs, "Gunfire," in *Action/Spectacle Cinema,* ed. José Arroyo (London: British Film Institute, 2000), 10.
[10] Michael Arlen discusses "bang-bang" coverage in "Television and the Press in Vietnam; Or, Yes, I can Hear You Very Well—Just What Was It You Were Saying?," in *Living-Room War* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 112 – 113. See also Chester J. Pach, Jr., "And That's the Way It Was: The Vietnam War on the Network Nightly News," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 94.
[11] William M. Hammond, *Public Affairs: The Military and the Media, 1962 – 1968* (Washington, D. C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1988), 238.
[12] Reports one viewer of *The Wild Bunch*: "The spurt of blood produced by each gunshot is electrifying in its realness. This must be what shooting is like, not like the unglamorous … shooting of U. S. soldiers seen on television." See Tracy Hotchner, "Movie Mailbag: Is the *Bunch* Too Wild?," *The New York Times,* July 20, 1969. Adds another after a preview screening of the film: "I hope the viciousness of the fights stays in so people can really know how bad killing is." Quoted by Stephen Prince in "Graphic Violence in the Cinema," 26.
[13] See, for instance, the July 1967 *Esquire* cover story "Why Are We Suddenly Obsessed with Violence?," which brings together violent newspaper headlines and leads; photographs of "real" dead and bloodied bodies; and recent advances in Hollywood bloodletting.
[14] According to political scientist Daniel C. Hallin, a major tenet of these theories—the most empirical of which was Michael Robinson's "Public Affairs Television and the Growth of Political Malaise" (1976)—is "the notion that because of the camera, television shows war in a particularly literal and unmediated way—from which it is sometimes concluded that any war covered by television, regardless of the political context, would lose public support." See Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 131.
[15] See Arlen, "Living-Room War" in the collection of essays by the same name. Though frequently used to describe television's "unmediated" infiltration into American homes, this phrase receives more complex treatment from Arlen, who frequently challenges the authenticity of the news media in essays written for *The New Yorker* between 1966 and 1968.
[16] Leonard Zeidenberg, "The 21-Inch View of Vietnam: Big Enough Picture?," *Television* 25 (January 1968). Quoted by Pach, 94.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Arlen, "Television and the Press in Vietnam," 114.

[19] Hallin, *Uncensored War*, 177, Figure 2.
[20] Violence even dominated coverage of peaceful protests. A CBS report on the Moratorium demonstrations of October 15, 1969, began, "Today's protest was *different*, peaceful, within the law, and not confined to a radical minority" (Hallin, *Uncensored War*, 200). Early reports of the November 1969 Moratorium and Mobilization also emphasized that demonstrations had been non-violent "thus far." See Melvin Small, *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 117.
[21] Hammond, 237.
[22] As described by Bernie Cook, "Over My Dead Body: The Ideological Use of Dead Bodies in Network News Coverage of Vietnam," *Quarterly Review of Film & Video* 18 (April 2001): 206.
[23] From a report by correspondent Gary Shepherd and cameraman Norman Lloyd. See "Courage Under Fire," *The Vietnam War with Walter Cronkite, Volume 1,* DVD (Eugene, OR: Marathon Music & Video, 2003).
[24] See Small, 29, 32. Coming after the Johnson administration's late 1967 "progress campaign," during which assurances were made to the American people about U. S. advances in Vietnam, the Tet Offensive of January 30 – 31, 1968, came as a surprise to many. During this assault, the North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front, or Vietcong, attacked more than 100 cities and towns throughout South Vietnam, moving fighting to urban areas, including Saigon, for the first time in the war. Though the offensive proved a resounding failure for the North Vietnamese and NLF, who—save for fighting in Hue and Khe Sanh—were pushed back to the countryside by mid-February, the attacks proved psychologically damaging to the American war effort, appearing as highly visible, dramatically disastrous events on television news. And yet, scholars such as historian Clarence Wyatt see Tet as "more climax than cause" when it comes to public opinion about the war, noting how confidence in the Johnson administration was flagging among legislators, citizens, and even soldiers by the end of 1967. See Wyatt, *Paper Soldiers: The American Pres and the Vietnam War* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 168. "Given this change in the parameters of public debate," adds Hallin, "it is perfectly reasonable to expect that the media, without … [becoming] more activist and anti-establishment, … would produce a far higher quantity of critical news coverage." See Hallin, "The Media, the War in Vietnam, and Political Support: A Critique of the Thesis of an Oppositional Media," *The Journal of Politics* 46 (1984): 20.
[25] Investigative journalism, as we know it, remains a product of the post-Watergate era. Before this, revelations such as the *Pentagon Papers,* the massacre at My Lai, or the bombing of Cambodia remained the result of governmental leaks and independent or governmental investigations.
[26] According to Hallin's research, only about 8 percent of all Vietnam stories contained journalistic comment on military or governmental statements ("The Media, the War in Vietnam, and Political Support," 17). Even after the Tet Offensive, "it can be estimated that a faithful viewer who watched the evening news every night would have seen an average of about one such reference a month—considerably more, no doubt, than a viewer would have seen before Tet (only three references occurred in the pre-Tet sample ...), but not a figure that suggests journalists were going out of their way to question official information" (18).
[27] Hallin, *Uncensored War,* 193.
[28] "Courage Under Fire."
[29] Arlen, "The Falklands, Vietnam, and Our Collective Memory," *The New Yorker,* August 16, 1982. Cited by Hammond, 238.
[30] For a description of the Tuckner shooting, see Bernie Cook, 214.
[31] Inciting outrage from the MACV Office of Information—which suggested that Safer's Canadian status may have predisposed him to critique American troops—the scene is frequently noted for its unscripted realism. Writes Arlen: "Safer [is] not standing tall and staring purposefully into the camera, the way he's supposed to, but instead with his hand on his hip, out of breath, telling us about an action that some American troops have just been engaged in, a smallish encounter, two or three men killed, nothing extraordinary, but *Morley Safer is out of breath,* he is not reading from his little notebook, he has not written anything down, his is speaking with pauses, changes of direction mid-sentence, occasional gaps between words." See Arlen, "Morley Safer Loses His Breath but Finds His Voice: A Moral Tale," in *Living-Room War,* 23. Arlen's description of Safer recalls Aline Saarinen's report from downtown Chicago

on August 28, 1968. Succumbing to tear gas used against protesters, she chuckles uncomfortably, "I don't know what you do about it," then adds more seriously, "I don't have a handkerchief …." See NBC's coverage of the Democratic convention as collected by The Vanderbilt Television News Archive: http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/.

[32] Arlen, "Television's War," *Living-Room War,* 83.

[33] See "Primal Scene," in *The Language of Psychoanalysis,* eds. Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973), 335 – 336, as well as Freud's case of the "Wolf Man" in "From the History of an Infantile Neurosis (1918)," in *Three Case Histories* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 186 – 204.

[34] The same holds true for earlier footage shot in Grant Park, which, though often handheld, moves from longer shots of indiscriminate pushing and clubbing on the part of police to more investigative close-ups of protestors' bloodied faces. See NBC's coverage of the Democratic convention as collected by The Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

[35] See NBC's coverage of the Democratic convention as collected by The Vanderbilt Television News Archive. Due to an electrical workers' strike, orchestrated in part by Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, live feeds from the streets of Chicago were impossible to organize. This not only accounts for the use of fixed cameras at the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Balboa Street, but it also means that coverage of the demonstrations was deferred 30 to 40 minutes, since film had to be rushed by motorcycle to a local affiliate for processing. See Culbert, 442. Interestingly, NBC also hired a motorcyclist to transport film during the Tet Offensive, the images of which appeared with less commentary than was common before that attack. See Bailey and Lichty, 223, as well as Hallin, *Uncensored War,* 172.

[36] Small, 89. The Walker Commission, headed by future Illinois governor Daniel Walker, was appointed to investigate events surrounding the Chicago convention.

[37] *The Wild Bunch*'s conclusion runs nearly four minutes longer than *Bonnie and Clyde*'s. Moreover, Peckinpah's film incorporates two sequences of this kind. The other, of nearly equal length, though less carnage, opens the film.

[38] One thinks, for instance, of Hammer Studios' *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Terence Fisher, 1957) or *Dracula* (Terence Fisher, 1958) as well as Roger Corman's Edgar Allen Poe series at AIP (1960 – 64), which featured Vincent Price in such titles as *House of Usher* (1960), *Tales of Terror* (1962), and *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964).

[39] The U. S. release dates of *Bonnie and Clyde* (August 13, 1967) and *The Wild Bunch* (June 18, 1969) not only straddled the dismantlement of the Hollywood Production Code, but also the Tet Offensive, Martin Luther King Jr.'s and Robert F. Kennedy's assassinations, civil unrest in Chicago, Washington, D. C., Baltimore, and other American cities, and the escalation of American troop levels in Vietnam to 536,000.

[40] Jack Valenti, "Statement by Jack Valenti, MPAA President, before the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence," *Screening Violence,* 65.

[41] As cited by Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 118.

[42] Shot between the U. S. releases of *Contempt* and *Week End*, *Medium Cool* not only partakes of their color palettes, but also their bloody car accident scenes.

[43] To the extent that the film borrows its title from Marshall McLuhan and makes a television cameraman (Robert Forster) its protagonist, *Medium Cool* figures an encounter between television and cinema as much as documentary and fiction.

[44] Riffing on Godard, Deleuze has suggested that color does not refer to particular objects, but rather, absorbs what it can, becoming "the virtual conjunction of all the objects which it picks up." See Deleuze, 118.

[45] The third installment of Lewis's well-known "gore" trilogy is actually called *Color Me Blood Red* (1965). The first two are titled *Blood Feast* (1963) and *Two Thousand Maniacs!* (1964), respectively.

[46] Indeed, making "films that … the majors couldn't or wouldn't make" was a central tenet of exploitation cinema from its emergence in the United States in the 1920s. (The quote is from Lewis, as cited by Christopher Wayne Curry, *A Taste of Blood: The Films of Herschell Gordon Lewis* (London: Creation Books, 1999), 52.) Relevant for my interests here is the history of productions that highlight the

permeability of human bodies, from sex hygiene films that featured births, C-sections, and diseased genitalia to so-called "atrocity" films that intercut footage from events such as the Holocaust with staged reproductions of murder. See Eric Schaefer, *Bold! Daring! Shocking! True: A History of Exploitation Films, 1919 – 1959* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999). Lewis's gore films maintain exploitation's conventional linkage of sex and corporeal violence, even if his camera lingers less on the dead Playmate's bared breasts than the chunks of red flesh that cling to her wounds. How and why Hollywood would turn this exploitation tradition toward male bodies and "masculine" genres (including western and gangster films) before returning it to horror's female victims in *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin, 1974) and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Tobe Hooper, 1974) is a question worth pursuing.

[47] André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *What is Cinema? Volume I,* trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 13, 15.

[48] Charles Sanders Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," *Writings of Peirce,* ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1986), 111.

[49] Peirce, "Sixth Paper: Deduction, Induction, and Hypothesis," in *Chance, Love, and Logic: Philosophical Essays*, ed. Morris R. Cohen (Lincoln, N.E.: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 135.

[50] Peirce, "Sixth Paper," 135, 150.

[51] Bazin, 15.

[52] Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic," 109.

[53] Bazin, 14.

[54] "The surrealists … looked to the photographic plate to provide them with their monstrosities and for this reason: the surrealist does not consider his aesthetic purpose and the mechanical effect of the image on our imaginations as things apart. For him, the logical distinction between what is imaginary and what is real tends to disappear." See Bazin, 15.

[55] See, in particular, Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingstone, *L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), as well as Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism" and "Notes on the Index: Part 1," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press, 1986), 87 – 118 and 196 – 209 , and *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press, 1994).

[56] André Breton, *Nadja,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 19.

[57] Louis Aragon, "On Décor," in *The Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema,* ed. Paul Hammond (San Francisco: City Lights, 2000), 51.

[58] See Paul Schrader, "Notes on *Film Noir,*" *Film Comment* 8 (Spring 1972): 8 – 13, as well as films such as *The Long Goodbye* (Robert Altman, 1973), *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974), and *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1976), for which Schrader served as screenwriter. For more on the links between *film noir* and surrealism, see James Naremore, *More than Night: Film Noir and Its Contexts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 9 – 39, and Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton, *A Panorama of American Film Noir (1941 – 1953),* trans. Paul Hammond (San Francisco: City Lights, 2002).

[59] *The Wild Bunch* even references Buñuel's work, however unwittingly. Opening, like *L'age d'or* (1931) on a scene of scorpions, Peckinpah's wounds also recall the eyeball that erupts at the start of *Un chien andalou* (1929). For more on Peckinpah's interest in Buñuel, see Christopher Sharrett, "Peckinpah the Radical: The Politics of *The Wild Bunch*," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, 96.

[60] Art Seidenbaum, "The Violent Imperative," *Los Angeles Times* June, 30 1969.

[61] Vincent Canby, "Movie Mailbag: Is the Bunch Too Wild?," *The New York Times,* July 20, 1969.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Pauline Kael, "The Wild Bunch," in *5001 Nights at the Movies* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1985), 837 – 38.

[64] Ebert.

[65] Lesley Stern, "Paths That Wind Through the Thicket of Things," *Critical Inquiry* 28 (Autumn 2001): 320.

[66] See Tom Gunning, "An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator," in *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Films,* ed. Linda Williams (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995): 114 – 33.

[67] The realism and relative criticality of *The Wild Bunch*'s violence actually tend to be linked in historical and contemporary accounts of the film. Commentators who find the film's wounds "realistic"—that is, ugly and unpleasurable—often take it as a critique of violence as such. Those who regard the brutality as artificial, meanwhile, frequently believe *The Wild Bunch* celebrates violence by virtue of the fact that it renders bloodletting beautiful. By slowing the speed of the action, writes Canby, Peckinpah "at first heightens the horror of the mindless slaughter, and, then—and this is what really carries horror—makes it beautiful, almost abstract, and finally into terrible parody." See Canby, "Violence and Beauty Mesh in The Wild Bunch," *The New York Times,* June 25, 1969.
[68] Clifford Terry, "The Movies: Wild Bunch," *Chicago Tribune,* July 14, 1969.
[69] Sharrett, 82.
[70] See John L. Wasserman, "The Wild Bunch and Violence," *San Francisco Chronicle,* June 25, 1969, and Devin McKinney, "*The Wild Bunch:* Innovation and Retreat," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, 195.
[71] CBS aired a similar report on April 8, 1971, about helicopter operations over Cambodia. See "The Air War," *The Vietnam War with Walter Cronkite, Volume 2,* DVD (Eugene, OR: Marathon Music & Video, 2003). Punning on the name of the AH-1 Cobra helicopter featured in the newsfilm, the correspondent remarks, "When more firepower is called for, it is the cobra's time to uncoil." For a reading of both helicopter reports, see Bernie Cook, 210.
[72] Ebert.
[73] Stephen Farber, "Peckinpah's Return," *Film Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (Autumn 1969): 3. Writing thirty years later, Prince lauds Peckinpah's efforts "bring the nastiness and painfulness of violence onto the American screen," but also finds that the film's conclusion "becomes a redemptive and heroic rite of passage for his band of outlaws, enabling them to achieve a warrior's apotheosis." See Prince, "Introduction: Sam Peckinpah, Savage Poet of American Cinema," in *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, 26, 29.
[74] Richard Slotkin explores *The Wild Bunch*'s relationship to the American "frontier myth" of violent conflict and progress in his well-known book *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (Norman, O.K.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 578 – 623.
[75] Touted by popular publications, the M163, twenty-millimeter Vulcan AA gun, was frequently mounted on tanks and helicopters and could fire up to 3,000 rounds per minute, decimating the field before it.
[76] Stern, 334.
[77] Sharrett, 104.
[78] Martin Jay, "Modernism and the Retreat from Form," in *Force Fields: Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 151.
[79] See Julia Kristeva, "Approaching Abjection," *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection,* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1 – 31.
[80] Bernie Cook, 205.
[81] Ibid., 204.
[82] I have Carol J. Clover's argument about modern horror films in mind when I use the phrase "open up" in this context. Though they engage in an assaultive, voyeuristic, and masterful gaze, horror films always turn this look round, according to Clover. Indeed, the central pleasures of horror for its spectators lie in its passive and introjective, rather than active, projective, gaze. See Clover, *Men, Women, and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
[83] Bernie Cook, 209.
[84] Ibid., emphasis mine.
[85]Cronkite's remarks came as part of the *CBS Evening News'* February 27, 1968, broadcast. The "body count," one of the government's few measures of progress in Vietnam, was released every Thursday by the Public Affairs Office in Saigon. While the networks generally reported these highly contested and often unreliable numbers alongside little American, South Vietnamese, and North Vietnamese flags, after Tet, correspondents and anchors began to apologize for the distant irreality of such figures. See Hammond, 317 – 320, and Hallin, *Uncensored War,* 175.
[86] One might compare Michael Bliss's suggestion that *The Wild Bunch* employs figures of enclosure to point to "limited possibilities and obscured self-awareness in the film" to the reviews that contemplate the "entrapment," of *Mean Streets* with its "dank, self-enclosed world" or "no-exit Hell." See Bliss, "'Back Off

to What?' Enclosure, Violence, and Capitalism in Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*," *Sam Peckinpah's* The Wild Bunch, 107, as well as Joy Gould Boyum, "America, Seen in Two Lenses," *Wall Street Journal*, October 19, 1973; Kevin Thomas, "Coming of Age in Little Italy," *Los Angeles Times*, October 25, 1973; and Tom Milne, "Mean Streets," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, 41: 480 / 491 (1974): 102. Scorsese's *Who's That Knocking at My Door?* (1969), a "premake" of *Mean Streets*, features Harvey Keitel as J. R., a young man with a predicament very similar to Charlie's. In that film, Scorsese expresses J. R.'s entrapment through repeated shots of doors shutting, locks being turned, and windows closing.

CHAPTER 4

[1] Pauline Kael, "The Current Cinema: Beyond Pirandello," *The New Yorker*, December 19, 1970, 112.

[2] Unwittingly filmed by one of the Maysles' cameramen, Hunter's stabbing by Hell's Angel Alan Passaro occurred during a free Rolling Stones concert at Altamont Speedway outside San Francisco on December 6, 1969. The concert capped the Rolling Stones' 1969 American tour, which the Maysles began filming in New York nine days earlier. Released on the first anniversary of Hunter's death, the completed film carried the tagline: "The music that thrilled the world. … And the killing that stunned it!"

[3] Kael, 112.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Kael is not alone in this proposition or in her disdain for the Maysles, whom, she implies, find good fortune in their manufactured "jackpot." Indeed, many of *Shelter*'s critics note the contingency of the film's violence while accusing the Maysles of manipulating or exploiting that contingency at the same time. Kael compares their techniques to Leni Riefenstahl's at Nuremberg (112). Vincent Canby cites *Mondo Cane* (See Canby, "Making Murder Pay?," *The New York Times*, December 13, 1970). And the *New Statesman*, for its part, publishes the following: "You bug a stadium with cameras, and let it all happen; then the close-cropped wizards of the editing studio splice together miles of film and mess about with the color processing. Like so many pop records, the movies that *result* from this alchemy are a technicians' genre; studio miracles whose artlessness and deceptively vérité air have an elaborately cooked-up flavor. *Gimme Shelter* is the scissored and crocheted version of what went on when the Stones gave their free concert at Altamont, California. But what really happened—freak-outs, stabbings, deaths, births, hippies mussing up Angels' bikes and Angels mussing hippies in return—was so far away from the clever tricks of the studio that the film breaks up around an unacknowledged incongruity" (See "Cinema," *New Statesman*, August 6, 1971, 188). For additional responses of this kind, see "Gimme Shelter," *Variety*, November 25, 1970; Michael Goodwin, "Films: Gimme Shelter," *Rolling Stone*, December 24, 1970, 58; Peter Schjeldahl, "Delicately Handled Dynamite …,"*The New York Times*, January 3, 1971; Joel Haycock, "Gimme Shelter," *Film Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (Summer 1971): 57 – 58; and David Pirie, "Gimme Shelter," *Sight and Sound* 40, no. 4 (Autumn 1971): 226 – 27.

[6] Even Kael's appeals to John F. Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald evoke *Shelter*'s unacknowledged freeze frames, since the footage of each likewise appeared as "stills." Portions of Abraham Zapruder's film of JFK's assassination first appeared as a series of photograms in the November 29, 1963, edition of *Life* magazine, which purchased the footage from Zapruder shortly after the event. Moving images of the murder were not widely viewed until 1975, when Geraldo Rivera aired Zapruder's film on ABC's *Goodnight America.* Since then, the footage has been subjected to repeated freeze framings, particularly at the moment of Kennedy's fatal wounding. (See such diverse texts as Oliver Stone's *JFK* (1991) or the documentary *Image of an Assassination: A New Look at the Zapruder Film* (1998), which details the original film's digital remastering.) For its part, Oswald's murder—captured live by NBC—was repeatedly played, arrested, reversed, and replayed by all three broadcast networks. Robert Jackson's photograph of Oswald's reaction to Jack Ruby's gunshot also circulated widely.

[7] Stefan Ponek, "1969 KSAN Radio Broadcast," *Gimme Shelter*, DVD, directed by Albert and David Maysles (New York: The Criterion Collection, 2000). Emphasis mine.

[8] Lester Bangs et. al., "Let it Bleed," *Rolling Stone*, January 21, 1970, 22. Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* echoes Bangs in his review of *Gimme Shelter* the following year: "With any luck, none of us will ever have a better chance to watch an instant replay of an actual murder than in *Gimme Shelter*." See Champlin, "Movie Review: Furore at Altamont in Shelter," *Los Angeles Times*, February 17, 1971.

References to instant replay are particularly significant in this context, since the technology only emerged in television sports after its use during rebroadcastings of Lee Harvey Oswald's murder. The first use of instant replay in American football took place during an Army vs. Navy game on December 7, 1963.
[9] *Gimme Shelter* even finds its way to the courthouse, where as part of Meredith Hunter's murder trial, it is "shown repeatedly, *frame by frame.*" See Grover Lewis, "Blowing Up a Movie to Solve a Murder," *Village Voice*, December 25, 1969, 33. Emphasis mine.
[10] *Ecstasy* (Old French, *extasis;* Late Latin, *extasis;* Greek *ekstasis*) comes from *ekistanai* (*ek,* meaning "out" + *histanai,* meaning "to place, cause to stand). The Oxford English Dictionary defines *ecstasy* as "the state of being 'beside oneself,' thrown into a frenzy or stupor, with anxiety, astonishment, fear, or passion." Indeed, the freeze frame's characteristic *stasis* (Greek for "a standing still") links it to *ekstasis* (Greek for "trance, distraction") by virtue of their shared root in the Proto-Indo-European *sta-*, meaning "to stand."
[11] Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality,* trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986), 13.
[12] *Excite,* meaning "to set in motion, stir up" comes from the Latin *exitāre,* which comes from *ex,* meaning "out" and *ciēre,* meaning "to set in motion."
[13] Eric L. Santner, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 31.
[14] See *Paris qui dort* (René Clair, 1924), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Jean Epstein, 1928), or *The Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1929) for salient examples, the ecstasy of which also appears in the writing of these practitioners. It is worth noting that the first cinematic projections in 1895 depended upon an initially still image to pique spectatorial desire for film's comparatively "impossible" views.
[15] While I do not mean to suggest that the freeze frame never appeared in popular American film before the late 1960s, it is the case that such instances are comparatively isolated and rare. Perhaps the most well-known freeze frame of the "classical" era is the more than 30-second arrest of George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) in Frank Capra's independently produced *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). Here, the ecstatic disruption of cinema's regular unfolding is explicitly otherworldly, accompanying, as it does, a review of the suicidal George's life narrated by no less than God himself. As the late 1960s approaches, these incidents become manifestly more violent. In fact, one of the first post-"classical" uses of the freeze frame in mainstream American cinema concludes Sidney Lumet's *Fail-Safe* (1964). There, ten successive arrests of a formerly bustling New York City figure the moment of nuclear apocalypse.
[16] Raymond Bellour, "The Pensive Spectator," *Wide Angle* 9, no. 1 (1987): 6.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Christian Metz, "Photography and Fetish," in *The Photography Reader,* ed. Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), 141.
[19] André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *What is Cinema? Volume I,* trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 14.
[20] Metz, 140.
[21] *Contingency* comes from *con-* ("with") + *tangĕre* ("to touch"), meaning "touching each other, in contact; tangential."
[22] See Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning: Research Notes on Some Eisenstein Stills," in *Image, Music, Text,* trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 52 – 68. In this text, Barthes argues for "third meaning" as the site of the *filmic,* of signification in excess of significance. While I will return to the filmic later in this chapter, what remains notable for the present moment is Barthes' limitation of its discovery to the photogram, *not* to the film in motion. The filmic, that is, "very paradoxically, cannot be grasped in the film 'in situation,' 'in movement,' 'in its natural state,' but only in that major artifact, the still" (65). Indeed, Barthes begins his explication of third meaning with a study of photograms drawn from Sergei Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*, the details of which appear to resist the film's more obvious narrative meaning.
[23] Ibid., 66.
[24] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2: 1927 – 1934,* eds. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingstone et. al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 510.

[25] Ibid.
[26] For his extension of photography's "optical unconscious" to cinema, see Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 3: 1935 – 1938,* eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, trans. Edmond Jephcott, Howard Eiland, et. al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 117.
[27] Bataille, 22.
[28] Ibid., 21.
[29] Ibid., 22.
[30] Ibid., 21. The emphasis is Bataille's.
[31] Stanley Booth, *Dance with the Devil: The Rolling Stones and Their Times* (New York: Random House, 1984), 375. Reprinted in 2000 as *The True Adventures of the Rolling Stones* (Chicago Review Press), Booth's preferred title. Random House's 1984 titling decision only reinforces the tenacity of associations between the Rolling Stones and the occult that I address here.
[32] Music critic Albert Goldman calls the concert an "orgy of violence and madness" for which "you couldn't find a closer parallel in any ritual murder in all the thousands of pages of *The Golden Bough.*" See Goldman, "… Or 'A Whitewash of Jagger'?," *The New York Times,* January 3, 1971. Matching Lester Bangs' experience of Altamont as a "religious assembly" full of young fans moving "as if in religious fervor," Pirie at *Sight and Sound* suggests that the film builds "to a kind of ritual sacrifice" or "overwrought religious vision." See Bangs, 34, 27, as well as Pirie, 226.
[33] Goldman, "Whitewash of Jagger."
[34] Craig McGregor, "Rock's 'We Are One' Myth," *The New York Times,* May 9, 1971.
[35] David Sadkin, "Gimme Shelter: 'A Corkscrew or a Cathedral'?," *Filmmakers Newsletter* 5, no. 1 (December 1971): 20.
[36] "Astrology: Fad and Phenomenon," *Time,* March 21, 1969, 47.
[37] *Time,* which offers its readers a copy of Richard Nixon's astrological chart, revels, too, in Ronald Reagan's interest in the zodiac. (See "Astrology: Fad and Phenomenon.") Though the California governor claims he is "no more interested in the subject than the average man," the most cursory list of contemporary investigations—"Theosophy: Cult of the Occult," *Time,* July 19, 1968; Andrew W. Greeley, "There's a New-Time Religion on Campus," *The New York Times Magazine,* June 1, 1969; "The Occult Explosion," *McCall's,* March 1970; and "Cult of the Occult," *Newsweek,* April 13, 1970—suggests this may be a lot. Other popular treatments include: Robb Baker, "Occult Today's Hip World Bingo," *Chicago Tribune,* December 7, 1969; J. Klemesrud, "Some People Take This Witch Business Seriously," *The New York Times,* October 31, 1969; Stephen J. Sansweet, "Strange Doings: Americans Show Burst of Interest in Witches, Other Occult Matters," *Wall Street Journal,* October 23, 1969; "Style of Evil," *Esquire,* March 1970; "Evil, Anyone?," *Newsweek,* August 16, 1971; "The Occult A Substitute Faith," *Time,* June 19, 1972, 62 – 68; Nancy Baltad, "Witches' Cauldrons Are Boiling Over in Valley," *Los Angeles Times,* May 14, 1972; "Voodoo U," *Newsweek,* April 9, 1973; and Francine Du Plessix, "Occultism: Exorcising Ourselves," *Vogue,* May 1974. Anton LaVey even made guest appearances on television's *The Tonight Show* in 1969 and *Donahue* in 1971.
[38] Martin Marty, "The Occult Establishment," *Social Research* 37, no. 2 (Summer 1970): 212 – 230.
[39] Ibid., 216.
[40] Ibid., 217.
[41] See Jeffrey Sconce, *Haunted Media: Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000).
[42] Marcello Truzzi, "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America,* eds. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 633.
[43] Antonin Artaud, "Witchcraft and the Cinema," in *Collected Works, Volume 3,* trans. Alastair Hamilton (London: Calder & Boyars, 1972), 66.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Kenneth Anger, quoted in Alice L. Hutchison, *Kenneth Anger: A Demonic Visionary* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), 163. Having met Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones in London in 1968, Anger not

only invited Jagger to star in his formerly abandoned *Lucifer Rising* project (1970 – 1981), but also interwove the band into *Invocation* (filmed, like *Gimme Shelter,* in 1969), for which Jagger composed a monotonous, trance-like soundtrack on the newly developed Moog synthesizer. Indeed, the network linking the Rolling Stones to Kenneth Anger is particularly dense. For instance, Anita Pallenberg—lover to Rolling Stone musicians Brian Jones and Keith Richards—allegedly introduced Jagger and Richards both to the occult and to Kenneth Anger. Pallenberg would later produce Anger's *Lucifer Rising*, which stars Jagger's former lover Marianne Faithfull and filmmaker Donald Cammell. Cammell, another member of the Stones' circle, not only directed *Performance* (1970) with Nicolas Roeg, which stars Jagger and Pallenberg, but also earned Anger's affection, given the relationship between Cammell's father, Charles Richard Cammell, and Aleister Crowley in the 1930s. It is also significant in this ecstatic context to mention that the Stones footage in *Invocation* comes from the band's July 5, 1969, Hyde Park concert for which the Hell's Angels provided security. See Hutchison and *Moonchild: The Films of Kenneth Anger,* ed. Jack Hunter (London: Creation Books, 2002) for more on this history.

[46] Anger, quoted in Tony Rayns, "Lucifer: A Kenneth Anger Compendium," *Cinema* 4 (October 1969): 24.

[47] The work of Jean-Paul Sartre circulates widely during late 1960s and early 1970s, as does Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1969). Contemporary critiques of authenticity include Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), an anthology of his 1970 lecture series at Harvard University, and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity,* trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), which explores the concept's circulation in postwar German thought. In *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), Marshall Berman traces the origins of authenticity for both Right and Left to the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

[48] Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 4.

[49] David Farber calls LSD a "new technology of the mind" in "The Intoxicated State / Illegal Nation: Drugs in the Sixties Counterculture," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s,* eds. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge, 2002), 23.

[50] The following explanation of LSD experience even employs freeze frame imagery: "You certainly were able to look at things that were normally almost too small to be seen with the naked eye more clearly than would ever be imagined. … You knew it was working when you moved your hand and you had twenty images of the hand in your mind at the same time, like fifteen stills of a motion picture film at one time." See *From Camelot to Kent State: The Sixties Experience in the Words of Those Who Lived It,* eds. Joan Morrison and Robert K. Morrison (New York: Times Books, 1987), 212.

[51] The late 1960s in particular revealed a profound shift in the face of the New Left, as throngs of new members from the Midwest and South joined SDS without the intellectual or left-wing backgrounds of the group's predominantly East Coast founders. What these representatives of "prairie power" did have, however, was sympathy for the counterculture's personal expressions of discontent. "By 1967," writes historian Melvin Small, "most college students from elite and urban campuses … began to adopt sloppy, long-haired countercultural fashions that offended many adults. Whether they were politicos … or dope-crazed, free-loving hippies of Haight-Ashbury, they all began to look the same from their unruly unisex hair to their tie-dyed T-shirts, torn jeans, and sandals." Outing their predecessors' more conservative exteriors, these new recruits unwittingly politicized culture for the New Left, the counterculture, and, as we shall see, a nation that variously emulated and opposed them. See Small, *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 163.

[52] Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 205.

[53] Small, 162.

[54] Latin American and Vietnamese guerillas, as well as Native Americans, also provided models of marginality and authenticity during this era. Writes Yippie leader Jerry Rubin in 1970: "Cops patrol the hippie areas the way they patrol black communities, the way Amerikan soldiers patrol Vietnamese villages." See Rubin, *Do It!: Scenarios of the Revolution* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970).

[55] Rossinow, 271.

[56] Jeff Jones, quoted in "Desperate Measures: SDS, Weathermen, Black Panthers," *From Camelot to Kent State*, 311.
[57] Champlin.
[58] Accounts of both Woodstock, the festival, and *Woodstock* (Michael Wadleigh, 1970), the film, demonstrate its benign reception relative to Altamont. Patrick Lydon of *The New York Times* writes: "What began as a symbolic protest against American society ended as a joyful confirmation that good things can happen here, that Army men can raise a "V" sign, that country people can welcome city hippies." See Lydon, "A Joyful Confirmation That Good Things *Can* Happen Here," *The New York Times,* August 24, 1969. Adds Champlin with regard to the film: "From all accounts [Woodstock] was peaceful, joyous, and altogether a resounding tribute to a lifestyle (wholly unlike the disastrous festival at Altamont, … only a few months later." See Champlin, "*Woodstock* a Chronicle of Rock Festival," *Los Angeles Times,* March 27, 1970.
[59] See Sheila Whiteley, "The Rolling Stones," in *The Space Between the Notes: Rock and the Counterculture* (London: Routledge, 1992), 82 – 102. Cultivating their image as "brutal, menacing, erectile, tough, [and] obscene," the Stones, Whiteley writes, were attractive to "the more militant branches of the counterculture" (87).
[60] John Sinclair, "Rock and Roll Is a Weapon of Cultural Revolution," in *Takin' It to the Streets: A Sixties Reader,* eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 301.
[61] In fact, the lyrics of "Satisfaction" open an inflammatory article in *Newsweek* about the degeneracy of popular music, which, the magazine reports, is replacing "the innocently exuberant sound of the Beatles" with "the tasteless themes of the Rolling Stones." See "Air Pollution?," *Newsweek,* August 16, 1965, as published in *Takin' It to the Streets,* 373.
[62] Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 12.
[63] One thinks of SDS founder Tom Hayden's reaction to the work of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the American South. "We should," he writes, "speak their revolutionary language without mocking it, for it is no lip service," but rather, "the revolution we hoped for." See "Re: SNCC Meeting, Jackson, Mississippi, September 14 – 17, 1961," cited by Clayborne Carson in *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 176. Indeed, the black Southern poor with whom SNCC worked also supply inspiration to white, middle-class politicos. "Cherished," writes Gitlin, for their "stoicism, wholeness, community, and expressiveness," these impoverished people stand as living repositories of authenticity. See Gitlin,164 – 65.
[64] Ward, 113.
[65] As does the American music industry, which according to Mike Daley, is experiencing its own crisis of authenticity thanks to the girl groups and teen idols of the early 1960s. See Daley, "'Why Do Whites Sing Black?': The Blues, Whiteness, and Early Histories of Rock," *Popular Music and Society* 26, no. 2 (June 2003): 161 – 67.
[66] Albert Goldman, "Why Do Whites Sing Black?," *The New York Times,* December 14, 1969. For rock journalist Chet Flippo, the Rolling Stones, in particular, are "English schoolboys faithfully aping American Southern blues singers. If there were any way to get temporary skin transplants," he writes, "these Limey boys would be black every night on stage." See Flippo, *On the Road with the Rolling Stones: 20 Years of Lipstick, Handcuffs, and Chemicals* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), 85.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Eric Lott, "Love and Theft: The Racial Unconscious of Blackface Minstrelsy," *Representations* 39 (Summer 1992): 23 – 50. Other explorations of blackface's paradoxical projections include Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) and Carol J. Clover, "Dancin' in the Rain," *Critical Inquiry* 21 (1995): 722 – 47.
[69] Lott, 28.
[70] The quotation is from Daley, 163. For more on Robert Johnson and his alleged interest in satanic and voodoo practices, see Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues* (New York: Viking Press, 1981), 111 – 131.
[71] Noted for their distance from music industry commercialism, the studios of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, are famous for mingling country, blues, and rock styles as well as for their "desegregated" recording sessions.

In addition to the Rolling Stones, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Otis Redding, and Wilson Pickett are among the many artists who famously recorded there.

[72] The film's other Alabama sequences are characterized by a similar duality. Just before "Love in Vain," the Stones listen to, but do not sing, recordings of the country-inspired "Wild Horses" and bluesy "Brown Sugar," which itself invokes a history of miscegenetic desire.

[73] Quoted in Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, "Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s," in *Imagine Nation,* 12. Former hippie Alex Forman corroborates this sentiment: "That was the illusion of the whole hippie ethos, that there was this abundance. … There wasn't an abundance. There was an abundance at a certain time for certain people." See *Camelot to Kent State,* 220, 221. Also worth noting in this regard is Daley's assertion that urban blacks did not, for the most part, participate in rock's blues revival (163). Indeed, Craig McGregor writes in one of Woodstock's few critiques: "BLACK? Hardly a black face in that massive come-together. A few black performers, but then Louis Armstrong played the Jim Crow circuit. The cruelest paradox of the Woodstock nation is that it has been liberated, primarily, by the black race from which it has borrowed music, dance, language, style, and much of its sense of brotherhood—but that so far it has done little to free those who freed it." See McGregor, "Woodstock: A Desperate Fear for the Future?," *The New York Times,* April 19, 1970. Adds a letter to the editor seven months earlier: "It is curious that in your extensive coverage of the Woodstock Festival no mention is made of the fact that at that fantastic outpouring there was an almost total absence of Negro youth." See Ralph Marvin Abee, "Symbolism of Bethel," *The New York Times,* September 3, 1969.

[74] Barthes, "Third Meaning," 58.

[75] Ibid., 55. I am referring here to Barthes' well-known distinction between *punctum* and *stadium* as it appears in his *Camera Lucida.* By *studium,* he refers to a photograph's "general interest," the culturally coded information it passes, with "average affect" onto its beholders. See *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 26. The *punctum,* meanwhile, violently breaks with a given *studium;* it is the contingent detail—unique to each beholder—that inexplicably combines visual evidence with subjective desire. Barthes raises the possibility of a specifically cinematic *punctum* only once in *Camera Lucida* and, then, with direct reference to the photogram in particular. Having asserted that the *punctum* is "what I add to the photograph and *what is nonetheless already there,*" he continues: "Do I add to images in movies? I don't think so; I don't have time. … I am constrained to a continuous voracity; a host of other qualities, but not pensiveness; whence the interest, for me, of the photogram" (55). The emphasis is Barthes'.

[76] Ibid., 66.

[77] See Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 113, 117. Here, he writes of the *punctum*'s "madness," which unites the "evidential" with the "exclamative" (113). My assertion that the freeze frame may do the same challenges Barthes' own conception of cinema. "A film can be mad by artifice," he writes, "can present the cultural signs of madness, [but] it is never mad by nature" (117).

[78] Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 169.

[79] George Baker, "Reanimations (I)," *October* 104 (Spring 2003): 28 – 70. Here, Baker explores a film by Irish artist James Coleman called *Untitled: Philippe VACHER* (1990), which extends a four-second film clip to seventeen minutes by re-photographing each frame for about thirteen seconds. Though it addresses the world of contemporary art practice, Baker's thoughts on the relationship between photography and cinema in this work speak to my own observations on commercial freeze frames from the late 1960s and early 1970s.

[80] Ibid., 62.

[81] Ibid., 35.

[82] "The kids in the audience were stunned," writes Roger Ebert in his response to *Night of the Living Dead*. "There was almost complete silence. The movie had stopped being delightfully scary, … and had become unexpectedly terrifying. … Worst of all, even the hero got killed." See Ebert, "Just Another Horror Movie—Or Is It?," *Chicago Sun-Times,* January 5, 1969. Interestingly, Ebert, like Kael, does not mention the freeze frames that compound the reactions he describes. He simply reports: "Inside the house, the Negro hears help coming and looks out the window. He is shot through the forehead by the deputies.

'That's one more for the bonfire,' the sheriff says. End of movie." End of the *movie*, yes, but as I will detail, not of its images, which continue both before and during the film's final credits.

[83] Released prior to both *Night* and *Shelter*, *Blowup* casts its shadow over both films. Antonioni's work even becomes part of the discourse on Meredith Hunter's murder. Writes *Newsweek*: "In a kind of latter-day variation of Antonioni's *Blowup*, police last week studied a remarkable film vignette of the murder." See "The Underground: Avenging Angels," *Newsweek*, January 5, 1970, 16. *Night* co-writer John Russo suggests and additional influence for his work: the end of Sidney Lumet's apocalyptic *Fail-Safe* (1964), one of the first commercial American films to feature a freeze-framed conclusion (see my note above). "We shot those stills, and they were printed through cheesecloth to give them that grainy look," Russo reports. See Paul R. Gange, *The Zombies That Ate Pittsburgh: The Films of George A. Romero* (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Company, 1987), 34. According to the commentary on the "Millennium Edition" of the film released by Elite Entertainment, it was a mezzotint screen that gave the images their grainy appearance.

[84] *Night*, that is, derives its freeze frames by different means than *Shelter*. While the Maysles use an optical printer to rephotograph individual frames, Romero shoots photographic prints with a motion-picture camera. The distinction does not, however, alter my argument here. Both processes produce full-frame images that resemble each other on screen and on celluloid as well as oppose photography to cinema.

[85] In fact, the freeze frame's resemblance to well-known photographs from this era may account for the numerous allegorical readings of *Night of the Living Dead* that appear in popular and academic discourse on the film. Commentators have compared the film's freeze frames to "news photos of southern lynching parties" as well as "images … of both World War II concentration camp footage and Vietnam War photography." See Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner, *Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film* (Bloomington, I.N.: Indiana University Press, 1988), 181, and Tony Williams, *The Cinema of George A. Romero: Knight of the Living Dead* (London: Wallflower Press, 2003), 30.

[86] J. Hoberman and Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Midnight Movies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 125.

[87] Romero contends that Duane Jones, the African American actor who plays Ben, was hired not for the color of his skin, but rather, for his acting abilities alone. While this may be the case, the contingency of his casting still directs us toward the racial politics that overdetermine the film's distribution and exhibition—something that Romero and his producers seem to understand. In a potentially apocryphal story, producer Russell Streiner describes his and Romero's drive to New York in search of a distributor on April 4, 1968, the day of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination: "We figured, 'Oh, great, … here we show up with a film with a black cat playing the lead and probably every theater in the country is going to be burned down within two days." See Gange, 34. After both Columbia Pictures and American International Pictures (AIP) passed on the film—the latter because of its downbeat conclusion—*Night of the Living Dead* was distributed by Continental Releasing on a double bill with the Ossie Davis / Dionne Warwick vehicle, *Slaves*. Citing a tendency in the early to mid-1960s to market race-themed features as both prestige pictures and exploitation films, Kevin Heffernan also links the *Slaves* (Herbert J. Biberman, 1969) / *Night of the Living Dead* combination to Continental's previous attempts to unite two genres popular with inner-city, African American audiences: the horror movie and the race-themed social problem film. "The proven success of horror in the inner-city market was now enhanced by a film with an intelligent and resourceful black hero," he writes. See Heffernan, "Inner-City Exhibition and the Genre Film: Distributing *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)," *Cinema Journal* 41, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 73. Not surprisingly, then, *Night of the Living Dead* later appeared in Philadelphia with the Sidney Poitier film *For Love of Ivy* (Daniel Mann, 1968).

[88] Writes Doane: "The documentary event is not so far from the narrative event. The event may take time, but it is *packaged* as a moment: time is condensed and becomes eminently meaningful" (160). Despite its participation in such "packaging," *Night*'s style implies its knowledge of this operation. Commentators usually note, for instance, how the film's amateurism and low production values give it a pseudo-*vérité* aesthetic, particularly Romero's use of location shooting, handheld camera, and high-contrast black and white stock. The result, write Hoberman and Rosenbaum, is "news-report immediacy," something the film elaborates through its extended imitations of radio and television announcements (122). The television reports in particular draw upon the conventions of "live" and "on-location" reporting as well as prosaicisms

like "search and destroy missions." And yet, with each repetition, these tropes push at the boundaries of realism, until the footage itself seems to fall inside ironical quotation marks. Indeed, when cutting to full-frame views of the reports, Romero retains the television screen's edges, as if to underscore how the medium ever "frames" the images we receive.

[89] Wade Davis, *Passage of Darkness: The Ethnobiology of the Haitian Zombie* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 57.

[90] Though *resurrect* and *reanimate* certainly share the sense of restoring something or someone to life, the Oxford English Dictionary underscores nuances that I draw upon here. *Resurrect*, that is, literally means to "rise again" from the dead, while *reanimate*, "to be filled with life again," retains a sense of reinvigorating life more than reversing death. Among the latter's definitions are: "to animate with new life," "to stimulate anew," and "to impart fresh vigor." By *reanimation*, I also mean to pick up on George Baker's sense of the term, which he borrows from Pier Paolo Pasolini's descriptions of free and indirect discourse as appropriation. "For Pasolini," he writes, "appropriation was a form that created a new form. … It was a form that brought form back to life" (68). When cinema cites photography, it may generate fantasies of authenticity, but it also reanimates the photogram's distinctly inauthentic composition.

[91] There are exceptions. Films like *King of the Zombies* (Jean Yarbrough, 1941), *Revenge of the Zombies* (Steve Sekely, 1943), and *Voodoo Man* (William Beaudine, 1944) feature white zombies created at the hands of mad-scientist types. See Williams, 13. Other zombies are products of disease or some kind of inexplicable vampirism. See, for instance, *The Last Man on Earth* (Ubaldo Ragona, 1964), which shares its source material—Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954)—with *Night of the Living Dead*.

[92] Ken Gelder, "Postcolonial Voodoo," *Postcolonial Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000): 92.

[93] bell hooks, "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance," in *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1999), 23, 29.

[94] In this regard, it is interesting to note *Night of the Living Dead*'s position in the history of American horror, where it frequently represents a significant step in the generic shift from external threats (monsters and mad scientists) to internal dangers (psychosis, collective metamorphosis). In *Night of the Living Dead* "and its numerous spawn," the creatures "may well slaughter and maim," Andrew Tudor writes, but "it is the metamorphosis itself which is the primary threat." See Tudor, *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 97.

[95] Santner, 33 – 37. "Internal alien-ness" comes from the work of Jean Laplanche. See Laplanche, *Essays on Otherness*, ed. John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) and *New Foundations for Psychoanalysis*, trans. David Macey (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

[96] Santner, 36.

[97] Aired as part of the *Huntley-Brinkley Report*'s coverage of the Tet Offensive on February 2, 1968, the moving pictures of Nguyen's actions were shot by cameraman Vo Suu and narrated by NBC correspondent Howard Tuckner. Eddie Adams' Pulitzer Prize – winning photograph, *Saigon Execution*, appeared that morning in a number of national newspapers as well as on NBC on the evening of February 1. Nick Út's photograph of the naked Phan Thi Kim Phúc was captured on film by a British cameraman.

[98] Raymond Bellour, "The Film Stilled," *Camera Obscura* 24 (September 1990): 107. Bellour borrows his notion of *l'instant pregnant* from Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Laocöon* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), where it applies to painting. Bellour admits that "in the painting, the meaningful instant doesn't refer to anything real," while the freeze frame "is always by force of circumstance a 'decisive instant' torn from reality" (107, 108). And yet, freeze frames also "possess a quality of abstraction and of irreality that seems to introduce a kind of paralysis—comparable to one that strikes (in) painting—into film" (108). From this point of view, the freeze frame's relationship to tableaux, whether painterly, theatrical, or cinematic, seems relevant, since these, too, commingle decisiveness with summation. See Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 33 – 78, and Kaveh Askari, "From 'the Horse in Motion' to 'Man in Motion,'" *Early Popular Visual Culture* 3, no. 1 (May 2005): 59 – 76.

[99] Gilles Deleuze, *The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 1 – 11.

[100] Ibid., 5.

[101] Ibid.
[102] Bellour, "The Film Stilled," 107.
[103] Films such as *Shelter* or *Blowup,* moreover, return more than once to the freeze frame's imperceptible recurrences, which are themselves repetitions of events the spectator has already witnessed.
[104] The play of repetition and difference I describe here finds an unexpected antecedent in Andy Warhol's silk screens, particularly those from his *Death in America* series (1962 – 67), which take violent photojournalistic images as their source material. While each work reproduces the same photograph several times on the same canvas, the variability of the silk-screening process introduces small differences with every repetition. His *Red Race Riot* (1963), which draws upon Charles Moore's well-known photographs of the 1963 "riots" in Birmingham, provides a salient example.

EPILOGUE
[1] See Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology,* ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 198 – 209.
[2] In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), Freud describes both sadism and "pleasure in looking" in terms of a sexualized aggressiveness emerging from the instinct toward mastery. Moreover, and especially in the earliest versions of the *Three Essays,* he argues for the primacy of sadism in infantile sexuality; its passive modes—masochism and exhibitionism—are conceived as the "turnings round" of this libidinal aggressiveness. As early as "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" in 1915, however, Freud betrays his uncertainty regarding this primary sadism. Significant for a study of cinematic pleasure is the fact that his hesitancy emerges precisely through his consideration of scopophilia. Freud fumbles, that is, in his attempts to connect sadism to visual pleasure, first suggesting their similarity, only to dismantle and then reassert it. The crucial moment comes when, having just argued for parallel trajectories in sadism-masochism and scopophilia-exhibitionism, he reverses gear and suggests an earlier stage of libidinal reflexivity for the scopophilic instinct. "At the beginning of its activity the scopophilic instinct is autoerotic," writes Freud; "it has indeed an object, but that object is the subject's own body. It is only later that the instinct comes … to exchange this object for … the body of another" (94). Here, scopophilia's emergence as a component instinct appears linked to masochism, not sadism. And though, in this text, he denies such reflexivity to the sadistic instinct itself, the problem of primary masochism continues to haunt Freud throughout *Beyond the Pleasure* (1920) and into "The Economic Problem in Masochism" (1924) in which he, for the first time, concedes to the possibility of primary masochism as a residuum of the death drive libidinally bound within the subject. Also significant for a theorization of cinematic pleasure is Freud's suggestion of primary masochism in the realm of fantasy. The signal moment in Freud's oeuvre comes when, in his 1919 "A Child is Being Beaten," he describes the beating fantasies of his female patients. Consisting of an unconscious, masochistic phase bound on either side by conscious, seemingly sadistic phases, these fantasies only inspire libidinal pleasure after phase two. That is, even though in the first, apparently sadistic scenario, the girl imagines a child being beaten by her father, Freud argues that the scene is not fully libidinally charged and thus not entirely sexual or sadistic. It is not until the unconscious second phase, when the girl herself is the object of the beating, that Freud suggests a high degree of, in this case, masochistic pleasure.
[3] See, in particular, Tom Gunning, "An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator," *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film,* ed. Linda Williams (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 114 – 33; Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, Excess," in *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader,* ed. Sue Thornheim (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 267 – 81, and "Discipline and Fun: *Psycho* and Postmodern Cinema," in *Re-Inventing Film Studies,* eds. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams (London: Arnold, 2000), 351 – 78; and Carol J. Clover, "The Eye of Horror," in *Men, Women, and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 166 – 230.
[4] See "Discipline and Fun." The usefulness of Williams' essay for the study of film violence is indicated by her central example, Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960).

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