AMBIVALENT AMBULATION:
FAN PILGRIMAGE AND THE ITINERANTEXTUAL CULT FILM

by

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ABSTRACT

Peripatetic by nature yet polymorphous in form, the topic of fan pilgrimage expresses a significant dearth in cult film and media scholarship. Whilst the concept of pilgrimage has been classically linked to religious duty and moral obligation, its ability to straddle both traditionalist and secularist rationales amidst increased globalisation makes such ambiguous mobility ripe for closer analysis. In this thesis, I will theorise fan pilgrimage using a series of itinerant fan taxonomies to recontextualise the role of the pilgrim and its function within select fan groups.

Utilising the critical literature of Zygmunt Bauman, Victor Turner, and Roger C. Aden, respectively, Chapter 1 reevaluates ideas of community and reconfigures the spatiotemporal theories of performance articulated by Richard Schechner through fan pilgrimage and performative communitas. Chapter 2 explores how theories of play and everyday life create my first fan taxonomy: the ludic pilgrim. Via the play theory of Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois as well as the theories of everyday life held by Erving Goffman, I argue for a correlation between play and costume through the case study of the *otaku* – i.e. fans of Japanese *anime* and *manga*. Chapter 3 employs fashion theory to subcultural style and reconsiders the value of the goth subculture and female vampire fandom by way of my second fan taxonomy: the subsartorial pilgrim. In Chapter 4, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* serves as my main case study to theorise subcultural liveness during screenings of *Rocky Horror* and highlight my third fan taxonomy: the performative pilgrim. Examining the pilgrim as tourist through concepts such as fan tourism and *flâneurism* and by way of case studies such as *Blade Runner*, Disney theme parks, and *The Lord of the Rings* blockbuster trilogy, Chapter 5 unpacks my fourth fan taxonomy: the postmodern pilgrim. Finally, Chapter 6 recasts *The Big Lebowski* as a cult film that is primarily consumed by fans via Lebowski Fest. This chapter will elucidate how narrative, replay culture, and the documentary film *The Achievers: The Story of the Lebowski Fans* all reshape the meaning of *Lebowski* and spotlight its classification as an itinerantextual cult film.

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DEDICATION

For Mum and Grandma.

INTRODUCTION: Fan Pilgrimage and Itinerantextuality – A Mobile Methodology

*Fandom both **is** and **is not** like religion, existing between 'cult' and 'culture.'*

- Matt Hills, *Fan Cultures* (118; emphasis in original)

Pilgrimage is one of the most common phenomena found in religious culture, occurring in just about every major religious tradition. Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism, for example, have all developed complex pilgrimage cultures ranging from overarching and unifying sites that transcend any national or cultural boundaries, to regional and localised sites that may conversely affirm cultural belongings, perhaps even over and against universalising ones.

- Ian Reader, Introduction to *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture* (3)

You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you are not all
        that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.

- Walt Whitman, "Song of the Open Road" in *Leaves of Grass* (3)

We all choose to walk for a variety of reasons. Most commonly, the act of walking is a means of getting from point 'A' to point 'B.' Walking is also promoted by physicians and fitness professionals as a simple and inexpensive way to exercise and maintain a healthy lifestyle. As pedestrians, we take on a more social labeling, and are defined by the purpose and trajectory of our walking via constructed streets and/or roads. Both physically and metaphorically, a road – as illustrated by Whitman in the above epigraph – represents a geographical contradiction between leisurely and purposeful ambulation. Though diverging in direction, differing in length, and varying in duration, the process of ambulation has nevertheless come under greater scrutiny in academia.

In recent years there has formed a small yet significant amount of critical literature on walking, in what could be called the field of 'walking studies.' The majority of the research

concerning the topic of walking argues for a critical reassessment of ambulatory and purposeful pedestrianism in the contemporary world (Amato 2004; Lorimer 2011). In particular, Rebecca Solnit notes that "[m]ost of the time walking is merely practical, the unconsidered locomotive means between two sites" (3). Although she considers walking to be an "amateur act" (4), Solnit does, however, state that "[t]he pilgrimage is one of the basic modes of walking, walking in search of something intangible" (45). Here, the ambulatory mode of the pilgrimage is analysed in terms of its own contradictions. "Pilgrimage is premised on the idea that the sacred is not entirely immaterial," continues Solnit, "[and] unites belief with action, thinking with doing, and it makes sense that this harmony is achieved when the sacred has material presence and location" (50). Therefore, based on Solnit's research, it would appear that walking attains a greater socio-spiritual purpose once it is attached to concept of 'pilgrimage.'

Pilgrimage has been the subject of interest in a number of works of classic literature, studies of world religions, and readings of historical trauma. Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1400), Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), and the anonymously written Russian text *The Way of the Pilgrim* (1884), use the act of pilgrimage to articulate religious piety among characters and also present an allegorical context within each narrative. In theology, pilgrimage has been the focal point of examinations into specific sacred sites such as Lourdes (Marnham 1980); Mecca and the significance of the annual Hajj (Peters 1994); Jerusalem and the Holy Land (Le Beau and Mor 1996); and Buddhist shrines (Coleman and Elsner 1995). Additionally, the historical component of pilgrimage has also prompted research into the role of pilgrimage in Ancient Greece (Dillon 1997) and mediaeval religion (Sumption 1975).

However, with further secularisation and the rise of tourism during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the idea that pilgrimage is a *strictly* religious venture has undergone multiple reinterpretations. For example, a certain 'spiritual reverence' is linked to critical studies

of disaster sites such as the Gettysburg Cemetery and Memorial in Pennsylvania (~July 1863); the USS *Arizona* Memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii (7 December 1941); and Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas where former President John F. Kennedy was shot (22 November 1963) (see Blasi 2002: 159-80). Furthermore, annual motorcycle pilgrimages across the U.S. with Vietnam war veterans function to address personal issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and also help to foster a network of ex-soldiers through their membership in such therapeutic travel (see Dubisch 2004: 106-32). What the above examples illustrate is that certain degrees of patriotism and historic memory exist in the American cultural landscape on the basis of a reconfiguration of the term pilgrimage.

But what may be the underlying purpose of pilgrimage in general, whether it is either explicitly religious or secular in form? Peter Jan Margry's essay "Secular Pilgrimage: A Contradiction in Terms?" attempts to answer this question and, in doing so, legitimises the study of pilgrimage. For Margry, pilgrimage points to "a transcendental encounter with a specific cult object for the purpose of acquiring spiritual, emotional or physical healing or benefit" (17). Through the "specific cult object," the quasi-medicinal, or at the very least, therapeutic benefit of pilgrimage, highlighted by Margry, is attained via a physical journey to a specialised geographic site in a certain part of the world.

From 'pop icon' mansions to grave sites, amusement parks to fan conventions, secularised pilgrimages have been increasingly popularised in modern media. These cites include Elvis Preseley and the attraction of Graceland[1] (Doss 1999); Dollywood[2] and the figure of Dolly Parton (Hardie in Lukas 2007); and *Star Trek* conventions (Geraghty 2007; Porter 1999: 245-

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[1] Graceland is located at 3764 Elvis Presley Blvd in Memphis, Tennessee. It was originally built in 1938 and 1939, but Elvis bought the mansion in 1957. Over 750,000 individuals visit Graceland per year (see Doss 89).

[2] Located in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, this is the official theme park created by country singer and Hollywood star Dolly Parton (see Hardie in Lukas 2007: 24). On a further note, Parton has also starred in numerous Hollywood films including *9 to 5* (Higgins, 1980), *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (Higgins, 1982), and *Steel Magnolias* (Ross, 1989).

70).[3] Graceland, Dollywood, and *Star Trek* conventions each represent physical sites of fandom that enable a fan to not only obtain a sense of cultural capital but also a form of what could be termed 'cartographical capital.' Such an attainment of cartographical capital happens when a fan, through the process of secularised pilgrimage, adopts a type of fan mobility I would refer to as 'itinerantextuality.' As a progressive module for fan mobilities to achieve cartographical capital, the hybrid concept of itinerantextuality works as a fluid entity that combines 'itinerancy' (i.e. movement from place to place) with a direct link to 'textuality' (i.e. the text itself being consumed). Itinerantextuality serves to establish both cultural *and* cartographical capital in specific fan hierarchies and, through the figure of the pilgim, will be applied throughout my thesis and culminate in Chapter 6 through an in-depth discussion of *The Big Lebowski* as itinerantextual cult film.

Such a merger between fan mobility and film consumption also points to questions involving the re-classification of the cult film. For instance, J. P. Telotte (1991) claims that the cult film "is a type marked by both its highly specified and limited audience as well as a singular pleasure that this audience finds in the film's transgressions" (7). If I contend that itinerantextuality is a hybrid process which puts a premium on both the aesthetics and economics of fan mobility and consumption, then the cult film, through its "highly specified and limited audience" achieves a greater fluidity through extratextual elements such as community, play, fashion, and performance. And as a voluntary excursion on both a personal and collective level, fan pilgrimage will be redefined and reexamined on the basis of itinerantextuality.

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[3] Geraghty's book is one of the most recognised critical studies of *Star Trek*, and views the television series and films as part of American history and culture, and its fandom premised upon fan letter writing, community, and self-improvement. Furthermore, Jennifer E. Porter's article concerns *Star Trek* conventions as fan pilgrimages, drawing from research conducted during the mid-1990s (see Porter 246).

Similar to Anne Jerslev's (1992) experience watching *The Big Sleep* (Hawks, 1946) as part of the reopening of an art house cinema in Copenhagen, Denmark in the late 1970s, I too have an anecdote related to fan audiences and localised pilgrimage I wish to foreground. In August 2011, I embarked on my own localised secular pilgrimage to an outdoor screening of *Casablanca* (Curtiz, 1942) in Vancouver. This film 'event' – dubbed 'Summer Screen' and sponsored by 'Freshaircinema.ca' – was held in the Athlete's Village[4] and promoted via 'word-of-mouth' across social media websites such as Facebook. An eclectic array of spectators came to see this "singular pleasure," as Telotte would note, with other like-minded fans of the film, which included romantic couples, families, youth, disabled persons, and elderly individuals. Given its outdoor location, much of the audience who attended this particular 'free' screening of *Casablanca* appeared to have walked, cycled, bused, or taken the Skytrain – Vancouver's main metro service – to this relatively central Vancouver location. What I drew from this short-lived experience with other fans of *Casablanca* was a greater interest toward spaces and places of cult film fandom. Like Jerslev, I felt like a "connoisseur among other connoisseurs" (181), and interpreted my experience viewing *Casablanca* solely through the process of itinerantextuality, my attainment of both cultural and cartographical capital, and an awareness of the increased localisation of fan pilgrimage within an urban milieu.

In this thesis, however, my cardinal objective will be to theorise fan pilgrimage using a series of itinerant fan taxonomies in order to recontextualise the role of the pilgrim and its extratextual function within select fan groups. As a conduit toward critically investigating the ambivalent ambulation inherent in fan pilgrimage, the fan as pilgrim will be used as a figure that fluidly adapts to a variety of foci as well as loci. Through an interdisciplinary reassessment of fan pilgrimage, my goal is to think through such wilful wanderlust across the spectrum of

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[4] A site originally constructed for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

popular and material culture and, in doing so, offer a new and eclectic approach to the research of fan mobilities.

Utilising the critical literature of Zygmunt Bauman, Victor Turner, and Roger C. Aden, respectively, Chapter 1 begins by reevaluating ideas of community, communitas, and fan pilgrimage. The chapter then proceeds to reconfigure the spatiotemporal theories of performance articulated by Richard Schechner through fan pilgrimage and my hybrid concept of performative communitas. In Chapter 2, I make the claim that play, performance, and everyday life work together to create my first fan taxonomy: the ludic pilgrim. In revisiting the play theory of Johan Huizinga and Roger Callois in addition to the theories of everyday life held by Erving Goffman, I argue for a correlation between play, mimesis, and costume through the case study of the *otaku* – i.e. fans of Japanese *anime* and *manga*. Following this, Chapter 3 employs fashion theory to subcultural style and additionally points to the 'cultification' of fashion within contemporary material culture. Focusing my attention exclusively toward fan attire, I will reconsider the value of the goth subculture and female vampire fandom, in terms of subcultural habiliment and via my second fan taxonomy: the subsartorial pilgrim. In Chapter 4, the concept of liveness in relation to the active consumption of cult film occupies the bulk of my investigation therein. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Sharman, 1975) will serve as my main case study in this chapter in order to theorise the fan as a catalyst of subcultural liveness during screenings of *Rocky Horror* and, in turn, highlight my third fan taxonomy: the performative pilgim.

Examining the pilgrim as tourist through concepts such as fan tourism and *flâneurism* and by way of case studies such as the fandom of *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982), Disney theme parks, and *The Lord of the Rings* (Jackson, 2001-3) as blockbuster pilgrimage, Chapter 5 unpacks my fourth fan taxonomy: the postmodern pilgrim. Finally, Chapter 6 recasts *The Big Lebowski* (Coen Brothers, 1998) as a cult film that is consumed primarily through performance and fan

pilgrimage. Cognisant of the history and influence of Lebowski Fest on *Lebowski* fandom, I will elucidate how narrative, replay culture, and the documentary film *The Achievers: The Story of the Lebowski Fans* (Chung, 2009) all reshape the meaning of *Lebowski* and its classification as an itinerantextual cult film. Premised on my theory of itinerantextuality and the research of Barbara Klinger, *Lebowski* will serve as the key exemplar of the itinerantextual cult film, mixing performative pilgrimage with fan mobility, ambiguous 'achievement' with paradoxical pathos, and portability with praxis.

1   Community / Communitas / Performative Communitas

The concept of community has been the subject of both public scrutiny and academic debate throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century.[5] In our development and maturation as social beings, we desire to communicate and interact with others who share similar interests as ourselves; ultimately, it would seem, to seek some form of 'togetherness' during each encounter. Bearing this historical and social context in mind, Chapter 1 intends to yoke together some of the core ideas and concepts in studies of society, community, and performance to argue that the nexus between performance and community exists beyond communal roots and should be reconsidered on the basis of performance studies through the writings of Richard Schechner (2003, 2006).

To begin this chapter, I will look at the theories regarding community and the figure of the pilgrim present in the writings of Zygmunt Bauman (1996, 2001). Bauman's attention toward the figure of 'the vagabond' signifies an important crossroads whereby ideas of community and pilgrimage fuse together. Bauman's theories on community, however, are premised on the society of the modern era. In an effort to launch into a more critical discussion of community, I aim to then revisit the work of Victor Turner (1977, 1978) and his theories regarding the terms *communitas* (of Latin origin) and liminality.

Following Turner, Roger C. Aden (1999) will be used to then highlight how the concept of 'symbolic pilgrimage' is influenced by Bauman's notion of the pilgrim in studies of community in addition to Turner's ideas of ritual concerning communitas and liminality. Whilst the writings and concepts of Bauman through to Aden all act as stepping stones toward a more succinct way of theorising fan pilgrimage, Richard Schechner's work in performance studies

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[5] Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* immediately springs to mind, although he spends the majority of his discussion pointing to the relationship between community and nationalism (see 1991: 7).

and, most importantly, on performance theory will assist me in recasting fan pilgrimage to be thought of and theorised in terms of what I would like to refer to as 'performative communitas.' The goal of this chapter is to introduce multiple ways of theorising community and the figure of the pilgrim whilst also underscoring the spatiotemporal characteristics of communitas and liminality that are evident under the rubric of performative communitas.

1.1   Zygmunt Bauman: The Pilgrim and Community

As one of the foremost thinkers of sociology and community studies, Zygmunt Bauman pioneered and championed new ways of looking at community from its early roots to developments in modernity. In his essay "From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity," Bauman connects community to structured forms of mobility, ambulation, and pilgrimage in the modern world. "The figure of the pilgrim was not a modern invention; it is as old as Christianity," asserts Bauman "[b]ut modernity gave it a new prominence and a seminally novel twist" (19). Bauman continues with a focus on the spatial concerns of the pilgrim, stating that "[f]or pilgrims through time, the truth is elsewhere; the true place is always some distance, some time away…[w]herever the pilgrim may be now, it is not where he ought to be, and not where he dreams of being" (20). This quest for truth and a sense of authenticity by the pilgrim is part of Bauman's close analysis of the reasons, functions, and results/consequences of embarking on pilgrimage in a more secular society.

Moreover, Bauman highlights the voluntary nature of pilgrimage, which points to its role as a specialised form of active ambulation. "In such a land, commonly called modern society," states Bauman, "pilgrimage is no longer a choice of the mode of life; less still is it a heroic or saintly choice…[however] one can do more than walk – one can walk *to*…[and] [o]ne can look back at the footprints left in the sand and see them as a road" (21-2; emphasis in original).

However, what Bauman tends to emphasise most in this essay is the individualistic quality and the sheer remoteness and isolation inherent in pilgrimage, chiefly as quests of self-discovery. "The pilgrim and the desert-like world he walks," contends Bauman, "acquire their meanings *together*, and *through each other*" (22; emphasis in original). He goes on to claim that for pilgrims "footprints are engraved for good, so that the trace and the record of past travels are kept and preserved. A world in which travelling may be indeed a pilgrimage. A world hospitable to the pilgrims" (23). Here, the relationship between the terrestrial, the psychological, the spiritual, and the ambulatory merits considerable attention, according to Bauman, in order to understand how the individual is able to take precedence over the community.

However, Bauman also laments that "[t]he world is not hospitable to the pilgrims any more" (23). Due to the above-mentioned issues of modernisation and secularisation, Bauman asks the following question: "[w]hat possible purpose could the strategy of pilgrim-style 'progress' serve in this world of ours?" (24). In the hopes of answering such a broad question in a comprehensive manner, Bauman selects the figures of 'the stroller,' 'the vagabond,' 'the tourist,' and 'the player' to argue for the existence and value of pilgrimage on modern society (see 25-6). For Bauman, "[t]he stroller was the past master of simulation – he imagined himself a scriptwriter and a director pulling the strings of other people's lives without damaging or distorting their fate" (26). "Life-as-strolling was a far cry from the life-as-pilgrimage," notes Bauman, "[but] [w]hat the pilgrim did in all seriousness, the stroller mocked playfully…[and] in the process, he got rid of the costs and the effects alike" (27). Unlike the stroller, argues Bauman, "[t]he vagabond was the bane of early modernity, the bugbear that spurred the rulers and the philosophers into an ordering and legislating frenzy. The vagabond was *masterless*, and being masterless (out of control, out of frame, on the loose) was one condition modernity could not bear and thus spent the rest of its history fighting" (28; emphasis in original). "What made

vagabonds so terrifying," continues Bauman, "was their apparent freedom to move and so to escape the net of heretofore locally based control. What further complicates a reading of the vagabond in a more positive light is that the movements of the vagabond are unpredictable; unlike the pilgrim the vagabond has no set destination…[and] [v]agabondage has no advance itinerary – its trajectory is patched together bit by bit, one bit at a time" (ibid). This resistance to (or outright reject of) a specific dwelling let alone a goal-oriented frame of mind on the part of the vagabond makes the figure one of increased speculation on the grounds of its simplistic nomadism and explicit deviance from the norm.[6]

Bauman's theorising of the vagabond, however, points to its apparent ambiguity when placed alongside more established notions of community. "Wherever the vagabond goes," asserts Bauman, "he is a stranger; he can never be 'the native', the 'settled one', one with 'roots in the soil'" (28). With such a nomadic sensibility, the vagabond not only underscores its continuous mobility but also its links to Bauman's next figure: the tourist. "Like the vagabond, the tourist is on the move," argues Bauman, "[and] [l]ike the vagabond, he is everywhere he goes *in*, but nowhere *of the* place he is in" (29; emphasis in original). Based on this evaluation of both the vagabond and the tourist by Bauman, it appears that the tourist exists as a transitory embodiment of travel, a mere 'passerby' to the locale he or she visits, whilst the vagabond maintains its 'outsider' status and resistance to the status quo.

In Bauman's follow-up text *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*, he further unpacks the complicated nature of community and its influence upon human behaviour. According to Bauman,"'community' stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us – but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to reposses" (3).

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[6] See also Tim Cresswell's essay "The Vagrant/Vagabond: the Curious Career of a Mobile Subject" (2011).

Admittedly utopian yet clearly an important way of classifying our socialisation as humans, "'[c]ommunity' is nowadays another name for paradise lost – but one to which we dearly hope to return, and so we feverishly seek the roads that may bring us there" (ibid). If, as Bauman suggests, we voluntarily "seek the roads" that will lead us to a more tangible sense of community – despite its idealised sensibility and 'feel-good' agenda – then this clearly points to ambulation as a cornerstone not only to studies of community, but also in analyses of its origins as communitas and liminality outlined by Victor Turner.

1.2   Victor Turner: Communitas and Liminality

Working primarily in the discipline of anthropology during the twentieth century, Victor Turner remains a seminal voice in the study of community and its origins via his theories of 'communitas' and 'liminality.' Originally a study of the Ndembu tribe's rituals and customs in the late 1970s in Zambia, Africa, Turner's *The Ritual Process* articulates the significance of the term 'communitas' over that of 'community' on the basis of a series of phases:

> [t]he first phase (of separation) comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions (a 'state'), or from both. During the intervening 'liminal' period, the characteristics of the ritual subject (the 'passenger') are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. In the third phase (reaggregation or reincorporation), the passage is consummated. The ritual subject, individual or corporate, is in a relatively stable state once more and, by virtue of this, has rights and obligations vis-à-vis others of a clearly defined and 'structural' type; he is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards binding on incumbents of social position in a system of such positions. (94-5)

This three step process for the initiate – from separation, to the 'liminal' period, to reaggregation/reincorporation – does, however, highlight the importance of the figure passing

through each phase in order to achieve both stability and acceptance within the group. But what exactly does Turner mean by 'liminality' and the 'liminal period,' which exists between separation and reincorporation? And in what ways can the ritual subject as 'the passenger' during the liminal period be recast as a figure of both transcendence *and* transgressiveness in discourse surrounding communitas and performance, more specifically?

In response to these questions, we must conjointly take note of the ambiguous nature of the term 'liminal.' Indeed, Turner considers it to be *the* most crucial point between the 'before' and 'after' of communitas, and its ritualistic associations. For example, Turner states that "[t]he attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ([i.e.] 'threshold people') are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (95). Further still, Turner states that "[w]hat is interesting about liminal phenomena…is the blend they offer of lowliness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship" (96). In light of this "betwixt and between" state and social bonding through convergence, communitas via Turner's liminality would, in turn, appear to draw attention to further ambiguities regarding both self *and* region.

Etymologically, however, Turner's overall thesis is more concerned with the traditionalistic nomenclature conveyed in the Latin term *communitas* rather than 'community.' "I prefer the Latin term 'communitas' to 'community,' argues Turner, "to distinguish this modality of social relationship from an 'area of common living.' The distinction between structure and communitas is not simply the familiar one between 'secular' and 'sacred,' or that, for example, between politics and religion" (96). The point Turner is trying to illustrate above is that what

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differentiates 'communitas' from 'community' is that communitas exists *outside* of the home environment whilst community emphasises those experiences and encounters *within* the home environment. Only when an individual participates in communitas outside of the domestic sphere does one not only achieve transcendence beyond the liminal state but also a greater sense of belonging and acceptance within a particular group.

However, Turner's notion of communitas does contain a degree of heightened religiosity in spite of its more traditional and ritualistic ethos. "Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority," states Turner, "[and] [i]t is almost everywhere held to be sacred or 'holy,' possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency" (128). Communitas, as described by Turner, then becomes a type of 'spiritual encounter' that converts the singular into the plural, or the individual into the collective whole through liminality and social bonding. However, Turner signals that "the immediacy of communitas gives way to the mediacy of structure, while in *rites de passage*,[7] men are released from structure into communitas only to return to structure revitalized by their experience of communitas" (129). We must remember, however, that this early research into communitas and liminality was focused exclusively on the Ndembu tribe and the transitional ritual from boyhood to into manhood. Both socially and spiritually, communitas not only changes the individual's perspective of bonding outside of one's community but also provides a more specific space for this newfound network of communal bonds to exist once liminality has been achieved.

In his text *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* – co-authored with his wife Edith – Turner reinterprets pilgrimage as a specialised type of mobility characterised by moments of

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[7] See Arnold van Gennep's *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1960 [1909]).

both communitas *and* liminality. "[T]here is undoubtedly an initiatory quality in pilgrimage," asserts Turner, "[and] [a] pilgrim is an initiand, entering into a new, deeper level of existence than he has known in his accustomed milieu" (8). On the one hand, Turner admits that, similar to Bauman's earlier argument, the pilgrim exists in a space beyond the home. However, on the other hand, Turner, and in no direct correlation to Bauman, does underscore that the pilgrim becomes a more ecclesiastical figure through the process of liminality and communitas.

Favouring a more traditional rather than secular approach to pilgrimage via communitas and liminality, Turner squarely sets such specialised ambulation alongside aspects of religious duty and symbolism. Turner reveals that "[t]oward the end of a pilgrimage, the pilgrim's new-found freedom from mundane or profane structures is increasingly circumscribed by symbolic structures: religious buildings, pictorial images, statuary, and sacralized features of the topography, often described and defined in sacred tales and legends" (10). That said, should there be a greater focus on ritual rather than religiosity within studies of pilgrimage in more contemporary times, especially in light of widespread globalisation and increased secularisation? These will soon become important questions in the section that follows, as I explore how Roger C. Aden reapplies Turner's established theories of communitas and liminality to the study of fan pilgrimage.

1.3   Roger C. Aden: Communitas, Liminality, and Fan Pilgrimage

Roger C. Aden offers a more secularised approach to Turner's ideas of communitas and liminality through a reassessment and reapplication of these terms to the topic of fandom. Aden identifies fandom not only as a taxonomy for extremely devoted persons of a particular text but also as a conduit for both psychological *and* physical journeys. In his text *Popular Stories and Promised Lands*, Aden explains that "[w]hether we have recognized the constraints of habitus

since our early years, have recently become aware of its limiting qualities, or implicitly understand its manifestations only on rare occasions, we yearn to travel from the comforts and constraints of our home/habitus to reach some place special: a promised land" (79). With clear Christo-Judaic overtones in Aden's articulation of "some place special" as "a promised land," Turner's influence appears to be most pronounced in Aden's blend of discourse pertaining to both spiritualism *and* regionalism.

However, what separates Aden from Turner is that the former doesn't just treat communitas and pilgrimage as *only* an ambulatory means to a spiritual or sacred end, but rather provokes the idea of *symbolic pilgrimage* on the basis of the home/away binary. Aden maintains that "[p]ilgrimages…are ritual journeys that separate us from our homes, immerse us in a liminal experience as we visit a sacred place called a shrine, and reaggregate us at home with a new perspective" (81). Mindful of the Turneresque approach to communitas, which states that "first communitas *releases* us from the habitus…[s]econd, communitas *transcends* habitus…[t]hird, communitas provides a perspective from which to *critique* the habitus…[and] [f]inally, communitas *generates respect* for additional alternative perspectives" (83; emphasis in original), Aden does, however, frame communitas not only on the basis of fandom but also sheer escapism. "Pilgrimage is undertaken as a purposeful escape from an unsatisfactory habitus," highlights Aden, "and it provides like-minded individuals with an opportunity to experience the communitas they find lacking" (84). Again, only by voluntarily leaving one's familiar living quarters and experiencing liminality via communitas can social bonds thrive and increase stability both for the individual and within a specific group. In doing so, what was once "lacking," according to Aden, has now been assuaged through the ritual process, and a greater sense of status and self-worth is attainted by the individual amongst the group.

But of what value then does Aden's theory of *symbolic pilgrimage* hold for future studies of fandom? And through what alternative ways beyond the religious (Turner) and the symbolic (Aden) can fan pilgrimage be explored and debated? With a closer eye toward how symbolic pilgrimage can impact a fan's 'feeling' of communitas and liminality, Aden notes that "[b]y transcending and experiencing the sacred in symbolic communities…groups of fans function more as members of a congregation" (96). With fandom adhering to and at the same time resisting any strict associations with religion, Aden nevertheless points to how "experiencing the sacred" in the physical form of a "congregation" may heighten communal bonds between fans yet are ambiguously "paradoxical journeys" (111). My objective in the next section is to examine the performative nature of Aden's symbolic pilgrimages as paradoxical journeys through a re-reading of Richard Schechner, performance theory, and performance studies.

1.4   Performative Communitas: Schechnerian Performance and Fan Pilgrimage

Widely recognised as one of the forerunners in the academic area of performance studies in the United States – and still a leading scholar at New York University on social and theatrical performance – Richard Schechner introduces some original ways of exploring the temporal dimensions of performance both in and outside of the dramatic arts. In his text *Performance Theory*, he puts forward two distinct temporalities in which performances can exist: *event time* and *symbolic time*. According to Schechner, *event time* refers to "when the activity itself has a set sequence and all the steps of that sequence must be completed no matter how long (or short) the elapsed clock time" (8). However, alternatively, *symbolic time* indicates "when the span of the activity represents another (longer or shorter) span of the clock time" (8). As we can see through these two examples, time directly impacts the duration of a particular activity. However, *event time* relies on a "set sequence" while *symbolic time* goes either under or beyond the allotted

time of the activity. That said, could Aden's earlier concept of *symbolic pilgrimage* be in any way connected to Schechner's *symbolic time*, thus creating a tripartite link between performance, temporality, and fan pilgrimage?

By *only* isolating the issue of performance from the above three aspects, I want to revisit the distinction and debate between Schechner's concepts of *make-belief* and *make-believe*. In his text *Performance Studies*, Schechner claims that "[p]erformances can be either 'make-belief' or 'make-believe'…[and] [that] [t]he many performances in everyday life such as professional roles, gender and race roles, and [the] shaping of one's identity are not make-believe actions (as playing a role on stage or in a film most probably is)" (42) but instead *make-belief*. Put another way, *make-believe* "refers to performances that maintain a clearly marked boundary between the world of the performance and everyday reality, while *make-belief* performances intentionally blur or sabotage that boundary" (43; my emphasis added). Therefore, both performatively and theatrically, *make-belief* and *make-believe* point to an additional ambiguity between 'ordinary' and 'staged' performance(s), real-life and dramatic performance(s).

Interestingly, however, Schechner does cite Turner in his analysis of *normative communitas* and *spontaneous communitas* and each concept's impact on theories of performance. *Normative communitas* can be considered in relation to "what happens during communion in an Episcopal or Roman Catholic service," explains Schechner, "[when] [t]he congregation is united 'in Christ' by the Eucharist" (70). However, *spontaneous communitas* "is different…[and] almost the opposite...happen[ing] when a congregation or group catches fire in the Spirit" (ibid). Suddenly, it would seem, Schechner's re-reading of Turner points to a further division of communitas through an ecumenical collective consumption (*normative*) and impromptu epiphany (*spontaneous*), which seems to *re*-traditionalise notions of community on the basis of its religious and not so much its societal roots.

Despite attempts made by Aden and Schechner to re-read Turner on the basis of communitas, the authors do not seem to include any concise revision of Turner's concept of communitas or liminality. As a corrective, I want to suggest that my above re-reading of the literature on Schechner highlights a connection between he and Turner that can be reapplied to future studies of fandom in relation to fan pilgrimage. My hybrid concept of *performative communitas*, unlike the above-mentioned *spontaneous communitas*, aims instead to *de-traditionalise* communitas in light of more modern interpretations and critical insights on fandom, fan theory, and fan performance. Indeed, the 'performing' of communitas will rest on a critical axis for which the following chapter will discuss in relation to the concept of play and public performance. What is more, the figure of the pilgrim will also be de-traditionalised from its former Baumanian context, and serve as metamorphic and itinerant fan taxonomy in order to reconsider fan pilgrimage on the basis of preparation, form, and execution.

2   The Ludic Pilgrim: Performative Play and Public Space

'Play' is often perceived as the opposite of 'work.' While the idea of 'play' has been studied in developmental psychology (Pellegrini 2009; Piaget 1962), psychoanalysis (Winnicott 1971), natural biology (Ackerman 1999), and anthropology (Bateson 1972), the term appears to be in very limited use within major studies of performance and cult fandom. All of us are no doubt familiar with the notion of play, and arguably have been aware of the concept since our early childhood. Generally speaking, play signals enjoyment. Play relates to pleasure-seeking activities. And play is also about obtaining and harnessing a temporary moment of 'fun.' But the term 'fun' – indeed much like term 'play' – is, by and large, highly ambiguous in both meaning and application. Fun is used primarily to describe and interpret our overall *feeling* – or *feelings* – associated with a sensorial or material pleasure. Yet read and applied to cult fandom, the attainment of fun through forms of play is further enhanced by fans' voluntary 'performances' and the 'ludicisation of space,' so to speak. In Chapter 2, I aim to examine how the concept of play interacts with, complicates, and conflicts with certain key aspects of fan performance, public space, and cult audiences.

To begin the chapter, I will explore the early play theories present in the writings of Johan Huizinga (1955) and Roger Caillois (1959, 1961). Next, I will turn my attention to the critical literature of Erving Goffman (1959/73, 1967, 1971) and discuss how Goffman, unlike Huizinga and Caillois before him, comprehends play as an important entity that shapes, reshapes, and simultaneously reinvents notions of 'everyday life.' I shall then look at how the early play theories of Huizinga and Caillois in addition to Goffman's theories of performance in everyday life connect to recent research on play conducted by Peter G. Stromberg (2009). Through a re-reading of Stromberg's research on play in terms of fan performance, I wish to focus on the 'doing' of fan mimesis in relation to play, and define my first itinerant fan taxonomy: the ludic

pilgrim. The ludic pilgrim combines play, performance, and pilgrimage to form a theoretical model based on this fluid triumvirate. The research of Brian Sutton-Smith (1997) and Quentin Stevens (2007) will function, furthermore, to understand "play" in relation to public space and how such civic spaces work alongside and against fan related activities and events. Après Sutton-Smith and Stevens, the theories of *cosplay* (a portmanteau of 'costume' and 'play') held by Donald Richie (2003), Theresa Winge (2006), and Roland Kelts (2006) will be used to shed new light on how play impacts fan behaviour and enhances the probability of singular and/or collective 'ludicity' during fan related events. More specifically, I will focus on the *otaku* – i.e. fans of Japanese *anime* and *manga* – who frequent fan conventions and gatherings en masse both in and outside of Japan. In critically thinking about cosplay in terms of both its sartorial *and* ludic entities, this chapter intends to utilise the example of anime cosplay as one noteworthy yet highly complex form of fan performance.

2.1   Early Play Theory: Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois

Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois are the earliest known theorists who dedicated much of their academic thought to the topic of play during the twentieth century. The publishing of Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* was a watershed moment for 'early play theory,' representing one of the first instances in critical social discourse where play was treated with a greater degree of seriousness and inquiry on many different levels of human interaction. In his book, Huizinga begins by stating that "[p]lay is older than culture, for culture, however inadequately defined, always presupposes human society, and animals have not waited for man to teach them their playing" (1). Right at the onset of his work, Huizinga points to the fundamental origins of play and its obvious links to animals and to nature in general. Huizinga states that "[i]n play there is something 'at play' which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the

action" (ibid). "We may well call play a 'totality' in the modern sense of the word," continues Huizinga, "and it is as a totality that we must try to understand and evaluate it" (3). Here, Huizinga appears to acknowledge the vast scope in which play enables humans to interact with one another and its significant role in the development of necessary social, psychological, and creative skills.

For Huizinga, play is omnipresent in our social lives, even if we do not immediately recognise it as 'fun' or 'playful.' "We find play present everywhere," says Huizinga, "as a well-defined quality of action which is different from 'ordinary' life" (4). Not only does Huizinga isolate play from work, but goes one step further, it would seem, to suggest that play belongs in direct opposition to typical notions of 'ordinary life.' It is through this direct opposition to typical notions of 'ordinary life' that Huizinga elects to classify "[p]lay as a special form of activity" (ibid). However, the 'specialness' Huizinga places upon play is twofold. According to Huizinga, "[t]o our way of thinking, play is the direct opposite of seriousness" (5) yet he also reminds us that "all play is a voluntary activity" (7). While the former may seem contradictory – examining something unserious seriously – it is instead the voluntaristic quality of play that allows the concept to be interpreted into and through an array of leisure and social activities beyond athleticism and/or sport.

Huizinga, however, is mindful of the temporal restrictions that are seemingly placed upon the concept of play. "Play can be deferred or suspended at any time," prompts Huizinga, "[and] [i]t is never imposed by physical necessity or moral duty…[and] [unless] play is a recognized cultural function – a rite, a ceremony – is it bound up with notions of obligation and duty" (8). While Huizinga further points to play's "secludedness…[and] limitedness" (9), it is also important to bear in mind that "[a]ll play has its rules…[which] determine what 'holds' in the temporary world circumscribed by play" (11). If play enters the space of ceremony, then

Huizinga stresses that "[t]he sacred performance is more than an actualization in appearance only, a sham reality; it is also more than a symbolical actualization – it is a mystical one" (14). In what could be considered a byproduct of ceremonial play, the "mystical" performance may be to Huizinga what 'normative communitas' was to Schechner in Chapter 1: a form of finite 'communion' amongst the collective.

In Roger Caillois' text *Man and the Sacred*, he cites Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* as a socio-cultural milestone in helping to establish and cultivate a respected discourse regarding play and play theory. Going further than Huizinga's text, Caillois argues that play and the attainment of play is achieved through a kind of alternate reality or 'space':

> [i]n play, man is removed from reality. He seeks free activity, which does not involve him more than he has decided in advance. He carefully demarcates the play area (arena, track, ring, stage, or chessboard) only in order to make it evident that it is a privileged space, ruled by special conventions in which acts have meaning only within that context. Outside this area, before and after play, one is no longer concerned with arbitrary rules. The external, that is to say, life, is comparatively a kind of jungle in which a thousand perils await one…[yet] the joy, abandon, and ease observed in play activity are derived from security. (158)

Caillois interprets play as a "free activity" that exists and functions through the application of and adherance to rules and regulations within "a privileged space." However, matching Huizinga's earlier idea of play being associated with mystical performance through ceremony and ritual, Caillois contends that "the sacred and play resemble each other to the degree that they are both opposed to the practical life, but they [also] occupy symmetrical situations with regard to it" (160). However, Caillois' subsequent writings further complicate any strict association with the sacred and, instead, view play in terms of its relationship to games.

In his text *Man, Play, and Games*, he attempts to connect culture and play through social and performative activities recognised as 'games.' Although he laments that "[a]t the end of the game, all can and must start over again at the same point" (5), Caillois does put forward the

refreshing perspective that "[p]lay is an occasion of pure waste: waste of time, energy, ingenuity, skill, and often of money" (5-6). But in this aforesaid statement is Caillois pointing to play as a kind of social (or interactive) surplus? Whilst Caillois does not directly answer this question, he, like Huizinga before, realises the voluntarism at the heart of decisions 'to play.' "One plays only if and when one wishes to" (7) states Caillois, and "games are not ruled and make-believe. Rather, they are ruled *or* make-believe" (9). Perhaps Caillois' earlier notion of 'a privileged space' could be seen through the notion and realm of "make-believe." We may recall that in Chapter 1 Schechner claimed that performances in 'everyday life' were make-belief whilst theatrical performance related to make-believe, and pointed to a further ambiguity between everyday 'happenings' and histrionics. In light of this reconsideration of Schechner via Caillois, we can perhaps suggest that Caillois' claim that games are ruled *or* make-believe may in fact mean that games are a type of 'staged' performance.

However, Caillois' main contribution to early play theory is his division of play into four distinct categories of games. "I am proposing a division into four main rubrics," details Caillois in *Man, Play, and Games*, "depending upon whether…the role of competition, chance, simulation, or vertigo is dominant. I call these *agôn*, *alea*, *mimicry*, and *ilinx*, respectively" (12). For Caillois, the term *agôn* deals with competition (e.g. athletics and contests in general), *alea* is associated with chance (e.g. betting and lotteries), *mimicry* pertains to simulation (e.g. masks, disguises, theatre, and spectacles in general), and, lastly, *ilinx* connects to vertigo (e.g. swinging or traveling carnivals) (36). Moreover, Caillois states that, "the different categories of play…presuppose not solitude but company" (40). Indeed, it is this latter feature of "company" that signals greater associations between the work of Caillois and more established ideas and debates surrounding community and socialisation in general.

In each of the four categories of games, Caillois points to the presence of six major qualities articulated inside each. For Caillois, play is a concept that is "(1) free, (2) separate, (3) uncertain, (4) unproductive, (5) regulated, and (6) fictive" (43). He continues that "[t]hese six purely formal qualities…[show] that play is essentially a *side* activity, [and] the inference is drawn that any contamination by ordinary life runs the risk of corrupting and destroying its very nature" (ibid). But regardless of their logical application to the concept of play, games in general have been equally met with degrees of negative criticism, skepticism, and overall derision. "They have generally been regarded as simple and insignificant pastimes for children" (57), admits Caillois, and that while "[i]n one case games are systematically viewed as a kind of degradation of adult activities that are transformed into meaningless distractions when they are no longer taken seriously…[i]n the other case, the spirit of play is the course of the fertile conventions that permit the evolution of culture…[because] [i]t stimulates ingenuity, refinement, and invention" (58). Pigeonholed as being either linked to "pastimes for children" or "meaningless distractions" for adults, Caillois highlights an intriguing link between games, play, age, and frivolity.

In its struggle between presence and *omni*presence, the concept of play enables the study of games be linked to frivolous behavior. If we are to understand play in a more critical context, we must turn our attention to how play interacts with and problematises readings of popular culture. Although Caillois states that "[t]he spirit of play is essential to culture" he also repines that "games and toys are historically the residues of culture" (ibid). But why are games classified, according to Caillois, as "the residues of culture"? And what points to their function as social waste or refuse? Bearing these questions in mind, the next section looks at the concept of 'everyday life' in greater depth and focuses on the sociological theories of Erving Goffman as possible tools to reformat the study of play and public performance.

2.2   Erving Goffman and Everyday Life

Despite not being one of the early play theorists, Erving Goffman is nevertheless a significant figure in both sociology and performance studies for his theories concerning space, place, and social 'performances' in everyday life. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman claims that "[t]he expressiveness of the individual [and therefore his capacity to give impressions] appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign acitivity: the expression that he *gives*, and the expression that he *gives off*" (2; emphasis in original). Goffman goes on to say that "[o]f the two kinds of communication…[he] [studies] the more theatrical and contextual kind, the non-verbal, presumably unintentional kind, whether this communication be purposely engineered or not" (4). "Knowing that the individual is likely to present himself in a light that is favorable to him," states Goffman, "the others may divide what they witness into two parts; a part that is relatively easy for the individual to manipulate at will, being chiefly his verbal assertions, and a part in regard to which he seems to have little concern or control, being chiefly derived from the expressions he gives off" (7). Still, Goffman claims that "in gaining admission to a tight social circle, the participant observer may not only wear an accepting look while listening to an informant, but may also be careful to wear the same look when observing the informant talking to others; observers of the observer will then not as easily discover where he actually stands" (8). What Goffman is pointing to here is both a 'performance' based on conformity *and* exclusivity.

Goffman further asserts that "[w]hen we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves effectively project a definition of the situation by virtue of their response to the individual and by virtue of any lines of action they initiate to him" (9). The key element here is, of course, is that the performer is *physically* 'performing' their

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actions in front of others in an audience. However, for Goffman, this performer/audience role-playing is more complex than at first glance:

> interaction (that is, face-to-face interaction) may be roughly defined as the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence. *An* interaction may be defined as all the interaction which occurs throughout any one occasion when a given set of individuals are in one another's continuous presence; the term 'an encounter' would do as well. A 'performance' may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants. (15; emphasis in original)

The above-mentioned "influence" bestowed upon the other participants by the performer points directly to how face-to-face interaction serves to heighten the verisimilitude of the performance, and thus the illusive realism inherent in the actions, gestures, and speech of the performer. Futhermore, Goffman states that 'performance' encompasses "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (22). But Goffman also suggests that as a means by which to classify this kind of performance before an audience "[i]t will be convenient to label as 'front' that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance. Front, then, is the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance" (ibid). In this way, Goffman's notion of 'front' acts as both a finite mode of performance and a possible indicator of performative communitas through the performer/audience binary.

However, Goffman's theory regarding a "performance" before an "audience" strives to be flexible in perspectives of the performer and the *kind* of audience in attendance. "As both effect and enabling cause of this kind of commitment to the part one is currently performing," states Goffman, "we find that 'audience segregation' occurs; by audience segregation the

individual ensures that those before whom he plays one of his parts will not be the same individuals before whom he plays a different part in another setting" (49). Through the cyclic presence of new audiences, the performer anticipates each performance as equally new. For, as Goffman states, "[t]he legitimate performances of everyday life are not 'acted' or 'put on' in the sense that the performer knows in advance just what he is going to do and does this solely because of the effect it is likely to have" (73). Such spontaneous 'acting' on the part of the performer points to a kind of illusion of immediacy and is further encouraged through audience attendance, approval through applause, and even direct participation in certain cases.

In *Behavior in Public Places*, Goffman tackles social interactions and etiquette in the public sphere. According to Goffman, "[t]he norms supporting public order, as public order is traditionally defined, regulate not only face-to-face interaction but also matters that need not entail immediate contact between persons" (8). Goffman further discusses the public sphere through the aspect of face-to-face interaction:

> public order traditionally refers more to the regulation of face-to-face interaction among those members of a community who are not well acquainted than it does to interaction occurring in private walled-in places where only familiars meet. Traditionally, 'public places' refer to any regions in a community freely accessible to members of that community; 'private places' refer to the soundproof regions where only members or invitees gather – the traditional concern for public order beginning only at the point where a private gathering begins to obtrude upon the neighbors. (9)

Goffman further surmises, however, that it is through face-to-face interaction and the element of copresence that credible interaction takes place between individuals in the public sphere:

> The full conditions of *copresence*, however, are found in less variable circumstances: persons must sense that they are close enough to be perceived in whatever they are doing, including their experiencing of others, and close enough to be perceived in this sensing of being perceived. In our walled-in Western society, these conditions are ordinarily expected to obtain throughout the space contained in a room, and to obtain for any and all persons present in the room. (17; emphasis in original)

But how is one able to classify the act of social interaction beyond the actual performance and/or audience dichotomy at work in the public sphere? In the words of Goffman: "the term *gathering* to refer to any set of two or more individuals whose members include all and only those who are at the moment in one another's immediate presence…[and] [b]y the term *situation* I shall refer to the full spatial environment anywhere within which an entering person becomes and member of the gathering that is (or does then become) present" (18). Goffman further reveals that "[s]ome social occasions, often called 'unserious' or 'recreational,' are felt to be ends in themselves, and the individual avowedly participates for the consummate pleasure of doing so" (19).

In addition to face-to-face interaction and copresence, Goffman underscores the importance of 'involvement' in relation to social performances in everyday life. "Involvement refers to the capacity of an individual to give, or withhold from giving, his concerted attention to some activity at hand – a solitary task, a conversation, a collaborative work effort," asserts Goffman, "[and] [i]t implies a certain admitted closeness between the individual and the object of involvement, a certain overt engrossment on the part of the one who is involved" (43). Further still, "[w]hile outwardly participating in an activity within a social situation, an individual can allow his attention to turn from what he and everyone else considers the real or serious world, and give himself up for a time to a playlike world in which he alone participates…[yet] [t]his kind of inward emigration from the gathering may be called 'away,' and we find that strict situational regulations obtain regarding it" (69). However, Goffman also stresses the importance 'acquaintanceship' on social involvement. "Its preconditions are satisfied when each of two individuals can personally identify the other by knowledge that distinguishes this other from everyone else," claims Goffman, "and when each acknowledges to the other that this state of mutual information exists. Once this information relationship has been established between two persons, it seems, with certain exceptions, to give rise to a social bondedness, placing both

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individuals on a new, typically nonterminable basis in regard to each other" (112). Such 'social bondedness' points to a form of performance set on mutual acceptance yet rooted in singular etiquette which defines such 'everyday' interactions between persons.

According to Goffman, "[p]articipation in an accessible engagement not only directly exposes the individual to linguistic and expressive communication with the other participants in the encounter but also opens up the possibility that they will expressively communicate something about him to the bystanders. Seeking some degree of intimacy with potential fellow participants in the encounter, the individual can find himself spurned or otherwise mistreated in a way that is visible to bystanders" (179). Based on what Goffman refers to as 'scenes,' he claims that it relates to "an individual who is supposed to be enclosed in an engagement may make a deeply engrossing appeal to others outside it, even though the appeal bears on a specific issue generated within the original engagement" (186). "It is a fact that the individual's relationship to gatherings and social occasions sometimes tells us something about his relationships to broader units of social life" (220), highlights Goffman, "[yet] [i]n social establishments…a particular member may serve as guardian of situational order, being obliged to see that all present maintain a suitable allocation of involvement" (227). In adopting the role of 'master of ceremonies,' the "particular member" or "guardian of situational order" Goffman speaks of exists in a liminal space both inside and outside of the gathering itself.

Goffman extends the idea of social interaction to include the concept of the 'line.' "Every person lives in a world of social encounters, involving him either in face-to face or mediated contact with other participants," asserts Goffman, "[and] [i]n each of these contacts, he tends to act out what is sometimes called a *line* – that is, a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself. Regardless of where a person intends to take a line, he will find that he has

does so in effect. The other participants will assume that he has more or less wilfully taken a stand, so that if he is to deal with their response to him he must take into consideration the impression they have possibly formed of him" (5; emphasis in original). While four years later, in his *Relations in Public*, Goffman states that "[r]itual is a perfunctory, conventionalized act through which an individual portrays his respect and regard for some object of ultimate value to that object of ultimate value or to its stand-in" (62), it would seem, however, that social interaction does contain a ritual quality that impacts the performer, audience, and overall performances of everyday life.

2.3   The Ludic Pilgrim: 'Doing' Fan Mimesis

In his book *Caught in Play*, Peter G. Stromberg states that "[i]t is not only children and role players who become caught up in play. Presumably, most of us have at some point become immersed in a book or game or movie such that – on the cognitive and emotional levels – the activity temporarily assumes a profound significance and the importance of the outside world beings to fade" (2-3). Stromberg states that "becoming caught up in play is worth our notice because this phenomenon can be the basis for an approach to understanding 'entertainment'" (3). Stromberg points to the early play theory associated with Caillois, and specifically underscores that "mimicry includes situations in which one imagines oneself as another, something that is likely to occur in any sort of spectating" (7). However, for Stromberg, "entertainment activities have not often been interpreted as types of play, and therefore such an approach may offer fresh insights" (11). Regarding what Stromberg calls 'meta-action,' he states that "whereas ritual tends to be associated with the ideas and symbols we acknowledge to be important, play is often associated with the ideas and symbols that we understand to be powerful but less worthy of admiration" (13). Again, we encounter the 'waste' or 'residue' found in the Cailloisian analyses

of play in Stromberg. However, Stromberg points to a new approach to playful encounters he refers to as being 'caught up.' For Stromberg, "becoming caught up is a complex process in which social, cultural, and biological components of human behavior work together to create experiences in which cultural symbols (including narratives, beliefs, physical objects, and substances) take on a particularly affecting salience" (14). What is articulated here through Stromberg's notion of being 'caught up' in play is that ludic behavior in humans is premised upon the 'doing' of play.

Moreover, Stromberg states that "[p]lay inevitably offers improvements on our reality; we are drawn to play because it is more suspenseful or exciting or rewarding – on the whole it is just more fun – than life in the day-to-day world" (15). He goes on to suggest that "[t]he role player…sets out to be entertained in, and together with, a social group, which means that immersion in the game may be richly documented because it is a public activity" (54). "Props are elements of the world that impart directionality to our imaginings and thereby enrich them" (55), notes Stromberg, and, again, "[t]he concept of meta-action enables [him] to classify getting caught up in play, to identify getting caught up by understanding the category in which it belongs. More explicitly: two of the most interesting forms of visible meta-action are ritual and play" (101). Unlike Huizinga or Caillois, Stromberg makes the case that "ritual and play are two forms of meta-action, activities through which human beings take a step back from and do something to or about their own action. Meta-action…is a means whereby humans…regulate their patterns of actions and interaction" (104). Based on Stromberg's approach to the 'doing' of play through the process of meta-action, I would like to suggest that in terms of fandom, the 'doing' of play is most evident in the figure of the ludic pilgrim. The ludic pilgrim is an itinerant fan taxonomy that functions through meta-action, performative play, and public space.

2.4   Performative Play and Public Space

Like Stromberg, the research of Brian Sutton-Smith presents an entirely new approach to play than his predecessors of Caillois and Huizinga. Sutton-Smith chooses to focus exclusively on the frivolity of play. "It is true that increased research attention has been given to play within psychology in recent decades, and within biology throughout this century," admits Sutton-Smith, "but there is still much more resistance to the subject than is justified, given its universal role in human behavior" (208). Although Sutton-Smith suggests that "the discipline of popular culture, itself a latter-day playful offshoot of folklore" (ibid) perhaps suffers from the same rigors of criticism and paradoxes found in the discipline of folklore studies, Sutton-Smith nevertheless foregrounds the significance of the figure of the 'dilettante' and 'dilettantist play' in public space.

According to Sutton-Smith, "[t]he dilettante is a dabbler, one who pursues his play just for amusement or in a desultory way" (210). He goes on to say that "[i]n many cultures and subcultures, the person known as fool, trickster, Frech, leprechaun, clown, harlequin, or comedian is held to be quite central to the theatric side of public affairs" (211). "The true trickster is so frivolous he can invert frivolity," claims Sutton-Smith, "[w]hile in modern society one can still find the 'official' fool in various places on the fringe of society, there have been times and there still are places where the fool has almost the position of the wisest person" (ibid). It is difficult, at the present time, to ascertain whether or not the ludic pilgrim would make for an ideal candidate as the cultural dilettante. However, it is important to recognise that the dilettante is met with its own series of contradictions regarding form, function, and folklore.

Contra Sutton-Smith, Quentin Stevens' *The Ludic City* reveals that "[p]lay is often interactive, especially in public places. The separateness of play from people's everyday life

heightens their awareness of others who are participating with them. Freedom from social responsibilities allows for the broadest expression of people's individuality" (47). "Interactive play in public places," according to Stevens, "can help to build feelings of connectedness and community; it can draw heterogeneous people together" (48). With a nod to the early play theories of Huizinga and Caillois, respectively, Stevens claims that "[p]lay's voluntary nature means people are free to interact on openly negotiated and hence more equitable terms. Informal and chance interactions can build over time into more permanent relationships" (48). Stevens' final point not only relates to my concept of performative communitas found in Chapter 1, but also connects to the theories presented by Goffman concerning social interactions and 'acquaintances.'

2.5   Costume, Play, Performance: Cosplay and the *Otaku*

But how does the concept of play impact a reading of fan performance, mobility, and overall consumption? I believe that the practice of *cosplay* within the Japanese anime and manga fan community (or *otaku*[8]) acts as an appropriate case study to not only question the 'playfulness' associated with such creative apparel, but to question the purpose and function behind such deliberate sartorial consumption and material means of performance. In his book *The Image Factory: Fads and Fashions in Japan*, Donald Richie harks back to the origins of *cosplay* in Japan, known as *kosupure* in the Japanese language. "*Kosupure* is a portmanteau term taken from 'costume play'" (137), writes Richie, "[yet] Japan [still] remains the land

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[8] Generally speaking, the word *otaku* refers to fans of *anime*, *manga*, and video games. However, initially, the word endured much scorn during the late 1980s. Between 1988 and 1989 the Japanese serial killer Miyazaki Tsutomu (1962-2008) raped and murdered several young girls in Tokyo and Saitama Prefecture. Miyazaki was found to be a fan of *anime* and *manga*, making the term *otaku* a highly negative social labeling. However, since the 1990s a new generation of *otaku* have sought to recast the term in a more positive light (see Azuma 2009: 3-4).

where…clothing most often indicates the profession or activity" (ibid) of any individual. "When costuming is not serious…then it is play" (ibid), continues Richie, "[but] dressing up in public…[or] being someone (or something) else." (137-38) is not just reserved for annual occasions or fan-related events. According to Richie, "*kosupure* occurs once a week: on Sundays, at a prime location, for example in Tokyo at Harajuku, the home of teen fashion. The neighbourhood resonates with green hair, blue lips, stained faces, fantasy frocks of various kinds, 'blood'-stained bandages, [and] shrouds" (138). "There is the atmosphere of carnival and the consequent temporary lifting of rules and regulations," explains Richie, [and] [t]here is the licence to dabble in the forbidden. And there is the freedom to be, for a time, someone else" (138). This desire to be "for a time, someone else" indicates a correlation between Richie's observations and the early play theory of Caillois. We may recall that Caillois listed *mimicry* among his four types of games, and that this particular term is linked to simulation – i.e. masks, disguises, theatre, and spectacle. Although short-lived, such mimicry still complicates a reading of *cosplay* in terms of its articulation of performance and overall meaning.

Richie, like Sutton-Smith in several sections earlier, also addresses the issue of frivolity in Japanese culture and its apparent suppression from 'everyday life.' Though the Japanese term *matsuri* is, as Richie discloses, "usually translated as 'festival' (ibid), many Japanese interpret the term to quite literally mean and point to aspects of being "heedless and thoughtless" (ibid). Although perceived by many Japanese and non-Japanese persons outside of the *anime*/*manga* fan community as "self-centred (*jiko-chushinteki*)" (149), Richie highlights that "[t]he Japanese spirit of frivolity is an embodiment of impotence, an inability to create actual social change and hence an attempt to mimic it. Dancing in the streets or prancing about in costume is equally frivolous in that it cannot be serious since to be serious is to have some effect, and it is carefully seen to that *eijanaika* [carnivalesque religious celebrations in 19th century Japan] posturing and

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kosupure posing alike have no social effect whatsoever" (ibid). Here, the disinterest of 'social change,' work, or labour for the 'cosplayer' as ludic pilgrim points to his/her ability to use clothing as a visual communicator of resistance and rebellion to social norms – particularly in Japan.

However, going beyond the societal and historical perspective of cosplay given by Richie, Theresa Winge's essay "Costuming the Imagination: Origins of Anime and Manga Cosplay," details how cosplay is a form of fan labour. She unveils that "[c]osplayers spend immeasurable monies and hours constructing or purchasing costumes, learning signature poses and dialogue, and performing at conventions and parties, as they transform themselves from 'real world' identities into chosen (fictional) characters" (65). According to Winge, cosplay "encompasses various types of costumed role-playing, such as science fiction, fantasy, horror, mythology, [and] fetish" (ibid). Crossing all genre (and for that matter gender) boundaries, Winge continues by stating that "[t]he four basic components are anime and manga cosplayer, social settings, (fictional) character and role-playing, and dress (e.g. hair, costume, makeup, and accessories, including weapons)…[and] [f]urthermore, these components facilitate complex interactions between people (e.g. cosplayers, spectators, masquerade judges, etc.), environments (e.g. personal, private, public, and virtual), and fantasy (e.g. imagination, fictional characters, etc.)" (67). As one of the most vivid sites of fan pilgrimage for anime/manga fans, "conventions are often the primary space where large numbers of cosplayers gather, socialize, and perform" (68). However, as Winge further notes, "the convention activity that attracts the most interest from *otaku*, especially cosplayers, is the masquerade" (69). By hosting a formal 'masquerade' at a convention (or 'con') *anime/manga* fans, based on Winge's research, actively engage in and promote cosplay primarily on the basis of its frivolity and reappropriation of sartorial style through the 'doing' of fandom through play and fashion.

What is more, the audience who watches and sometimes participates in the cosplay performance is essential to any successful social interaction at anime conventions. "Spectators play an important role in the social settings of cosplay," maintains Winge, "[and] use applause, verbal cues, and laughter to encourage cosplayers to perform and interact" (ibid) with each other. While "[c]osplay dress includes all body modifications and supplements…[and] may be the most important tool the cosplayer has to nonverbally communicate his or her chosen character and character traits" (72), Winge goes further to suggest that "cosplay dress and environment(s) permit the cosplayer to role-play the character he or she is dressed as and engage in such social activities within a 'safe' and 'supportive' social structure. In this way the cosplay social structure is established, developed, and maintained" (74-5). Therefore, to wear the proper cosplay regalia, confers a greater likelihood of performative communitas and collective ludicity within the 'con' setting based on its fan-created social structure.

In addition to the research on cosplay gathered and articulated by Richie and Winge, Roland Kelts' *Japanamerica* further unpacks the idiosyncrasies of cosplay and its impact both inside and outside of the *otaku* community, and in and outside of Japan. In particular, Kelts draws attention to how "anime/manga fandom is participatory, and communal" (147). Like Winge, Kelts highlights the significance of "the *anime* expo or comics convention…[especially] [t]he annual Japanese industry event, the Tokyo International Anime Fair" (ibid). "But while the Tokyo fair's performers and models may be costumed, its visitors are not," reveals Kelts, "[because] [c]osplay – dressing up as anime and manga characters – is prohibited" (148). Kelts' chapter on cosplay tends to focus on the American appropriation of anime cosplay and reveals that "unlike their Japanese counterparts, they are parading around in a very public forum" (ibid). This re-working of Japanese popular culture in the United States is, for Kelts, "reminiscent of the U.S. approach to karaoke" (ibid). "There are public cosplay events in Japan, but aside from

outdoor promotional campaigns in Akihabara, they are often of a limited size," contends Kelts, "[and] [y]ou are more likely to see a few individuals – usually young and usually female – strolling the streets of Harajuku, Japan's center of street fashion, or lolling about in Yoyogi Park, dressed up as a gothic character from that vein of anime and manga titles, or in a coy manga-inspired maid's outfit" (149). Indeed the performing of cosplay through a combination of both 'costume' and 'play' indicates that through the fan taxonomy of the ludic pilgrim, fashion plays a greater role in the preparation of fan pilgrimage to specific sites such as the 'con' and the above-mentioned streets of Harajuku. The following chapter will examine the role of fashion on the preparation of fan pilgrimage in greater detail, and with attention to two distinct subcultures: the goths and female vampire fans.

3   The Subsartorial Pilgrim: Fan Attire and the 'Cultification' of Fashion

Does what we wear determine who we are? Or, further still, do the clothes we wear in public have a direct impact on how others perceive us, communicate with us, and accept us? These pressing questions are at the heart of the fashion dilemma we each face as social beings each and every day before venturing out into the public sphere. Across the spectrum of social classes, closets and dressers seem to be filled with a variety of outerwear, casual dress, formal dress, shoes, and accessories. Fashion often changes according to the particular season and can also be categorised into 'outfits' depending on the occupational and social context in which they are to be worn. But whilst the 'putting on' of clothes and accessories does indeed function as a daily ritual for work, play, and socialisation, I would like to go further and suggest that these items of fashion also serve as crucial signifiers regarding taste and aesthetics that allow one to better understand subculture and its function in cult fan communities. As such, Chapter 3 seeks to look at subculture through the lens of fashion and, in turn, determine how a kind of fan 'sartorialisation' continues to draw the line between 'outsider' and 'insider' status.

Although written nearly three decades ago, Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, still remains an apt starting point for one to unravel the complex relationship between culture, subculture, and subcultural fashion. In his text, Hebdige focuses on a handful of marginalised youth cultures in the UK during the late 1970s – such as the Teddy Boys, mods, rockers, skinheads, and punks – and ultimately sought to uncover "the expressive forms and rituals of those subordinate groups…who are alternately dismissed, denounced and canonized" (2). The blatant 'othering' of these aforesaid subcultures in this period in Great Britain hints at the idea that many subcultures lay at the fringes of acceptable culture, or 'the norm,' and were subject to misconstrued labels and stereotypes, predominantly for how the members dressed in public. One can then agree with Hebdige that "[t]he meaning of subculture is, then, always in

dispute, and style is the area in which the opposing definitions clash with most dramatic force"
(3). This tension between style and subculture takes an undeniably material form for many
subcultures and it is through the 'cultification of fashion,' so to speak, that members of certain
fan communities attain and maintain subcultural capital within each group.

While Hebdige's approach to style and subcultural fashion certainly played a vital part in
cultivativing greater attention and seriousness toward the topics of fashion and subculture during
the late 1970s, the trends, fashions, and subcultures that were once present and relevant during
that time period in the UK have either morphed and adapted into other niche groups or have
vanished altogether from the subcultural studies radar. In more contemporary times, we must
nevertheless realise that each subculture is met with different social, political, and economic
forces during each moment of its inception and subsequent group 'following,' which often
results in a specific identity formed through fashion and especially different fabrics, textiles, and
'looks' that rise, fall, and become recycled. And among the visual arts, cinema – and in particular
cult cinema – has encouraged aspects of fan attire and style that have been mirrored in real-life
during screenings, as a form of 'street' fashion, and as a subcultural marker. Subcultural fashion
holds an even greater position when considered in the context of fan pilgrimage. Chiefly
recognised for his or her ability to 'perform' a specific cult text or express the 'oppositional
dress' of a subculture through their fan attire, the subsartorial pilgrim functions as my second
itinerant fan taxonomy.

Chapter 3 intends to gather together two subcultures that have received rather limited
scholarship in the academy yet are increasingly related and influenced by cult cinema and media.
The overall aim of the chapter hopes to position the sartorial pilgrim in parallel discourses and
debates surrounding fan attire. To begin, the chapter will study how fashion functions as a kind
of 'mask' to perform and disrupt typical conventions of dress and performance using the fashion

research of Elizabeth Wilson (1985), Malcolm Barnard (2002), Efrat Tseëlon (2001), and Nathan Joseph (1986). This will, in turn, allow me to elaborate upon the aestheticisation (and fetishisation) of fashion via what I would like to refer to as 'subsartorial masquerade.' Following this, I will turn my attention to the goth subculture and determine its influence on and in the wake of the release of *Edward Scissorhands* (Burton, 1990). Both goths and Burton's film arguably exhibit a 'dark subsartorial aesthetic' that marks both as candidates of macabre performance. For this section on goth cinema, fashion, and pilgrimage, the theories put forward by Lauren M. E. Goodlad and Michael Bibby (2007), Paul Hodkinson (2002), Catherine Spooner (2007, 2006), Robert Markley (2007), and Sharon Miklas and Stephen J. Arnold (1999) will be used accordingly, and help determine the many facets and phases of popularity that have granted goth its longevity and relevance, despite its often negative portrayal in the media over the years. The goth subculture will then be compared and contrasted against female vampire fans and what I would classify as 'subsartorial vampirism,' which will be elaborated upon through the research of Milly Williamson (2001) and Maria Mellins (2010).

3.1   Subsartorial Masquerade

Fashion has always struggled to be studied with any degree of seriousness in the academy (see Kawamura 2005). Particularly in the twentieth century, any notion of 'fashion studies,' per se, was thought to only exist inside fashion and textile schools, designer shops and factories, and posh businesses specialising in haute couture.[9] The rise of designer labels and the globalisation of the fashion industry allowed the likes of Karl Lagerfeld, Giorgio Armani, Yves Saint Laurent,

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[9] Although still a relatively new area of film studies research and inquiry, fashion has been studied in terms of single texts on clothing and identity in the movies (Bruzzi 1997), collected anthologies (Munich 2011), and the relationship between star studies (especially Hollywood stardom) and fashion studies (Moseley 2005).

Ralph Lauren, and Tommy Hilfiger – just to name a few – to reinvent fashion as an art form and as a form of artistic performance through fashion shows or other elaborate sartorial galas. With the days of the grand couturiers in the far and distant past yet the spectre of Charles Frederick Worth is still very much present along the catwalks and sartorial fanfare, the performative nature of fashion became a carnivalesque ideal to help market high-end clothing and accessories to the upper middle class and also create a fantasy world recognised chiefly for its pure excessiveness.

But in correlation to Hebdige's above-mentioned text, so-called 'high fashion' was greatly rejected by numerous subcultures because of its unrealistic fantasy, unattainable price point, and strict associations with the mainstream and 'the norm.' This type of 'anti-fashion' not only grew in response to social issues between subcultures and the public sphere but also through political and economical aspects of society and the importance placed on individual freedom and personal identity. In Elizabeth Wilson's *Adorned in Dreams*, she states that "[o]ppositional fashions aim to express the dissent or distinctive ideas of a group" (184). Subcultures adopt "oppositional fashions" in order to separate 'insider' members from 'outsider' wannabes, but also do so at the risk of being ostracised from 'the norm' in terms of gender, sexual orientation, musical preference, and group philosophy. Yet through "dissent or distinctive ideas," as Wilson calls them, subcultures continuously challenge what constitutes as 'acceptable fashion' in the public sphere and serve as aesthetic barometers of creativity, originality, and artistry.

Going beyond Wilson's study, Malcolm Barnard not only relates subcultural fashion to oppositional fashion but also to the idea of a 'masquerade.' In his text *Fashion as Communication*, Barnard states that "[t]he use of some artefact, be it mask or textiles, to change, create, hide or enhance appearance, is clearly something that masquerade has in common with fashion and clothing" (166). He goes on to claim that since "[m]asquerade always already includes the use of visual artefacts (garments, clothes), it can account for whole ensembles or

looks as well as the details of individual items making up such ensembles and it is found at the point where the body meets fashion" (167-68). It is at the moment when "the body meets fashion," as stated by Barnard, that masquerade would seem to conceal/reveal subcultural identity (and capital) vis-à-vis specific items of clothing and accessories.

Barnard cites Efrat Tseëlon's essay "From Fashion to Masquerade" as a piece of writing that emphasizes the role of the masquerade in fashion studies and serious sartorial discourse. Tseëlon states that "[m]asquerade is a paradigm particularly suited for 'the clothed body'…[because] [i]t is rooted both in the material and in the symbolic: a meeting point between the body project and the fashion project…[and] refers to conscious and unconscious uses of disguise" (108). The concept of disguise in relation to masquerade brings forth new ideas concerning the material/symbolic binary, and its purpose in subcultural fashion. This blend of masquerade and subcultural fashion points to what I would like to develop in the sections that follow as 'subsartorial masquerade.'

One of the most unique features of subsartorial masquerade for a specific subculture is that, by and large, fashion becomes less of a one-time experiment and more of a daily (and therefore continuous) routine. In Nathan Joseph's text *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, Joseph asserts that "[t]he uniform identifies group members, helps insure that organizational goals will be attained, and orders priorities of group and status demands for the individual" (66). Whilst each subculture would seem to contain and showcase its own 'dress code' and 'uniform' used to 'perform' a certain identity, the difficulty in classifying subsartorial masquerade as a kind of performative uniform is to both suggest group solidarity yet restrict individuality and member status within that subcultural community.

3.2   The Dark Subsartorial Aesthetic: Goth as Pilgrim

Amongst the vast range of subcultures that emerged in the post-punk era, the goth subculture is one that has been both a material curios and misunderstood lifestyle. Looking at the evolution of goth and its place among other twenty-first century subcultures, Lauren M. E. Goodlad and Michael Bibby underscore the significance put on fashion as a marker of goth identity. Goodlad and Bibby disclose some of the most pertinent forms of clothing and accessories that have enabled individuals to materially – or, more to the point, sartorially – define themselves according to the 'dress code' of goth:

> [g]oth fashion was and remains a mix-and-match mélange of black and retro garments fashioned from leather, buckles, velvet, silk, PVC [polyvinyl cloride], chains, or lace. Goths may wear spiked heals, pointy-toed lace-ups, shiny thigh-high boots, or clunky Doc Martins. They may accessorize with sunglasses, top hats, capes, corsets, cravats, riding crops, or lunchbox purses. They may dye their hair black, white, red, or purple and wear it back-combed, teased, shaved, crimpled, or spiked. Goths may sport tattoos, body painting, piercings, purple contact lenses, fangs, or decorative scarring; applying their makeup, they may favor whiteface, mascara, eyeliner, Kabuki-inspired face paint, or red, black, or purple lipstick and nail varnish. Goth fashion may incorporate elements of ancient Celtic, Christian, pagan, Egyptian, or Asian iconographies. The overall style of any gothic ensemble may evoke high chic, antique, retro-kitsch, punk, fetish, secondhand trash, or some combination of the above. (3)

While at first glance the goth subculture may appear to be a rather modern (though highly peripheral) phenomenon, neither its evolution nor its distinct fashion preferences can be read simply as an alternative to or offshoot of the former punk subculture. Goodlad and Bibby further claim that goth "can be divided into two epochs: one which began with goth's punk-era emergence and saw its mainstream diffusion peak in the 1980s and again in the mid-1990s, and the second in which goth's presence in the mainstream became more subtle" (7-8). Arguably the most well-known assumption regarding the goth subculture is that it was (and perhaps still is) perceived "as a dangerous youth phenomenon" (12). "At its most utopian," continue Goodlad

and Bibby, "goth subculture helps to cultivate antiheteronormative sexualities, unconventional genders, and nonbinaristic social relations between the sexes" (20). Such ambiguous sexual politics on the part of many goths provoke further questions regarding the subculture's performative nature vis-à-vis subsartorial masquerade and, by that same token, fan pilgrimage.[10]

Paul Hodkinson's *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture* (2002) remains one of the first book-length studies of the goth subculture. Hodkinson's text is structured around a quantitative questionnaire he distributed to goth participants/pilgrims at the October 1997 Whitby Festival (now Whitby Gothic Weekend) in Whitby, North Yorkshire in the UK. As an early moment in Hodkinson's ethnographic research and scholarship into goths, his work goes to great lengths to dispel the myths associated with goth culture and also highlight the importance of what could be termed the 'goth festival.' Goth festivals could be considered a type of fan pilgrimage that is prepared and embarked upon primarily through concert-going and physical expressions of 'the dark subsartorial aesthetic.'

During the first 'wave' of goth's history, music, fashion, and the act of concert-going essentially functioned as the group's major artistic trinity that encouraged members to participate in fan pilgrimage as both a collective and individual endeavor. According to Hodkinson, "music and its performers were most directly responsible for the emergence of the stylistic characteristics of goth" (35), and that "going out to goth events…[and] participating in the goth scene" (85) served as the group's raison d'être. "Specialist goth pubs and club nights had emerged in greater numbers from the early to mid-1990s," states Hodkinson, "partly as a result of the increasing exclusion of goth music from 'alternative' events" (88). Thus, the combination of the concert-going experience and the emphasis on local pilgrimages to niche pubs and clubs

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[10] See Dunja Brill (2008 and 2007 in Hodkinson and Deicke: 111-25) for an extensive look at the significance and problems surrounding the topics of gender and sexuality in the goth subculture.

granted the goth subculture its own cult space, or 'scene.' Hodkinson also notes that these more localised pilgrimages "accounted for the majority of individuals' social participation in the goth scene…[because] some goths hardly ever travelled elsewhere for subcultural events" (99). Although their exclusion from other alternative music scenes brought forth the creation of the goth subculture's own music scene, the localisation of fan pilgrimage to the venues of pubs and clubs may be read as an example of 'subacoustic' and subsartorial communitas – wherein the twin masquerade of both music and fashion is 'performed' by both on-stage performer and goth audience.[11]

In Catherine Spooner's text *Contemporary Gothic*, she states that "[g]oth musicians such as Nick Cave and Robert Smith of The Cure have become critically acclaimed broadsheet staples, exemplars of middle-class taste, while teenage [g]oths continue to preoccupy the media" (8). Along with Cave and The Cure, the music and fashion of Bauhaus, Joy Division, Siouxsie Sioux of Siouxsie and the Banshees was also instrumental in creating both a sonic and material connection between fan identity and fan pilgrimage through the concert-going experience. Historically, the link between the goths and pilgrimage have existed many centuries before the subculture took shape in the post-punk era. Spooner reports that goths led a "nomadic, tribal existence [which] led them to be presented by subsequent generations as barbarians, primitive peoples who with brute force had overturned the cultural achievements of Roman civilization" (13). Such collective violence by the goths in antiquity as well as the group's "preoccupation with the darker side of human life…[such] [as] death, crime, insanity, perversion, obsessive desire, the supernatural and the occult" (21) point to how history and historiography have categorised goths as being ambulatory yet prone to hostility.

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[11] For more details regarding the successes and limitations of Hodkinson's in-depth study see Siegel (2005).

However, since the post-punk era, the goth subculture still remains a highly ambiguous group not only due to its negative ties to violence, death, and suicide but also its heterogeneous adoption of gothic fiction, romanticism, and blurring of gender and corporeal/incorporeal boundaries. Goth relates to yet eschews the traditional gothic figures of Count Dracula (from Stoker's *Dracula* [1897]), Dorian Gray (from Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* [1890]), Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde (from Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* [1886]), and Frankenstein's monster (from Shelley's *Frankenstein* [1818]); popular music such as Marilyn Manson (*Antichrist Superstar*, 1996); and horror films such as *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (Craven, 1984), *The Silence of the Lambs* (Demme, 1990), *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Coppola, 1992), *Interview With the Vampire* (Jordan, 1994) and *Scream* (Craven, 1996) (see Spooner 25). Many of these figures and narratives centre on monstrosity, ambiguous sexuality and sexual orientation, dualism and the doppelgänger, disability, and 'othering.' For Spooner, these themes provide the nexus between gothic fiction and goth subculture because "[t]he fascination with freakishness is partly based in performative notions of identity – remaking the self as monsterous – and partly in an apparently contradictory attempt to reinstate the physicality of the body in an increasingly decorporealized information society" (29). Therefore, the quality of 'freakishness,' in creating the subsartorial identity of the goth subculture, holds roots both in literary and cinematic horror narratives that place greater emphasis on gender (and post-gender) problems and paradoxes.

Goth's unique combination of gender politics, music, and subsartorial masquerade could perhaps connect the subculture to what Spooner refers to as "the 'folk' grotesque" (68). In creating a kind of youth folk history, goth subculture has brought forth new questions regarding the physical and psychological frustrations and angst borne out of puberty and 'the adolescent condition.' Citing Tim Burton's *Beetlejuice* (1988) as an early example of this teen goth identity,

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Spooner explains that "[t]he body at the center of many contemporary Gothic narratives is definitively an adolescent one. This leads to further contradiction: on the one hand, the physicality of the teen body is emphasized through the visceral depredations of horror; on the other, teen [g]oth identities are fashioned through performance and play…[and] dressing up" (87). But whilst Burton's film and the goth subculture have been the object of fascination for many years in the public sphere, the group and its classification has been met with and has tried to overcome controversy in the post-Columbine landscape of youth cultures and the tragedy's influence upon (and separation from) goth's several 'waves' of history.[12]

Edward Scissorhands, *Donnie Darko* (Kelly, 2001), and *Ginger Snaps* (Fawcett, 2000) all belong to a subgenre of the horror film (and for that matter, cult film) that could be considered the 'goth film.' "Johnny Depp's performance as the eponymous hero…forms the prototype," says Spooner of the titular character in *Edward Scissorhands*, "[and] [as] a fairy-tale version of Frankenstein's Creature, Edward's outward monstrosity serves as a lightning-rod for the inward monstrosity of suburban America" (104). While Edward exhibits a deeper and more complex relationship to the goth identity than *Donnie Darko* or *Ginger Snaps*, these twenty-first century interpretations of the goth subculture do reinforce and manipulate the negative stereotypes associated with goths in the post-Columbine (in addition to post-9/11) youth culture. While Kelly's depiction of Donnie (Jake Gyllenhaal) as a 'troubled youth' shows the binary between conscious and unconscious violence and the desires held by the title character yet executed with the guidance of a rabbit named Frank, it is difficult to determine if this text

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[12] The Columbine Massacre was a highly publicised school shooting that took place on 20 April 1999. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were responsible for the killing of 12 students and 1 teacher at Columbine High School, located in the suburbs of Denver, Colorado (See Spooner 2006: 109).

attained cult status due to its adherence to or differentiation from ideas of post-Columbine youth cultures, teen angst, and goth identity.

Alternatively, in *Ginger Snaps*, Ginger (Katharine Isabelle) and Brigitte or 'B' (Emily Perkins) express connections to the goth subculture through accidental death and suicide, as what Spooner calls "victims of bloody and frequently improbable deaths" (106), as part of a high school assignment in the opening scene of the film. For Spooner, the seemingly distasteful photographs "suggest that the sisters are in control of their world, and that horror can be used performatively as a means of forging individual identity and transmuting adolescent anxiety into play" (ibid). The fine line between macabre performance and performative play enable goths and the goth subculture to straddle between creativity and negativity as well as reworkings of subsartorial masquerade through adolescent social and sexual fears.

Returning to the dark subsartorial aesthetic that defines the goth subculture, Spooner states that "[g]oth is, itself, a look that recycles other looks…[such] [as] period costume, fetish wear, fancy dress appropriation…[and] [a] desire for the new, but also about a relationship with the old, with past looks – another kind of revival" (133-4). This postmodern approach to fashion by goths creates a kind of in-between material culture whereas the ideas of 'pastness' and novelty conflict and build upon one another to flirt with and challenge typical notions not only of fashion but semiotics in general. Spooner's most recent study entitled "Undead Fashion: Nineties Style and the Perennial Return of Goth" – from her text *Fashioning Gothic Bodies* and included as part of the goth anthology text *Goth: Undead Subculture* – she discusses goth fashion and its influence upon and throughout the 1990s. Spooner goes on to say that "[t]he function of clothes within goth subculture largely depends on who is wearing them: the middle-class goth of the 1980s can enact rebellion only through stereotyped and implicitly ridiculous dress codes, while the classless, avant-garde goth of the 1990s is stylishly subversive of convention" (145). It would

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seem, therefore, that the question of outdatedness of the 1980s garb versus the more 're-gothicised' styles and modes of dress in the 1990s ushers forth a new conundrum that Spooner suggests is at the heart of the goth subculture's struggle: subcultural fashion versus mainstream material culture.

In directly addressing this issue, Spooner states that "[s]ubcultural style tends to enact a paradox, in that while it is predicated on looking different from the mainstream, it necessarily entails looking similar to other members of the subculture, the marking out of so-called tribal identity" (145). With their anti-conformist ethos and fringe history alongside other marginalised subcultures during the 1980s and 1990s, goths appear to wear black and other elements of the dark subsartorial aesthetic not to promote a kind of anti-fashion, per se, but rather a superficial kind of post-fashion articulated through subsartorial masquerade. Post-fashion, in this context at least, does not communicate the absence of clothes (neither through explicit nudity nor the practice of nudism) but instead offers a new philosophy toward fashion that continuously blurs the lines between cloth and skin, past and present, light and dark, male and female, and perhaps even 'good' and 'bad.' Although the goth subculture may serve as a "pastness that is in the process of returning" (147), is remains debatable whether or not goth's gender politics either help or hinder any straightforward explanation for its 'othering' in its cult and mainstream incarnations through subsartorial masquerade.

Edward Scissorhands represents one of the first films to be widely accepted by goths during the early-1990s. But upon closer inspection there is more to what Edward represents sexually, socially, economically, and cinematically than meets the eye. In Robert Markley's essay "Geek/Goth," Markley states that "Edward…is a kind of machine assemblage. His 'scissorhands' mark an alienation from others that is fundamental to the film's depiction of adolescent identity: to be is to cut and to be cut" (277). As one of the first films to truly display

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the goth identity in film, *Edward Scissorhands* points to the sexual frustration and ambiguity of adolescence while at the same time, as Markley suggests, tackling issues of inclusion/exclusion and self-harm/suicide that are embodied by Edward and executed in real-life or as fantasies by members of the goth subculture.

But to further complicate matters, Edward, it would seem, is *not* human, and therefore contains no direct gender affiliation with male or female identity (though his name, Edward, is masculine in origin). As the mechanical 'creation' of The Inventor (Vincent Price), Edward, according to Markley, "is a being cooked up from spare parts, cumbersome or outmoded technologies, and strange recipes" (277). As a "being," Edward, like the goths, displays a subsartorial masquerade that appears both androgynous and sombre through shades of black alongside a pale visage. "*Edward Scissorhands* has achieved a cult status among subcultural audiences," claims Markley, "because it (re)stages a familiar tale of teenage alienation by exploiting a filmic nostalgia that paradoxically locates moral and psychological authenticity in the amateurish technologies of Burton's beloved 1950s and 1960s monster movies" (278). Though Edward blurs the line between man and machine, Markley goes on to say that "Edward can be appropriated as a kind of goth everyman because he represents the strangeness within the process of interpellation – the sense that the process of normalization has been arrested and we are all stamped with an irrevocable mark of incompletion that is both blessing and curse" (285). The blessing/curse binary embodied through Edward's 'scissor-like' hands underscores how the issue of 'incompletion' points to the 'othering' and eclecticism found in the goth subculture.[13]

Edward is also an early 'fringe' character in the Hollywood acting career of Johnny Depp, an actor who also struggled for social acceptance in mainstream cinema and throughout

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[13] The role of Edward was first offered to Tom Cruise and Tom Hanks – the latter wanting to star in *Bonfire of the Vanities* (De Palma, 1990) – in addition to a very well-known pop singing sensation: the late Michael Jackson (See Page 2007: 80).

his own adolescence and adulthood. "Depp is not so much a representation of a subculture that has been appropriated by a mainstream filmmaker," says Markley of Depp's portrayal of Edward, "but an amalgam, a visual archeology of consumerist odds and ends" (286). Markley goes on to say that "Edward is a goth icon to the extent that he is a hybrid creature: part silent-movie comedian, part B-movie monster, part suburban Frankenstein, part Pocket Fisherman, and part Siouxsie and the Banshees fan. The leather and metal-studded suit which Depp wears may…be Edward's skin…[because] he awkwardly puts clothes on over the latex and black tape" (ibid). If, as Markley suggests, Edward's hybrid body and style through leather and metal function as his 'skin' more so than 'clothes' or 'garments,' Depp's character may in fact go against the real-life goth's appropriation of the subsartorial masquerade to a not-yet achievable post-human form of anti-sartorialisation.

Philosophically speaking, however, "[t]he components of Depp's costume…in a sense demand to be taken not as fashion but as what passes for essence: identity itself is an assemblage of spare parts and throwaways. Out of the detritus of consumer culture comes a visual artistry of alienation and difference that paradoxically celebrates the uniqueness of being perpetually misunderstood" (291) concludes Markley. At least for the real-life goth subculture, the anti-consumerism found through the dark subsartorial aesthetic of Edward points to a kind of recycled fashion rather than anti-sartorialisation. *Edward Scissorhands* combines the character of Edward, the acting of Depp, and the direction of Burton to mark an important turning point in cult film and the goth film: a collaborative friendship and working relationship between Depp and Burton that could be classified as 'goth auteurism.' Through their shared goth auteurism, the dark themes found in Depp/Burton filmic collaborations have enabled goth to successfully enter into popular consciousness and mainstream Hollywood. Titles such as *Sleepy Hollow* (1999), *Corpse Bride* (2005), *Sweeney Todd: The Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), and the upcoming *Dark*

Shadows (2012) point to the Depp/Burton goth identity which continues to straddle popular culture and entertainment for both cult and increasingly popular film audiences.

From strictly a fashion perspective, however, Ruth La Ferla, commenting in a 2005 article in the *New York Times*, suggests that "[s]uch fondness for [g]oth-tinged playthings attests to the mainstreaming of a trend that was once the exclusive domain of societal outcasts and freaks" (2005). Whilst goth subculture has undergone several transformations and stylistic makeovers since its roots in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, the new millennium has provided much large platforms for the subculture and its dark subsartorial aesthetic to attract more fans and followers to the concert-going and film-going experience. Through film, television, and the rise of the Internet, once strictly marginalised subcultures can now take on a more globalised identity and are able to perform such alternative sexual, social, musical, and sartorial preferences with perhaps greater tolerance.

3.3 Bitten and Smitten: Subsartorial Vampirism and Female Fan Attire

In addition to the goth subculture, vampire fandom and the vampiric female mode of dress displays yet another example of subsartorial masquerade. In Milly Williamson's article entitled "Vampires and Goths: Fandom, Gender and Cult Dress," she states that "the experience of not fitting in…has lead to a rejection of those norms and the construction of an alternative sartorial identity" (146). Along with feelings of alienation, apathy, and 'otherness,' vampire fans, much like their goth counterparts, "emphasize the sinister drama of black through the use of antique and out-of-fashion clothing styles, worn in silks and velvets which many combine with dyed black hair, yellow contact lenses and sometimes the donning of dental caps fashioned as vampire fangs" (148). Williamson goes on to say that this type of fandom articulated by subsartorial masquerade may be "a form of regressive nostalgia for the past" (151). Nostalgia

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and 'out of time' fashion runs in tandem with the argument that goth, gothic, and vampiric subcultures quite literally 'resurrect' past fashions and refabricate them to the present day to create a kind of anachronistic time frame that goes against any typical notions of time, space, and place.

Beyond the research of Williamson, Maria Mellins' essay "Fashioning a Morbid Identity: Female Vampire Fans and Subcultural Style," goes on to detail gatherings that could be classified as fan pilgrimages for vampire fans. Mellins states that since the early 1990s "[t]he London vampire community [has] consist[ed] of three major groups: the London Vampyre Group, the Vampyre Connexion, and the London Vampyre Meetup" (127). Mellins notes that these meetings promote the 'performing' of 'vampire dress' in addition to the fact that "[v]ampire fans fashion a distinctive, but extremely eclectic subcultural style, ranging from full mourning Victoriana to a contemporary take on the [s]teampunk aesthetic" (ibid). Indeed, Mellins based her entire study – in addition to her eventual essay – around a questionnaire and series of testimonies regarding "how fans of the vampire use clothes and accessories to perform their fandom" (128). For Mellins, "the vampire community [is] able to stand out from conventional style, and reveal a more anachronistic approach to dress" (ibid). The anachronistic quality found in vampire fandom is arguably what distinguishes it from the earlier goth subculture and brings forth a new and more refined yet still preternatural kind of subsartorial masquerade for vampire fans: what I would, at this point, chose to classify as 'subsartorial vampirism.'

Subsartorial vampirism, in direct connection to the research of Mellins, highlights "[t]he eclectic style demonstrated by members of the vampire community, coupled with the fact that vampire fans are not simply consuming their fandom based on onscreen vampires…[and] reveals

the community as both a fan culture and identity subculture" (133). This said, the subsartorialisation of the vampiric mode of dress leads to subsartorial anachronism being the chief attribute of fashion associated with the vampire subculture.

Furthermore, Mellins highlights that "female vampire fans are returning to the historical archives in order to fashion the self, drawing most commonly on Victorian images of morbid beauty…[and] [although] the nature of women's dress practice does not function as a form of historical re-enactment…[it] reveals a complex negotiation of time as they simultaneously travel backwards and forwards in time to inform their lives in the present" (142). Again, the manipulation of time and the 'traveling' through/back in time vis-à-vis a kind of temporal subsartorialisation offers a similar problem related to the intention of the subcultural fashion that was seen earlier in the discourse pertaining to the goths. "By wearing a variety of corsets, bustled skirts, lace/velvet tops, fishnet stockings, black eyeliner, silver jewellery, and fangs," reports Mellins towards the end of her study, "fans are presenting a fusion of histories, and merging a variety of trends, as they re(-)imagine their own neo-Victorian fantasies in a real world setting" (144).

We now come full circle, as it were, back to Hebdige's initial musings and research regarding subcultures. More than halfway through his study, Hebdige claims that "the concept of *bricolage* can be used to explain how subcultural styles are constructed" (103). Indeed, the process of bricolage – i.e. the act of constructing something using whatever is available or practically obtained at that point in time – shows how subcultures can recycle fashion at a grassroots level of fan labour. In an update of what Hebdige calls "[t]he subcultural *bricoleur*" (106), my above discussion of the goth subculture and female vampire expressed each group's adherence to a form of 'subsartorial capital' via the itinerant fan taxonomy of the subsartorial

pilgrim, thus bringing to the forefront the topic of subsartorial masquerade in cult film and media audiences.

4   The Performative Pilgrim: An Unconventional Conventionalist

It's not easy having a good time.

- Dr. Frank-N-Furter (Tim Curry), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975)

Fan pilgrimages require movement, encourage communal bonds, and imply both physical and figurative journeys. But in order for a real-life pilgrimage to effectively impact any fan experience – particularly for cult and genre film fans – there needs to be some form of pleasure derived from fans 'performing' their fandom toward a specific text or genre. Such 'live performances' point to the importance of 'liveness' in relation to the celebration and consumption of cult texts. In an attempt to go beyond former readings relating performance and performativity to sexual politics/orientation, authenticity, or intertextuality, this chapter will alternatively focus on how liveness and live performance both impact film fan pilgrimages despite growing mediatisation in the contemporary visual landscape. Drawing from the theories put forward by Philip Auslander (1999), Matt Hills (2010), and Sarah Thornton (1995), liveness will be examined in Chapter 4 through its relation to media and genre and, more specifically, I will isolate taste as one of the key contributing factors of what I term 'subcultural liveness.' Subcultural liveness provokes the idea of communitas and fan performance in addition to creating my third fan taxonomy: the performative pilgrim. The performative pilgrim is a film or media fan who attends a live event and literally 'performs' their fandom among/for other fans inside a real-life space or cinema auditorium.

Using the well-established, audience-driven legacy of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (hereafter *Rocky Horror*), which contains one of the most familiar yet elusive examples of audience participation within the cult film canon, I seek to situate the notion of the performative

pilgrim alongside *Rocky Horror* research and scholarship written by Jeffrey Weinstock (2007), Liz Locke (2008), and Robert E. Wood (1991). Re-considering *Rocky Horror* in terms of fan behaviour, hierarchies, and performance, this chapter concludes with the notion of meta-performance, and how *Rocky Horror* uniquely promotes an audience for its own audience or, put another way, an audience who 'performs' with *and* against the film text for the direct pleasure of their fellow fans. This extradiegetic liveness, in opposition to *Rocky Horror*'s often ridiculed *mise-en-scène*, functions instead as a form of interactive spectatorship – a 'staged' form of fan performance I attempt to theorise and label as '*mise-en-spectateur*.'

4.1   Liveness and Live Performance

In his book *Liveness*, Philip Auslander recognises a heightened convergence between live and media events. Film, in addition to its ever-changing definition and formats, is merely one medium that is complicated by this enmeshing of real and recorded performances. For Auslander, film "is no longer an unrepeated experience confined to particular places and times" and that while "film was once experienced as evanescence, it is now experienced as repetition" (46). This "evanescence" that Auslander points to reflects how film, and in particular cult cinema, has evolved from a once limited-time-only 'event' attended by a momentary audience to now a more diffused and recursive film experience, especially with the rise of repeat viewings via the advent of video and other personal recording devices.

Along with changes in how a 'live event' is experienced and the awareness of recursion in contemporary film and media, liveness is further interrogated by Auslander when he claims that sensual and communal attraction are the two main factors for live performance to achieve the upper hand on mediatised 'events.' For Auslander, the "appeal of live performance is that it offers a fuller sensory experience than mediatized performances" and although it seems to assist

in the creation of a kind of community, live performance is "most likely to be little more than the common consumption of a particular performance commodity" (55). Of the five human senses, a fan attending a live event related to film or media, may 'consume' a text-made-real through sight, sound, and touch. Yet while Auslander argues that "[t]he sense of community arises from being part of an audience…[and] not from the spectacle for which the audience has gathered" (56), what impacts the liveness of a live event when the audience 'witnesses' other audience members performing *with* and *against* the perceived spectacle?

At its most basic, the liveness inherent in live performance stems from the performer-audience relationship, or imaginary contract that is standard in usual theatre and cinemagoing protocol and procedure. Auslander, however, states that although live performance "brings performers and spectators together in a community…[performance] is predicated on the distinction between performers and spectators" (ibid). In this aforesaid statement, the key term used by Auslander is 'distinction.' What is implied in both live and mediatised events, and hinted at by Auslander, is the assumption that a barrier exists between performer and audience in order to separate the 'talented' craft and acting performance of the performer from the 'amateur' audience participant wanting to be entertained – one would immediately assume – by a trained and professional performing artist. Upon entering the space/'stage' of the performer or interfering with the organisation of blocking, dialogue, and story the performer is trying to create is usually perceived as impolite and disrespectful not only to the performer, but to the entire cast, crew, and most of all the creator/director who is coordinating the 'live' event. However, as I shall discuss later on in this chapter, the 'barrier' between performer and audience is sometimes dismantled in favour of fan interaction vis-à-vis fan pilgrimages, repeat viewings, and a more refined kind of audience liveness: subcultural liveness.

4.2   Subcultural Liveness

In his study of horror film festivals and conventions, Matt Hills approaches the concept of liveness through a careful look at attendance of live events in Great Britain via 'flesh and blood genre communities.' Hills notes that, live events, particularly fan conventions/festivals "help to reproduce fan culture's hierarchies by allowing attendees to be more 'in the know' than fellow fans…[while] build[ing] and sustain[ing] a sense of non-imagined fan community" (88). These 'fan hierarchies' Hills speaks of relation to levels of cultural taste, and position, in this case the 'live' horror fan, in an 'insider' circle of "subcultural capital" (89). But what exactly is 'subcultural capital'? And how does this concept relate to a fan's hierarchical position among other fans at a live event?

In response to the first question, Hills borrows the concept of 'subcultural capital' from Sarah Thornton and her essay "The Social Logic of Subcultural Capital." Thornton's research focuses on British subcultures, lifestyles, and consumption practices among dance subcultures during the mid-1990s. She claims that "[j]ust as cultural capital is personified in 'good' manners and urbane conversation, so subcultural capital is embodied in the form of being 'in the know'" (186). These knowledge-based and taste-based distinctions and desires available to fans through live events readapt previous notions of taste originally theorised by Pierre Bourdieu during the 1960s. Having read and evaluated the premises within Auslander's *Liveness*, Hills underscores the shortcomings of such an Auslanderian approach, as it were, to live events. The difficulty in accepting Auslander's critique of liveness, for Hills, is that Auslander's research "uses the term 'symbolic capital'…interchangeably with the notion of cultural capital" (90). Absent from Auslander's 1999 study is any evident consideration or conscious application of Thornton's

research or revamping of the Bourdieuian concept.[14] What separates subcultural capital from symbolic capital is the latter's ability to enable the fan to 'perform' their fandom within a safe and sanctioned setting of other, equally performative and pleasure-seeking fans. According to Hills "it must be evident to fans that their accumulated capital…is actually recognized and legitimated *as subcultural capital* by other fans in order for it to function as such" (91-2: emphasis in original). Social acceptance and group affirmation of this reformulated type of cultural capital greatly impact how fans participate and interact with a text situated textually or extratextually within the context and space provided by a live event.

The physical presence of a group of spectators presents a new and more tangible reading of how subcultural capital can be interpreted as subcultural liveness. Hills, in support of this latter point, states that "[b]y attending a film festival or convention, fans can be assured of 'co-watching' horror films; that is, actually watching horror with a theatre full of like-minded spectators" (94). 'Co-watching' a film, for Hills is "a phenomenological by-product of the affirmation and recognition of subcultural capital" (ibid). If subcultural capital acts as an 'authentic' marker of 'insider status'" (99), as Hills indicates, then it sets in train the idea that fan-knowledge promotes 'insider status by treading a fine line between exclusivity and inclusivity. Put another way, subcultural liveness evolves into subjective liveness which turns the fan pilgrimage into a phenomenological encounter that promotes belonging, togetherness, and communitas outside of the habitus.

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[14] See also Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984).

4.3   The Performative Pilgrim and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*

Over the decades, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* has arguably become chiefly recognised on the basis of its audience participation and fan performance at midnight screenings.[15] As the penultimate 'midnight movie' and cult film to most individuals in the mainstream film public, *Rocky Horror*'s ability to create such synchronic forms of communitas, spontaneous pilgrimage, and structured fan hierarchies and behaviours is a testament to its growing 'word of mouth' fandom since the mid-1970s.[16] Caught within a 'wave' of other provocative and transgressive cult films during the 1970s – including *Performance* (Cammell and Roeg, 1970), *Phantom of the Paradise* (De Palma, 1974), and *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (Roeg, 1976) – *Rocky Horror* stood out as the benchmark cult film of its era due to its ambiguous history and live audience.

In his 2007 book-length study of *Rocky Horror*, Jeffrey Weinstock admits that any real sense of this mythic communitas "never *quite* materializes" (1). To begin his in-depth analysis, Weinstock uses a personal anecdote to point to instances of live performance and subcutural liveness in relation to subjective performance and pilgrimage. Weinstock's phenomenological account of a midnight screening of the film in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1988, reveals an unorthodox way of 'experiencing' a film, let alone any visual spectacle or work of art: "what I remember least of all…is the movie itself" (8). Despite his various attempts to engage in audience participation, Weinstock confesses that he had to "pretend that none of this was new to me and that I knew exactly what I was doing" (ibid). Such efforts made by Weinstock to rationalise and 'normalise' his personal 'live' viewing experience of *Rocky Horror* confirms his

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[15] See Michaels and Evans (2002) .

[16] J. Hoberman and Jonathan Rosenbaum disclose in their cult film history research that *Rocky Horror* began as a stage play in London, England in 1973, was penned by Richard "Ritz" O'Brien (Riff Raff), and its title evolved from *They Came from Denton High* to *The Rock Horroar Show* to finally *The Rocky Horror Show* (see 1983: 4).

place in the overall fan hierarchy. In his effort to 'pretend' to engage in the film diegesis, act alongside the extratextual fans and their filmic counterparts, and use his props accordingly, Weinstock points to the preparation and extratexual fan-knowledge that is required before attending a live screening of *Rocky Horror*.

Concerning the fan hierarchies and their connection to *Rocky Horror*'s live communitas, Weinstock extends this notion to state that "'regulars' take the lead in almost every respect and revel in their knowledge of appropriate responses. Such regulars direct a certain degree of resentment towards 'occasional cultists'…and welcome 'virgins' as long as they know their place and follow the rules" (37). 'Regulars' are those fans who have frequently attended screenings of *Rocky Horror*, while 'virgins' are those entirely new to *Rocky Horror* as a live event. Weinstock implies that typical fan performances of *Rocky Horror* involve an established and recorded set of rules created by fans in order to make their subcultural capital and liveness 'official' to other fans. Fan behaviour at screenings of *Rocky Horror*, according to Weinstock:

> can be categorised in terms of their temporal relationship to the on-screen action and divided into three categories…predictive, reactive and simultaneous. Predictive actions are audience actions – in the case of *Rocky Horror*, almost entirely verbal – that reveal foreknowledge of what is to come…[r]eactive responses are comments that respond to and evaluate on-screen action. Like predictive actions, reactive responses are verbal interjections generated by cues in the primary text… and [s]imultaneous events are comments, movements or actions that the audience performs in conjunction with the film…[which] include the use of props, the *Rocky Horror* floorshow and the dancing and singing along with the movie that occurs at certain moments. (40-1)

Expanding upon Weinstock's personal and historical study of *Rocky Horror*, Liz Locke's essay "Don't Dream It, Be It" focuses on the preparation and anticipation concerning the extratextual performances of the audience, rather than the film's characters and actors. Locke claims that pre-shows are an important form of reflexive fan performance and that these performative rituals include "the initiation of 'virgins,' costume competitions, trivia bowls, parodies of beauty

contests, or skits incorporating material from other movie cults" (142). Moreover, 'talk,' for Locke, is yet another critical yet enigmatic element of the *Rocky Horror* live experience. Speech at a screening of *Rocky Horror* remains "[t]he most readily noticeable shift of performance value…[and] it smashes the convention[s] that keeps theatergoers together in a state of normative communitas, characterized by passivity and silence" (145). Verbal performances are recast as 'meta-performances' – in other words, "performances that comment on earlier performances and ensure a high standard for responses in much the same way as traditional storytellers" (147). Building off oral history, song, and dance traditions that have been part of human culture since the beginning of civilisation, the only 'visible' form of the *Rocky Horror* film 'text' is expressed through hyperbolized re-enactments 'performed' by the audience meant to initiate a kind of 'extradiegetic liveness.'[17]

4.4   Coercive Performance and *Rocky Horror*

During live screenings of *Rocky Horror*, extradiegetic liveness essentially becomes its subcultural capital. However, the layers within the fan hierarchies and the exact behaviour that is summoned during the course of a screening can range from pleasant and tame to sadistic and downright unruly. As Weinstock and Locke imply above, the problem with a live screening of *Rocky Horror* is that the focus is rarely toward full comprehension let alone direct interest in the characters, the plot, *or* the film itself. To unpack this point further, there appear to be two scripts concerning *Rocky Horror* that constantly compete for attention and value at a typical midnight screening: one script exists in the on-screen diegesis while the other one is 'created' by the live,

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[17] For an interesting comparison, see McCulloch's (2011) study of the audience participation present in the recent screenings and overall cult phenomenon of Tommy Wiseau's *The Room* (2003). Although it exclusively focuses on a UK audience sample, it nevertheless reveals connections to contemporary 'subcultural liveness' beyond *Rocky Horror*.

off-screen audience. In relation to this latter point, Weinstock agrees that "a secondary script is…overlaid upon the primary script for the benefit of other audience members" (Weinstock 2007: 39). Interestingly, however, this patchwork of improvisation or haphazard admixture of verbal participation is eerily Frankensteinian – a theme which is at the heart of *Rocky Horror*'s fabula. It is the fans' own 'living creation' constructed out of once-living 'parts' and 'brought to life.'

Yet sadistic behaviour remains an often hidden or repressed topic in studies of *Rocky Horror* fandom and viewing practices. In the research conducted by Weinstock, he reports that fans at a live screening of the film "attempt to control discourse through an act of verbal piracy that hijacks the film's intended meaning" (45). This 'verbal piracy' points to outright disobedience and even equates *Rocky Horror* fans as borderline delinquents. These verbal interjections, furthermore, impact a live viewing experience by "preventing imaginary identification and bifurcating the meaning of each line such that, while each character is clearly responding to the preceding comment within the cinematic dialogue, he or she is also 'forced' to answer the audience's question at the same time" (47).

Seeking to address and make sense of the rudeness and reckless behaviour witness by Weinstock, the author classifies such a phenomenon as "the fetishisation of interruption" (ibid). "What *Rocky Horror* fans do, again and again," according to Weinstock, "is to interrupt the film in ways that reinforce their sense of mastery of the plot and dialogue: they revel in their ability to predict what the characters will say and do and to subvert intended meaning through predictive interjections" (48). We may recall that the aforesaid 'predictive interjections' relate back to the first of the three points Weinstock listed earlier in relation to fan behaviour in *Rocky Horror* – that is, *predictive*, reactive, and simultaneous.

But the question remains as to whether the *film* or the *audience* ignites and therefore takes the onus for such malicious behaviour being displayed at a midnight screening of *Rocky Horror*. Such 'coercive performance' exhibited by fans *toward* the film text itself, signifies moments of live retaliation and vengeance directed primarily *at* the mediatised characters within the diegesis. "The sadistic denigration of the film and its characters," laments Weinstock, "reflects the audience's failure both to be the film and to master the film. Its inability to realise either desire manifests itself in irreverent commentary that belies the audience's affective attachment to the film by fostering the impression that the movie is worth nothing" (50-1). In suggesting that 'the movie is worth nothing' Weinstock sidesteps an opportunity to delve further into the ramifications of coercive performance on the *Rocky Horror*, its legacy, and fanbase, and instead seems to suggest that *Rocky Horror* occupies a place somewhere between a 'bad film' and a fan pilgrimage that may perhaps be a 'waste of time.' Whilst time is displaced through the real-life scheduling of midnight screenings and the 'warp' of time in *Rocky Horror*'s famous "Time Warp" scene, the temporality of *Rocky Horror* is nevertheless a factor in provoking the unpredictable nature of its fans' performances, repeating viewing practices, and pseudo-Dionysian celebration of grandiloquence and excess.[18]

4.5   *Mise-en-spectateur*

In Robert E. Wood's essay "Don't Dream It," the author attempts to find connections between *Rocky Horror* and performance studies. Conscious of the dramatic roots of *Rocky Horror* – i.e. as a stage-play referred to as *The Rocky Horror Show* – Wood maintains that *Rocky Horror* functions more as a theatrical experience than a cinematic one. The film version of

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[18] See Barbara Ehrenreich's *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy* (2007) and Michel Maffesoli's *The Time of the Tribes* (1996).

Rocky Horror, according to Wood, was released and consumed by fans "in a period when the theater was in the process of shattering certain conventions of audience passivity and exploring the limits of how a mass audience might interact with live performers" (156). Wood goes even further to suggest that *Rocky Horror* is not only connected to theatre, but American experimental theatre in particular.[19] Of course, this then puts into question the 'performability,' so to speak, of a cult film such as *Rocky Horror*. American experimental theatre enabled the imaginary boundary between performer and audience to be lifted, thereby creating the illusion of a greater sense of liveness and corporeal communitas. "Commonly, experimental theater of the early 1970s," explains Wood, "confronted audiences with a confusion about their roles, either as social beings or as spectators at a performance" (161). By "plac[ing] audience and performer in the same category, as participants in something new to all," Wood evokes a link between audience and performance art, wherein the audience is in fact part of the live art being displayed, interpreted, evaluated, and criticised.

Wood cites the work and dramatic theories posited by Peter Brook during the late 1960s in order to present a new reading of *Rocky Horror*'s live fandom as an important form of performance art. During the 1960s and '70s, Brook stood as one of the salient figures in experimental theatre, and became chiefly recognised in the performing arts for his staging of Shakespeare plays as well as filmic adaptations such as *Lord of the Flies* (1963) and Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade* in 1967.[20] In his book *The Empty Space* (1968), Brook states the following: "I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged" (9). An interesting link is found between Brook though Wood's analysis and Hills' earlier notion

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[19] For an in-depth history of American avant-garde theatre see Aronson (2000).

[20] For a complete history of Brook and his innovative style of theatre and film œuvre see Jones (1985).

of subcultural capital. Performance relies on corporeal movement and spontaneity, but it also relies on another individual or series of individuals watching and witnessing such a spectacle. The theatrical element found in the performative pilgrim and subcultural liveness at a screening of *Rocky Horror*, I would argue, repositions Brook's point to suggest a reversal of the performer-audience relationship. For *Rocky Horror*, the 'stage' is *inside* the audience, and the 'empty space' could relate to the lack of meaning in the on-screen narrative and characters.

Brook describes four types of theatre: deadly theatre, holy theatre, rough theatre and immediate theatre. 'Deadly theatre' refers to more mainstream theatre. 'Holy theatre,' conversely, means that "the stage is a place where the invisible can appear" (42). Rough theatre, in contrast to deadly theatre and holy theatre, refers to "the theatre that's not in a theatre…[such as] audiences joining in, answering back" (65). It is this latter kind of theatre, 'rough theatre' that *Rocky Horror* appears to hold in 'the empty space' of a midnight screening – a space where fans, holding subcultural capital and experiencing subcultural liveness, use props such as rice, newspapers, noise-makers, and squirt guns to identify with other audience members. This, in turn, shifts the focus from the film's *mise-en-scène* to the 'live' fan performances happening within the *mise-en-spectateur*.

Wood further claims that *Rocky Horror* exists somewhere between "holy theater and rough theater" (164) and that the film encourages "the emergence of both a holy and rough cinema, one that, in the best *theatrical* way, finds a kind of truthful experience in the presence and participation of its spectators" (165; emphasis in original). He goes on to say that "behavior relies on those elements of film which directly relate to the human body – dialogue, gesture, makeup, costumes, props – in short, to the film's *theatrical* rather than specifically cinematic dimensions. Of those theatrical elements accessible to the audience, dialogue assumes the greatest weight" (157-8: emphasis in original). The presentation, communication, and celebration

of the human body in a more theatrical rather than film context, points to a corporeal communitas that underscores the verbal element of predictive and reactive performance vis-à-vis the 'quotability' of dialogue. Improvisation is important to Wood's argument. According to Wood, "[t]he shadow world of the film image lines up with live stage representation…[and] [w]hat results is a kind of dialogue with the screen that resembles the theatrical freedom of the live performer to improvise around a fixed text" (161).

One scene within the on-screen narrative of *Rocky Horror* points to such an interpretation of audience participation as *mise-en-spectateur*. During Frank-N-Furter's (Tim Curry) Judy Garland-inspired swan song "I'm Going Home" a blue curtain and radiant spotlight shine down upon a stage situated at the front of a spacious cinema. As Brad Majors (Barry Bostwick), Janet Weiss (Susan Sarandon), Dr. Everett (Von) Scott (Jonathan Adams), Columbia (Little Nell) and Rocky Horror (Peter Hinwood) witness Frank's performance in the 'wings' of the theater, Riff Raff (Richard O'Brien) and Magenta (Patricia Quinn), conversely, watch his sentimental (yet magniloquent) performance from the opposite end of the theatre toward the 'exit.' Empty chairs line the barren seating area in front of the stage. Frank's imagination – out of heightened nostalgia – enables him to 'imagine' a live audience, whose spectral appearance occurs at the climax of his impromptu ballad. What this scene points to is that Frank, just like the itinerant fan taxonomy of the performative pilgrim at a *Rocky Horror* live screening, *requires* a live audience in order for subcultural capital to form any sense of communitas and sensual camaraderie.

5   The Postmodern Pilgrim: From Fan Tourism to Blockbuster Pilgrimage

Travel provokes the idea of physically 'escaping' from one's everyday life and journeying to different, more 'exotic' lands and experiencing new cultural and communal experiences. Those deemed leisurely[21] or pedagogical pursuits rather than work or business related expeditions have only recently been seriously studied within academia, especially in the fields of human geography, tourism studies, history, literature, and, most currently, film studies. Whilst advertising does play a crucial role in an individuals' decision-making in particular and the tourism industry in general, it more pressingly underscores the apparent commodification of various fan pilgrimages in the contemporary era. In Chapter 5, I would like to make the claim that in contemporary tourism studies, cult cinema and its extratextual fandom, promotion, and reception has increasingly impacted the ways in which cult fans plan, execute, and perform a cult film or series vis-à-vis real-life pilgrimages.

To begin this chapter, I would like to first examine the relationship between fan pilgrimage and the academic literature on tourism studies, particularly the insights held by John Urry (2002), Dean MacCannell (1976), Simon Coleman and Mike Crang (2002), and Tom Mordue (2010). I will then proceed to explore the concept of 'black spot' tourism through the acute observations made by Chris Rojek (1994) and Kenneth Anger (1975, 1984/6), respectively. By examining the phenomenon of 'black spot' tourism on movie star and celebrity culture, I seek to determine the signficance of posthumous stardom on fan tourism and how this unique form of fan pilgrimage encourages a type of fan performance that I wish to term 'touristic deathgazing.' Because the *flâneur/flâneuse* of the 19th century embodies one of the earliest examples of the 'tourist' and urban leisure, I will then turn my attention to theorising the Dandyist 'performer'

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[21] Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) was an early text that discussed conspicuous leisure and consumption, and canons of taste in a critical manner.

through the research of Anne Friedberg (1993) and Rhonda K. Garelick (1998). Next, the notion of 'participatory immersion' shall be further probed using the cult film *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982) and its complicated relationship to fan pilgrimage studies. For this section concerning *Blade Runner*, I employ the theories of Will Brooker (2004) and Patricia R. Zimmermann (2008) to illustrate parallels between professional and amateur fan pilgrimage and the documentation and reportage of actual *Blade Runner* sites. What's more, I will subsequently determine how these physical journeys complicate fan readings of cult texts through a blurring of the everyday and fantasy, real-life and the medium of film.

I will then segue into a discussion of The Walt Disney Company's theme parks and how these Disney attractions generate familial and generational pilgrimage sites – sites that are key examples of what I would like to call 'nostalgic pilgrimage.' Drawing from the writings of Judith A. Adams (1991), David Buckingham (2000), Alan Bryman (1995, 2004), and Janet Wasko (2001), nostalgic pilgrimage will be analysed in terms of Disney fandom and the premium the franchise puts on childhood and the *re-visitation* of childhood through adulthood and/or parenthood.

To conclude Chapter 5, I will study the extratextual fandom and tourism surrounding *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy (Jackson, 2001-3) by utilising the scholarship of Stan Jones (2006), Thierry Jutel (2004), and Ian Conrich (2006).[22] Jackson's epic film trilogy stands as a unique film series that presents extratextual fan pilgrimage through the creation of the postmodern pilgrim – my fourth itinerant fan taxonomy – as well as a recontextualisation of New Zealand as tourist attraction and film location. Following the series' worldwide success in the early twenty-first century and its association with what I refer to as 'blockbuster pilgrimage,' this

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[22] See also Croft (2004); Leotta (2011); Thompson (2007); Thornley in Mathijs (2006); and Wong in Lam and Oryshchuk 2007 for more analyses of *The Lord of the Rings*, New Zealand, and national tourism.

chapter ends by reconsidering how the blockbuster film compliments yet complicates fan

pilgrimage, and provokes further inquiry into the relationship between tourism, fan pilgrimage,

and the consumption of contemporary cult cinema.

5.1   Pilgrim as Tourist? Or Tourist as Pilgrim?

In his text *The Tourist Gaze*, John Urry states that "[t]ourism is a leisure activity which

presupposes its opposite, namely regulated and organised work" (2). Urry's position that tourism

is a 'leisure activity' ushers forth the notion that to be a tourist requires one to essentially

'perform' leisure and to participate in such leisure through a mental separation of 'work' and

'leisure.' As a physical embodiment of liminality, the tourist holds the ability to transcend the

threshold of daily work and 'escape' into the pleasures found (or anticipated) in 'leisure' and

tourism. Urry goes on to say that "[l]ike the pilgrim the tourist moves from a familiar place to a

far place and then returns to the familiar place. At the far place both the pilgrim and the tourist

engage in 'worship' of shrines which are sacred…[and] gain some kind of uplifting experience'

(11). That said, can it then be suggested, through Urry's above-mentioned statement, that the

tourist is a more refined or mature form of pilgrim? Or, alternatively, that the pilgrim evolved

into what in the contemporary era we may simply classify as a 'tourist'? These questions

undoubtedly merit further attention, yet I would like to now turn back to Urry's notion that both

the pilgrim and the tourist share similar traits despite their ambiguous nomenclature.

Throughout much of his research, Urry cites Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist* as an

important academic source in 'tourist studies' and also suggests that MacCannell's mid-1970s

book remains one of the earliest writings on tourism and its connections to leisure, class, and

travel. One of MacCannell's main premises is that "[a]ll tourist attractions are cultural

experiences" (23-4). MacCannell goes on to claim, however, that "[t]ourists commonly take

guided tours of social establishments because they provide easy access to areas of the establishment ordinarily closed to outsiders" (98). The concept of "guided tours" into attractions "ordinarily closed to outsiders" situates MacCannell's perspective alongside issues of inclusivity and exclusivity in studies of tourism.

In more recent years, however, the scholarship of Tom Mordue as well as Simon Coleman and Mike Crang has pointed to new directions that tourism studies must consider in order to adapt well to the visual and popular culture landscapes of today. In his essay "Time Machines and Space Craft," Mordue purports that "[i]n business parlance…cities become 'products' that need to perform in the global market, consisting of 'resources' by which attractions considered part of the authenticity and uniqueness of place are often mixed with other more 'exotic' attractions that have blanket appeal to cosmopolitan consumers" (175). Whilst Mordue's argument and overall essay concerns the importance of tourism on place branding, I believe that such 'corporate performance' found in the arena of business can be similarly discovered in fan pilgrimages. This will become particularly evident in my discussions below of Hollywood in relation to 'black spot' tourism, Los Angeles on *Blade Runner* fandom, Disney theme parks and 'nostalgic pilgrimage,' and 'blockbuster pilgrimage' in relation to Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy.

Coleman and Crang's essay "Grounded Tourists, Travelling Theory," however, contends that tourist theory should not be static and rooted in only certain 'heritage' or historic sites of interest. The two authors recommend that "instead of seeing places as relatively fixed entities, to be juxtaposed in analytical terms with more dynamic flows of tourists, images and cultures, we need to see them as fluid and created through performance" (1). In viewing tourists and tourism as 'fluid' and provoking 'performance,' Coleman and Crang indirectly, though importantly, imply a possible relationship between tourist studies and performance studies that in future

sections of this chapter will relate to how fan tourism fosters 'performance spaces' for the postmodern pilgrim.

5.2   'Black Spot' Tourism, Touristic Deathgazing, and the Postmortem Pilgrim

In Chris Rojek's *Ways of Escape,* he links tourism and leisure to various "escape areas" (136) and their relationship to film and poplar culture more generally. In particular, so-called 'black spots' "refer to the commercial developments of grave sites and sites in which celebrities or large numbers of people have met with sudden and violent death" (ibid). Rojek goes on to claim that while "[t]he interest in catastrophes and disasters might seem to be distasteful…[d]eath sites and places of violent death involving celebrities or large numbers of people, almost immediately take on a monumental quality in our culture" (138). During his discussion of posthumous stardom and 'black spot' tourism Rojek makes explicit reference to Kenneth Anger's *Hollywood Babylon* (1975) and *Hollywood Babylon II* (1984/6) and also isolates Westwood Memorial Park in Los Angeles in addition to Hollywood Memorial Park (now, in 2011, called 'Hollywood Forever') as two of the most recognisable areas of black spot tourism associated with Hollywood cinema (see Rojek 141).

Whilst Anger's book *Hollywood Babylon* emphasises the salacious and sordid details of the private lives and gossip surrounding classical Hollywood film stars, it could also be reinterpreted as a tool for fan pilgrimage in general and black spot tourism in particular. Anger features a birds-eye view of Hollywood Memorial Park Cemetery on the final inside pages of his text. The cemetery is the resting place of Victor Fleming (director of *The Wizard of Oz*, 1939), D.W. Griffith (director of *Intolerance: Love's Struggle Throughout the Ages*, 1916), Cecil B. De Mille (director of *The Greatest Show on Earth*, 1952), Tyrone Power (star of *Witness for the Prosecution*, 1957), Rudolph Valentino (star of *The Sheik*, 1921) and Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.

(star of *The Thief of Bagdad*, 1924). However, in Anger's sequel entitled *Hollywood Babylon II*, Anger reveals that "[g]rowing up in Tinseltown, my childhood hobby was visiting cemeteries, seeking the resting places of my heroes" (1). One such hero of Anger's was Valentino, and Anger confesses his own fan pilgrimage to the tomb of the 1920s Hollywood star in the following testimony: "I was drawn back again, and *again*, and *again*" (2; emphasis in original).

The idea that cemeteries are being traveled to as key sites of fan pilgrimage and black spot tourism raises both ethical and cultural concerns not only regarding posthumous fandom but also respect for those deceased. Rojek reveals that while "[b]ourgeois culture constructed the cemetery as a place of dignity and solemnity" and "[v]isitors were expected to show proper respect for the dead" (141), in more contemporary tourism studies, "the metropolitan cemetery…became a sight to see just like any other monument" (ibid). But rather than considering the cemetery tour as a kind of postmodern desecration or collective irreverence, Rojek uses the example of the James Dean fan club to illustrate how black spot tourism and Hollywood fandom instead maintain the relevance and legacy of stardom through posthumous worship. The late James Dean (1931-55) stands as one of Hollywood's most famous screen talents during the post-war era.[23] At just 24 years old and just one month prior to the theatrical release of *Rebel Without a Cause* (Ray, 1955), Dean died in a fatal car crash in the town of Cholame in California. In a wave of posthumous fandom arguably unmatched throughout *any* era in Hollywood, Dean's legacy carries on through fan pilgrimage and black spot tourism. According to Rojek, on each 30 September "a procession of 1949 Merc[ury]s and 1950 Fords, driven by fans of Dean, arrive at the spot where the crash occurred in time for the exact moment of the crash. Not only do the fans visit the black spot, but they fastidiously take the same route

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[23] For more details about Dean, his Hollywood stardom, tragic death, and posthumous fandom, see Brottman 2002; DeAngelis 2001; and Springer 2007.

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that Dean followed from Los Angeles on his last day…try[ing] to repeat the sights, sounds and experiences that their hero experienced on the journey" (142). Such black spot performances point to what could be called 'touristic deathgazing.'

'Touristic deathgazing' is a term I would like to apply to both to the visitation of Hollywood star graveyards as well as instances of fan mimesis and celebration such as those executed by the James Dean fan club. Because black spot tourism includes fan performances and, as Rojek notes, "activities of pure repetition" (144), 'tourist deathgazing' could be an attribute of a future itinerant fan taxonomy called the 'postmortem pilgrim.' This latter term would, in effect, combine recursive jubulation and posthumous star worship with black spot tourism to highlight the importance of death on cult cinema and fan pilgrimage sites.

5.3   Postmodern *Flâneurism*: Fan Pilgrimage in the Age of Neo-Dandyism

In their text *Practices of Looking*, Maria Sturken and Lisa Cartwright assert that the *flâneur* traditionally refers to "a man who strolls the streets of cities such as Paris, observing the urban landscape in a detached way while moving through it" (271). Sturken and Cartwright elaborate upon the figure of the *flâneur* by stating that he "was a subject of fascination for poet Charles Baudelaire [1821-67] and later for Walter Benjamin [1892-1940]…[and] moves through the city in an anonymous fashion and whose primary activity is looking" (271). But in a postmodern reading of fan pilgrimage, *flâneurism* needs to be reconsidered not only on the basis of both the male *and* female consumer but also as a kind of 'postmodern *flâneurism*' that poses interesting questions for both aesthetics and film studies scholarship, respectively.

Sturken and Cartwright cite Anne Friedberg's *Window Shopping* as a seminal text that bridges the gap between consumerism and film culture vis-à-vis *flâneurism*. However, Friedberg's approach to *flâneurism* holds a more feminist edge in its articulation of the *flâneuse*

in relation to postmodern film spectatorship: "[t]he flâneuse was the nineteenth-century version of a female observer…[and] [t]he shopping mall developed as a site for combining the speculative activity of shopping with the mobilities of tourism; the shopping mall 'multiplex' cinema epitomizes both in a virtual form" (110). Friedberg goes on to suggest that "[t]he mall creates a nostalgic image of the town center as a clean, safe, and legible place, but a peculiarly timeless place" (113). Friedberg's notion that the *flâneuse* represents the ideal postmodern consumer or 'window shopper' is, however, complicated by globalisation and corporate marketing, and how tourism itself has been linked to a kind of 'shopping' or consumer experience based on impulsive feelings of nostalgia and escapism.

One way of thinking about how various fan pilgrimages link to *flâneurism* and postmodern tourism practices is to replace notions of globalisation with that of the more refined concept of what I would dub 'neo-dandyism.' Rhonda K. Garelick's *Rising Star* takes a careful look at the link between *flâneurism* and the persona of the dandy at the turn of the 19th century. For Garelick, "[d]andyism is itself a performance, the performance of a highly stylized, painstakingly constructed self, a solipsistic social icon…[and] [a]rtful manipulation of posture, social skill, manners, conversation, and dress [are] all accoutrements in the aestheticization of the self central to dandyism" (3). As the postmodern equivalent to the dandyism at the *fin de siècle*, neo-dandyism places a premium on 'appearance' and 'looking,' which are two important aspects of consumption and performance in relation to fan pilgrimage and cult cinema. Therefore, 'postmodern *flâneurism*' could be held as yet another classification of the postmodern pilgrim, particularly in contemporary fan pilgrimages that blur the line between consumption and performance, and where neo-dandyism appears to provoke further investigate into the nexus between private and public space.

5.4   Postmodern Amateurism: Participatory Immersion and *Blade Runner* Fandom

The relationship between cult text and cult consumption is further complicated when fans participate in real-life pilgrimages to cities that are featured within the diegesis of a particular cult film. *Blade Runner* serves as an appropriate filmic case study to illustrate the dynamics between real-life location and fan consumption.[24] In Will Brooker's essay "The *Blade Runner* Experience: Pilgrimage and Liminal Space," Brooker claims that he "arrived in Los Angeles expecting to recognise something of the film's diegesis" (11). Brooker goes on to cite the 2nd Street road tunnel, Union Station, the Ennis-Brown House, and the Bradbury Building as the four key sites he was wanting to explore as a fan of *Blade Runner*. "[B]ecause of their coding as either everyday places," Brooker states, "these locations do not offer fully immersive, transcendent experience, a sense of 'losing oneself'" (13). The 'everydayness' of these sites that Brooker points to further underscores the limits of fan pilgrimage, particularly in relation to liminality and communitas. "[T]hey can only provide a less heightened feeling of inbetweenness," says Brooker, "of an ambiguous, liminal state bridging the real L.A. of the present and the fictional city of the future" (13).

Creativity plays a vital role in achieving this kind of imaginary-yet-real fan pilgrimage. Brooker contends that "sites like the *Blade Runner* locations demand a significant amount of emotional commitment and imaginative work on the pilgrim's part to even approach a sense of communion with the fictional text" (14). "*Blade Runner* has not lifted the real LA to cinema," laments Brooker, "respecting its layout and spatial relationships between places; it has selectively picked out interiors and transferred them into an entirely new creative geography that makes no sense in 'real' terms" (15). Such 'creative geography' that Brooker mention further

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[24] See Bukaman (1997) for a full book-length study of *Blade Runner*, which details the film's box-office figures, cult history, and influence on motion pictures and popular culture in general.

challenges the way in which fans of *Blade Runner* can access, 'perform' or 'experience' the cult film on an extratextual level.

The 2nd Street tunnel in Los Angeles offers what Brooker calls "participatory immersion," permitting "the visitor to perform the text and 'become' [Rick] Deckard for the length of the transit between Hill and Figueroa" (17). The benefits of 'participatory immersion' is that Brooker's theory suggests the ultimate phenomenological experience for the *Blade Runner* fan. However, the shortcoming of such a concept is that Brooker's idea is, in fact, more of a 'subjective immersion' because it is an action performed by the fan to the structure without the aid or collective presence of communitas. Indeed, as Brooker notes, "[o]n a solo visit to the *Blade Runner* sites, the pilgrim has no way of knowing whether the others wandering the space are there for the same reason, because each site continues to have at least one other connotation; often one that overshadows its role as a one-time location for a 1982 science fiction movie" (18).

Moreover, Brooker points specifically to the fan labour exhibited by Ben Mund of bladezone.com and Don Solosan (aka: Gnomus) of brmovie.com who have each used the visual mediums of photography and film, respectively, to 'experience' the *Blade Runner* sites; to capture, more specifically, "a visual record of the sites" (20). Mund and Solosan's instances of fan labour in relation to *Blade Runner* could fall into the category of what could be called 'postmodern amateurism.' Brooker, however, positions such 'postmodern amateurism' against Mark Kermode's (b. 1963) scripted professional television documentary *On the Edge of Blade Runner* (Abbott, 2000), released by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom. While the professionalism of Kermode's Channel 4 television documentary would seem to trump the amateurism found in the photographs and films of Mund and Solosan on both a commercial and economic level, the postmodern amateurism showcased by these independent *Blade Runner* fans present the pilgrimage sites as an invitation for other fans to 'replicate' such temporary sojourns instead of

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merely 'learning' second-hand where Scott's film was shot in L.A. "The memory of having occupied the space where the film was shot, of standing in a place that, while grounded in the everyday," reveals Brooker, "was nevertheless the parallel-world neighbour of a site Deckard had walked or driven through, provides a link between the viewer and the screen text" (27).

But in what ways can the fan films of Mund and Solosan cited by Brooker – as key examples of postmodern amateurism – each be framed in relation to film research and future investigations into fan pilgrimage sites? Patricia R. Zimmermann's essay "Mapping History into Histories" states that "[a]mateur films do not simply absorb history. Instead, they mobilize an active historical process of reimaging and reinvention" (275). Zimmermann further asserts that "[t]he amateur camera mediates between self and fantasy, between self and others" (276). Interestingly, the Mund and Solosan's fan films document and report upon the *Blade Runner* pilgrimage sites in L.A. in a sort of historigraphic/historiophotic manner that, as Zimmermann makes clear, points to a 'reimaging and reinvention' of both the self and the 'live' world. Whilst Zimmermann admits that amateur films and amateurism are both "often viewed as cinematic failures infused by an innocent naivety and innocence" (277) and were traditionally "located within leisure, the private sphere, and hobbies" (278), their application and relevance to the practice of fan pilgrimage and *Blade Runner* fandom opens up new debates into the value of preserving fan experiences and memories through video, photography, and the practice of fan archiving.

5.5   Walt's Wanderlust: Deconstructing Disneyana and Nostalgic Pilgrimage

As one of the most influential and financially successful American industries in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, The Walt Disney Company still remains one of the key

promoters of fan pilgrimages sites in the entire world.[25] With its theme parks including Disneyland and Walt Disney World, the Disney brand has become synonymous with fan pilgrimage and, in particular, what I would term 'nostalgic pilgrimage.' In Judith A. Adams' *The American Amusement Park Industry*, Adams makes the claim that among the Disney theme parks "Walt Disney World has replaced the religious shrine as a pilgrimage center. Just as a journey to Mecca, Canterbury, Lourdes, or Rome represents a rite of passage that sanctifies a pilgrim as a member of a holy community, a visit to Walt Disney World ratifies the values of corporate culture and allows the 20th century pilgrim to reaffirm faith in capitalist scriptures of progress through technology, control through managerial hierarchy, and consumerism" (154). Adams continues by suggesting that "[t]he form and function of Walt Disney World is a borrowing from the spiritual pilgrimage center. In the postmodern world, play, leisure, the mythic values of the American dream, and the cult of technology have largely replaced the archaic rituals and scriptures of organized religion" (155). Here, Adams make a three-pronged connection between Disney, fan pilgrimage, and religious pilgrimage to clearly suggest that Disney has, in many ways, become a popular 'shrine' in America that blends capitalism with 'nostalgic pilgrimage.'

But why and how has Disney stood the test of time, and encouraged generations of pilgrims to attend and participate in the activities within its theme parks? In David Buckingham's *After the Death of Childhood*, he states that "[j]ust as teenagers were apparently 'discovered' as a distinct consumer group in the postwar economic boom, so children are now becoming one of the most sought-after targets for 'niche marketing'" (146-7). Buckingham further discloses that "[i]n the case of the early days of Disney…the relationship between the movies and the merchandise was always a dialectical one: the movies 'sold' the merchandise, but the

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[25] See Alexander Moore's article "Walt Disney World: Bounded Ritual Space and the Playful Pilgrimage" (207-17).

merchandise also attracted children to watch the movies" (158). Whilst Disney may be situated in the 'child marketplace' of contemporary culture, the franchise is nonetheless able to create a synergy between motion pictures, brand loyalty, and fan pilgrimage that on the surface may cater to children yet is experienced by a range of pilgrims, especially in the context of family pilgrimages and generational pilgrimages.[26]

Alan Bryman's research[27] in the twenty-first century on Disney, its multi-tiered corporate and creative structure, and global influence/legacy points to some refreshing ways of reading and understanding Disney vis-à-vis fan pilgrimage. Bryman's first book-length study of Disney entitled *Disney and his Worlds* points to an explicit familial component to Disney. For Bryman, "parents know that they too will have an enjoyable experience, since a great many of the attractions are designed for them, if not exclusively, then at least in part (90). "[I]t is *middle-class* families and adults who are typically found in the parks," reveals Bryman, "and that in the main these are *white* middle-class families and adults" (92; emphasis in original). Both race and class are mentioned by Bryman in order to, I believe, not only point to the specific demographic of individuals who frequent the park, but to additionally suggest that Disney theme parks are almost similar in appearance (and function) as suburban/gated communities. Returning back to the generational aspect of familial fan pilgrimages, Bryman says, "[i]t is in their own childhoods that many parents will have developed their love for Disney characters, films, merchandise, and indeed theme parks. Advertising for the parks associates itself with childhood through the use of standard representations, such as Mickey [Mouse], the castle, stars…though often couched in

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[26] In addition, the range of Disney tourism also extends to the LGBTQ community. Since 1978, 'Gay Days' have been featured at both Disneyland and Walt Disney World, thus promoting a kind of queer fan pilgrimage (see Griffin 2005: 125).

[27] At the time of writing, Buckingham's *The Material Child: Growing Up in Consumer Culture* (2011) is his most recent scholarly text. In it, he focuses on the 'child consumer' and the figure's links between business and material culture inside the so-called 'children's marketplace.'

ways that will appeal to adults" (157). This is where the idea of "nostalgic pilgrimage" becomes most important in an argument toward suggesting that a Brymanian approach to Disney offers a chance to understand the company, its touristic initiatives, and brand loyalty on the basis of nostalgia through childhood pilgrimages. As Bryman goes on to note, "[c]onsumption becomes part of the immersion in fantasy, so that goods are purchased as symbols or signs of such narratives as childhood and nostalgia, rather than for use value" (159). Therefore, Disney could be participating in a kind of brand immersion that takes the form of 'nostalgic pilgrimage' in order to capitalise on the childhood memories of parents and adults who (re)visit the theme parks.

In his later text on Disney entitled *The Disneyization of Society*, Bryman refines his earlier arguments about Disney through the coining of the term 'Disneyization.' According to Bryman, Disneyization signals "the process by which *the principles* of the Disney theme parks are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world" (1; emphasis in original). Bryman extends this notion by claiming that "[i]n essence, Disneyization is about consumption. Consumption and, in particular, increasing the inclination to consume, is Disneyization's driving force" (4). Having said this, fan pilgrimages – in the form of either familial and/or generational pilgrimages – are more akin to 'nostalgic Disneyization,' and reestablish how cult film franchises capitalise upon childhood *and* memories of childhood in order to shape tourism and fan pilgrimage solely on the basis of capital, consumerism, and simulacra.[28]

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[28] In Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation*, he refers to Disneyland as the "perfect model" (12) to showcase simulacra yet also claims that the theme park functions primarily as a "miniaturized pleasure of real America, of its constraints and joys" (ibid).

Unlike Adams and Bryman, the research on Disney conducted by Janet Wasko alternatively sheds important light on Disney fandom and its specific relationship to cult consumerism and fan pilgrimage. In her book *Understanding Disney*, Wasko states that "[w]hen Disneyland opened in 1955, it was a departure from typical amusement parks and carnivals" (56). "The 'experiences' and 'memories' of visits to the Disney worlds," Wasko implies, "are ultimately wrapped up with consumption…the parks are commodities themselves, amassing sizeable revenues just from entrance fees" (158). Wasko does, however, agree with Bryman's claim that there is both a familial and generational component to experiencing Disney theme parks as sites of fan pilgrimage. "Promotional and advertising material features families," says Wasko, "and they are depicted in various ways throughout the parks…middle-class families are portrayed…[since] the ideals and values depicted in the parks are decidedly middle-class" (162). Again, although her focus is on fan consumption and the Disney brand, Wasko's above-mentioned statement compliments Bryman's earlier connection between class and the demographics of Disney theme park attendees.

Disney theme parks, according to Wasko, "have become 'sacred centers' that people feel compelled to visit and as rituals in which pilgrims encounter liminal states in unfamiliar and unstructured settings" (163). She classifies Disney fans as "Disneyphiles" and "Disney freaks" that dutifully "visit the parks often, own huge collections of Disney memorabilia, and decorate their homes in Disney themes" (198). In fact, based on Wasko's research on Disney and fan pilgrimage, "Disney World is said to be the number one honeymoon destination in the USA" (198-9). Being a fan of Disney means being a fan of Disneyana – evidently a play on the term 'Americana' – particularly through "[t]he buying and selling of Disney merchandise…as a major activity" (199). As such, the concept of Disneyana further suggests the linkage between fan

pilgrimage, nostalgia pilgrimage, and the impact of the Disney brand on tourism and notions of cult fandom.

5.6   Blockbuster Pilgrimage: *The Lord of the Rings* and the Postmodern Pilgrim

In his introduction to *Movie Blockbusters*, Julian Stringer states that blockbuster films "simply cannot be avoided" despite the reality that "little sustained scholarly attention has been paid to them" (11). As one of the most colossal undertakings and achievements in cinema during the early part of the twenty-first century, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy can be considered a crucial marketing tool for tourism to the country of New Zealand. As a New Zealander/'Kiwi' who began his film career near the city of Wellington, Peter Jackson and his three-part filmic adaptation of J. R. R. Tolkien's (1892-1973) series of books – *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954 [2001]), *The Two Towers* (1954 [2003]), and *The Return of the King* (1955 [2003]) – helped to establish the blockbuster film as a cult object beyond the usual 'hype,' long queues, and crowded cinemas.[29]

In his essay "Fixing a Heritage," Stan Jones states that "[n]ow that the film trilogy has had its global first run, its extended DVD editions and TV showing, it has entered film/media history. In New Zealand, the media, tourism and related institutions are displaying a second phase of adapting and applying the fantasy of Middle Earth" (286). Jones goes on to disclose that "[t]he slogan 'Home of Middle Earth' is the final stage of an articulation which has already seen *The Lord of the Rings* place names applied to New Zealand geography, such as the "Hobbits' Tunnel" on State Highway 43 from Taumuranui to Stratford, the unsuccessful suggestion from the 1970s of naming peaks in the Southern Alps after middle Earth and the long-established

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[29] A film adaptation of Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) is currently being produced and directed by Jackson, and will be divided into two separate films: *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* is set for release in late-2012 whilst *The Hobbit: There and Back Again* is due out in late-2013.

commune 'Wilderland,' on the Coromandel peninsula" (ibid). Keenly aware of the branding potential *The Lord of the Rings* film series has on New Zealand as a geographical representation of 'Middle Earth,' Jones implies that specific areas of New Zealand have been 'cultified,' as it were, and now, due to the trilogy's grand scale and success, have be totally renamed, reshaped, and recast because of the sheer popularity of such cult texts.

Jones cites Thierry Jutel's essay "*Lord of the Rings*: Landscape, Transformation, and the Geography of the Virtual" (2004) as an important piece of early writing on the trilogy that specifically discusses the commodification of New Zealand in relation to *The Lord of the Rings* films. What set New Zealand apart from other countries around the world, says Jutel, is the nation's ability to "reinvent its location" (61).[30] "Maps constitute much of the appeal of Tolkien's books," claims Jutel, "[and] [t]he absorption in the imaginary topography of Middle Earth has provided much pleasure to readers over the years" (62). However, if one is to consider New Zealand a physical 'place' of fandom associated with *The Lord of the Rings*, then it seems that part of the pleasure in such a fan pilgrimage is derived from the close proximity or 'closeness' to some of the actual film sets used during the trilogy's production. Related to this latter point, Jutel notes that "it is New Zealand as film set that is valued as a tourist destination, through the space of Middle Earth: a mixture of the actual and the imaginary" (ibid). Similar to Brooker's investigation of the *Blade Runner* sites in L.A. and Bryman's discussion of fictive versus real spaces found in Disney pilgrimages mentioned above, Jutel's analysis of fan pilgrimages to New Zealand points to the difficulty in effectively creating a liminal experience through fantasy and play through *The Lord of the Rings* text.

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[30] For instance, Jutel points out that *The Last Samurai* (Zwick, 2003) used location shots where Mount Taranaki becomes Mount Fuji and in Jackson's *The Frighteners* (1996) the hills of Lyttleton Harbour are geographical substitutes for the American Pacific Northwest" (see 2004: 61).

In his essay "A Land of Make Believe," Ian Conrich observes the ways in which Jackson's film trilogy has been promoted inside of New Zealand and outside and throughout the global film industry, tourism industry, and global marketplace. Conrich states that while "Film New Zealand produced a poster-size map of New Zealand to promote *The Lord of the Rings* to trade, industry, and media figures just prior to the release of *The Fellowship of the Ring*" (132), "[s]uch profiting from the films…[had] been encouraged by [former] New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, who established a government budget to promote the country as the 'Home of Middle Earth' globally, and resituate it within the international cultural economy" (135). Efforts on the part of the New Zealand federal government to promote New Zealand through *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy not only points to their bureaucratic desire to further promote the film franchise – directed by one of their own citizens – but also to generate government revenue on the basis of place branding.[31] Based on this latter point, I want to suggest that *The Lord of the Rings* has now become the 'cult brand' of New Zealand.[32] Because "Air New Zealand became 'Airline to Middle Earth,'" and adorned "the fuselages of three planes – a Boeing 747, a Boeing 767, and an A320 Airbus" (135) with *The Lord of the Rings* decals and advertisements, New Zealand can be read as a 'national fan pilgrimage site' that, through such postmodern applications of tourism, promotion, and consumption, creates the taxonomical infrastructure on which the 'the postmodern pilgrim' is based. With its status as a forerunner of the cult blockbuster, *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy functions as a cult series that not only assists fan performance displayed by the postmodern pilgrim but also, and more importantly,

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[31] For further research on place branding consult the following works: Moilanen and Rainisto (2009), Anholt (2007), and Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006).

[32] See Paul Grainge (2008) for more a criticism of the blockbuster and its link to the Hollywood branding of fantasy franchises beyond Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

erects the notion of the 'blockbuster pilgrimage' and its ability to cross from niche fandom into

the mass audience and the mainstream film marketplace.

6   Abiding and Achieving: *The Big Lebowski* and The Performative Pilgrimage

Because of its unorthodox reception and creative admixture of community, ludic sensibilities, subsatorialisation, and fan performance, *The Big Lebowski* (hereafter *Lebowski*) represents a type of cult film that goes well beyond traditional notions of fan behavior through its mobility and transmediation. Indeed, *Lebowski* gained a second – and some may say more appreciative – audience upon its release on home video, on DVD (Digital Versatile Disc), and as a late-night movie on cable television. Considered less of an auteurist breakthrough for the Coens and more of a rejected cinematic oddity during its initial theatrical release, *Lebowski* soon was excavated by a unique fanbase in the early part of the 21st century, especially with the rise of the Internet and the so-called 'digital age.' And with the creation of the festival-cum-fan pilgrimage known as Lebowski Fest, *Lebowski* can be reconsidered as a cult text that relies predominantly on its national *and* transnational fan pilgrimage sites as succinct microcosms of extratextual fan performance, much like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and Matt Hills' earlier reworking of the concept of subcultural capital detailed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 6, however, intends to investigate the narrative, repeat viewing practices, fan documentation, and itinerantextuality of *Lebowski* through a reevaluation of the film, its niche audience, and the ways in which the film has been refitted into a 'pilgrimitised' mode of consumption. I intend to use *Lebowski* as my main case study to argue towards a more refined strategy of theorising the performative pilgrimage and its implications on cult media and influence upon the consumption of American popular culture in general. First, I will begin this chapter by providing an overview of the critical literature on *Leowski* and the debate surrounding the film's authorship as either part of the Coen Brothers' film œuvre or the fan-driven cult phenomenon. Second, I will turn my attention to repeat viewings and *Lebowski*, and how the

theories of Barbara Klinger fit alongside notions of community, play, fashion, and performance already articulated earlier in Chapters 1 through 4. Thirdly, I utilise Klinger's research to act as a springboard toward understanding the fan behavior found in Eddie Chung's *The Achievers*, a documentary about the growth and popularity of the (now) annual Lebowski Fest and its attendance by *Lebowski* devotees in and outside of the United States.

Relying on both on its real-life fan performances as proof of subcultural capital and its sporadic fan pilgrimages via Lebowski Fest as touristic yet transitory moments of cult film consumption, I argue that *Lebowski* can be alternatively categorised as an itinerantextual cult film. For my purposes and the overall trajectory of this chapter, the itinerantextual cult film is defined not only it terms of its apparent hybridity between mobility and textuality but, moreover, through the mobility of its fans and their individual and collective performances which reconsider, reassign, and at times reject the text and its multiple meanings.

6.1   Taking *The Big Lebowski* Seriously

Given the nature of *Lebowski*'s comedic narrative, its association with being a Coen Brothers film, and its memorable characters and dialogue, there may be those that question why I wish to 'study' *Lebowski*, and treat the film as a work which merits serious academic discourse. However, my intention is to go beyond the textual analysis of *Lebowski* and instead focus on its fans and extratextual consumption. Indeed, a select group of texts have already discussed *Lebowski* in terms of its narrative as an homage to the detective fiction of Raymond Chandler (Bergan 2000: 187; Palmer 2004: 53); its place among other Coen absurdist comedies (Conrad 2009; Rowell 2007; Russell 2000); its religion of 'Dudeism' (Benjamin and Eustey 2011; Mathijs and Sexton 2011: 59; The Church of Latter Day Dude 2011); and its presence in fan fiction (Bertocci 2010). What much of these insights and criticisms dwell upon the most is the

intricacy of the film's plot and its ability to eschew typical frameworks of pastiche and intertextuality in a blatant attempt to defy genre altogether.

But what is it precisely that makes the narrative of *Lebowski* a major element of inquiry and/or concern? And what impact does it have on the methods of fan consumption? Whilst these questions are important in order to deconstruct the layers of what constitutes *Lebowski* as a significance cult film, it is best to first provide a brief synopsis of the film. *Lebowski* begins at the edge of the desert frontier, on a desolate sage-brushed plain in the 'middle of nowhere.' Suddenly, on the edge of the frontier appears the city of Los Angeles with its twinkling lights and urban sprawl. The setting, according to the non-diegetic narrator named the Stranger (Sam Elliott), is the early-1990s during the time when the United States was still in the midst of war between Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi people.

The spectator is introduced to the Dude, Jeffrey Lebowski ("the man for his time and place"), who talks, dresses, and acts like something of an anachronistic enigma. The Dude is a former hippie and present Venice Beach 'stoner'/'slacker' who, upon his return home from Ralph's grocery store to pick up some 'half and half' – to no doubt mix in his signature 'White Russian' cocktail – is suddenly accosted by two of Jackie Treehorn's (Ben Gazzara) thugs. The two intruders, having 'broken into' the Dude's apartment while he went to Ralph's, intend to question the Dude and seek retribution for their boss. Whilst an unnamed blonde man (Mark Pellegrino) submerges the Dude's head into the bathroom's toilet bowl as a crude and torturous form of interrogation, his accomplice, Woo (Philip Moon) goes one step further and 'pees' on The Dude's living room rug. In our first instance of mistaken identity, it is revealed that the Dude is *not* the same Jeffrey Lebowski (David Huddleston), a so-called millionaire, the thugs are looking for and whose wife, Bunny Lebowski (Tara Reid), owes money to Treehorn, a porn tycoon who resides in Malibu.

However, the Dude soon meets and confronts the millionaire Lebowski at his L.A. mansion about compensation for his 'soiled' rug. After technically stealing a replacement rug from the millionaire's mansion and figuring that his life is back in order, the Dude – upon receiving a voice message from Brandt (Philip Seymour Hoffman), the millionaire's butler, that Bunny has been kidnapped – agrees to meet with Lebowski and assist with the investigation of Bunny, taking on the role of amateur 'gumshoe' throughout the remainder of the film. When the Dude is not acting as courier for the $1 million ransom money or pondering the reasons behind Bunny's sudden disappearance, he enjoys bowling with his friends Walter (John Goodman) and Donny (Steve Buscemi). The three are part of a bowling team that plan to participate in an upcoming league tournament, yet must face Jesus (John Turturro), a former paedophile (or as Walter calls him 'a pederast') and prisoner of Chino penetentiary and Liam (James G. Hoosier), his bowling partner, to advance to the next round of 'league play.'

The Dude further encounters Maude (Julianne Moore), Lebowski's daughter, an avant-garde painter, and feminist; Little Larry Sellers (Jesse Flanagan), a pre-teen who supposedly stole the briefcase containing the ransom money; and a group of German nihilists, headed by Uli Kunkel (aka: Karl Hungus) (Peter Stormare), who feigned the kidnapping of Bunny, but ultimately threatened castration upon the Dude. As Walter and the Dude battle the nihilists outside of the bowling alley, Donny suffers a major heart attack and dies. The movie concludes with the Dude preparing for the semi-finals of the bowling tournament as the Stranger reappears and reminds the viewer that he was the one telling the story of the Dude – a story that creates its own mythology and folklore whilst still remaining American in context.

Like the film's complex diegesis, the initial fan consumption of Lebowski originated through discussion of the film's textuality as well as its cachet in American popular culture. In their book-length study of *Lebowski*, J. M. Tyree and Ben Walters state that "[i]n July 2002, two

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bored vendors at the Derby City Tattoo Expo in Louisville, Kentucky, began quoting lines from *The Big Lebowski* to entertain themselves" (7). Through their ability to interpret and reinterpret the narrative of *Lebowski* primarily through the dialogue spoken by its characters, Will Russell and Scott Shuffitt – the two former vendors – represent the *first* fans to have consumed and shared *Lebowski* on both a linguistic and cultural level to other fans. Indeed, Russell and Shuffitt would go on further to establish and maintain their subcultural capital and personal investment with the cult text of *Lebowski* through the construction of Lebowski Fest.

One of the reasons I consider *Lebowski* to be emblematic of fan performance and consumption in cult film is because of its fanbase and their classification as 'achievers.' In their co-authored introduction to *The Year's Work in Lebowski Studies*, Edward P. Comentale and Aaron Jaffe state that "[a]*chiever*…was the preferred nomenclature, the name that the *Lebowski* fans self-applied" (18) and that "the Dude's trademark verb – *to abide* – is contrasted with Lebowski's – *to achieve*" (20). Comentale and Jaffe point both to the issue of nomenclature and irony in the classification of *Lebowski* fans as achievers. Through its reference to the Little Lebowski Urban Achievers, an educational program helmed by Lebowski for L.A. disenfranchised kids, the label of 'achiever' can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Pedagogically, the term can refer to fans of *Lebowski* seeking betterment *and* achievement through learning, and thus being educated, by the persona, actions, words, and philosophy of the Dude. Another approach is to see the fan labeling as a social signifier, a term that immediately generates and points to a sense of self-worth. Thus, 'achievers' who attend the real-life pilgrimage of Lebowski Fest not only attain greater subcultural capital but a greater sense of self-worth and belonging through notions of community (detailed in Chapter 1).

6.2   Repeat Viewings, Replay Culture, and *The Big Lebowski*

Repeat viewings of *Lebowski* further harness the film's ability to be memorised and consumed by fans, particularly at real-life fan pilgrimages such as Lebowski Fest. In her text *Beyond the Multiplex*, Barbara Klinger states that "[r]epetition…is a cornerstone of the consumer's experience of entertainment that has the potential to be as enjoyable as it is inescapable" (136). "Foreknowledge of the story alters the narrative experience by lessening the tension associated with suspense," continues Klinger, "[and] once viewers are conversant with a comedy's jokes, for example, they look forward to the laughs they know these jokes will bring" (154). She goes on to say that "[n]o matter what the specific subcommunity happens to be, viewers identify repeatable classics both to secure distinction (including infamy) with the broader peer culture and to display mass cultural prowess within their own group" (162). Like Hills in Chapter 4 taking about fan hierarchies and subcultural capital, so too does Klinger emphasise repeat viewing as a way for fans to 'master' the film through memorisation of the dialogue and use this linguistic knowledge as a key component in a more oral rather than corporeal fan performance. This also grants the fan the ability to position him or herself amidst the hierarchy of other *Lebowski* fans.

Klinger elaborates upon the significance and practicality of dialogue in *Lebowski* as everyday language in her essay "Say It Again, Sam." She states that "[i]n this world of apparently trivial pursuits, the Lebowski Fest's origin story provides a different, but related view of quotation's importance: it represents the potent role dialogue plays, not only in expressing fan enthusiasm, but in building organized fandoms from the ground up. By memorizing dialogue, Russell and Shuffit internalized the Coen [Brothers] film so fully that they could spontaneously repeat the script's choice parts for sustained mutual entertainment" ("Say It Again, Sam" 2008). Klinger further notes that "[t]his example further indicates that a film's quotability – its existence

as a source of catchphrases that become part of a collective discourse – plays a vital role in its attainment of long-term popularity" (ibid). For Klinger, *Lebowski* should *not* be considered a very unique case of repeat viewing, by any means. She claims that "[o]ver the last twenty-five years an especially intensive 'replay culture' has developed, owing to the increased horizontal and vertical integration of corporations owning media concerns…[and] the growing number of exhibition windows for media texts" (ibid). If replay culture is fostered through the attainment and ownership of home video, televisual, and digital formats, *Lebowski* fans may use these more domesticated forms of fan consumption as a means of preparation for the annual Lebowski Fest. As Klinger notes, "replay culture acts as a mnemonic device" (ibid). If, however, memorisation of dialogue is placed as a high premium in the *Lebowski* fan community, then the real-life performative pilgrimage acts as an arena to showcase a kind of 'mnemonic subcultural liveness' that bears a similarity to *Rocky Horror* fandom, without, of course, such coercive ramifications like those disclosed by Weinstock in Chapter 4.

Klinger also refers to the work of Erving Goffman when relating cinematic dialogue to everyday conversations and interactions. She states that "the viewer's immersion in dialogue vividly demonstrates how, through repetition, films are personalized, brought so close that they provide a means of self and social identification, including gender identification…[and] [that] [t]he kind of familiarity bred by repeated contact with a title enables it to become a part of a viewer's identity…[and] the theatricality of everyday life" (ibid). Through a revamping of Goffmanian everydayness, the theory of performance vis-à-vis replay culture further questions what is being 'replayed' – that is, either the film text, the fan performances, or the two in tandem.

Which brings me to Klinger's most recent study of fandom and *The Big Lebowski* titled "Becoming cult: *The Big Lebowski*, replay culture and male fans." She begins her article by returning to the initially poor reception and critical acclaim of the film: "[it] earned only $17.5

million in the USA, barely recouping its $15 million budget. Although the film proceeded to gross an additional $29 million in film theatres abroad, its reputation as a box-office failure endured" (1). However, Klinger goes on to claim that through a renewed sense of 'replay culture,' "*Lebowski*'s success prompts reflection on the impact of a hyperactive sphere of ancillary exhibition on the contemporary film experience, including the substantial influence of television and the internet on films and their fans" (3). "As a film is domesticated, scenes, characters and dialogue may be burned into the viewer's memory, becoming signature aspects of meaning and pleasure and, possibly, providing common ground for the title's collective appreciation," contends Klinger, "[and] domestication may encourage fans to recycle films themselves via blog reviews or DIY [do-it-yourself] internet parodies" (4). Klinger also reveals that *Lebowski* "appeared in staggered rereleases in the US home market, including reissues on laser disc and DVD in 1998, on VHS and DVD in 1999, and on cable and satellite channel USA beginning in 2000" (5).

It is important to stress here that the "replay culture" referred to here relates strictly to the textual memorisation of *Lebowski* by the fan. But what happens when fan performance through dialogue is challenged through other forms of performance such as play, costume, and a transitory reassignment of gender roles and behavior at Lebowski Fest? This point is significant because Klinger mentions Chung's *The Achievers* as a mediatised interpretation of Lebowski Fest as fan pilgrimage, to which the next section will seek to reassess.

6.3   Retaken Identities: *The Big Lebowski* and Eddie Chung's *The Achievers*

In her study of the performative documentary mode, Stella Bruzzi notes that this approach to recording a slice of real-life is "a mode which emphasizes…the often hidden aspect of performance (153) and is one which "a masquerade of spontaneity can be seen to function at

an overt level" (ibid). *The Achievers* could be considered a performative documentary based on its link to Bruzzi's aforesaid notion of the masquerade (related also to subsartorialisation in Chapter 3). In addition, the documentary seems to portray Lebowski Fest as not only a fan gathering in a public space but instead as a performative pilgrimage – a real-life fan site wherein fan performances become the raison d'être for fans embarking on a collective pilgrimage.

The Achievers charts six consecutive years of Lebowski Fest from 2002 to 2008. The viewer – most likely a fan of *Lebowski* themselves – is treated to an 'insiders look' at the phenomenon of *Lebowski* through interviews with the real-life inspirations for the Dude (Jeff Dowd) and Walter (University of Southern California film professor Peter Exline); minor actors who were cast in the film such as Jerry Haleva (Saddam Hussein in the Dude's 'dream' sequence), Luis Colina (the red corvette owner); and special guest appearances such as the one featured at the 2005 Lebowski Fest in L.A., showcasing the musical talent of Bridges as he sings and strums along to Bob Dylan's "The Man in Me" (1970) with the accompaniment of his other band members. With Lebowski Fest appearing to be divided into part costume contest and part bowling tournament, one may question if Lebowski Fest in Chung's film – as a performative pilgrimage documented in a performative documentary – is an effective means of affirming mastery over the film through dialogue and mnemonic subcultural liveness, as mentioned earlier by Klinger. If Klinger pointed to the domestication of *Lebowski* even in the early years of the film's fanbase, what purpose (and advantage) does the real-life performative pilgrimage have against its mediatised counterpart?

Although the viewer witnesses a combination of interviews with fans, organisers, and experts, two fans in particular appear to be put in the limelight by Chung: Stormy and Andy. Stormy, from the outskirts of Chicago, Illinois and Andy, from the outskirts of Louisville, Kentucky not only represent enthusiastic and knowledgeable fans of *Lebowski*, but were also

among the first forum members to be a part of the LebowskiFest.com online community. The spectator first meets Stormy when she is in costume as 'The Walrus' at the 2008 Lebowski Fest in Chicago. She has been chasing the first place prize in the annual Lebowski trivia contest for four years and, in spite of her subcultural capital and dedication to mnemonic mastery, is overshadowed by the victory of fellow fan Joe Blevins. About midway through the documentary, the spectator reunites with Stormy and, having gone back several years, witnesses her talking to the camera while she is receiving a tattoo on her upper right leg of a meditating Maude in Viking regalia, at a local tattoo parlor.

Here, the relationship between fandom and the art of tattooing forms a unique form of subcultural capital and a permanent bodily marker of personal investment toward *Lebowski*. Margo DeMello's *Bodies of Inscription* remains one of the few studies to devote any considerable attention to the history of tattooing and its consumption as a form of body art in Western culture. According to DeMello, "the tattoo has always been a metaphor of difference. It has represented different things at different times, but ultimately the tattoo has always been seen as the mark of the primitive. The tattoo attracts and also repels precisely because it is different" (13). As "the mark of the primitive," Stormy's tattoo of Maude not only functions as a signifier for the character and her unique feminist agenda, but also relates to communal rituals (detailed in Chapter 1) in addition to subcultural hierarchies (discussed in Chapter 4) and the need for acceptance within cult fan communities.

Along with Stormy's tattoo acting as a permanent symbol of her *Lebowski* fandom, she is also a working class, single mother of two young boys. Interestingly, she does not hide or in any way repress her fandom towards *Lebowski* from them. Whilst she states that they have seen the 'censored version' of the film via the Comedy Central television channel, her youngest son supports her fandom by drawing pictures of Walter whilst her eldest son helps his mum

memorise trivia through flashcard exercises, thus further enhancing the mnemonic tendencies of replay culture articulated earlier by Klinger. In her next round of trivia Stormy wins 1st place in the trivia contest at the Lebowski Fest in Chicago, and chooses to retire from playing trivia altogether. Nathan Hunt, notwithstanding his focus on the science fiction fan community, nevertheless presents a possible way of interpreting the purpose of fan trivia and trivia contests, which avoids criticisms towards these activities as being merely frivolous. Through emphasising the "ways in which trivia work as a form of cultural capital within fandom" (186), Hunt states that "[t]rivia are used to establish who is an insider and to declare others to be outsiders who do not have the right to participate within fandom" (ibid). Hunt goes on to say that "trivia are important exactly because its value can be recognized only by insiders" (198). In an effort to establish her subcultural capital both corporeally (with a tattoo) and competitively (through trivia), Stormy is a fan whose purpose within the fan community is to challenge the way one consumes *Lebowski* on both a personal and collective level.

Unlike Stormy, however, Andy's consumption of *Lebowski* is connected to friendship and with the consumption practice of fan collecting. At Andy's house in a Louisville suburb, the viewer witnesses him barbequing alongside other *Lebowski* fans from the online forum, during the forum members' 'cookout' in 2004. Andy discusses his fellow forum members as being a kind of 'extended family' and whom are individuals he genuinely enjoys 'hanging out with.' He then proceeds to give Chung and *The Achiever*'s film crew a short tour of his house. Despite the fact that his wife Chandra vehemently dislikes *Lebowski*, she tolerates Andy's 'obsessive consumption' of *Lebowski* and cult media in general. Andy highlights the presence of fan memorabilia on the walls of his home including an autographed The Dead Milkmen picture (a punk rock band originally from Philadelphia), an original film poster of the low-budget horror/sci-fi film *The Flesh Eaters* (Curtis, 1964), and items related to the filmography of George

A. Romero. In this way, Andy is refraining from any sense of replay culture or mnemonic tendencies like that of Stormy and earlier theorised by Klinger, but rather points to new avenues of studying the fans of *Lebowski* as collectors of cult media. Indeed, these amassed quantities of ancillary mementoes can be perceived as 'fan museums' which preserve subcultural capital whilst also defining personal taste and status within that particular fan hierarchy.

6.4   Down the Trail: *The Big Lebowski* as Itinerantextual Cult Film

Klinger's theories of replay culture and Chung's film about the fans of *Lebowski* both point to the film's ability to travel textually, extratextually, and even *intra*textually on both the physical and digital frontier. While Klinger has argued above that *Lebowski* grew out of the tradition of home video and therefore was first consumed by fans in a more domestic setting, I argue, instead, that *Lebowski* via Lebowski Fest acts not just as a performative pilgrimage but has instead foregrounded a specific kind of cult film: the itinerantextual cult film. The itinerantextual cult film exists and is consumed by fans in a liminal space between mobility and textuality.

Although *Lebowski* has retooled and reappropriated concepts pertaining to community, ritual, play, and subsartorialisation that were rooted in the original consumption of *Rocky Horror* (as detailed in Chapter 4), *Rocky Horror* remains more of a localised pilgrimage than performative pilgrimage on the scale of Lebowski Fest. Whilst both films and fanbases rely on a degree of subcultural liveness by their fans to effectively 'perform' their fandom of the text, *Lebowski* contains a more touristic element that places it more alongside *Blade Runner* and *The Lord of the Rings* (both discussed in Chapter 5) as being commercialised and consumed by fans on the basis of their place branding. However, this notion of place branding is further complicated when one considers that Lebowski Fest's location changes annually, and that now

Lebowski Fest competes with more amateur, make-shift celebrations of the film on a more localised scale.

As an itinerantextual cult film, *Lebowski* illustrates the significance of real-life fan pilgrimages over the domestic and digital consumption of cult media. Through the performative pilgrimage of Lebowski Fest, *Lebowski* has become not only one of the most popular films to attend amongst other fans, but one of the most popular events to attend in general in and outside of the United States. Because of its fluidity, mobility, and itinerantextuality between home video and public festival space, the 'eventness' of *Lebowski* also becomes more intertwined with its metaperformances than actual screen performances. Therefore, the itinerantextual cult film may prove more contradictory than cooperative with typical notions of travel and its relationship to the cult text. And while it's clear that *Lebowski* defies genre classification and encourages its fans to perform their fandom through play, dress, and real-life attendance at Lebowski Fest, what still remains uncertain is the longevity of such performative pilgrimage and the commitment fans make to taking comfort among strangers later on down the trail.

CONCLUSION: **Paradoxical Pathos and Future Paths in Fan Mobility Studies**

We are each time an other, each time with others.

- Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural* (2000: 35)

By theorising the fan as pilgrim through the itinerant fan taxonomies of the ludic pilgrim, the subsartorial pilgrim, the performative pilgrim, and the postmodern pilgrim, one of the goals of this thesis was to craft an appropriate lexicon to be utilised in future studies of fan mobilities. Through a rebooting, refurbishing, and remapping of the parameters of fan pilgrimage by way of a concise rubric, my ultimate hope would be that such a systematic inquiry brings 'fan mobility studies' to the forefront of cult audience and fan discourse.

In retrospect, this project began with a socio-anthropological reassessment of theories regarding community, communitas, and performance studies in Chapter 1, in order to help shape a re-reading of Schechner through fan pilgrimage as a hybrid type of 'mobile performance' I termed performative communitas. In reevaluating the theories of Bauman, Turner, and Aden through Schechner, it becomes clear that, to some extent, fan pilgrimage is rooted in our sociological need for social bonding and self-discovery. In Chapter 2 my first itinerant fan taxonomy of the ludic pilgrim, rested on the historical and theoretical expertise of Huizinga and Caillois to then trace the roots of play theory, the 'doing' of fan mimesis in public space, and the sartorial performance of the *otaku* subculture. Indeed, as my main case study for this chapter, it would appear that the *otaku* illustrate a combination of performative communitas and ludicity through the group's ability to champion costume as a strictly material means by which to 'perform' their fandom for a particular cult text – be it a film, *manga*, or video game character.

In Chapter 3, I proceeded to then explore my second itinerant fan taxonomy: the subsartorial pilgrim. This chapter focused on how fan attire can play a central role in the 'styling' and eventual 'cultification' of fashion through fan pilgrimage preparation and habiliment. Through the concept of subsartorial masquerade, I investigated the goth subculture through a number of key theorists including Hodkinson and Spooner as well as films including *Edward Scissorhands*, *Donnie Darko*, and *Ginger Snaps*. Through the process of subsartorial vampirism, via the research of Williamson and Mellins, I sought to articulate how fan performance *literally* materialises through both the purchase of and DIY attitude toward the creation of functional and original subcultural vesture.

In Chapter 4, my main focus spotlighted a core issue in studies of authenticity and fan consumption: live versus mediatised performance. Via my concept of subcultural liveness and the legendary (though highly transgressive) fandom of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, I not only posited ways in which the performative pilgrim functions as an embodiment of subcultural liveness, but I also learned that a certain type of negative subculture liveness exists in the literature surrounding *Rocky Horror*: that which I termed 'coercive performance.' Furthermore, I studied how fans of *Rocky Horror* communicate their performative communitas through an ability to generate an audience *for* the audience, and not the film text, per se. Instead, my third itinerant fan taxonomy of the performative pilgrim signaled the significance of the *mise-en-spectateur* during midnight screenings of *Rocky Horror*. The *mise-en-spectateur* is a concept which requires further finessing in future studies yet nevertheless ushers forth a greater degree of meta-performance in the consumption of the 'live' cult film screenings such as *Rocky Horror*.

In looking at tourism in greater depth, I arrived, in Chapter 5, at my fourth itinerant fan taxonomy of the postmodern pilgrim. The theoretical model of the postmodern pilgrim aided in my study of touristic deathgazing, neo-dandyism, *Blade Runner* fandom in L.A., Disney and

nostalgic pilgrimage, and blockbuster pilgrimage through the case study of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and branding phenomenon. Out of all the chapters in this thesis, Chapter 5 is the one in which I feel the most confident to expand upon during future research into the relationship between place branding and fan mobilities. In fact, the topic of fan tourism via studies of 'cartographical capital' and fan mobilities in the blockbuster film and popular culture may serve to be a suitable topic for a dissertation on the relationship between cult film and the 'branding' of select fan sites and spaces.

As a fan of *The Big Lebowski*, I was keen to explore the film in greater depth in Chapter 6, focusing on its well-documented and ever burgeoning fandom through the (now) annual fan pilgrimage of Lebowski Fest. As the culmination of my research on itinerant fan taxonomies and cartographical capital, I considered *Lebowski* as an examplar of the itinerantextual cult film. The itinerantextual cult film encapsulates all of the previous modes and incarnations of the fan as pilgrim through a concise re-reading of the critical literature of Barbara Klinger via Chung's *The Achievers*. Based on my research and findings, I believe that future studies into the limitations of the itinerantextual film exists will help determine to what extent a particular fan audience is willing to 'perform' their fandom through theories of community, play, fashion, and fan pilgrimage.

Whilst it is difficult to prognosticate the future of fan mobility studies at the present moment, there may be equally rich opportunities in the future to study itinerantextuality beyond the discipline of film studies and, in particular, the study of cult film. To be sure, the influence of television on fan pilgrimage (Brooker 2007: 149-64; Couldry 2007: 139-48; Sterry 1998: 363-73) has pointed to a recent body of critical literature on how popular television programmes in the U.S. and UK have been promoted in and through growing fandom and touristic initiatives. However, with television being situated most commonly in the everyday *oikos*, such televisual

fan pilgrimages hold their own anomalies and contradictions that problematise notions of escapism, 'space,' and the meaning behind this kind of fan mobility. Given a future opportunity to resume my research into itinerantextuality, fan mobilities, and cult film and media, the use of qualitative research may prove beneficial in order to move my argument from theory into practice. By way of an audience sample and a concise empirical investigation, I could use surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and general observation to determine to what extent itinerantextual media is promoted and consumed on the basis of fandom, technological advancement, and corporate conglomeration.

In many ways, this thesis came to fruition through its own singular and collaborative bonds, degrees of creativity and panache, and moments of cerebral dexterity and intellectual calisthenics. We may recall in Chapter 1 that Victor Turner held communitas to be a type of 'spiritual encounter' that converts the singular *into* the plural, or the individual *into* the collective whole through liminality and social bonding beyond the habitus. In light of this, I wish conclude my project on a philosophical note. "Being together is being at the same time," writes Jean-Luc Nancy in *Being Singular Plural*, "[and] '[s]ame time/same place' assumes that 'subjects'…share this space-time, but not in the extrinsic sense of 'sharing'; they must share it between *themselves*; they must themselves 'symbolize' it as the 'same space-time' without which there would not be time or space" (60-1; emphasis in original). Philosophically, Nancy connects the singular-plural dichotomy to a more phenomenological approach to subjectivity and collectivity. If we are to consider fan pilgrimage and the itinerantextual cult film as *both* a singular *and* plural 'event' with its own tailored space, aspects of performance, and characteristic mobility, then perhaps such a form of ambivalent ambulation points to its underlying agenda: an existence within a state of flux, but *always* in motion.

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