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Special Section: Children's Films

The Technocratic Momentum after 1945, the Development of Teaching Machines, and Sobering Results

Daniel Tröhler

Professor of Education at the University of Luxembourg

Abstract • This article investigates the development of new teaching ideologies in the context of the technocratic ideology of the Cold War. These ideologies did not simply vanish after 1989. The catchwords were "programmed instruction" and "teaching machines", accompanied by the promise that all students would make efficient learning progress. Although eastern and western states fought the Cold War over political ideologies, their teaching ideologies (perhaps surprisingly) converged. This may explain why neither the apparent failure of these educational ideologies nor the end of the Cold War led to the modification of the ideologies themselves, but rather to the modification of devices serving the ideologies.

Keywords • behaviorism, Burrhus Skinner, cognition psychology, Cold War, Jerome Bruner, programmed instruction, teaching machines, Sputnik

Walter Heller, the economic advisor to the president of the United States, said in his keynote address to the plenary session of the first conference about education held by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in October 1961 that educational issues were of utmost importance and therefore should not be left entirely to the professional stakeholders in the educational field. "May I say that, in this context, the fight for education is too important to be left solely to the educators."[1]

The notion of fighting for education expressed in this speech is not misleading. It refers to the first national law on education that the United States Congress ever passed, that is, the National Defense Education Act of 1958, which was implemented in direct response to the *Sputnik* satellite launched by the Soviet Union on 4 October 1957. The alleged technological lead that the Soviets had won over the United States had triggered a fundamental national crisis that would prove to have far-reaching consequences for education and daily life. For the first time in US history, education became a national issue after having previously been a local issue. This transcendence expresses a more widespread understanding of problems as the result of deficits in

the education system. This reaction originated in the late eighteenth century and was usually related to social problems.[2] During the Cold War, however, it was used to address the lack of technological competence, which was alleged to have a considerable impact on economic and military development. Whereas the process of "educationalization" around 1800 was based on questions regarding civic progress and uncertainty,[3] during the Cold War it fostered school subjects such as mathematics and sciences in the global martial contest for world domination. The medical historian Thomas Bonner found widespread support when he wrote, in 1958, that, "Science and education have now become the main battleground of the Cold War. It is upon education that the fate of our way of life depends. It means that the outcome of a third world war may be decided in the classroom."[4]

This educationalization of the Cold War was of course by no means limited to the western world. In the Soviet Union in 1958 the president, Nikita Khrushchev, launched an educational reform in secondary education in order to "revive technical and vocational emphasis."[5] Although the importance of the state's educational ambitions for the armed forces was rarely explicit, such ambitions were frequently expressed in military language. It is no coincidence that in the United States one of the leaders of this educationalization of the Cold War was Hyman Rickover, a vice admiral of the United States Navy and "father of the Nuclear Navy"[6] who took an interest in education during the Cold War. "Education is Our First Line of Defense – Make it Strong" was the title of the first chapter of Rickover's book *Education and Freedom*, published in 1959 eighteen months after the launching of Sputnik.[7]

Rickover's commitment to educational questions at the end of the 1950s was not an exception within educational history but part of a broader cultural shift that had begun[8] in the early 1950s and later began to dominate global policy in education via transnational organizations such as the OECD. It included an alliance between economists, high ranking military officers, scientists, and psychologists including, initially, behavioral psychologists and, later, cognitive psychologists (who were often considered to be the heirs of behavioral psychologists). Philipp Coombs, who also held a keynote speech alongside Walter Heller at the OECD conference on education in October 1961, was an economist who became the head of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning in 1963. Coombs held the position until 1968, when he published his best-selling *The World Educational Crisis*.[9] The head of the OECD committee who addressed questions concerning education at that time was Alexander

King, a British chemist who was assisted by James Ronald Gass, a British social scientist who, according to the Norwegian economist and deputy undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs Kjell Eide, did "not know much about education."[10]

The aim of this article is to show that, during the Cold War in the 1950s, a fundamental educational shift affected the curricula of the countries involved, and that specific organizations (primarily the OEEC and its successor OECD, but also the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning) provided the organizational framework for this educationalized ideology – an ideology which continues to exert its influence on nation-states to this day. The different strategies connected with this educationalization of the Cold War were partially compatible, but not mutually coordinated. They were strongly influenced by specific modes of successful problem-solving strategies developed during the Second World War in institutions such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, and the Manhattan Project. In these settings it was not only politicians, scientists, and engineers who were involved in cooperative teamwork, but also psychologists, who developed methods of testing individual abilities, strategies in applied social psychology, and programs of instruction and training. The two stars in educational reforms since the late 1950s, Torsten Husén in Europe and Jerome Bruner in the United States, had both been military psychologists during the Second World War. By virtue of their participation in these war programs these psychologists were able to understand problems in the language of science, which defines relations in a causal way and uses notions such as input, output, and rational control system.[11] When, in the late 1950s, these former military psychologists were requested to help to reform education, they translated the complex and non-causal cultural system of education into a technological system that could be "steered."[12] Against this background, it is not surprising that Bruner, at an education conference sponsored by the US Air Force in Woods Hole, Massachusetts (after Sputnik in 1959), noted that, by reforming education "the entire array of possible alternatives that might be created by using existing or newly developed technologies … from scratch" and that "the goals of education … expressed in terms of the human functions and tasks to be performed … can be as exactly and objectively specified as can the human functions and tasks in the Atlas Weapon System."[13]

This (largely western) technocratic culture (of which this article deals exclusively with the last) include the following aspects:

1. At the level of governance this new strategy challenged the democratic idea of local school boards. Locally elected laymen were now meant to implement the theories of central experts. The general assumption of the expert-driven democracy was "That democracy is best, in which people participate least."[14]

2. These experts based their educational vision on the human capital theory (the expansion of education as *investment*[15]) and the vision of useful knowledge, including languages, sciences, and mathematics (curricular reform).[16]

3. The experts based their education policy decisions on the results of cognitive psychology tests in schools and comparative statistics.[17]

4. It was thought that this new ideology would spread across the world via transnational organizations such as UNESCO or the OECD and national institutions such as the Max Planck Institute for Education (founded in 1963).[18]

5. Teaching of school subjects should become efficient and individual; the catchword was "programmed instruction", and its central instrument was the teaching machine.

The following exploration reflects the development of new teaching ideologies in the context of the overall technocratic ideology of the Cold War, ideologies that persisted after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989.[19] The article explores the way in which the new teaching ideology had become possible in the context of the Cold War, and how it found expression in teaching machines and in programmed instruction (often in combination with cybernetics). The third part will show how (after Sputnik and the educationalization of the Cold War) these new teaching methods were supported and how this support affected unprecedented research activities. The final section shows how the failure of this ideology did not lead to an intelligent modification of the ideology but to the modification of the devices serving the ideology.

The New Science of Learning, Military Anxiety, and Education in the 1950s

When the Cold War was educationalized after the shock of Sputnik in 1957, a limited amount of relevant and suitable (new) theories of learning and education were available. In 1953, when McCarthyism was at its peak the behaviorist and former military psychologist B. Skinner published his landmark book, *Science and Human Behavior*.[20] During the Second World War Skinner had trained pigeons for use in steering Pelican missiles and in the book he translated his insights into pigeon training ("operant conditioning") to the human sphere. A year later his

article "The Science of Learning and the Art of Teaching"[21] transferred learning theory developed with the pigeons ("Science of Learning") to education ("Art of Teaching").

Learning is understood as behavior, and desired behavior is caused by the "reinforcement" of provoked "effects" of specific, prepared conditions.[22] The advantage Skinners recognizes in this "positive reinforcement" technique is that (for the first time, Skinner argues) it builds on positive feedback and not on aversive feedback. Whereas the old pedagogy had been based on the child's fear of being punished by the rod, the movement called "progressive education" had only seemingly moderated this brutal practice, for "… anyone who visits the lower grades of the average school today will observe that a change has been made, not from aversive to positive control, but from one form of aversive stimulation to another."[23] In the old system, whether traditional or progressive, the teacher cannot escape mistreating the learner:

> The child at his desk, filling in his work book, is behaving primarily to escape from the threat of a series of minor aversive events: the teacher's displeasure, the criticism or ridicule of his classmates, an ignominious showing in a competition, low marks, a trip to the office "to be talked to" by the principal, or a word to the parent who may still resort to the birch rod.[24]

Wrong reinforcement is one of the problems of the "old" system(s), of which Skinner lists another three. First he addresses the time span between fulfillment of the task by the learner and the reinforcement by another. "Many seconds or minutes intervene between the child's response and the teacher's reinforcement … it is surprising that this system has any effect whatsoever."[25] Immediate reinforcement is one of the necessities, a "skillful program which moves forward through a series of progressive approximations to the final complex behavior desired" is another,[26] and the "frequency of reinforcement" is the third. The result is that, "The condition in the average school is a matter of widespread national concern. Modern children simply do not learn arithmetic quickly or well."[27] Instead of being dedicated to clearly defined progressions of learning targets, the modern teacher is caught up in unclear expectations brought about by progressive philosophy, according to which, "Skills are minimized in favor of vague achievements, educating for democracy, educating the whole child, educating for life, and so on."[28] When Skinner published his propaganda article about more effective ways of teaching in 1954, John Dewey had been dead for two years. Dewey was the epitome of progressive

education,[29] and was accused of having introduced an inefficient and possibly misguided way of teaching in the United States.

In the view of the new, science-based paradigm in education, American teachers had been seduced by the false ideals of progressive education instead of becoming committed to a modern technological worldview. Indeed, the ideals of education advocated by the American teachers as they had been formulated in 1961 by the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, were health, worthy home membership, vocational competence, effective citizenship, worthy use of leisure, ethical character, self-realization, human relationships, economic efficiency and civic responsibility. However, they did not include the mastery of school subjects.[30]

After Sputnik, these ideals were condemned as inappropriate or even dangerous, and they were interpreted as educational practices that weakened the strength of the nation and thus paved the way for the dominance of Soviet communism. After Sputnik, in December 1957, *Time Magazine* reported on education in the United States. In the article, Vice-Admiral Hyman Rickover was asked about the efficiency and purposefulness of the American school system. Angrily he said that, "If the local school continued to teach such pleasant subjects as 'Life adjustment' and 'How to know when you are really in love,' instead of French and physics, its diploma would be, for all the world to see, inferior."[31] It is in this context Rickover postulated, for the first time national standards and a system of incentives:

> In some fashion we must devise a way to introduce uniform standards into American education. It would be best to set up a private agency, a Council of Scholars, financed by our colleges and universities as a joint undertaking – or perhaps by Foundations. This council would set a national standard for the high school diploma, as well as for the scholastic competence of teachers. High schools accepting this standard would receive official accreditation, somewhat on the order of the accreditation given medical schools and hospitals.[32]

Stakeholders at the intersection of the sciences, the military, and the economy asked for fundamental change, involving more sciences in the curriculum and more science-based modes of teaching. The former president of the United States Herbert Hoover declared after Sputnik that,

> The trouble is that we are turning out annually from our institutions of higher education perhaps fewer than half as many scientists and engineers as we did seven years ago. The

> greatest enemies of all mankind, the Communists, are turning out twice or possibly three times as many as we do. Our higher institutions of learning have the capacity to train the recruits we need. The harsh fact is that the high schools are not preparing youngsters for the entrance requirements which must be maintained by our institutions training scientists and engineers.[33]

Skinner did not wait long, and published an article as early as 1958 in which he propagated his ideas of teaching machines, defining his ideas on operant conditioning.

Teaching Machines and Programmed Learning

Skinner started advocating his teaching machines in 1954, the same year that he transferred his insights from pigeon training to education. He produced a film in which he demonstrated the effects of his new teaching method.[34] In the film, he praises the teaching machine as "a device which creates vastly improved conditions for effective studying."[35] The machine looks like this:

(Place Tröhler photo1. here/not included in online version)

Figure 1. Skinner teaching machine.

In the film, Skinner goes on to explain the function of the teaching machine with the same rationale developed in his article, "Science of Learning and the Art of Teaching": "With the machine you have just seen in use, the student sees a bit of text, or rather printed material, in a window." This bit could be a "sentence or two, or an equation in arithmetic." However, this bit is not complete; some "small part is missing, and the student must supply it by writing on an exposed strip of paper." According to the created problem the student's response "may be an answer to a question or the solution of a problem, but generally it is simply a symbol or word, which completes the material he has just read." The great advantage of this kind of learning, says Skinner, is that as "soon as the student has written his response, he operates the machine and learns immediately whether he is right or wrong. This is a great improvement over the system in which papers are corrected by a teacher, where the student must wait perhaps till another day to learn whether or not what he has written is right."[36]

Skinner [37] sees three fundamental advantages to the machine: immediacy, individuality, perfectibility:

1. *Immediacy:* Immediate feedback has two effects: (1) “It leads most rapidly to the formation of correct behavior. The student quickly learns to be right,” (2) “The student is free of uncertainty or anxiety about his success or failure.” Skinner says this makes “work … pleasurable.” Coercion is no longer needed, for a “classroom in which machines are being used is usually the scene of intense concentration.”
2. *Individuality:* The machine allows the student “to move at his own pace.” Therefore, it solves the problem of traditional teaching “in which a whole class is forced to move forward together, the bright student wastes time waiting for others to catch up, and the slow student, who may not be inferior in any other respect, is forced to go too fast.”
3. *Perfectibility:* A third feature of this propagated machine teaching is that “each student follows a carefully constructed program.” This program leads “from the initial stage, where he is wholly unfamiliar with the subject, to a final stage in which he is competent.” The student progresses “by taking a large number of very small steps, arranged in a coherent order. Each step is so small that he is almost certain to take it correctly.”

The presence of small steps increases the chance of success, and success in turn motivates the student to continue (“positive reinforcement”). Skinner promises that this setting is not only better in terms of motivation but also in terms of efficiency. “A conservative estimate seems to be that with these machines, the average grade or high school student can cover about twice as much material with the same amount of time and effort as with traditional classroom techniques.”[38]

In 1958, in the wake of Sputnik, the National Defense Education Act had set aside 70,000,000 dollars annually for subsequent years “for the acquisition of teaching equipment (suitable for use in providing education in science, mathematics, or modern foreign languages),”[39] and Skinner was supported in the further development of this teaching machine.

To legitimate his teaching ideology, Skinner published an article about teaching machines in the journal *Science* in October 1958.[40] Not surprisingly, the article starts with a comment on the need for more education and for more effective education. “There are more people in the world than ever before, and a far greater part of them want an education. The demand cannot be met simply by building more schools and training more teachers. Education must become more efficient.”[41] The growing size of the classes, says Skinner, may render the student “more and more a mere passive receiver of instruction.”[42] Skinner mentions earlier attempts to design

teaching machines by Sidney Pressey, a psychology professor at Ohio State University, but reminds us that in those days learning theories had not been well developed. This had changed in the meantime, Skinner argues. “The learning process is now much better understood. Much of what we know has come from studying the behavior of lower organisms, but the results hold surprisingly well for human subjects.”[43] However, what works with regard to “the behavior of lower organisms often cannot be arranged by hand; rather elaborate apparatus is needed. The human organism requires even more subtle instrumentation.”[44]

In the article Skinner repeats his main argument from his text of 1954, criticizing the “old” way of teaching, criticizing John Dewey for not having had a real alternative to the old drill school, and propagating his teaching machine for effective learning (a “science of behavior”[45]) in mathematics, foreign languages, and high school physics. Here, Skinner admits that the “machine itself, of course, does not teach.” However, it “brings the student into contact with the person who composed the material it presents. It is a labor-saving device because it can bring one programmer into contact with an indefinite number of students. This may suggest mass production, but the effect upon each student is surprisingly like that of a private tutor.”[46] The reference person for the student is no longer the teacher but the programmer. It is of no surprise that stakeholders in the late 1950s supported efforts to develop the teaching machine, for it complemented another idea on instructing with minimum emphasis on teachers, again developed by the intersection of army and psychology, namely, the idea of “programmed learning” developed by the Air Force around 1955.

Programmed Learning and the Anxieties of the Cold War

In 1955, a year after Skinner had launched the idea of a teaching machine that promised to instruct students more efficiently than the old ways of teaching, two psychologists (Guy Besnard and Leslie Briggs), an Air Force lieutenant (George Mursch), and a member of the technical staff at Hughes Aircraft (Elbert Walker), published a brochure entitled *Development of the Subject-Matter Trainer,*[47] in which the idea of programmed instruction was explained for the first time. According to the authors, an ideal “device” should “provide opportunity for effective individual and group study of the adjustment and check procedures to be learned.”[48] In accordance with Skinner’s ideas, students should “receive automatic guidance and information as to the correctness or incorrectness of each response made” and that this would “[free] the instructor to

work with students performing on the equipment." If the device was "versatile enough" to offer the students "practice in a great variety of learning problems," it should be capable of being used "regardless of the student's previous degree of knowledge of the problem at hand."[49]

A couple of months later, Besnard, Briggs, and Walker published another twelve-page brochure, *The Improved Subject-Matter Trainer.*[50] Here again, the idea of programmed instruction was favored, and the "device" was developed "to permit students to practice and learn technical subject matter under conditions of reinforced practice with minimum aid of the instructor." Six modes of operation had been designed, five learning modes and one test mode, through which the student could learn effectively.[51]

Between 1955 and 1957 the notion of "programmed learning" was used mostly in Air Force contexts or in training for medical assistants. However, after Sputnik (in October 1957) the idea became a global one. The Instructional Service of the National Education Association, contracted to the US Education Office to promote the "National Defense Education Act," and organized propaganda initiatives in which people like Wilbur Lang Schramm, a professor of English who had served in the Second World War in the department of propaganda (where he became familiar with behaviorism), served as propagandists.

In 1962 Schramm published a seventy-four-page booklet called *Programmed Instruction Today and Tomorrow.*[52] The publisher was the Fund for the Advancement of Education, an initiative of the Ford Foundation, which in 1968 became the co-sponsor of the Center of Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) at the OECD and later nurtured PISA. The purpose of the booklet was to popularize Skinner's idea of programmed instruction. In his half-page introduction, Schramm promised what every reformer in education had always promised, that is, to break with tradition and begin completely anew. "Programed instruction" was of "revolutionary significance" for the education system, for it served to free schools and every individual learner from the "bonds of the past."[53] The first chapter outlined the general idea. "Programmed instruction" replaces the teacher's role from the student's point of view and induces the learner to specific desired ways of behavior. Programmed instruction can be executed by textbooks, but also by teaching machines. Schramm emphasized that the program consists of a series of statements where the student has to fill in a gap in the text or answer a question or tick a multiple choice option. The pupil should immediately receive a response to his behavior. To give pupils a sense of success, the program should be formulated such that each

learning step is so small that the learner selects the right answers most of the time.[54] The success of this propaganda in the nervous culture of the Cold War is demonstrated by the large number of publications addressing the subject. In English language publications, the notion of "programmed instruction" was used in twenty-three different articles or chapters in 1957 andin 379 different articles or chapters in 1962.[55]

(Place Tröhler Figure 1 about here /not included in online version)

After 1958, the two ideas of the teaching machine and programmed learning were often mentioned together and not infrequently combined with cybernetics. In Germany, for instance, where the first evidence of discussions about American language laboratories and teaching machines appeared in 1960[56] and 1961,[57] a symposium was held in 1963 in Nürtingen about *Teaching Machines from a Cybernetic and Educational Point of View (Lehrmaschinen in kybernetischer und pädagogischer Sicht).*[58] The same year, an international conference took place in Berlin called *Programmed Instruction and Teaching Machines,* which included a panel on "cybernetics in relation to programmed instruction" organized by the editor of the Nürtingen symposium.[59] In 1964, the *Lexicon of Programmed Instruction (Wörterbuch Programmierter Unterricht)* was published with the subtitle *Short Terminology List of Cybernetic Education,* (*Kleine Terminologie der kybernetischen Pädagogik).*[60]

Not least due to specific translations, such as Schramm's *Programed Instruction Today and Tomorrow* or Robert Mager's *Preparing Objectives for Programmed Instruction (Lernziele und Programmierter Unterricht),* the idea of teaching machines and programmed instruction became popular in Europe. In Germany the number of publications with either programmed instruction or teaching machine in the title rose from six in 1960 to over 170 in 1963.

(Place Tröhler Figure 2 about here)

The "enemies" behind the iron curtain carried pursued similar explorations. They too started to investigate programmed instruction and teaching machines, as Hartmut Vogt reported in 1965 in a booklet entitled, *Programmed Instruction and Teaching Machines in Academies and Professional Schools in the Soviet Union (Programmierter Unterricht und Lehrmaschinen an*

Hoch- und Fachschulen der Sowjetunion).[61] As early as 1962, the journal *Questions of Psychology* (Вопросы психологии) reported on the *Implementation of Some Psychological Principles in Teaching Machines in the USA* (*Реализация некоторых психологических принципов в обучающих машинах в США*).[62] Programmed instruction, based in part on findings from animal psychology, was not affected by the deep political and ideological differences between the West and East; both sides found it relevant. Moreover, it served the interests of two political leaders who were striving towards global dominance, as the illustrations for publications in the Soviet Union shows:

(Place Tröhler Figure 3 about here)

The Unteachable Reformers

After 1960 several teaching machines and even more textbooks were produced, based on programmed instruction. At the same time language laboratories became popular. Schools invested a lot of money in laboratories to make learning easier than before. Extremely complex efforts were undertaken to "program" knowledge in an infallible way. The idea that both the human mind and the facts of the subject matter were prearranged in an analogue way had already been advanced by some eighteenth century philosophers and reinforced at the Woods Hole conference in 1959, with the supported of the Air Force, the RAND cooperation and the National Academy of Sciences, under the leadership of Jerome Bruner. The general psychological idea underlying the reform was that "intellectual activity" (the cognitive process) is uniform in principle, regardless of a person's age or situation. The conviction was that, "intellectual activity anywhere is the same, whether at the frontier of knowledge or in a third grade classroom."[63] However, not only the human intellect, but also academic and school disciplines were uniform. To learn a discipline at school, the participants at the Woods Hole conference claimed, was basically to learn its "structure". This learning of structure was claimed to be the "heart of the educational process,"[64] which meant that every discipline had a general "idea" or "basic or underlying principle" that needed to be learned by the student. Decisions concerning curricular content should be taken by experts. "The decision as to what should be taught … is a decision that can best be reached with the aid of those with a high degree of vision and competence"[65] in the academic disciplines and was not a decision to be made by elected school boards.

However, the challenges encountered when constructing ideal programs that served the individual's capacities were severe and, after ten years, led to disillusionment. Textbooks dispensed with the idea of gap texts to be filled in from the late 1970s. Those teaching machines that were developed (and sold), such as Brigg's Subject Matter Trainer, PLATO, Socrates, CLASS-System, Promentaboy, MIN/MAX III, Unitutor, Mitsi 2023, Geromat or Robbimat,[66] have disappeared and are largely unknown to modern historians of education, and language laboratories have been removed from schools and colleges.

However, out of sight is not out of mind. The general idea that education is a technological system that should be steered like a technical system has not disappeared. When the discussions about more efficiency in schooling started to label traditional policy as "input-steering" and to compare it with the allegedly more efficient "output-" or "outcome-steering", this technocratic thinking gave rise to a dichotomy. Experts (the former programmers) define standards in subject matter, while schools are "free" (autonomous) in their choice of methods to achieve these standards. To ensure compliance from the schools, incentives serve as motivation in the same way that Skinner used bread with his hungry pigeons, rewarding them after they had been trained to play a sort of table tennis, as he proudly recounted in 1954.[67]

The shift in educational policy from "input" to "output" was possible with the shift from behaviorism to cognitive psychology. Whereas behaviorism aimed to create desired behavior as defined by experts, cognitive psychology measures desired competencies as defined by experts. Both systems try to minimize the role of teachers in both their public role and in their daily interaction, and both systems view the democratic process as one which is potentially opposed to so-called experts. Both systems view the teacher as a coach, who implements defaults defined by experts. It is no coincidence that, in 1963, when programmed instruction and teaching machines were attracting the attention of education policy-makers, the secretary of the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel, Alexander King, was lambasting criticism by national delegates who accused him of integrating so-called experts without asking the members. King told them that they were simply not familiar enough with the issues to evaluate the Committee's work.[68] Chester Finn, a tireless promoter of standards in American schools, described the local school boards in the United States as "living fossils of an earlier age."[69] The right to the Western ideals of participation and self-determination was not considered adequate by those in power.

It is part of this cultural heritage that those who fail do not question either the aspiration or the approach, but rather the technology. How else could we understand the current initiative of Idaho's superintendent Tom Luna[70] who, on the basis of the alleged bad PISA results (output steering), wants to improve school outcomes by using computer-based online learning programs (input steering) and to cover the investment by reducing teachers' salaries?[71] William Pinar reports that a 2011 Idaho state legislature initiative passed a law "requiring all high school students to take online classes in order to graduate."[72] Similar to an initiative in North Carolina, "the state promised to provide all students and their teachers [with] laptops or tablets." However, "to pay for these purchases, the state shifted tens of millions of dollars away from teacher salaries. State bureaucrats also announced a shift in the role of teachers, who, they announced, would no longer be 'lecturers,' standing at the front of classrooms." Here the idea of the teacher as "coach" or "guide" came up again. "Teachers would be 'guides,' their teaching focused only on helping students complete whatever lessons appeared on those computer screens (Richtel 4 January 2012, A1, B4)."[73]

The army-run laboratories during the Second World War had developed an efficient way of solving problems. These problems were not social, concerning questions of equity, justice, or freedom, but military, concerning weapons, survival, and killing. This method of problem-solving was designed to be adapted to the postwar period. In 1944, President Roosevelt asked Vannevar Bush, a trained engineer and initiator of the Manhattan Project, to prepare a report on the question, "What can be done, consistent with military security, and with the prior approval of the military authorities, to make known to the world as soon as possible the contributions which have been made during our war effort to scientific knowledge?"[74] Bush's report, entitled *Science The Endless Frontier*, delivered on 25 July 1945 to President Harry Truman, closely recounted the future fight against disease, defense against aggressors, and the establishment of a welfare state to promote "new knowledge" that "can be obtained only through basic scientific research."[75] Scientific work involved teamwork by experts, as practised during the Second World War: "Science can be effective in the national welfare only as a member of a team, whether the conditions be peace or war. But without scientific progress no amount of achievement in other directions can insure our health, prosperity, and security as a nation in the modern world."[76] Science education as a program designed to ensure the "renewal of our scientific talent"[77] was of

the highest importance for the future. The history of education over the last sixty years is testament to the success of this commitment.

This technocratic and technological educational culture was activated after Sputnik and implemented as a strategy towards global salvation against the new enemy, the Soviet Union. The problem was that the Soviet Union had a similar agenda, and claimed to be on the path towards freedom, welfare, and justice. Both ideologies and systems relied on reforming education on the basis of principles of central expertise, technological innovation, and supporting psychology. Against this background it is not surprising that the differences between Western and Eastern educational reforms during the Cold War were much smaller than the overall ideological differences would suggest. The technocratic movement, which gained momentum in the laboratories of the Second World War, had no frontier, and still exerts an influence. A broader historical investigation into this transnational discourse of salvation and its materialization in teaching media and devices has still to be carried out.

* A first version of this article was presented in the special working group "Educational media in comparative perspective" on occasion of the annual ISCHE meeting at the University of Geneva, 27-30 June 2012 (28 June). I thank Eckhardt Fuchs for inviting me to this group.

Notes

[1] OECD, *Policy Conference on Economic Growth and Investment in Education, Washington, DC, 16–20 October 1961* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 1961), 35.

[2] Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe, *Educational Research: the Educationalization of Social Problems* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009).

[3] Daniel Tröhler, "The Educationalization of the Modern World. Progress, Passion, and the Protestant Promise of Education," in *Languages of Education: Protestant Legacies, National Identities, and Global Aspirations*, ed. D. Tröhler (New York: Routledge. 2011), 21-36.

[4] Thomas Bonner, "Sputniks and the Educational Crisis in America," *The Journal for Higher Education* 29 (1958): 178.

[5] William Tompson, *Khrushchev. A Political Life* (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 1995), 192 ff.

[6] R. Wallace, "A Deluge of Honors for an Exasperating Admiral," *TIME Magazine*, 8 September 1958, 104-106, 109-116, 118.

[7] Hyman Rickover, *Education and Freedom* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1959). Rickover's "counterpart" in the Soviet Union was the Navy Admiral Aksel Ivanovich Berg, the head of the Soviet Naval Research Institute from 1947 to 1957, and Deputy Minister of Defense from 1953 to 1957. In 1958, Berg founded the Scientific Council of Complex Problems and published several books and articles on programmed learning and cybernetics, which were translated into English. See А. И. Берг, *Кибернетику на службу коммунизму* (Moscow, 1961) and Aksel Ivanovich Berg, *Cybernetics at the Service of Communism – USSR* (Washington: US Department of Commerce, Office of Technical Services, Joint Publications Research Service, 1962).

[8] In historical analyses the notion of "start" is a vulnerable one. "Start" is used to mean "becoming evident" or "becoming visible," and I am not inclined to say that there were no forerunners.

[9] Philipp Coombs, *The World Educational Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

[10] Kjell Eide, *30 Years of Educational Collaboration in the OECD* (Oslo: Royal Ministry of Education and Research, 1990), 9.

[11] John Rudolph, *Scientists in the Classroom. The Cold War Reconstruction of American Science Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

[12] This idea reflects a broader attempt to overcome, often with the catchword of cybernetics, the traditional separation between two human cultures, that is, a hard (technology) and a soft (literature, philosophy) culture. "It is the thesis of this book that society can only be understood through a study of the messages and the communication facilities which belong to it; and that in the future development of these messages and communication facilities, messages between man and machines, between machines and man, and between machine and machine, are destined to play an ever-increasing part." See Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use of Human Beings* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), 16. This idea became popular in the Soviet Union not least in the context of teacher education; see Samuil Braynes, Anatoliy Napalkov, and Vladislav Svechinskiy, *Problems of Neurocybernetics* (Moscow, 1959); Victor Glushkov, *About General Aspect of Cybernetics. Transcript of Lectures, Read at the Seminar of Teacher Training* (Kiev, 1960); Берг, *Кибернетику*.

[13] Jerome Bruner, cited in Rudolph, *Scientists in the Classroom*, 94, 99.

[14] Joseph Schmupeter, cited in Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 48.

[15] Burton Weisbrod, "Education and Investment in Human Capital," *Journal of Political Economy* 70 (1962): 106-123.

[16] OECD, Harold Stoke, Hans Löwbeer, and Jean Capelle, *Modernizing Our Schools. Curriculum Improvement and Educational Development* (Paris: OECD, 1966).

[17] F. Keppel, *The Necessary Revolution in American Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

[18] Daniel Tröhler, "Change Management in the Governance of Schooling. The Rise of Experts, Planners, and Statistics in the Early OECD," *Teachers College Record* (forthcoming).

[19] Daniel Tröhler, "Harmonizing the Educational Globe. World Polity, Cultural Features, and the Challenges to Educational Research," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 29 (2010): 7-29.

[20] B. Skinner, *Science and Human Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).
[21] B. Skinner, "The Science of Learning and the Art of Teaching," in *Programmed Learning*, ed. W. Smith and J. Moore (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1966 (first published in 1954)), 34-48.
[22] Skinner, "The Science of Learning," 19.
[23] Ibid., 24.
[24] Idem.
[25] Ibid., 24f.
[26] Ibid., 25.
[27] Ibid., 26.
[28] Ibid., 27.
[29] It is of no importance whether John Dewey's alleged "fatherhood" of progressive education is right or not, for he was believed to be at the origin of this movement.
[30] Educational Policies Commission, *The Central Purpose of American Education* (Washington, DC: Educational Policies Commission, 1961).
[31] Hyman Rickover, "Education. What Price Life Adjustment?" *Time Magazine*, 2 December 1957, LXX (23).
[32] Rickover, "Education: What Price Life Adjustment?"
[33] Idem.
[34] B. Skinner, *Teaching Machines and Programmed Learning* (film), 1954. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTH3ob1IRFo&feature=related.
[35] I thank Viktoria Boretska and Caroline Galiatsos for transcribing the film about teaching machines, which is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTH3ob1IRFo&feature=related.
[36] Skinner, *Teaching Machines and Programmed Learning*, film narration.
[37] Idem.
[38] Idem.
[39] US Congress. National Defence Education Act 1958, section 301.
[40] B. Skinner, "Teaching Machines," *Science* 128 (24 October 1958): 969-977.
[41] Ibid., 969.
[42] Idem.
[43] Ibid., 970.
[44] Idem.
[45] Ibid., 976.
[46] Ibid., 971.
[47] Guy Besnard, Leslie Briggs, George Mursch, and Elbert Walker, *Development of the Subject-Matter Trainer (AFPTRC, Armament Systems Personnel Research Laboratory* (Tech. memo, ASPRL-TM-55-7, March 1955).
[48] Idem.
[49] Idem.
[50] Guy Besnard, Leslie Briggs, George Mursch, and Elbert Walker, *The Improved Subject-Matter Trainer (AFPTRC, Armament Systems Personnel Research Laboratory* (Tech. memo, ASPRL-TM-55-11, April 1955).
[51] "Each of the practice modes, while providing knowledge of the correctness or incorrectness of each response the student makes, gives varying amounts of assistance to the student, depending upon his own speed of learning and previous knowledge of the subject matter. … The test mode of operation, usable in both classroom and laboratory, provides for testing students following learning sessions with the device. Two types of automatic scoring during practice are also provided," http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=AD0487936.
[52] Wilbur Schramm, *Programmed Instruction for Today and Tomorrow* (New York: Society for the Advancement of Education, 1961.
[53] Schramm, *Programmed Instruction*, 5.
[54] Ibid., 6.
[55] I thank Franziska Sophie Hirt, Viktoria Boretska, and Ekaterina Belousova for their help when putting together these bibliographies.
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[57] Wolfgang Fischer, "Die amerikanische Lehrmaschine," *Die Neue Sammlung* 1 (1961): 368-383.
[58] Helmar G. Frank (Ed.), *Lehrmaschinen in kybernetischer und pädagogischer Sicht (Referate der ersten deutschen Lehrmaschinentagung Nürtinger Symposium 1963).* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett; Munich: Oldenburg, 1963).

[59] Helmar G. Frank, "Kybernetik und Lehrmaschinen," in *Lehrmaschinen*, Helmar G. Frank, ed., 13-27.

[60] *Wörterbuch Programmierter Unterricht: kleine Terminologie der kybernetischen Pädagogik* (Munich: Manz, 1964).

[61] Harmut Vogt, *Programmierter Unterricht und Lehrmaschinen an Hoch- und Fachschulen der Sowjetunion: Studie zum Bildungswettlauf zwischen Ost und West* (Munich: Manz, 1965).

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[63] Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 16.

[64] Bruner, *The Process of Education*, 17.

[65] Bruner, *The Process of Education*, 19.

[66] See C. Thomas, *Überblick zur historischen Entwicklung von computerunterstützten Lehr- und Lernsystemen* (Bakkalaureatsarbeit, Technische Universität Dresden, 2006) (elearn.inf.tu-dresden.de/history/ba.pdf

[67] Skinner, "The science of learning," 20.

[68] OECD Archives, *Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel, Record of the 7th Session held at the Château de la Muette, Paris, 26-28 June 1963*, STP/M(63)2 (Paris: OECD Archives), 9f.

[69] Chester E. Finn, *We Must Take Charge of Our Schools and Our Future* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 32

[70] In 2012 Presidential candidate Mitt Romney named Luna to his 19-member education policy advisory group (http://www.idahopress.com/news/state/mitt-romney-taps-idaho-superintendent-of-public-instruction-tom-luna/article_1e2a801e-a630-11e1-90c1-001a4bcf887a.html)

[71] Tom Luna's ideas are available at: http://educationidaho.blogspot.ch/2012/01/superintendent-luna-provides-update-on.html

[72] William Pinar, "The End of Public Education in the United States," Unpublished paper presented at the University of Luxembourg, 18 September 2012. The paper will be published in William Pinar, *Curriculum Studies in the United States: Present Circumstances, Intellectual Histories* (New York: Palgrave Pivot, forthcoming).

[73] Pinar, *The End of Public Education*, 19. Idaho is no exception; the faith in programming learning for the sake of a better economy; Idaho Governor C. L. Otter doesn't understand the oppositions against the superintendent's initiative, commenting that "putting technology into students' hands" was the "only way to prepare them for the workforce" (quoted in Pinar, 2012, p. 20). In Mooresville, North Carolina, "Apple has already plundered Mooresville's public budget." For each student a "MacBook Air was leased from Apple for $215 a year, including warranty, for a total of $1 million; an additional $100,000 a year was allocated for software." Technology saves money in terms of on-site workforce: "Sixty-five jobs were eliminated, including 37 teaching positions, which resulted in larger class sizes – but district officials insisted that instruction was now more efficient due to the technology" (Pinar, 2012, p. 17).

[74] Vannear Bush, *Science The Endless Frontier: A Report to the President by Vannevar Bush, Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, July 1945* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1945) http://www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/nsf50/vbush1945.htm (accessed 15 June 2013).

[75] Bush, *Science The Endless Frontier*, Summary section.

[76] Bush, *Science The Endless Frontier*, Summary section.

[77] Bush, *Science The Endless Frontier*, Chapter 4.

Problematic Portrayals and Contentious Content: Representation of the Holocaust in English History Textbooks

Stuart Foster and Adrian Burgess

Stuart Foster is Professor of Education and Executive Director in the IOE's Centre for Holocaust Education, University of London

Adrian Burgess is Research and Evaluation Officer in the Centre for Holocaust Education, Institute of Education, University of London

Abstract • This article reports on a study into the ways in which the Holocaust is portrayed in four school history textbooks in England. It offers detailed analysis and critical insights into the content of these textbooks, which are commonly used to support the teaching of this compulsory aspect of the history National Curriculum to pupils aged eleven to fourteen. The study draws on a recent national report based on the responses of more than 2,000 teachers and explicitly uses the education guidelines of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) as a benchmark against which to evaluate the textbook content. It identifies a number of potentially alarming findings of which two themes predominate: a common tendency for textbooks to present an "Auschwitz-centric" "perpetrator narrative" and a widespread failure to sensitively present Jewish life and agency before, during and after the war. Ultimately, the article calls for the improvement of textbook content, but equally recognizes the need for teachers to be knowledgeable, judicious and critical when using textbooks in their classrooms.

Key words • England, history textbooks, Holocaust education, IHRA, National Curriculum

Introduction

The Holocaust has been a compulsory topic for inclusion within the National Curriculum for history in England since 1990.[1] Specifically, history teachers are directed to teach about the Holocaust within the first three years of pupils' secondary education (between the ages of eleven and fourteen).[2] Nevertheless, despite its mandatory inclusion in the National Curriculum, teachers are offered no specific guidance on how to teach this complex, potentially contentious and often emotive subject. Furthermore, the curriculum does not detail what specific content should be covered in the study of the Holocaust, nor does it stipulate how much curriculum time teachers should devote to the subject. Not

surprisingly, therefore, previous small-scale research and anecdotal evidence suggests that classroom practice varies widely and many teachers feel daunted by the challenges inherent in teaching this troubling and complicated episode in human history.[3]

In direct response to these demands and challenges, researchers at the Institute of Education, University of London (IOE) were commissioned to conduct a comprehensive analysis of teaching and learning about the Holocaust in England.[4] This led in 2009 to the publication of the IOE's national research report, *Teaching About the Holocaust in English Secondary Schools*: *An empirical study of national trends, perspectives and practice.*[5] The report was based on the responses of 2,108 secondary school teachers to a 54-question online survey and small-group follow-up interviews with 68 teachers at twenty-four different schools across England. This was the first and remains the only large-scale national research study into teaching and learning about the Holocaust conducted in England.

In the period since the national study, researchers at the IOE have engaged in a range of follow-up activities to more fully understand classroom practice in Holocaust education (e.g., conducting further interviews with teachers; producing case studies of selected schools; reviewing available educational programs for teachers). One area of subsequent investigation was the examination of school history textbooks.

The Holocaust and history textbooks: A national research study

A specific focus on history textbooks was deemed important because sixty-seven percent of teachers who responded to the online survey stated that they were "likely" to use textbooks when teaching about the Holocaust. Teacher interviews also revealed that history textbooks were considered a valuable educational resource, widely used in the classroom. [6] The rationale for a specific focus on textbooks is particularly compelling in a curriculum area that many teachers consider difficult and challenging. This is especially so given the IOE's report revealed widespread confusion on teaching aims, uncertainty about definitions, and potentially important gaps in subject knowledge. Of particular significance, 82.5 percent of teachers surveyed admitted that they had had no formal professional development in the subject and were primarily "self-taught".[7] In this context,

in addition to using textbooks as an educational resource, teachers often use them to develop their own subject knowledge. As one respondent explained,

> I think it was actually just reading a school history textbook and seeing that for the first time. Because I never studied it to any depth at all at school or university during my history degree, it has purely come from teaching and learning through textbooks.

Given the complexities and sensitivities of the subject and the evidence that many teachers lack detailed subject knowledge, it is perhaps not surprising that large numbers retreat to the safety of the textbook on the assumption that it offers accurate and appropriate content carefully selected by professional writers and specialist experts. For this reason, the importance of a detailed study of textbooks is readily apparent. Indeed, although it would be imprudent to suggest that textbook content easily translates into what teachers teach and pupils learn, analysis of school textbooks offers rich insights into the ways in which many pupils encounter and understand the Holocaust.[8]

Specific research into how the Holocaust is portrayed in school textbooks is also worth conducting because so few studies currently exist. Although a growing body of international research has emerged on the use of school history textbooks in general, only limited attention has been paid to textbook portrayals of the Holocaust in different nations.[9] Strikingly, moreover, no detailed textbook study focused solely on portrayals of the Holocaust has ever been published in the U. K.

The Textbook Sample and the Status of the Textbook in England

In many respects England is very unusual in matters of textbook production, selection, and use. Unlike many other countries, state regulated or "approved" textbooks do not exist. Rather, individual schools, and often individual teachers, are free to choose which textbooks to purchase from the open market. Not surprisingly, due to the potentially lucrative nature of this situation, a number of major publishing houses have emerged to dominate the textbook market. These publishers make every effort to ensure their books are relevant to the National Curriculum and attractive to schools by virtue of meeting

their needs. However, it is important to emphasize that schools have absolute freedom to choose which books they select and buy. A further particular characteristic of textbook provision in English schools is that no requirement exists to replace books on a regular basis. Thus, despite the existence of revised materials on the market, some schools continue to use history textbooks that are more than ten years old.

Following a wide-ranging review of secondary textbooks currently available on the market in England, a purposive sample was made of textbooks that met four criteria: they (a) were designed to provide an overview of key events of the twentieth century for pupils aged eleven to fourteen (i.e. they were general world history textbooks); (b) devoted specific, but proportionate attention to the Holocaust; (c) were produced by a major textbook publishing house for adoption in schools across the country; (d) were published since 1999. The table below details the four textbooks selected for analysis. Throughout the text, they are referred to as Book A, Book B, Book C, and Book D in keeping with the code outlined.

Table 1 here

Table 1. The four textbooks seleceted for analysis.

Methodology

Drawing upon the authors' previous research studies and methodological considerations raised by other scholars in the field of textbook research, the textbooks were analyzed using storyline, content and pictorial analysis.[10] Primary attention was given to qualitative content analysis; however, quantitative measures were used to explore relative emphasis on selected areas of content such as the number of sources authored by Nazi leaders or the priority given to the study of the Holocaust relative to other events of the twentieth century.

Analysis began with close readings and re-readings of the four textbook chapters, where a text-driven content analysis approach was adopted.[11] After initially working individually and deploying a "constant comparative" method through a close line-by-line reading of the text,[12] the authors came together to discuss and compare the emergent themes and initial codes, which had arisen. At this point it was decided that the emergent

themes - such as the uncritical use of Nazi euphemisms, the adoption of a 'perpetrator oriented perspective' (discussed below), along with the lack of attention to pre-war Jewish Life and the lack of Jewish agency - related to the findings of the 2009 IOE report, which could be used as an *explicit* context.[13] In addition, it was agreed that an *external* and explicit benchmark should be used, against which textbook content could be legitimately evaluated. As Krippendorff insists, "[We as c]ontent analysis researchers [...] must do our best to explicate what we are doing and describe how we derive our judgments."[14] This, he argues, operates as a guard against the unchecked tendency toward "applying our individual worldviews to texts and enacting our interest in what those texts mean to us."[15]

Accordingly, the educational guidelines of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (commonly referred to as the IHRA guidelines) were employed for this purpose. The IHRA is an intergovernmental body, supported by more than 30 member states, whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research both nationally and internationally. The IHRA guidelines for teachers cover five primary areas including recommendations on "why, what and how to teach about the Holocaust" and are internationally recognized as key guiding principles for intelligent and sensitive Holocaust education (see www.holocausttaskforce.org/). Nevertheless, the authors are aware that the guidelines are in themselves texts that allow for multiple readings and furthermore, inevitably, represent a certain set of positions within the field of Holocaust education. As such, they are utilized here as an explicit and public rather than "objective" benchmark. However, an examination of some of the major institutions operating in the field, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations (UN), the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, provides significant support for the general acceptance of the IHRA guidelines. Moreover, the guidelines were written by a committee that included authors from a number of the leading organizations in the field, including the USHMM, Yad Vashem, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Memorial and Museum and the Imperial War Museum in London. [16]

Overall, analysis of the selected textbooks exposed a complex range of interrelated issues, many of which are beyond the scope of this article; they included: the

explicit and implicit aims of the textbook, the pedagogy of textbooks, textbook language and definitions of the Holocaust, and the use of Holocaust imagery. Nevertheless, two themes, "perpetrator narrative" and "Jewish life and agency", proved particularly salient. These two themes provide the organizational structure for the findings presented in the following sections.

Textbook Analysis and Findings

Theme One: Textbook Content and "Perpetrator Narrative"

The detailed IHRA guidelines which focus on content, i.e. "what to teach about the Holocaust", emphasize four important areas. First, they recommend that, rather than teaching about the subject as a separate area of study, the "Holocaust must be studied in the context of European and global history as a whole to give pupils a perspective on the precedents and circumstances that contributed to it." Second, the guidelines advocate that in order for pupils to truly appreciate the complexities of the subject, they must be introduced to a range of perspectives, including those of the victims, perpetrators, collaborators, bystanders and rescuers, and to a detailed understanding of key content areas relating to the periods before, during and after the war.[17] Third, IHRA guidelines suggest that to understand the Holocaust on a human level, pupils must undertake a "meaningful exploration of the motivation, thoughts, feelings, and actions of people in the past" by directly studying primary source materials such as "letters, diaries, newspapers, speeches, works of art, orders, and official documents". Finally, the guidelines stress the importance of ensuring that pupils do not assimilate the language or perspective of the perpetrator. For example, they point out that bureaucratic euphemisms like "the Final Solution" must only be used critically and not employed "to describe the historical event". Similarly, the guidelines strongly recommend that teachers alert pupils "to the fact that the perpetrators produced much of the evidence of the Holocaust" and avoid the danger of viewing events only "through the eyes of the perpetrators." Implicit in the guidelines is the recommendation that teachers avoid over-emphasizing the actions of the Nazis and their followers. Instead they are encouraged to devote thoughtful attention to studying the Holocaust from a range of perspectives in order to give pupils a more detailed and intelligent understanding of the complexity of events.

In relation to typical practice in England, the 2009 IOE report revealed that one of the most commonly reported challenges to teaching about the Holocaust was deciding what content to cover within an average of just five or six lessons. Detailed analysis of the topics that teachers reported including in their teaching suggested that, rather than exploring victims' responses to persecution and genocide, teachers are more likely to focus on what may be termed *perpetrator-oriented* narratives: narratives that focus on the actions of the Nazis and their collaborators and position Jewish people and other persecuted groups as objects rather than subjects of study.[18] Two content areas dominate teachers' coverage of this period; First, the events of the 1930s, including Hitler's rise to power and the Nazi state; propaganda and stereotyping; persecution of the Jews; the Nuremberg Laws and "*Kristallnacht*"; second, an explicit focus on Auschwitz-Birkenau. Other key aspects of the Holocaust, including the pre-war lives of Jewish people, important stages in the development of the Holocaust during the war years, and Jewish responses to the unfolding genocide received less attention.[19]

Of the four books analyzed, two books (A and B) proved particularly problematic in relation to the concerns raised by the 2009 IOE report and the recommendations of the IHRA. For example, in its six pages of text related to the Holocaust, Book B devoted almost exclusive attention to events in the death camps and at Auschwitz-Birkenau in particular. Opening with the dramatic heading "What was a death camp like?", set opposite a large photographic image of the train tracks running into Birkenau, the textbook focuses on disturbing accounts of life in the camp and the systematic and brutal murder of millions of Jews.

The book's focus on the death camps is prefaced by a brief account of the persecution of the Jews in the 1930s, the ghettos, and the execution squads that foreshadowed the death camps. However, beyond the plans and actions of the Nazi perpetrators, the book is almost completely devoid of context. The reader is offered no sense of pre-war Jewish life or of resistance to the Nazis, nor any sense or critical understanding of the Holocaust and its significance in the post-war world. Rather, young readers are introduced to disturbing images and accounts primarily authored by the perpetrators, with little, if any, contextual understanding. For example, of the ten sources included in Book B, nine are authored or presented from the perspective of the Nazis[20]

(these include the views of leading Nazis such as Heinrich Himmler and Rudolf Höss[21]). The only possible exception is an unattributed eyewitness who luridly describes "infants wailing in the fire" and a guard smashing a baby against a wall "until only a bloody mess remained in his hands." It further recounts how the mother was forced to take this 'mess' with her into the gas chamber".

Similarly, although Book A provides a little more context than Book B (for example, it devotes some attention to Jewish persecution in the 1930s and examines the issue of who was to "blame" for the Holocaust), in the central pages devoted to investigating "Who was responsible for the Final Solution?", six of the seven sources are authored by Nazis or Germans complicit in the genocide. Once again, the only source not written by a Nazi is a gruesome description, by Zalmen Gradowski, a Polish Jew, of how victims of the gas chambers were reduced to ashes in the camp furnaces:

> The furnace is opened and the stretcher pushed in. The hair catches light first. The skin swells and blisters, bursting open after a few seconds. Arms and legs twist, veins and nerves seize up and cause the limbs to jerk. By now the whole body is on fire, the skin splits open, fat spills out and you hear the fire sizzle. The stomach bursts. The intestines pour out and within a few minutes no trace remains (Book A: 101).

Accordingly, even when a Jewish person is introduced to the readers of these textbooks, they do not provide a broader understanding of other perspectives or of the wider Jewish experience during the 1930s and 1940s. These texts do nothing to "rehumanize" the victims, but rather sustain an exclusive focus on the brutal actions of the Nazi perpetrators.

Book D devotes nine pages to the study of the Holocaust. Under the compelling headline "The greatest crime in the history of the world" (a quote later attributed to Winston Churchill), Book D frames its focus around the central question, "Why is it so important to remember the Holocaust?" In its exploration of this important question the reader is provided with a two-page overview of the roots of antisemitism and Hitler's disposition to blame the Jews for Germany's problems during the 1930s. Strikingly

absent, however, is any detailed focus on the relationship between the prosecution of the war and the Holocaust. Instead, the establishment of and experiences in the ghettos, the actions of the *Einsatzgruppen*, the expansion of the camp system, and the development of killing centers are skipped over in two or three cursory sentences. The final three pages of the chapter briefly focus on resistance to the Nazis, how much people knew about the Holocaust during the war years (both within Germany and among the Allies), and the significance of the Holocaust to contemporary society. In summary however, consistent with other books aimed at young readers, it fails to offer any deep contextual understanding of events, nor does it provide testimony from a range of primary sources.

Book C follows a similar pattern to Book D in its nine-page investigation of the chapter's organizing question: "How did the Holocaust Happen?" The first three pages are devoted to a study of the history of antisemitism in general and a more specific focus on "the treatment of the Jews in Nazi Germany." Two pages focus on the establishment of ghettos in occupied Poland and the slaughter of "over two million people" by the *SS Einsatzgruppen* following the invasion of the USSR in June 1941. The following two pages center on events at Auschwitz and the "Final Solution", and the chapter concludes abruptly with a brief focus on resistance and "the German reaction" to the Holocaust at the end of the war. However, although the book does attend to particular areas of content in more detail than in other textbooks analyzed, it is similarly problematic to these in its use of primary source material. For example, of the ten sources employed to accompany the central narrative of wartime events (pages 90-93 inclusive), every written source is either written by a German or a Nazi officer and the five photographic sources typically show disturbing images of Jews as victims in the ghettos or the concentration camps (the captions to two selected photographs, for example, read: "Jewish women and children being led naked to the place where they will be killed"; "Prisoners putting a dead body into an oven in Auschwitz"). [22]

In overview, analysis of the four textbooks reveals that they typically fail to provide the necessary content to meet the guidelines advocated by the IHRA. No textbook, for example, provides readers with a range of perspectives from the viewpoints of victims, perpetrators, collaborators, bystanders, and rescuers; almost without exception, the textbooks do not provide a detailed understanding of key content areas

relating to the periods before, during and after the war. Potentially more problematic, however, is the fact that textbooks appear to reinforce and perpetuate a focus on perpetrator narratives. Source material typically derives from evidence drawn from members of the Nazi party and problematic terms like the "Final Solution" and "*Kristallnacht*" are used uncritically in all the books. Given that the IOE report revealed concerns about both the quality of teachers' substantive knowledge and their choice of content when teaching about the Holocaust[23], this textbook analysis raises further significant issues. Most importantly, it suggests that rather than providing teachers with access to robust content and a broad range of perspectives, history textbooks may instead exacerbate existing problems and support enduring misconceptions.

Theme Two: Textbook Content and Portrayals of Jewish Life and Agency

The second area of our textbook analysis is closely related to the previous one in that it critically examines how the experiences and perspectives of Jewish people before, during and after the war are portrayed and explained in the four selected history textbooks. In relation to this issue the IHRA guidelines are very clear and, once again, broadly center around four key recommendations. Most importantly, the IHRA guidelines emphasize that Jewish people should not be defined "solely in terms of the Holocaust". Rather, they advocate that a compelling need exists to portray Jewish life before and after the Holocaust "in order to make it clear that the Jewish people have a long history and rich cultural heritage." Above all, the guidelines stipulate that "[y]oung people should be aware of the enormous loss to contemporary world culture that resulted from the destruction of rich and vibrant Jewish communities in Europe."

The second major area of recommendation is that pupils and teachers "recognize that antisemitism is a worldwide and centuries-old phenomenon" which must be understood and contextualized. Similarly, the guidelines highlight that pupils should also appreciate that during the 1930s and 1940s many non-German individuals, agencies and governments willingly assisted in the persecution and murder of Jews. Thirdly, the guidelines emphasize the importance of individualizing the stories and personal experiences of those who lived through the Holocaust by introducing pupils to "case studies, survivor testimony, and letters and diaries from the period to show the human

experience". The guidelines stress the importance of avoiding portrayals of Jewish people as statistics or as a "faceless mass of victims" who are "dehumanized and degraded" by Nazi persecution and terror. Rather, the guidelines advocate that pupils must "understand that each 'statistic' was a real person, an individual with a life before the Holocaust, friends, and family." Finally, the guidelines specify that pupils should appreciate that Jewish people reacted to persecution, terror and murder in a variety of ways. For example, "there were many forms of resistance to Nazi persecution, from armed struggle to finding ways of maintaining human dignity even in the most extreme circumstances of the ghettos and the camps." The IHRA guidelines emphasize that it is important for young people to know that "the victims of the Nazis did not always passively accept their persecution" and to study how the victims responded, "the limits on their freedom of action, and the many different forms of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust."

Once again the IOE's analysis of teachers' topic choices, pedagogical practice and substantive knowledge in England revealed a number of key issues and concerns in relation to teaching about the Jewish experience before, during and after the Holocaust. For example, only a quarter of teachers claimed to teach about "Jewish cultural life before 1933" and/or the "contribution of the Jews to European social and cultural life before 1933". Most teachers appeared to begin their teaching with a cursory look at the history of antisemitism before sharply focusing on Nazi persecution during the 1930s. Furthermore, relative to topics commonly selected by teachers, such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, propaganda and stereotyping, "*Kristallnacht*", the Nuremberg Laws, Hitler's rise to power and the Nazi state, attention to the Jewish perspective appeared secondary. This is evidenced by the fact that many teachers consistently reported that topics such as life in the ghettos, the Warsaw ghetto uprising, Jewish resistance in the camps and the actions of Jewish partisans received limited coverage in the classroom.[24]

Overall, a picture emerged from the IOE research that indicated that many teachers appeared to give relatively little attention to who the victims of the Holocaust actually were and how they responded to the unfolding genocide. The proportion of the German people who were Jewish was routinely overestimated;[25] relatively few teachers spent time covering the history and diversity of the Jewish people in Europe, pre-war Jewish life or the contribution that Jewish people made to the development of European

society; nor did many focus on Jewish resistance to the Nazis in the camps or Jewish partisan activity.

Most experts in the field argue with conviction that it is impossible for pupils to understand the devastating impact of the Holocaust unless they have an awareness of what was lost and destroyed, and that any understanding of the significance of the Holocaust must include an appreciation of how Europe was dramatically changed by the destruction of centuries-old Jewish communities throughout the continent. Despite this clearly comprehensible justification for placing an emphasis on Jewish life and culture before the war, *none* of the textbooks analyzed included any specific information on this vital issue. In most textbooks, the reader encounters Jewish people as victims of persecution and destruction without any sense of who the Jewish people were nor any attention to the richness and diversity of their lives in pre-war Europe.

Although two books (A and B) worryingly leap to descriptions of Jewish persecution in Nazi Germany and the devastating horror of the Holocaust without supplying any context, two others at least provide some background reference to the historical roots of antisemitism. Books C and D devote several paragraphs to the issue. Each one defines the meaning of antisemitism, traces its origins to events in the Middle Ages and its development in later centuries, and explains it as a phenomenon occurring in many countries.[26] Potentially troubling, however, is that although antisemitic ideas, rooted in the prejudices of the past, are presented in the textbooks, as discussed below, nowhere are they critically analyzed or challenged.

Three books attend to Nazi antisemitism and the persecution of the Jews during the 1930s (A, C, D). Each one uses a range of pictorial and written sources to illustrate the incremental marginalization and persecution of the Jewish people and summary details of the Nuremberg Laws are commonly presented. Each book freely reproduces Nazi views towards the Jews. For example, one book uses a cartoon drawing of Hitler in which he declares, in a series of speech bubbles, the reasons for his hatred for the Jews. In one extract he claims, “The whole of Germany is governed by the Jews. The Jew sits in the government and swindles and smuggles” (Book D: 87). Similarly, Book C uses extracts from *Mein Kampf*: “The black haired Jewish youth lies in wait for hours on end, glaring and spying on the unsuspicious German girl whom he plans to seduce, corrupting

her blood" (Book C: 88). A third book (Book A) illustrates antisemitic perspectives by showing a propaganda poster for the film "the Eternal Jew", which provides a gross caricature of those positioned by the Nazi ideology as the enemies of the German people. Book B includes a brief text box under the heading "!FACT" that offers no *historical* account of antisemitism, but asserts, "Millions saw them [the Jews] as a selfish race who were only interested in making money rather than improving the nation" (Book B: 90). What is remarkable in each of these sections typically devoted to Nazi antisemitism, ranging from a paragraph to two pages in length, is that the racist attitudes and portrayals they depict go *completely* unchallenged in the textbooks. In keeping with Pate's criticism of how the Holocaust is portrayed in US textbooks, no attempt is made to refute or deconstruct any of the Nazi prejudices.[27] Accordingly, given that Jewish people suddenly appear in the textbooks without any historical introduction, it is entirely possible that without a full understanding of the irrational motivation underlying the prejudices held against them, pupils might unwittingly and unintentionally be led to accept and internalize the prejudices explicitly conveyed in the sources featured in the textbooks.

As Short and Reed identified in an earlier textbook study, the problem is potentially further exacerbated by textbook references to the influence and power of Jewish people in pre-war Germany.[28] For example, one textbook declares that Hitler "grew to hate the rich and successful Jews around him" (Book D: 87) and another book, in the context of the economic depression of the 1930s, explains how Germans "turned on the Jews, many of whom were rich and successful in business" (Book C: 87). Given that Nazi propaganda blamed the Jews for all the ills of the German nation and portrayed them as an existential threat to the survival of the German people, it is arguably very important that textbooks make teachers and their pupils aware of the very small numbers of Jews living in pre-war Germany (less than one percent of the population) and the limited amount of political and economic power held by the Jewish community. Nevertheless, a key and unprecedented characteristic of the Holocaust was the irrational motivation underlying the Nazis' antisemitic ideology that elevated a small, vulnerable minority group to the level of deadly adversary that must be eradicated at all costs. Unfortunately, however, analysis of the content of selected textbooks suggests that these

books may be unwittingly reinforcing myths and stereotypes about the power, wealth and control possessed by the Jewish people.

The IHRA guidelines explicitly recommend that Jewish people are seen as active agents with individual human identities and experiences; in contradistinction to this, textbook narratives tend to regard the victims of the Holocaust more as objects rather than as subjects of study, turning them into a passive mass of people to whom things were done, rather than individuals actively responding to the unfolding genocide. Strikingly, and again in clear contrast to what the IHRA guidelines present as good practice, no textbook uses case studies, survivor testimony, letters or diaries from the period to illustrate the diverse and very human experiences of the Jewish people.[29] Instead, as described in section one, the focus of the textbooks is almost exclusively on the actions of the perpetrators and their collaborators.

In brief contrast, however, three books (B, C and D) do offer, albeit fleetingly, accounts of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust. As one book notes,

> The reactions of the Jews to this persecution varied widely. During the round-ups in Poland and Russia there were many occasions when Jews resisted […]. There was also resistance in the camps. In Treblinka, in 1943, one of the prisoners managed to get into the arsenal, from where he handed out grenades and guns […] But the Germans regained control of the camp and 550 prisoners were killed (Book C: 94).

Book D reports on Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghetto and a revolt in "the Sosibor (sic) death camp in 1943."[30] Furthermore, Book B offers a brief one-paragraph text box under the heading "!FACT Rebellion" that states that there were "occasional rebellions" in the death camps and again gives a cursory account of the rebellion at Treblinka. Thus, although three books do make reference to resistance in the camps, there is no sustained engagement with a perspective to counterpoint that of the perpetrators. Similarly, although three of the textbooks analyzed abruptly end the study of the Holocaust with the defeat of the Nazis, one textbook (D) does briefly attend to the legacy of the Holocaust, the lives of Holocaust survivors and the international significance of the genocide.

Nevertheless, and despite these fleeting inclinations to engage with the lives and agency of the victims, the tables below illustrate that, when measured against the IHRA guidelines, the history textbooks analyzed offer highly problematic portrayals of the Jewish experience.

Table 2. Textbook portrayals of "Jewish life and agency" using IHRA recommendations.[31]
(Table 2 here)

Table 3. Textbook coverage of content considered typically undesirable by the IHRA.
(Table 3 here)

Overall, therefore, Jewish people are presented in the textbooks analyzed as silent and anonymous victims of the Holocaust. For the most part they appear *en masse*, only to be persecuted and murdered. Graphic portrayals of dead bodies and lurid accounts of heinous acts committed against the Jews are a consistent and dominant feature of all books. Furthermore, despite the recommendation that Jewish people not be defined by the Holocaust, this is exactly what emerges in textbook portrayals. Typically, Jewish people feature without any explanation of their heritage or culture, or of the *void* left by the destruction of Jewish communities across Europe.[32] Finally, the textbooks offer no sense of what it meant to "survive" the Holocaust, nor any understanding of the Jewish experience in the post-war world.

Enduring Concerns and Ongoing Challenges

According to Supple (1992), in the years immediately following the introduction of the National Curriculum in England many teachers felt "under-informed" and "under resourced to teach the subject". Of particular concern was that no adequate textbook was available to secondary school teachers. Indeed, Supple's review of existing textbooks reached the gloomy conclusion that:

> […] most textbooks dealt with the Holocaust in a dangerously superficial way. Gaps included few images and little information about Jewish people other than re-productions of anti-Semitic stereotypes; there was no description of the variety of Jewish life before the Holocaust; no explanation of the roots of anti-Semitism; no idea of the variety of response to Nazism…no notion of named individuals other than Nazis or perhaps Anne Frank [and] […] no mention of 'resistance' or 'rescuers'.[33]

As exemplified by the findings of the current study of four commonly used secondary school textbooks, almost two decades after Supple's initial investigation grave concerns remain about how the Holocaust is portrayed in school textbooks in England. As this study has shown, current textbooks typically present an "Auschwitz-centric" "perpetrator narrative" focused almost exclusively on the brutal actions of the Nazis and their collaborators. Young readers are denied any knowledge of the diversity and richness of pre-war Jewish life, any sense of the irrational motivation underlying antisemitic ideas either historically or during the period of Nazi domination, any understanding of the complex and varied ways in which Jewish people experienced and responded to unfolding genocide, and any appreciation of the significance and legacy of the Holocaust in the post-war era.

Very few historical topics or content areas are mandatory in the history curriculum in England. However, the study of the Holocaust is regarded as an exceptional event central to any pupil's understanding of the modern world. As such it is a compulsory aspect of the school curriculum in England for each one of the more than 3 million pupils who attend secondary school in any given year. Unfortunately, however, treated in conjunction with the 2009 IOE report, this study demonstrates that significant numbers of pupils in classrooms across the country may be receiving an inadequate education in this vital area of the curriculum. It suggests that textbook authors and textbook publishers need to take greater responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the material they include and, moreover, that teachers need to be knowledgeable, judicious and critical when using textbooks to teach about the Holocaust in their classrooms. Their failure to do so runs the risk of (re)producing stereotypes about

and even more worryingly *from* this most significant and traumatic period of our collective history.

List of Textbooks Quoted

Jamie Byrom, Christine Counsell, Michael Gorman, Derek Peaple and Michael Riley, *Modern Minds: The Twentieth-Century world* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited (Longman), 1999)

Stuart Clayton, Martin Collier, Steven Day and Rosemary Rees, *History in Progress: 1901 to Present Day* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited (Heinemann), 2009)

Colin Shepard and Keith Shepard, *Re-Discovering The Twentieth Century World: A World Study After 1900* (London: Hodder Education, 2001)

Aaron Wilkes, *Technology, War and Identities: A World Study After 1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press (Folens), 2009)

Notes

[1] In the context of European and world history, the history National Curriculum specifically mandates that pupils should be taught about "the changing nature of conflict and cooperation between countries and peoples and its lasting impact on national, ethnic, racial, cultural or religious issues, including the nature and impact of the two world wars and the Holocaust, and the role of European and international institutions in resolving conflicts." Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007 (updated 2011), *History programme of study for key stage 3 and attainment targets*, http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/key-stage-3/history/index.aspx (accessed 24 September 2012). At the time of writing the current National Curriculum for history is under review, however the Department for Education draft consultation document still includes the Holocaust as a compulsory element of the proposed 2013 key stage 3 history curriculum.

[2] Although not mandatory outside of the history curriculum, research reveals that the Holocaust is in fact taught across a range of subjects, including English, citizenship, and religious education, and to all seven year groups in secondary education (that is pupils aged eleven to eighteen). Alice Pettigrew et al., *Teaching About the Holocaust in English Secondary Schools: An Empirical Study of National Trends, Perspectives and Practice* (London: Institute of Education, 2009), 30-39.

[3] Margot Brown and Ian Davies, "The Holocaust and Education for Citizenship: the Teaching of History, Religion and Human Rights in England," *Educational Review* 50, no.1 (1998): 75-83; Neil Burtonwood "Holocaust Memorial Day in Schools – Context, Process and Content. A Review of Research into Holocaust Education," *Educational Research* 44, no. 1 (2002): 69-82; Bruce Carrington and Geoffrey Short "Holocaust Education, anti-racism and citizenship," *Educational Review* 49, no.3 (1997): 271-82; Jane Clements. "A very neutral voice: teaching about the Holocaust". *Educate* 5, no. 1, http://www.educatejournal.org/index.php/educate/article/view/60/56 (accessed 24 September 2012); Lucy Russell, *Teaching the Holocaust in School History*, (London: Continuum, 2006); Geoffrey Short, "Teaching about the Holocaust. A Consideration of Some Ethical and Pedagogic Issues," *Educational Studies* 20, 1 (1994).

[4] Funded by the Department for Education and Pears Foundation (a UK charitable trust).

[5] Pettigrew et al., *Teaching About the Holocaust.*

[6] Pettigrew et al., *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 47.

[7] Pettigrew et al, *Teaching about the Holocaust,* 31-62.

[8] Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith, eds., *The Politics of the Textbook* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford, eds., *What Shall We Tell the Children? International Perspectives on School History Textbooks* (Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, 2006); William E. Marsden, *The School Textbook: History, Geography and Social Studies* (London: Routledge, 2001).

[9] Those that do exist include: Patricia Bromley and Susan Russell, "The Holocaust as History and Human Rights: A cross-national analysis of Holocaust education in social science textbooks, 1970 – 2008," *Prospects* 40 (2010): 153-173; Keith A. Crawford and Stuart J. Foster, *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in school history textbooks* (Greenwich, CT.: Information Age Publishing, 2007); Henry Friedlander, 1973. *On the Holocaust: A Critique of the Treatment of the Holocaust in History Textbooks Accompanied by an Annotated Bibliography*. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith; David Lindquist, "The Coverage of the Holocaust in High School History Textbooks,"' *Social Education* 73, no. 6 (2009): 298-304; Bodo von Borries, "The Third Reich in German History Textbooks since 1945," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003): 45-62; Barbara Wenzeler, *The Presentation of the Holocaust in German and English School History Textbooks: A Comparative Study*, 2012, http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/historyresource/journal6/Barbararev.pdf (accessed 24 September).

[10] Crawford and Foster, *War, Nation, Memory*; Foster and Crawford, *What shall we tell the children?;* Stuart J. Foster, "Dominant traditions in international textbook research and revision," *Education Inquiry* 2, no. 1 (2010): 1-16; Laura Hein, and Mark Selden, eds., *Censoring history: History, citizenship and memory in Japan, Germany and the United States* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 2000); Jason Nicholls, "Methods in school textbook research," *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 3, no. 2 (2003); Jason Nicholls, *School History Textbooks across Cultures: International Debates and Perspectives* (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2006); Falk Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* (2nd revised edition) (Paris: UNESCO, 2010).

[11] Krippendorff distinguishes between "text-driven", "problem-driven" and "method-driven" approaches to content analysis. Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*: *An Introduction to Its Methodology* (Thousand Oakes: Sage, 2004), 340–341.

[12] Barny G. Glaser, "The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis," *Social Problems* vol.12, no.4 (1965); Juliet Corbin, and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research 3e* (Thousand Oakes: Sage, 2008).

[13] While every effort was made not to read the textbooks *for* the themes from the recent HEDP research, once these themes emerged as pertinent, the HEDP research provided a rich context within which to make sense of the textbook data and, conversely, the opportunity to understand the way the common concerns and issues revealed by the national study were mirrored in the textbook content. As Corbin and Strauss assert, "... it is not that we use experience or literature as data, but that we use the properties and dimensions derived from the comparative incident to examine the data in front of us." Corbin and Strauss, *Qualitative Research*, 75.

[14] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, xxii.

[15] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, xxi.

[16] The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in collaboration with Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, provide "suggestions for educators" on preparing for Holocaust memorial days; such preparations, as they explicitly state, are "quite different in character" (p. 2) from classroom teaching. The organizations direct their readers specifically to the IHRA "[f]or additional guidelines on the rationale for teaching about the Holocaust as well as suggestions on how to approach this topic in the classroom" (p. 18). The United Nations, through the "The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme", state that they and the IHRA "work together to assist United Nations Member States in the adoption of national educational curriculum on the Holocaust." The UN provides a range of educational materials, but accordingly no explicit rationale or guidelines separate from those of the IHRA. The one major international organization that provides its own "guidelines for teaching" in English is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. These recommendations closely mirror the IHRA guidelines and in many cases use the exact same wording.

[17] Although it is recognized that teachers will not be able to incorporate all elements into their teaching, the IHRA recommends, wherever possible, attention to the following content areas: 1933-1939: dictatorship in National Socialist Germany; Jewry in the Third Reich; early stages of persecution; the first concentration camps; world response; 1939-1945: World War II in Europe; Nazi racist ideologies and policies; the

"euthanasia" program; persecution and murder of Jews; persecution and murder of non-Jewish victims; Jewish reactions to Nazi policies; ghettos; mobile killing squads; expansion of the camp system; killing centers; collaboration; resistance; rescue; world response; death marches; liberation. aftermath: postwar trials; displaced persons' camps and emigration.

[18] Pettigrew et al., *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 41-45.

[19] In this regard it is potentially significant that the Wannsee Conference, the mass murders by the *Einsatzgruppen*, and Operation Reinhard (the plan to murder some two million Jews in the German-occupied part of Poland known as the General Government, which resulted in the killing of some 1.7 million Jewish people, the vast majority in the gas chambers of the death camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka II) were among the topics least likely to be selected to be taught in English schools.

[20] One source, from an "eyewitness", is unattributed.

[21] We note that textbook C presents inaccurate and confusing information in respect to Höss. Source D refers to the "*Memoirs of Rudolf Hoss*, the first commandant of Auschwitz," when more accurately his name should be spelt Hoess or Höss. Then, 4 pages later, the reader learns about Rudolf Hess, "the man in charge of Auschwitz," which confuses Rudolf Höss with Rudolf Hess, Hitler's Deputy in the Nazi Party for much of the 1930s and early 1940s.

[22] One source is unattributed but described as a "visitor to the Warsaw ghetto."

[23] Pettigrew et al., *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 41-45; 51-63.

[24] Pettigrew et al., *Teaching about the Holocaust*, 41-45.

[25] The online survey asked a series of knowledge-based questions. Specifically, one question asked teachers what, in percentage terms, was the Jewish population of Germany in 1933 (teachers were given multiple choices: less than one percent; approximately five percent; approximately fifteen percent; more than thiry percent). Analysis revealed that only 32 percent of history teachers and fewer than one in five citizenship, English and RE teachers provided the correct answer (that is, less than one percent), with many teachers seriously overestimating the size of the Jewish population in pre-war Germany.

[26] Many scholars would put its origins as much earlier than the Middle Ages. Further, it is perhaps significant that the textbooks do not distinguish between antisemitism (a modern term dating from the nineteenth century) and anti-Judaism, which may be more appropriate for earlier forms of religion-based prejudice.

[27] In his 1987 study Glenn Pate remarked: "Disturbingly, not all books which refer to the scapegoat concept mention that the Jews were not to blame for Germany's troubles. A reader of some of the texts could get the impression that the Jews were guilty." Pate, "The Holocaust in American Textbooks," in Randolph L. Braham, ed., *The Treatment of the Holocaust in Textbooks: The Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, The United States of America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

[28] Geoffrey Short and Carole Anne Reed, *Issues in Holocaust Education* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)

[29] It is true that accounts written by Jewish people are included in order to describe the horrors inflicted by the Holocaust, but no account provides any sense of Jewish agency.

[30] More accurately the reference should be to the Sobibor extermination camp in occupied Poland.

[31] "Yes" indicates the content area is covered; "no" means it is absent; and "limited" refers to textbook coverage of a few sentences or less.

[32] These findings are consistent with an earlier textbook study in which Short and Reed noted that "none of the books recognize, even in passing, the positive aspects of Jewish history. The focus is exclusively on persecution." Short and Reed, *Issues*, 64.

[33] Carrie Supple, "The Teaching of the Nazi Holocaust in North Tyneside, Newcastle and Northumberland Secondary Schools" (PhD diss., University of Newcastle, 1992), 21.

Introduction: New Perspectives in Children's Film Studies

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer

The study of children's films is a complex and demanding issue, involving a range of critical, educational, psychological, cultural, institutional and textual aspects. "Children's films" can be a broad and ambiguous term; there are films aimed at children, films about childhood, and films children watch regardless of whether they are children's films or films targeted towards adults. The rise of an expanding children's film industry (including the accompanying merchandizing products) in the United States and many European countries presents a further challenge to the study of children's films. In some countries, children's films are included in the general school curriculum; this indicates that children's films are a key part of children's culture which requires educational attention.[1] Another fact to which the inclusion of children's films in school curricula points is the crucial role of these films in the development of media literacy, due to the fact that children come to recognize and understand the typical features of films by means of a gradual process which takes a substantial amount of time. The acquisition of a "film language" presupposes the ability to comprehend the symbolic meanings of images, the close relationship, upon which films depend, between a moving image, sound, and speech, and prototypical properties of films, such as shots, zooms, cuts, camera perspective and voice-over.

The production of so-called "family films", that is, films which address children and adults alike, and the increasing complexity of modern children's films, demonstrate that the typical properties of children's films are becoming increasingly similar to those of films targeted at an adult audience. This convergence applies to both the themes and the narrative strategies of children's films, as we can observe in their increasingly frequent treatment of difficult, sensitive or "taboo" subjects, as well as in their directors' use of complex narrative and aesthetic devices such as first-person narration, retrospective, multiperspectivity, the combination of different temporal levels, and intermedial allusions to other films. While children's limited cognitive abilities and knowledge of the world mean that these techniques and devices can only be employed in a restricted sense, they doubtless manifest a growing tendency among those who produce children's films to take the artform and its audiences seriously.

We may therefore surmise that the cultural, educational and economic significance of children's films is consistently increasing. It is fortunate that this development has been

accompanied by a growing interest on the part of a number of academic fields, such as media studies, film studies, research into children's literature, and education, in the investigation of children's films. However, in spite of these developments, we still have to acknowledge that the children's film is still somewhat marginal in academia, with no international journals or regular conferences devoted to the subject. Despite some promising monographs and collections of essays, the history of children's films has not yet been thoroughly investigated, and the field lacks detailed introductions and handbooks that describe the current state of research. Given this situation, it is of little surprise that we do not yet have a fully developed theory of children's films to draw upon in our research into the genre.

In light of this, one of the aims of this special section is to bring together recent research in the area of children's films and develop new ways forward for children's film studies. More than ever, it is not enough to focus exclusively on the content of children's films and their relation to children's everyday lives and to analyze the reciprocal interaction between literature and film; such an approach cannot do justice to children's film as a self-contained art form. The focus of this special section, therefore, is reflection upon narrative strategies and visual aesthetic features of contemporary children's films. Children's films require those who make them to consider the stage of cognitive, emotional and linguistic development at which the film's intended audience finds itself. Therefore, in order to study children's films properly, we need to adopt an interdisciplinary approach which takes into account findings from film studies, media education, childhood studies, the study of intermediality, cognitive psychology, and literacy studies. Needless to say, the five articles in this section cannot cover all possible theoretical frameworks and approaches to this subject; they nevertheless exemplify the great pertinence of children's film studies to a number of academic fields.

Historically, and indeed to this day, most children's films have been adaptations of literary works, while some are based on original scripts whose story has not been previously published for children. For a long time, film adaptations of children's books were frequently regarded as poor copies of the original work, a view which failed to take into consideration the different narrative and aesthetic strategies used in film as opposed to those employed in literature. Fortunately, the rise of the discipline of intermedial studies, which investigates the mutual relationships between various forms of media and considers their differences and the features they have in common, has brought about a change in this attitude.

The transformation of picture books into films presents a specific challenge to media education. Picture books as multimodal art forms familiarize children with the interconnection

of text and image and therefore may prepare the way for children to understand movies, which verbally and visually refer to the picture book medium. Although films aimed at preschool children are often adaptations of picturebook stories, there is scant research into the intermedial processes that take place when picture books are transformed into films. In her article in this issue, Johanna Tydecks' attempts to fill this gap with a detailed comparison of Shaun Tan's picture book *The Lost Thing* (1999) with the Oscar-winning short movie of the same title (2010). Basing her approach on research into visual literacy and media literacy, Tydecks illustrates how each medium calls for specific abilities on the part of the reader/viewer, and how the knowledge of the picture book's plot and imagery might facilitate audiences' understanding of the cinematic techniques applied in the animated film version.

One seminal issue in the investigation of children's films concerns the question of genre. It appears that children's films show a certain preference for specific genres, often revolving around fairytales, animals, or adventures, and frequently using animation. The investigation of the ways in which these genres interrelate is certainly a promising research task, as is the exploration of the new genres currently emerging in children's film. Ian Wojcik-Andrews draws our attention to an innovative topic in current films for children: a journey or quest undertaken by an elderly person along with a child. According to the author, this yields a new genre called "Kid Quest" – a combination of "Elderquest" and "Kid Venture". Although ethnicity and culture play a significant role in this film genre, Wojcik-Andrews stresses that age-related issues are equally important. Thus the hybrid "Kid Quest" genre challenges mainstream Hollywood movies for children insofar as it scrutinizes traditional ideas about age, personal growth and education, thus highlighting the genre's underlying ideological and educational concerns.

As Wojcik-Andrew's article indicates, children's films are inseparably connected with images of childhood which generally govern the films' plots and their presentation of their characters. These images may be drawn from various ideas about childhood, which might derive, for example, from the observation of real children, from childhood reminiscences, or from ideas about possible environments in which children live. Beyond this, images of childhood may also be determined by academic and literary discourses. How these matters bring their influence to bear on children's films is the chief concern of David Whitley's and Anders Wilhelm Åberg's articles. While David Whitley focuses on images of innocence in animated films for children, Åberg engages with issues of nation and ethnicity in two Swedish children's films.

In his thought-provoking essay, Whitley emphasizes the impact of cultural nostalgia on the ideas underlying films from the Disney studios, comparing them to animated films inspired by other traditions, such as the films released by Pixar and Dreamworksand the French film *Kirikou et la sorcière* (Kirikou and the Sorceress, 1998). He argues that the presentation of innocence in these animated films is double-edged due to the images of childhood and gender perspectives that underlie the films; further, he demonstrates that the ambivalent attitudes thus manifested are strongly marked by anxieties concerning childhood in modern globalized societies.

The impact of nostalgia is also a key topic of Åberg's article, which shows how issues of nation and ethnicity have been dominant themes in Swedish children's films from the 1940s to the present day. By comparing two Swedish films, *Guttersnipes* (*Rännstensungar*, 1944) and its modernized remake *Kidz in da hood* (*Förortsungar*, 2006), the author illustrates a change in the conceptualization of "Swedishness", a notion which draws on stereotypical and nostalgic images of Swedish nature and culture. By doing this, Åberg sheds light on the differences between the two films, which mainly consist in the substitution of ethnic conflict, which pervades the film *Kidz in da hood*, for class conflict, as depicted in *Guttersnipes*. Thus these films not only illustrate shifts in images of childhood, but also reflect societal changes which have largely arisen as a result of the development of intercultural societies and transnational interconnections. The 2006 remake, shifting between the celebration and rejection of "Swedishness", modifies the concept of (Swedish) "national cinema". Furthermore, the burning issue, touched upon in the film, of what may emerge out of encounters between different cultures and languages in a globalized world points to the children's film as a site of interaction and cross-reference between issues in intercultural studies and childhood studies.

For a number of years, scholars working in the field of film studies have paid close attention to filmic paratexts and their importance to the comprehension of movies. Since Gérard Genette introduced this concept at the end of the 1980s, numerous studies have analyzed the significance and changes of paratexts in a range of different works of art. Although film theorists have shown that paratexts, such as front and end credits, film titles, logos, trailers, and inserts, appear to influence audiences' reception of the actual feature film, the impact of paratexts in children's films has yet to be investigated. The article by Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer attempts to explore the effects of paratexts in modern children's films and to examine the cognitive capacities required for a thorough comprehension of paratexts. In this context, she demonstrates that the front credits in modern children's films often

anticipate the film's plot, while the end credits frequently provide a follow-up or hint at its continuation, and thus prepare the ground for a sequel or encourage the viewer to reflect on possible alternative endings. Since the comprehension of these strategies calls for a meta-critical approach on the part of the viewer, the author suggests that this specific capacity should be called "meta-filmic awareness", that is, the ability to distinguish between filmic paratexts and the feature film.

The variety of aspects of this topic and the multiplicity of critical approaches to it illustrate the complex issues raised by the analysis of contemporary children's films. This special section, containing contributions by experts from the field, is testimony to international academic interest in children's films and will hopefully serve to acquaint scholars, teachers, and educationalists with the richness and depth of the genre, thus demonstrating that it makes for a highly promising research topic.

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[1] In Germany, the Conference of the Ministers of Education of the Federal States passed a resolution in March 2012 entitled "Media Education in Schools" (*Medienbildung in der Schule*), which explicitly calls for greater support for film education at elementary and secondary schools. Moreover, the existing canon of films used for school teaching in schools has been revised in order to better accommodate students' everyday life and interests. In this context, the German Federation of Film Clubs for Children and Young People (*Bundesverband Jugend und Film*) has proposed a canon of children's films encompassing fourteen titles, ranging from Charles Chaplin's *The Kid* (US, 1921) to Kirikou and the Sorceress *(Kirikou et la sorcière*, France 1998, directed by Michel Ocelot).

The Lost Thing: Moving Media Language from a Picture Book to a Short Film

Johanna Tydecks

PhD student in the German Department at the University of Tübingen, and event manager for the Goetheanum in Basel, Switzerland

Abstract • The transformation of a picture book into a film is a special case of film adaptation because this process involves inherently intermedial qualities. In media literacy terms, when viewers look at a picture book that has been made into a film, they familiarize themselves with the story's imagery and plot, which makes it easier for them to comprehend the techniques employed by the film to create meaning. The Oscar-winning short film *The Lost Thing* is exemplary of this, as it narrates the same story as the original picture book, dealing with social as well as existential issues. This comparative analysis focuses on the two different narrations of this story with regard to the literacy skills required to comprehend them.

Keywords • animation, film adaptation, media literacy, narration, picture books, visual literacy

A capacity to understand the language of film[1] is a prerequisite for the critical consumption of contemporary media. This capacity requires familiarity with the structure of texts in general and with the visual language of imagery. Interaction with stories told via images enhances children's ability to decode visual information, for "the screen ... is organised according to the logic of the image."[2] In contrast to viewers of a film, readers control the time required to absorb the story told in a picture book. These media therefore differ according to the speed and temporal aspect of their narration, but also according to the way in which they are structured and received.

The film adaptation of Shaun Tan's picture book *The Lost Thing*[3] differs from other film adaptations insofar as both narratives of *The Lost Thing* present several metadiegetic references and self-references concerning mediality. This adaptation is therefore particularly suitable for the promotion of media competencies. In addition to verbal literacy, "reading" skills are also required for the film's image and sound presentation, which challenge the audience on a linguistic, cognitive and emotional level. This article aims to show how the picture book and its film adaptation[4] exemplify narrative distinctions between the book and the film.

The Lost Thing was first published as a picture book and later adapted into an animated short film. The film is fifteen minutes long and can easily be screened in schools.

Unlike many other film adaptations, this one makes no additions or changes to the original plot of the book. The visual content of the animated film corresponds to the illustrations of the book. Nevertheless, the demands of the cinematic medium lead to differences between the film and the book; the media languages used in each case differ, as do the requirements of the audiences.

The following sections contain a comparison of the narratives shown within the two media, focusing on their visual and verbal languages. I will explore the interaction of the visual and verbal forms and the film's use of sound with respect to how they influence the audience's perceptions and emotions. Since both book and film tell their tale on a number of different levels, they also appeal to older audiences; they can therefore be used not only in elementary schools but also in more advanced media education.[5] *The Lost Thing* has been broadcast on television in the mornings as well as at night, during the 9 PM slot and even after 11 PM, the purpose of the nighttime slots being to target adult audiences. Critics greeted both the book and the film with acclaim, awarding them prizes including the Oscar for the Best Animated Short Film in 2011. The film is G-rated[6] in Australia, from where the book's author originates, and hence is shown without an age limit. Nevertheless, it is advisable to introduce both the film and the book to pupils aged at least seven years, because both narratives require basic capacities for metalinguistic attention.[7]

In this study, I will initially explore the verbal and visual narrative of the picture book *The Lost Thing*, which corresponds to the approach I recommend for use in class.[8] I will then compare the narratives in the picture book with those of the film. The third section of the article will deal with the speed of narration in each medium. My comparative analysis will focus exclusively on the differences between the narratives in the context of media education, and does not therefore replace a detailed interpretation of the works.[9]

Reading the Book

The Lost Thing is a picture book written and illustrated by Shaun Tan and first published in Australia in 1999. The large upright format book features a color scheme composed of warm and moody shades of brown, red and yellow in an antique style and a collage technique. The rather dense layout is composed of several seemingly handcrafted details. A two-colored frame encloses the cover. Several elements are set within the frame, superimposed on a busy background of old diagrams that appear to have been cut out from physics and engineering textbooks. A large panel shows an apparently imaginary industrial territory. In the background appear a boy and a big red object, the protagonists of the story. The book's title is

set below this panel; its letters, likewise appearing collaged, are each of a different size and some are slightly transparent. The author's name appears in the shape of a stamp on the cover. The substantially smaller subtitle, in a typewriter-style font, refers to the book as "A tale for those who have more important things to pay attention to." Several other details allude to the story; one is a sign with an arrow that will lead the protagonists through much of their journey.

A postcard dominates the back cover, with both sides on display. It sends "Greetings from Suburbia" from someone named Shaun (like the author and illustrator of the book) to a friend named Pete (like the friend of the protagonist in the story), who is located in "Greater Suburbia." The names thus play with the narrative frame. The bottom of the page features instructions about how to scan and shelve the book, and even integrates its actual barcode as well as official stamps of fictional state authorities and the remarks of a fictitious censor. The background comprising old engineering textbook excerpts extends to the back cover, thus maintaining a link with the front cover.

The inside title page is divided into two parts. The upper portion features a centrally justified panel showing a tram wagon carrying passengers. The lower portion provides the required information on the book's author and publisher, as well as an "authorization" panel purporting to be from the fictitious "Federal Department of Information" and a space for the reader to fill in their name as the owner of the book, requesting them to "please print clearly."

The arrangement and size of the panels differs on each of the following pages. However, they all adhere to the same scheme. On each page, both picture panels and handwritten strips and panels of text are placed against a collaged background of old physics and engineering book excerpts. These excerpts frame the picture and text panels but bear no direct relation to the plot, for they seem to have been placed there by chance. "These palimpsests of collage, originally meant to explain the underlying principles by which things work, effectively deny us any such insights because of their excess, their fragmentariness and lack of context."[10] Nonetheless, they add possible connotations to the panels that they frame and suggest possible comment on the story. They also ensure that no empty spaces remain. Both the paratext and the fictional story are presented in the same style, with no clear visual contrast between the non-fictional frame of the story and the story itself.

Initially, the setting of the story is dense with details. Symbolized by the tram in the first panel, the setting carries the dichotomy of a futuristic, mechanical, strictly ordered world that is also "retro" and nostalgic on the one hand, and handmade, messy impressions on the other, full of technical details without visible meaning, full of people but showing no

interaction, all drawn in muted colors. The reader's suspense, as created by these consistent visual contrasts, is increased by the contrast between the visual and the verbal narrations. The diegetic narration, which takes place through a first-person speaker, immediately addresses the reader with the question, "do you want to hear a story?"

The illustrations of the story are always directly connected to the verbal text, yet offer an unexpected context. The temporal setting of the story is specified by the verbal narration as "a few summers ago," and its location is verbally described as "the beach," which is where the narrator wanted to look for bottle-tops. The visual information does not contradict this. However, the setting does not look quite as ordinary or naturalistic as the verbal narration suggests. The main character, a boy or young man still living at his parents' home, narrates a matter-of-fact summer holiday story. Variously sized panels show how the narrator finds the Lost Thing at the beach and how they become friends. These scenes feature reduced verbal information. Later on, the bizarre visual presence of the Lost Thing adds humor due to the discrepancy between the visual presentation and the narrator's dry and unimpressed commentary on an absurd environment.

The friends first follow the advice of a newspaper advertisement, and then that of a janitor-like creature which intervenes by handing the narrator the arrow symbol we referred to above. Finally, they arrive at their destination, a fantastic place where all lost things belong. The visual impact of this scene is overwhelming. The duo's arrival at this particular Utopia extends across a double spread, and does not share the page with either a text strip or a textbook collage, and with a black background in striking contrast to the collaged textbook backgrounds of all the other pages. The scene showing Utopia is visibly the flashpoint of the story. Thereafter, the book returns to the upright format and smaller panels; the friends' goodbye and the boy's return to the usual run of his life are narrated both visually and verbally. In a surprising twist, the last page shows the janitor-like creature again, cleaning the floor, as if it were tidying up the end of the book.[11]

New Narratives: From the Book to the Film

The animated fifteen minute long short film of the book was directed by the film producer Andrew Ruhemann and Shaun Tan, the author and illustrator of the picture book. Ruhemann specializes in producing animated films and documentaries. *The Lost Thing* was his first directorial venture. The film adaptation, in production from 2002 to 2010, created using computer-generated imagery and hand-painted elements. Almost every surface is hand-painted using nondigital materials such as acrylic paints, pencils, oils and collage.

Place Tydecks Figure 1 here /not included in online version

Figure 1. Collage, split screen technique, symbolic signs and external point of view of a film scene from *The Lost Thing*, directed by Shaun Tan and Andrew Ruhemann (2010).

Although the film functions independently of the book, it retains, or at least references, several elements from the book, such as the use of framing by collage. The directorial collaboration involving the book's creator and the use of technology resulted in similar styles of illustration for both book and film, despite differences in medium. Most of the book's symbolic elements, such as the bottle tops or the arrow, are used in the film.[12] Both the book and the film use symbolic images on multiple levels, images which demand, confirm and contradict audiences' previous knowledge about the meaning of symbols and signs. Only a few of the symbolic images that recur in the book are not picked up in the film; one of them is the book's close-ups of the sky.

The title credits which open the film briefly recreate the collage technique of the book. The opening credits appear both extradiegetically on the "frame", and intradiegetically (intraiconically) on several signs on the street and the tram within the story's setting. The film then cuts to the main plot. The text narration of the book is by an intradiegetic/homodiegetic first-person narrator who possibly takes an autodiegetic position in the frame story[13] and is represented in the film by means of a voiceover.[14] The visual narration in the book alternates between an omniscient perspective and the reminiscent perception of the protagonist via devices such as views from over his shoulder. Several sequences direct the reader's view to the very center of the protagonist's interest by zooming in on details. This point of view changes in some scenes to an omniscient one, presenting a bird's-eye view, as though that of a distant outside observer looking down from a higher point. This distance still presents an internal view where it symbolizes the reminiscent view of the narrator. Most visuals in the book adopt an external viewpoint or focalizer. The internal focalization of Utopia must be recognized as an exception,[15] like the newspaper page that first sends the protagonist to a different destination, the "Federal Department of Odds and Ends." The verbal narration, by contrast, has only an internal focalizer. There is also a discrepancy between the expectations that the verbal and visual plots create; things that are apparently normal to the boy may not be so to the reader. The boy seems to be telling an everyday story, but the visuals show a surreal, Dalí-like setting.

Both book and film show the personal perspective of the boy and then alternate it with an external point of view by using aerial views. The reverse shots and the personal

perspective of the Lost Thing used in the film, however, do not exist in the book. Consider the beach scene that shows how the protagonists first meet. In the book, the subsequent ball game between the boy and the Lost Thing is shown through an external focalizer, in contrast to the internal point of view presented through very close shots in the film. Similarly, in the scene depicting the search for the Lost Thing's home, the external focalization of the book's visual narration is replaced by an internal point of view in the film. During the scene with Pete, for example, the film creates more action by using a white flash. The book's portrait of Pete is a more static and less intimate image, while in the film, Pete's character is more detailed.

A new point of view is presented by using the reverse shot during the scene in which the boy feeds the Lost Thing, a scene to which the book devotes a single page but which the film highlights. Reverse shots make the scene seem more intimate, and the special illumination emphasizes its emotional quality. The film adds a few small details to the plot, such as the boy getting the Christmas decorations, with which he plans to feed the Lost Thing, from a shelf and searching for a ladder. The Lost Thing is presented as an overtly emotional being in several scenes of the film, as opposed to its more understated emotionality in the book. This effect is achieved with different factors including close shots, acoustic underscoring and light effects, whereby the perspective changes from the boy's point of view to that of the Lost Thing. This change of perspective impacts the affective and emotional processes taking place in the viewer,[16] and thus creates an experience differing from that of reading the book. The change of perspective created by reverse shots also enhances the reliability and "reality effect" of the action shown, because each perspective confirms the other depiction.[17]

Other visual differences are contingent upon the medium used in each case. The newspaper advertisement of the book appears in the film as an advertisement on television, thereby reflecting the medium of the film itself. The metadiegetic level responds to the medium used such that focalization is internal in both cases. The use of metalepsis, of which the transfer of medium from newspaper in the book to television in the film is an example, makes the reader feel like the immediate receiver of the medium within the medium. But while the television is framed, the book's page is not. Another example of the film's differing point of view concerns the duo's arrival in Utopia. While the book's picture narrows the view here to the small round panel of the doorbell, placing the reader in close proximity to the characters, the film shows the front door through a low-angle shot. In these two examples, there seems to be greater distance between the audience and the diegetic world in the film

than in the book, with the viewer, unlike the reader, more a watcher than a protagonist.[18]

Utopia itself is visualized differently. The film shows more inhabitants by using close-ups, guiding the viewer through a progressively changing perspective, while the spread in the book guides the view into Utopia from the foreground to the background. In the book, the reader is free to discover details autonomously, while the film selects these details for the viewer. The main differences in the diegesis include a greater use of close-ups in the film than in the book's pictures. Two scenes using a split screen recall the paper frames of the book's very beginning and correspond to its use of several panels on a single page. However, the split screen is also a specific film technique. It is not clear whether the actions shown take place one after another; in this case, the technique breaks the illusion of linear reality and reveals the artificial character of the narration. Some of the actions could be simultaneous, but they are presented from different points of view. The imagery may be associated with surveillance cameras and film techniques that symbolize hallucinations and nightmares[19] and can be seen as a commentary on dystopian themes like a world governed by an omniscient, despotic ruler.[20]

The story's filmic presentation offers many new connotations that arise from its specific medial structure, including acoustic codes; its sound is produced by bringing together a number of different acoustic levels. Sound designer John Kassab speaks of three principal levels.

> In every scene, I considered three perspectives. The perspective of the main characters, the objective perspective of what was physically happening (or what the audience would be expecting to hear) and the perspective of the other characters in the film. These perspectives are constantly shifting in every scene, particularly as we regarded the locations themselves as characters in their own right and each required distinct sonic treatments and a moment to sing.[21]

Acoustically, we can differentiate between sound, music and voice. Kassab mentions sound recordings from 1836, such as steam blasts, chugging sounds, engines, pipe rattles, metallic vibrations and voices, in addition to synthesized sounds.[22] There are sounds that depict concrete action, such as a creaking door, the dropping of a ball or the crackle of potato chips. Other sound effects include echoes, as when the boy shouts into the Lost Thing during their first encounter, and the sound of the television advertisement. Another category comprises sounds used to underline a particular atmosphere, such as mechanical crackling or the sound of steam, clogs and gears.

Further, there is a palette of sounds characterizing the Lost Thing. Most obvious is the ringing of little bells. The Lost Thing is made up of "lots of components (feet, hinges, bells, mouth lid, claws, doors, cooling fan, internal mechanics, vocalisations, etc.). ... Basically Shaun wanted [the] L[ost] T[hing] to sound rusty and metallic but as light on his feet as an excitable puppy. That is, he wanted us to convey his massive physicality and texture but refrain from making him sound earth-shattering[ly] heavy unless the story or performance called for it."[23]

The other characters, such as Pete, and even some locations, have their specific palettes of sounds. These are combined with atmospheric sounds, the voiceover and music. The soundtrack, composed by Michael Yezerski and including several songs, underscores the action on an emotional level. In collaboration with Shaun Tan and Andrew Ruhemann, Yezerski developed "a non-traditional musical landscape for the score that would be both heartwarming and yet somehow a little unfamiliar, which reflects the themes of the film."[24] While the characters have their specific sounds, the music is structured by recurring melodies, of which Ruhemann offers an example: "[W]hen the boy starts feeding The Lost Thing in the shed, [i]t is the first time we hear the tune that becomes a *leitmotif*, as in a repeated melody that helps you feel this connection. ... When they say goodbye, the melody is repeated again, deliberately connecting those two scenes."[25]

In the film, voices are used as sound as well as to present the book's complete verbal text via a voiceover that can be heard beyond diegetic limits. Besides telling the story, the voice of Tim Minchin also codes emotions, through features such as trembling or pauses, and synchronizes direct speech, interpreting the text in a way that is not available to the book form.

Temporal Aspects

Both the book and the film present a temporal difference between the moment of the story and its telling. The frame story is told through simultaneous narration, which means that the narrator tells the story at the very moment that it occurs. The inner story, in both book and film, is told through subsequent narration. This is the most common temporal position in narrative, with the narrator relating incidents of a bygone time. Visually speaking, the consistent framing of panels and text in the book suggests that even the frame story may have happened long ago. The frame story seems to be much more current in the film. The sequence and timing of events are the same in both media. However, the "discourse time" and "narrative time"[26] of the events differ in each medium. The discourse time of the picture

book is difficult to specify because it functions through both verbal and visual codes of communication.[27] The time required to read a picture book differs from reader to reader; it is impossible to fix the duration of this process. Visual breaks in the story of a film, implemented via devices like blackouts, can never be influenced by the viewer. By contrast, pages serve as limits in the flow of the story that the reader must cross at his or her own pace.

Instead of measuring the duration of the narrative time or discourse time, we will compare visual possibilities for controlling the flow of reading[28] with the filmic elements of time segmentation so that we can compare the speed of discourse. On the macro level, we will compare the organization of pages and panels in the book with possible equivalences in the film. The instruments I use to analyze pictures on a micro level, that is, within one panel, originate from the science of comics.[29]

As previously discussed, the first panel on the first page of the book depicts the exterior view of the tram and the paratextual information placed below it. The equivalent in the film is realized by means of a single long shot spanning thirty-three seconds, showing the tram in motion while the opening credits roll. With the turn of a page in the picture book, the reader enters the inner story. The line of the street and the direction of the narrator's view lead the reader to the Lost Thing. The close-ups of the Lost Thing in the picture book are filmic, resembling a storyboard. Accordingly, close-ups guide the view of the beach in the film. The two media use their own specific means to emphasize the progress of time in the following scene of the boy and the Lost Thing in interaction and at play. The book uses extreme close-up pictures of the Lost Thing, illustrating its dimensions in relation to that of the boy, and then seven little panels showing snapshots of their play together. Rhythm is maintained by using panels of different sizes. Between the panels, several hours pass; the verbal text confirms that "the hours slouched by," and the last picture, correspondingly, is dimly lit. The film illustrates the passage of time through a ball game. It also shows other play activities which are only alluded to in the book, like building sandcastles and fetch the stick. In the book, the scene that follows is presented mostly in high, narrow rectangular frames. The picture size creates an impression of events that last longer,[30] even as the impression of repetition enhances the tempo. While the narrative time here is no longer than part of the evening, the visual discourse seems stretched. By contrast, the film uses fast shots to convey details such as closing parasols. Only the departure from the beach takes place in a longer and more distant shot, whereas the framed in-motion images of Pete's home provide an impression of speed. These segments reveal the first real temporal difference between book and film.

The following scene supports this difference. In the book, Pete is presented in a very static manner, in a round portrait. The wide space around the panel permits a pause in the beat of the story. The film works with brief close shots of details that do not exist in the book, which quickens the narration markedly. The book presents the boy's home across a single-page panel (recto), while this sequence in the film begins with a close-up of the family portrait. The force of the tram passing seems to make the wall and the portrait tremble. The book's view of the boy's home is far closer than in the film; many details in the book are lost in the film, as the latter offers little time for contemplation. From this point on, the film begins to apply more and more blatant cuts, and black transitions enclose the dinner of the Lost Thing. In the book, one page shows in dim colors this intimate moment between the boy and the Lost Thing, warmly lit by a light bulb, and showing the shed in only a little panel; the film's narrative is more expansive, highlighting the scene through illumination and reverse shots that show the duo's intimacy and close shots that further underline it.

The presentation of the advertisement for the Federal Department of Odds and Ends is also more elliptic in the book than in the film. The film shows step-by-step how the boy enters the living room, looks at his sleeping parents, and then turns to the television. The book, by contrast, leaves the atmosphere and setting to the reader's imagination. Nevertheless, the book influences the reader's perception of the advertisement by a previous page-turn and an unexpected scene-to-scene transition. Similarly, the brief scenes of the Lost Thing entering Utopia and of the door closing behind it are not shown in the book. Instead, Utopia succeeds a page-turn and is a visual surprise. Once again, the ellipsis in the book is greater. The goodbye scene in the book is presented over a full-page panel that gives the effect of a long duration. The film adapts it into several shots of varying size and perspective; a reverse shot reproduces the intimacy of the book panel. The visual repetition of the tram after the goodbye is a static long view in the book. The film shows the view out of the moving tram just slow enough for the recipient to notice the outside environment, an environment full of signs and moving people, in which other Lost Things are highlighted by spotlights like celebrities on stage. Not until then does the film pick up the picture of the tram's exterior, directly moving on to the pictures from the subsequent double spread of the book. The effect of increasing distance from the tram, from its inside to the outside to far away, is created in the book by means of repeated pictures. This gives the illusion of crowding and speed in the book, because the "background rapidly drops away and, visually, the narrator disappears into anonymity."[31] The subsequent blackout in the film can be considered equivalent to the reader's turning of pages.

Compared with the typical visual design of comics, the narration of Tan's book is mostly quiet. There are few lines of movement and Tan employs neither onomatopoeia nor multiple images[32] to produce the effect of motion. There is occasional use of repeated figures and representations of different moments in one movement. For instance, the back cover shows the same postcard from both sides. It is the multiplicity of details on each page which vitalizes the narration. Similarly, in the film, the background of each shot is replete with details from the main story. However, unlike the reader of the book, the viewer of the film lacks sufficient time to contemplate all the details. Hence the film's narrative seems to progress faster.[33] While the turning of pages slows reception, time segmentation through the use of black transitions and fade-outs in the film combines several page units without a pause in the narration. The frequency of shots in the film is also higher than the frequency of panels in the book. A number of panels from the book are split in the film into several close-ups. Furthermore, the film's closing ellipsis is one that neither the visual nor the verbal text fills in the book.

These differences in time composition naturally influence the story itself. Whereas the film closes some gaps in the book's narrative, especially with regard to the main story, which is presented in a closer and more detailed manner in the film, it neglects other aspects of the book. These include the connotations of the collage frames or the postcard design on the back cover. This results in a different focus in each medium and concomitant major differences between the reading paths taken by the reader or viewer.

Reading Competency Requirements

What skills are necessary to deal successfully with the narratives in the book and in the film? As far as the plot is concerned, both media require the audience to merge the ordinariness of the verbal story with the surrealistic images. The progression between the panels is recreated using several single illustrations in the animation film. Both the reader of the book and the viewer of the film are required to join form to meaning,[34] stimulating recognition of the significance in context of basic signs and symbols (such as the arrow).

No changes are made to the written text, which is adapted into the film as the voiceover. The collage technique of the book is alluded to in the film, but lacks the former's impact. While the book's collage technique recalls the paper basis of its medium, the film instead uses the filmic technique of a split screen. The paratextual information is also presented differently in each medium. In both media, there is no clear boundary between the paratext,[35] such as the title page in the book or the credits in the film, and the main text, with

both presented in the same visual style. Both media integrate paratextual information into the story by various means. The book's play with the conventions of paratext, including information about the author on the back cover,[36] challenges the reader to recognize and identify these conventions. The film includes the title credits in the imagery of the fictional story, but this is common practice on the big screen. The film's end credits are also presented conventionally. These features enable the viewer of the film to establish, recognize or enhance their knowledge of formal film structure.

Frequent close-ups are also a common device in filmic narration. In addition to the use of the split screen and only slight pauses in the narrative created by the use of fade-outs or blackouts, they help the film move faster than the book. The rhythm of the background score also enhances the speed. These properties mean the viewer must be able to receive and handle large amounts of new visual and acoustic information quickly. The book's images allow more time for contemplation because the reader is confronted with new information only by the turn of a page, and it is the reader who controls the page turns. Moreover, the techniques used in the book to present the flow of time do not tell the story at a rapid pace.

The book's audience can control the time required to contemplate the images and establish their connection to the written text. However, the reader needs to be able to judge autonomously the relevance of the information presented to them. Both the reader of the book and the viewer of the film need to constitute meaning by reading images that are semantically precise and closed.[37] The camera perspective in the short film concentrates consecutively on single aspects of the imagery. In the book, the reader moves from one aspect to the next much more independently, while the camera's perspective presents the viewer of the film with only one possible ordering of the various details. The screen's images need to be "read". Unlike the picture book, the story in the film is guided much more directively by the exclusive sequencing of images.[38] The reader of the book is challenged to make the connections in the story through the collage technique, whereas the collage soon ends in the film. The reader of the book is confronted with both elements of the main plot and nonlinear atmospheric elements like the panels of the sky.[39] Thus the audience of the book establishes relevance in a more autonomous manner than that of the film does. Moreover, the immediacy of the film's narrative, with its close and personal perspective, invites identification with the boy; it is more difficult for the viewer to remain consistently aware of the fictional quality of the story told than for the reader of the book. This "[f]ilmic realism is also historically conditioned."[40] According to David Lewis, in the picture book the "pictorial narrative" conveys the emotional content, yet it does so in contrast to its "verbal narrative."[41]

Therefore the book might help to improve readers' capacity to distinguish between reality and fiction, and support them with this distinction when watching the film.

On an emotional and unconscious level, the music, sounds and voices used in the film strongly influence the atmosphere of the story, as well as adding new aspects to the story that are not present in the book. The voice, an intentionally awkward and melancholy voice with a British accent, is naturally an interpretation of the narrator's personality. The narrative is also interpreted by the speaker through the pauses and accentuation in his speech. The film's dispensation with the requirement of the book's reader to switch between the text and image panels makes the perception of the film more immediate and less distant. The episodes on the beach and in the shed provoke a different emotional response to the Lost Thing on the part of the audience. The picture book uses its own devices, such as pictures like close-ups of the sky that are not necessary to the plot, to create a specific atmosphere. By contrast, the sound and the close perspective help the film guide the viewer's response and emotions, even if the viewer is not necessarily conscious of being thus guided.

Conclusion

Reading the picture book promotes media literacy in primary and secondary school education because the author "offers strategies for ways of navigating and changing a textuality that erases difference."[42] Besides, the book familiarizes the audience with the story`s imagery and plot and may therefore act to acquaint it with the filmic narrative, which is more ephemeral. In order to recognize the specific "signals and markers that refer to emotional conditions and govern the reader`s attitude"[43] in each case, and which relate to the understanding of the devices of storytelling, narrative and point of view used in each genre, it might be helpful if audiences reread the book after watching the film and vice versa. *The Lost Thing* reveals that both media invite us to comprehend points of view that are not our own and therefore have the capacity to activate the reader's or viewer's awareness of emotions.

With regard to reading skills, the picture book as a classic access route into reading enhances the reader`s ability to read film literally as well as to interpret forms, signs or positions in which images are placed. It is, therefore, beneficial to the comprehension of visual codes. These reading competencies can be transferred and advanced in the comprehension of the film`s visual and acoustic signals. The film's acoustics convey multiple levels of sound. As we have discussed, the respective points of view, the differing temporal structures used in the film, and the role of ellipsis are also worth exploring. In the case of *The Lost Thing*, neither medium replaces the other. Instead, each benefits from the fact that the

audience becomes acquainted with the story in the other medium.[44]

[1] See Alice Bienk, *Filmsprache. Einführung in die interaktive Filmanalyse* (Marburg: Schüren, 2010), 20.
[2] Gunther Kress, *Literacy in the New Media Age* (New York/London: Routledge, 2003), 164.
[3] Shaun Tan, *The Lost Thing. A Tale for Those Who Have More Important Things to Pay Attention To* (Sydney: Lothian, 1999).
[4] Shaun Tan and Andrew Ruhemann (dir.) (2010), *The Lost Thing*. [DVD]. Australia: Madman.
[5] Sandie Mourão employed this picture book and its film in a foreign language class of sixteen- to eighteen-year-old students. See Sandie Mourão, "Response to *The Lost Thing:* Notes from a Secondary Class," *CLELE. Children's Literature in English Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2013): 81-105.
[6] See http://www.imdb.de/title/tt1669698/ (accessed 1 December 2012).
[7] For this term, see Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, *Kinder und Jugendliteratur. Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2012), 21.
[8] This approach also corresponds to the manner of proceeding used in Sandie Mourão's project; see Mourão, "Response to *The Lost Thing*," 81.
[9] For further discussion of the work, see Debra Dudek, "Dogboys and Lost Things; or Anchoring a Floating Signifier: Race and Critical Multiculturalism," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 37, no.4 (2006): 1-20; Debra Dudek, "Desiring Perceptions: Finding Utopian Impulses in Shaun Tan's The Lost Thing," *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature* 15, no. 2 (2005): 58-66; David Rudd, "A Sense of (Be)longing in Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*," *International Research in Children's Literature* 3, no. 2 (2010): 134-147.
[10] See Rudd, "A Sense of (Be)longing," 135.
[11] "[I]n true picturebook fashion there is one more illustration: a closing page."; see Sandie Mourão: "And the winner is ... The Lost Thing," http://picturebooksinelt.blogspot.de/2011/03/and-winner-is-lost-thing.html, (accessed 23 December 2012).
[12] Rudd mentions the "almost animate" appearance of the arrow and the clouds, referring to Dudek. See Rudd, "A Sense of (Be)longing," 139.
[13] In cinematic terminology, a voiceover is always regarded as non-diegetic because it is outside the filmic world. In this case, it adheres perfectly to the text strips in the book, which are also separated from visual narration
[14] The boy mentions that he is going to relate a story that happened a few years earlier.
[15] Utopia "must be read differently. The reader is no longer distanced from the boy and the lost thing, and, instead, sees exactly as they do." See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 62.
[16] This corresponds to the students' experiences in Sandie Mourão's project; see Sandie Mourão, "Response to *The Lost Thing*," 7. See also Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, "Emotional Connection: Representation of Emotions in Young Adult Literature," in *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and Culture: The Emergent Adult*, ed. Mary Hilton and Maria Nikolajeva (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 127-138; here 127 f.
[17] Kümmerling-Meibauer, "Emotional Connection," 136.
[18] See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 62.
[19]See Bienk, *Filmsprache*, 50.
[20] See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 61.
[21] Miguel Isaza, "*The Lost Thing*, Exclusive Interview with Sound Designer John Kassab," http://designingsound.org/2011/03/the-lost-thing-exclusive-interview-with-sound-designer-john-kassab/, accessed 23 December 2012.
[22] See Idem.
[23] See Idem.
[24] Nylon Studios' composer Michael Yezerski, see: Nylon Studios, "The Lost Thing, with a score by Nylon composer Michael Yezerski, wins the Oscar!" http://nylonstudios.blogspot.de/2011/03/lost-thing-with-score-by-nylon-composer.html (accessed 25 December 2012).
[25] See http://beakstreetblog.com/2011/04/passions-lost-thing/ (accessed 30 August 2012).
[26] While the "discourse time" refers to the time it takes to narrate the events, "narrative time" refers to the duration of these events.
[27] See Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott, *How Picturebooks Work* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2001), 139.
[28] See Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006).
[29] See Nicole Mahne: *Transmediale Erzähltheorie. Eine Einfhrung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2007); Scott McCloud: *Understanding Comics. The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

[30] Longer pictures, for example, seem to show longer lasting events than shorter pictures; see McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, 102.
[31] See Rudd, "A Sense of (Be)longing," 142.
[32] See Mahne, *Erzähltheorie*, 52f., and McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, 112.
[33] See Chuan-Yao Lin, "A Conversation with Illustrator Shaun Tan," *World Literature Today* 82, no. 5, 44-47.
[34] See Kress, *Literacy*, 145.
[35] "*The Lost Thing* refuses to be entirely contained by such boundaries as front and back covers, for instance." See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 63.
[36] See Nikolajeva and Scott, *Picturebooks*, 241f.
[37] Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 166.
[38] Reading paths in printed images are relatively open. See Kress, *Literacy*, 165.
[39] See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 63, and Mourão, "Response to *The Lost Thing*," 89.
[40] Robert Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation (*Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 11.
[41]See David Lewis, "The Constructedness of Texts: Picture Books and the Metafictive", in *Only Connect: Readings on Children's Literature*, 3 (1996): 259-277.
[42] See Dudek, "Desiring Perception," 65.
[43] See Kümmerling-Meibauer, *Emotional Connection*, 131.
[44] "After seeing the film ... the students all agreed that they understood the story better." See Sandie Mourão, "Response to *The Lost Thing*," 7.

Elder Quests, Kid Ventures, and Kinder Quests

Ian Wojcik-Andrews
Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature, Eastern Michigan University, Ipsilanti, USA

Abstract • Films for young audiences today, particularly those deemed multicultural such as *Whale Rider* or *Up*, combine two journeys or quests, those of an elderly person and those of a young child. These films and others, such as *The Secret of Roan Inish*, represent a new genre called Kid Quests. This article examines the history, defining features, and cultural worth of kid quests and discusses their value and relevance to topics current in diversity studies such as age.

Keywords • elder quests, kid ventures, kid quests, genre, age stereotype, mental health/illness, memory, multiculturalism

According to the authors of "What is an Elderquest and Why is it so Important?"[1] an elder quest movie is one in which, “An older woman or man sets out on a hazardous journey.”[2] Although there are many earlier versions of the elder quest such as Sophocles’s *Oedipus at Colonus*, the modern elder quest genre, “a new kind of road movie,” emerged in 1957 with Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* (Sweden 1957; dir. Ingmar Bergman). This movie is “widely recognized as a milestone in the modern reappraisal of old age by psychologists and gerontologists as well as humanities scholars and film historians.”[3] *Wild Strawberries* involves a physical road trip for sure but the inner, emotional journey, which concludes with images of children playing, figures just as prominently. Ready to travel from Stockholm to Lund to receive a prestigious honorary degree, seventy-eight-year-old widowed Professor Isak Borg comments that in his “old age” he still feels “lonely,” empty, and dissatisfied and that his dreams contain symbols - ticking clocks, dead, faceless bodies, a hearse, a coffin and the like - that foreshadow his death. Borg decides to drive to Lund accompanied by Marianne, his pregnant daughter-in-law who is estranged temporarily from her husband and staying with Borg. They pick up various hitchhikers who ask probing, unsettling questions of Borg and provide uncomfortable insights into a past that on the surface seems successful but that underneath is fraught with self-doubt. Their pointed observations (“You know so much [but] you don’t know anything” Marianne tells him) force him to confront the death of his wife, his loneliness and aloofness, his distant, middle aged son, and his cold-hearted mother - in short,

his life and his familial relations to that point. After much self-reflection and introspection he reconciles with Marianne, his son, and Miss Agda, his long-suffering housemaid and surrogate wife. The concluding scenes show Borg in bed, drifting into sleep, his mind full of pleasurable childhood memories.

Since 1957, numerous elder quest narratives from *Harold and Maude* (USA 1971; dir. Hal Ashby) and *On Golden Pond* (USA 1981; dir. Mark Rydell) to *Everybody's Fine* (USA 2009; dir. Kirk Jones) have largely conformed to this storyline of an older person on a physical journey that prompts an emotional reevaluation of their life which typically leads them back either to their own childhood, their own children, or a state of innocence traditionally associated with childhood in general. In *Harold and Maude*, free-spirited and youthful septuagenarian Maude sees life as one long adventurous journey. This includes trying something new each day, including a relationship with 20 year-old Harold whose morbid obsession with death stands in stark contrast to Maude's cheerful obsession with life. In *On Golden Pond* elderly couple Norman and Ethel Thayer have made their annual trip to their summer cottage on Golden Pond. Their daughter, Chelsea, and her new fiancé, Billy Ray, visit them. When the visit ends their troubled son Billy Ray Jr (Norman and Ethel's grand stepson) remains behind. In part, the movie chronicles how Billy Ray Jr's physical presence and youthful, honest, and direct questions awakens in Norman and Ethel memories regarding their troubled relationship to daughter Chelsea when she was a young girl. In *Everybody's Fine* widowed Frank Goode (Robert De Niro) treks across country to visit his adult children after they had cancelled on an annual family reunion, a modern-day odyssey of sorts that unearths along the way numerous emotionally charged memories regarding his relationship to them as children.

If elder quest narratives from 1957 to today are defined primarily by the presence of an elderly protagonist whose quest leads back to the past, Hollywood type kid (ad)ventures feature a young protagonist whose journey is oriented toward the future and, ironically, precisely those markers of adult identity such as work and family elders often question on their journeys as truly valuable. Perhaps as a reflection of the way in which the historical development of the nuclear family has meant the physical and psychological separation of elders from children, elder quests and kid ventures move in quite different directions. Shirley Temple's movies in the 1930s, *National Velvet* (USA 1944; dir. Clarence Brown), most

Disney movies from the 1930s onwards, *Home Alone* (USA 1990; dir. Chris Columbus), *The Lion King* (USA 1994; dir. Roger Allers), *The Land and Before Time* (USA 1988; dir. Don Bluth), the work of Pixar, DreamWorks SKG, and the Harry Potter, Narnia, and Twilight franchises are good examples of mainstream kid ventures from across a range of traditional children's filmic genres such as fantasy and realism whose narratives propel their hopeful, adventurous protagonists into the future - marriage, romance - rather than backwards toward the past. Kid ventures are bildungsroman, coming of age stories and, as with the elder quest, typically use the traditional hero quest model as popularized by Joseph Campbell in *A Hero With a Thousand Faces*[4] to dramatize the challenges faced by the young protagonists on their way to adulthood. Thus, movies for young people from *Ferngully: The Last Rainforest* (USA 1992; dir. Bill Kroyer) to *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (USA 2001; dir. Chris Columbus) usually involve an orphaned child leaving home due to a crisis of some sort. He or she then experiences and learns about life while on the quest, meeting helpers and villains, mentors and guides, developing a relationship with a peer usually of the opposite sex, and happily returning home with said peer having grown up by resolving the initial crisis. By the movie's conclusion, the protagonists have found themselves friendship, love, a home, work of some kind, and thus a purpose in life that, it is hoped, will result in a successful transition away from childhood into the unchartered territory of adulthood.

Toward the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century roughly speaking, a new genre has emerged that brings together elements of the elder quest and the kid venture and reflects a range of historical conditions. I would call this increasingly popular genre kid quests. I would argue that its modern formulation begins in the 1980s and early 1990s with movies such as *The Secret of Roan Inish* (USA/Ireland 1993; dir. John Sayles)) and includes such films as *Whale Rider* (New Zealand 2002; dir. Niki Caro), *The Way Home* (South Korea 2002; dir. Jeong-hyang Lee), The *Triplets of Belleville* (France 2003; dir. Sylvain Chomet), *Akeelah and the Bee* (USA 2006; Doug Atchison), *Up* (USA 2009; dir. Pete Docter), and *Hugo* (USA 2012; dir. Martin Scorsese). Raymond Williams writes in *Marxism and Literature* that there are "clear social and historical relations between literary forms and the societies and periods in which they were originated and practiced."[5] Kid quests are a response to a range of changing social-economic and historical changes. These changes and developments include the Civil Rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s, the emergence of

academic multiculturalism in the 1970s that meant the setting up of programs and degrees in women's studies, African-American studies, children's literature and gerontology, the emergence of an aging baby-boomer generation as an economic and cultural force, developments in the fields of media literacy, social learning theory, and a broad range of cultural studies perspectives that challenge traditional ideas about what constitutes not just youth but also old age: in a world of aging baby-boomers demanding respect for their civic engagements similar degrees of respect are expected for seniors who are young at heart. Profound changing demographics and socio-economic and historical factors, not the least of which is the return of the multigenerational family,[6] have produced the kid quest.

How might kid quests be defined? What are some of their central features? Primarily, a kid quest is defined as one in which the narrative foregrounds almost in equal parts a deep and abiding relationship between a child and an elderly protagonist. In *Whale Rider*, a South Pacific Pictures/New Zealand film production, the narrative revolves around Paikea and her grandfather Koro. Lee Jeong-hyang's *The Way Home*, from South Korea, examines the relationship between a city-born boy, seven-year-old Sang-woo and his seventy-five-year-old, country raised grandmother. Martin Scorsese's *Hugo* concerns twelve-year-old Hugo Cabret, and an old man, Papa George. The elderly man turns out to be French silent filmmaker George Melies whom many people thought dead but, it turns out, is still very much alive living a completely unassuming life. Pixar's 2009 *Up* concerns 8-year-old Russell and the elderly, widowed, 78 year old Carl. As this cast of characters suggests, kid quests are defined also by their multicultural nature. Second, early in a kid quest, the narrative brings both young and old protagonists together and they remain connected through to the end. Russell, a wilderness explorer trying to get his Assisting the Elderly badge, knocks on Carl's door toward the beginning of the film. As they travel to Paradise Falls, their lives remain forever interconnected. Third, ultimately the dual, intersecting and overlapping journeys radically transform both child and senior citizen. Hugo's appearance in Melies' life ultimately forces the aging, bitterly resentful filmmaker out of obscurity and back into the limelight. His pioneering film work during the silent era recognized, Melies is rejuvenated and Hugo has found a family.

It is important to examine one example of a kid quest in detail. Adapted from the book of the same name, and filmed in Auckland, Niki Caro's award-winning 2002 New Zealand

film *Whale Rider* features a powerful relationship between eleven-year-old Paikea and her grandfather Koro. Paikea is played by Australian-born, but also part-New Zealand, part-Maori actress Keisha Castle-Hughes. Rawiri Paratene from Hokianga, New Zealand, plays Koro. The remainder of the cast is similarly indigenous and thus authentically connected to the film's central themes of life and death, past and present, tradition and an unshakeable belief in tribal rituals and conventions versus an equally firm resolve in modern life. When we first meet Paikea as an eleven-year-old she already has a profound belief in herself as the whale rider of Whangarian myth and legend destined to bring about the rebirth and revitalization of her community in the context of contemporary New Zealand life. To realize that belief, she must fight age-old assumptions about the rights and expectations of male heirs to be cultural leaders, a right expressed and defended most visibly, constantly, and forcefully through the ever-felt, authoritarian presence of her stern but caring Grandfather Koro. Numerous scenes show Paikea and Koro clashing over these important cultural questions. For example, when Koro arranges to teach the village's first-born boys the "old ways" Koro forbids Paikea to take part in the class because she is a girl. Ultimately she is prepared to die for her beliefs. In the climatic scenes, Paikea climbs aboard a beached whale stuck at the water's edge and, though the other members of the community are unable to do so, coaxes it back out to the ocean. We see her riding atop the massive, barnacled whale and looking back to the shoreline as she disappears further out in to the ocean calmly intoning, "I'm not scared to die." Standing alone at the water's edge, Koro is made to realize what has just happened and is forced to admit that he completely misjudged his granddaughter's strength of purpose and sense of destiny and is transformed accordingly. Forced to rethink his deep-rooted assumptions about Paikea, he kneels in acknowledgement by her hospital bedside after she has been rescued from ocean. He concedes that she is indeed the whale rider, a girl child whose knowledge of and belief in the past can nonetheless lead Whangarian culture and its people into the future.

The movie literally closes with the community at large rowing the village's canoe out into the ocean, a symbolic act of intergenerational unity and cultural rebirth that is publicly shown to weave together traditional ways of life as represented by Koro, with new strands of thinking as represented by Paikea. The film makes it clear that the strength of the community as a whole lies in the combined efforts of its youngest and oldest people. As such, it perfectly illustrates the emerging genre of the kid quest.

Though *Whale Rider* illustrates nicely the main aspects of the kid quest, why study this emerging genre as a whole? First, though critics such as Douglas Brode[7] would argue otherwise, Disney's forays into diversity studies with movies such as *Aladdin* (USA 1992; dir. Ron Clements), *Pocahontas* (USA 1995; dir. Mike Gabriel), Beauty *and the Beast* (USA 1991; dir. Gary Trousdale), *Mulan* (USA 1998; dir. Tony Bancroft) and others, perpetuates the same old racist cultural stereotypes as do other First World production companies and movies such as Columbia Pictures' *Karate Kid* (USA 2010; dir. Harald Zwart), in this instance regards Beijing. Conversations about kid quests, ageism, and multiculturalism afford educators across the humanities and the social sciences a chance to discuss how mainstream media, especially conglomerates such as the Disney Corporation, continue to perpetuate ageist stereotypes and those of race, class, and gender. Kid quests from Second and Third Cinematic[8] contexts counteract negative stereotypes of both the young and the old typically found in First World production companies such as Disney. In this regard, kid quests will breathe new life into discussions about key terms in media literacy such as representation, and social learning theory such as symbolic modeling. How real is the realism of multicultural films for the young from First, Second, and Third cinemas? Is the relationship between young and old treated stereotypically or seriously represented depending on a movie's production values and how does this affect society's views of either children or seniors? What responsibility does mainstream media have to make products in which characters model socially acceptable behaviors regards the elderly and the very young?

A second reason for studying kid quests other than they contain positive representations of cultural diversity that will surely have a lasting effect on people's attitudes towards others is that the image and role of the elderly has been largely ignored in children's literature studies. Conversely the role of the child has largely been ignored in gerontology studies. Whilst this situation is slowly changing within departments of English and gerontology, sustained discussions about the relationship between young and old are largely absent in filmic studies. Therefore, discussions of kid quests as a genre responding to social and cultural changes provide students of film a perfect opportunity to fill these absences and contribute to the larger debates about how traditional film historiographies elide national cinema and marginal genres deemed unpopular and unprofitable by the cinema's filmic gatekeepers. In short, many of these questions and more can be answered if media literacy

intersects with kid quests and social learning theory. Websites such as www.journeysinfilm.org[9] perfectly exemplify such intersections by suggesting a myriad ways in which educators might utilize multicultural films starring children and thus engage in renewed debates regards media literacy.

What is social learning theory and media literacy and how are they connected to kid quests? Social learning theory is an interpretative model developed by psychologists such as Albert Bandura [10] and is typically used for understanding human behavior. It asks a fundamental question: why do people act and behave the way they do. One answer is that either real or fictional characters in the media behave in certain ways and that this symbolic modeling, as it is referred to, produces similar kinds of behavior in people that subsequently spills over into society. Children do not simply watch characters on television or film and copy their behavior. Other factors such as prolonged attention to the behavior being modeled, the memorization of and motivation to reproduce that behavior, must come into play. Bandura and others were merely arguing that behavior is not just a consequence of an individual's psychological profile but also of other social and cultural factors. It is not difficult to see how social learning theory intersects with media literacy and, ultimately, kid quests. Media literacy, or media education (other terms are visual or cine literacy), is about being able to understand both the form and content of the various media outlets available today. In relation to children, media literacy means teaching kids how to be media literate, how to understand not just the presence of a cultural stereotype in a movie but how and why that cultural stereotype is produced. In other words, media literacy means being able to decode a range of experiences associated with watching television, films, playing computer games, being on the Internet and so forth. In its broadest sense, media literacy is about understanding questions of production, language, representation, and audience, four terms developed by David Buckingham as a way of understanding what might be called the politics of media literacy.[11] Given that children are now understood to be living in an electronic childhood, media literacy is a crucial pedagogical tool that works to facilitate children's entry into the informational age of the twenty-first century. If social learning theory argues that children learn behavior through the symbolic modeling of fiction or real characters in the media, and media literacy concerns itself with teaching children and young adults how to understand modeled behavior, it is not difficult to see that sustained discussions of kid quests in multiple pedagogical situations will enhance

children's understanding about cultural stereotypes but also the construction of reality based upon repeated viewings of particular cultures and their people in the media.

Whale Rider touches on several of the contexts mentioned above. In an important way it models, to use Bandura's terms, for young audiences an accurate and sensitive portrayal of traditional Whangarian tribal life in the context of contemporary New Zealand culture. As such, it stands in marked contrast to any number of cultural stereotypes in mainstream movies for the young today and might be used in a myriad of pedagogical ways to teach key ideas about cultural diversity and the struggles of people around the world for self-fulfillment in the face of cultural and economic adversity. In their curriculum guide, Journeys in Film suggests using *Whale Rider* to teach media literacy, especially the degree to which filmmakers use music to evoke emotions in audiences and, more broadly, special effects such as the use of animatronics (Whale Rider's use of mechanized whales, for example).[12] It definitely functions as a perfect example of a multicultural children's film. In keeping with current demands by scholars, teachers, and activists for authenticity in children's literary and visual texts, it brings together the universality of human experience with the specificity of culture setting.

In keeping with evolving definitions of what constitutes multicultural, or diversity studies, *Whale Rider* as a kid quest directed toward young audiences has a further relevance and importance in this discussion. Its image of the elderly as cultural gatekeepers significantly counteracts the idea that elderly people lose their memory when growing old as part of an inevitable deterioration in mental health. Multicultural children's literature studies at first focused mainly on the absence of images of African-American children in picture books: Nancy Larrick's 1965 article is generally seen as seminal in this regard.[13] Since then, diversity studies have evolved to include not just people of color but religious groups, the disabled, questions of gender, regionalist issues and, of course, the issue of age[14] and the degree to which old age is associated with a declining mental health that in turn perpetuates further stereotypes of the elderly as inevitably incapacitated the older they become. *Whale Rider*, and other kid quests such as *The Secret of Roan Inish* or the work more generally of Japanese director Hayao Miyazaki such as *Spirited Away* (Japan 2001; dir. Hayao Miyazaki) and *Ponyo* (Japan 2008; dir. Hayao Miyazaki) work against those assumptions. Koro, Paikea's grandfather, and Nanny Flowers, her grandmother, are ageing of course but nonetheless remain vital both physically and mentally. They are stubborn but their stubbornness is not

associated with craziness (except in the most affectionate of ways). They are an integral part of their community but they also remain individualized as characters. Their deliberateness is an attention to detail rather than a sign of deteriorating hand/eye coordination. In short, in contrast to images of the elderly in mainstream children's films that depend upon the connection between mental illness and age for their profit, *Whale Rider* and others treat the subject with a degree of serious and sensitivity that should teach a tolerance and greater understanding for such issues. As part of a broader discussion of age and kid quests, deconstructing negative and positive images of mental health in films for the young is crucial. Before I discuss *Up* as a kid quest that models positive images of the aging process and the life cycle in general, it is important to examine the negative images of mental health in Disney.

There are negative cultural stereotypes of the young and the elderly of course but the connection between film, age, and mental health issues is especially problematic. Negative images of old and young in movies not only simplify complex issues—and mental illness is certainly a complex issue—but also more damagingly reinforces in the minds of young, impressionable viewers binary oppositions regarding mental health and sickness that are hard to break. These oppositions in turn establish the parameters of physical, mental, and behavioral norms found acceptable at any given historical moment: the stereotype becomes real. Some critical work has been done to examine mental illness and films for older audiences.[15] But it is appropriate here to look at the connections between movies, mental health, and age in Disney as its films perpetuate the cultural stereotype of mental illness in young and old as something comical and lovable or something fearsome and untrustworthy, something strangely different.

Allan Beveridge[16] argues that whilst "Disney's work has been related to his own troubled psyche, his treatment of the mental problems of his characters has not been examined." To illustrate Disney's stereotypical approach to mental illness, Beveridge draws on classic children's filmic texts such as *Alice in Wonderland* (USA 1951; dir. Clyde Geronimi), *Dumbo* (USA 1941; dir. Ben Sharpsteen), *Mary Poppins* (USA 1964; dir. Robert Stevenson), and *Beauty and the Beast* (USA 1991; dir. Gary Trousdale). In relation to *Alice in Wonderland*, Beveridge notes that it is full of images of madness, not least of which is the Mad Hatter! Beveridge comments that in *Dumbo*, Mrs. Jumbo is locked up because of her violent outbursts that in fact are attempts to defend her son from "the taunts of the audience"

whose response to the madness of Mrs. Jumbo is fear and suspicion. In *Beauty and the Beast*, Belle and her father Maurice are seen as crazy, different. Other critics such as Lawson and Fouts have similarly noted the negative links between mainstream films for the young - Hollywood centric type kid ventures - cultural stereotyping and mental illness. Lawson and Fouts argue that because Disney films contain a high frequency of negative references to mental illness, exposure to Disney films and television shows "has implications for child viewers who are learning stereotyped attitudes and stigmatizing terminology."[17] In short, Disney's films model negative attitudes regarding the elderly and mental health.

It is worth examining Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* in more detail. In terms of age, class, and gender, the prologue does indeed set the scene in *Beauty and the Beast* as it presents to us a magical landscape populated by castles, a spoilt prince, a beggar, an enchantress, spells, transformations, and a cottage, in other words, all the ingredients required to make a folk tale. It is an old beggar woman who one evening visits a spoiled, selfish, and unkind prince in his castle: note here the obvious connection between age, class, and gender. These connections are heard and seen as we are shown that the prince is repulsed by her "haggard appearance" - old age is physically disgusting - and rejects her offer of a rose in exchange for shelter from the winter's "bitter cold." The narrator tells us that the "old woman's ugliness" is then transformed into a "beautiful enchantress" who punishes the prince for his inability to see the real beauty behind the superficial ugliness by transforming him into a "hideous beast." Ashamed of his "monstrous form" he hides himself away in the castle, his only window on the outside world a magical rose that will die, and he along with it, unless someone is found who can love a beast. At this point we meet Belle. Belle's appearance at this point in the narrative is significant. She is neither ugly nor old and neither rich nor particularly poor. If the ugly old woman and the beautiful enchantress are at the extremes of age and beauty, Belle occupies a middle ground that ironically enough reinforces the extremes of age and beauty. A compulsive reader of stories who seems completely unaware of herself as a fairy tale character in a film about a fairy tale Belle is seen by the townsfolk as "strange and distracted," a "funny girl," "peculiar, rather odd." The three female sycophants who admire Gaston view her as "crazy" because she would rather read a book than have a relationship with him. Along with her father Maurice who is referred to as "crazy old Maurice" Belle is not feared just viewed as "different from the rest of us."

Can kid quests such *Up* teach a perspective on age and mental health that allows students to see the negative associations made in Disney's films in particular and mainstream films for the young in general. In short, can media literacy educators and others utilize *Up* to make young audiences more aware, tolerant and understanding of the complexities of mental health as it is associated with issues of ageing. Can *Up* function as symbolic modeling in a positive manner?

Up's treatment of memory is especially relevant to our discussion. One stereotype that surrounds the elderly is the loss of memory associated with dementia as a consequence of Alzheimer's and the aging process in general. In the minds of many people, getting old is associated with a steady decline in an elderly person's mental capabilities. *Up* massively complicates this cultural stereotype of the elderly as forgetful, unable to remember anything, getting old, and thus losing not just their mind but also the sense of identity and subjectivity that accompanies memory loss. Most obviously, Carl's rich and detailed memories of his life with Ellie drive the movie. Their initial meeting, their courtship, marriage, inability to have children, old age, and Ellie's death (their entire life together) are significant motivating factors in his decision finally to uproot the house and travel to Paradise Falls in South America. These memories are not lost or forgotten. They are recalled in startling detail, as are the details of the house. Indeed, we might argue that the house stands in for Ellie. The house houses his memories of her and the ups and downs of their life together: the money they saved for the trip to Paradise Falls but never spent, the two chairs next to one another in which they sat and read every night, and so forth. At first these memories are cherished: appropriately his journey involves taking the house (the memories) with him. He pulls and drags it along to Paradise Falls so determined is he to keep alive the memory of Ellie and her dreams of adventure. But ultimately he is forced to choose between the past, the present, and the future. In order to save Russell he must let go of the house and the memories it contains. As it floats away, the burden of the memories are lifted from him. Freed from the memories of the past, Carl is last seen sitting on the sidewalk eating ice cream with Russell, presumably dreaming of new adventures and thus the creation of new memories neither of which suggest a return to a "finite childishness"[18] but a "childlikeness seasoned with wisdom."[19]

Rejuvenated by Russell, Carl is alive and well. Aided by Carl, Russell is now a fully-fledged senior wilderness explorer and happily receives his Assisting the Wilderness badge at

the appropriate ceremony assisted by Carl, Russell's surrogate father and grandfather rolled into one. As with *Whale Rider*, *Up* is similarly life-affirming and, given other more positive images of the elderly in the media, should further allay the terror of death as traditionally represented by the elderly.

Critics have tried to link mainstream children's films (kid ventures) to questions of mental health. In her playfully tongue-in-cheek *Tigger on the Couch*, Laura James is one such critic. Assigning various mental health disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyper Disorder, Dysthmic Disorder, and Generalised Anxiety Disorder to Tigger, Winnie-the-Pooh, Eeyore, and Piglet respectively, James acknowledges that "Mental illness is a real and painful problem" but that she wrote the book in order to present mental illness "in an accessible way which might help lessen the fear so often associated with emotional and psychological disorders." [20] Realizing that Eeyore suffers from depression will open up a conversation on that subject. Similarly, Birgit Wolz argues that movies such as *The Lion King*, *Bridge to Terabithia* (USA 2007; dir. Gabor Csupo), and *Free Willy* (USA 1993; dir. Simon Wincer) though not specifically kid quests as their narratives do not focus exclusively on a relationship between a young and old elderly protagonist, might nonetheless allow young audiences to work through questions of separation, loss of a family member, death, anxiety and self-esteem. *Mrs. Doubtfire* ((USA 1993; dir. Chris Columbus) might be used for "treatment of depression or anxiety resulting from family transitions because of divorce and step-family issues."[21] Drawing on the work of Gardner (multiple intelligences), Campbell (hero cycle), Jung (archetypes and collective unconscious), and Freud (projection), Wolz argues that conversation between a young viewer and a psychiatrist of a relevant scene from these films will hopefully result if not in the patient's (the young viewer's) complete cure then certainly an understanding of the issues involved and what the next step might be in the resolution of those issues and the young viewer's return to mental health.

The problems with these lines of argument are several. In relation to *The Lion King* (USA 1994; dir. Roger Allers) a discussion regards birth, ageing, death and the life process in general might be resolved through watching Simba develop from a cub to king, or from watching Mufasa plunge to his death because of Scar's betrayal. However, it might also be argued that repeated viewing of Mufasa's death will traumatize or desensitize young viewers rather than cure them of their fear of separation from a loved one! Furthermore, that film's

representation of the hyenas as "crazy and dim-witted" especially when set against the image of Mufasa as thoughtful, deliberate, and stately will still reinforce connections between mental disorders (crazy hyenas are to be feared), evil (the crazy hyenas are bad characters), and social order (stately, sensible, paternalistic lions are at the top of the food chain).

Multicultural children's films do have a social and political function. Art has a therapeutic role in people's lives and films directed toward young people should not be exempt from that possibility. As Shohat and Stam point out: multicultural films can provide a "nurturing space for the playing out of the secret hopes of social life … and imagined alliances."[22] How then can kid quests be used in a progressive pedagogy more in keeping with today's hybridist, multicultural classrooms? Zalman Schachter-Shalomi argues that elders are incredibly valuable members of society, especially in regards mental health, because they have an "invisible productivity." [23]You can rely on seniors but what you rely on ("invisible productivity") cannot be quantified. The presence of elders in any culture or community in other words is a plus, an added advantage at the economic and physical level but also the mental, emotional, and spiritual level. If it is reasonable to assume that a discussion of Tigger's extreme energy levels will help youngsters understand Attention Deficit Hyper Disorder, or that Mufasa's demise will cure, or at least allay, a young person's fear of death, it is equally reasonable to assume that an image of togetherness and interconnectedness, of emotional and mental harmony, between young and old found in kid quests such as *Whale Rider* and *The Secret of Roan Inish* or *Hugo* or *Up* will register positively for young viewers, erase the stigmas and anxieties typically associated with age, and symbolically model for them a more tolerant understanding of the ever changing relationship between mental health and the aging process.

Kid quests showing child and senior citizen meaningfully interacting reflect the current trend toward what popular online magazine SheKnowsParenting.com calls "Parenting Grandparents."[24] In this regard, kid quests clearly appeal to grandparents in their roles as surrogate parents, cultural gatekeepers, and film spectators. In kid quests such as *Whale Rider* and *The Secret of Roan Inish* grandparents see characters and situations that replicate their own lives, including those lives as they revolve around the grandchild for whom they care. In other words, grandparents see in kid quests elderly characters mentoring and nurturing a child as they themselves do in real life. The payback for the elderly grandparent, as Erik Erikson

notes, are the "conversations"[25] they have with the grandchildren and thus the avoidance of what Erikson calls a "playless second childhood."[26]

Beyond this sense in which kid quests reflect the lives of individual elderly people and children, the emergence of kid quests as a genre roughly coincides with the appearance of multicultural children's literature and film and diversity studies as a whole in the post-Second World War era. The trend towards multiculturalism within American political, cultural, educational, and social life since the mid to late 1960s has meant the increased presence of diverse characters in children's literature and film. Children and seniors from a wide range of socio-economic, cultural, religious, and regional backgrounds and contexts now populate the landscape of children's literary and visual texts, including children's films deemed kid quests. Though this diverse group of young and old protagonists all embark on a quest of some sort, multicultural characters by definition are not part of the white majority that has historically populated the monomythic world of Hollywood stars and movies from Shirley Temple to *Mary Poppins* to *Home Alone*, Harry Potter, *The Hunger Games* (USA 2012; dir. Gary Ross) and *The Help* (USA 2011; dir. Tate Taylor). We do not think of the central characters in these movies in terms of their skin color. Their whiteness is taken for granted, hence the absence of discussions of race in relation to children's visual media. Whiteness is the fall back position, the default mark of ethnicity so seamlessly assumed we think of these characters in terms of costumes, scars, and the like. The advent of kid quests, especially those deemed multicultural, presages the end of the postmodern blockbuster era in Hollywood just as, say, Italian neo-realism emerged from World War 2 brought about the end of 1930s style Hollywood glamor. Meaningful relationships between young and old as a response to flourishing gerontology programs, the power of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the emphasis on civic engagement, and multiculturalism, are now seen as legitimate topics for film. Kid quests affirm the emergence and acceptance of young and old from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, genders, settings, and (dis) abilities such as mental illness as proper subjects for filmic narratives and current pedagogical practice. In this hybridist, postmodern, global society, kid quests democratize stereotypical representations of age by building bridges between and among generations and by refusing to have young and old sidelined to the margins of the reel world as they are so often in the real world.

1. See "What is an Elderquest and Why is it so Important: The Longevity Revolution and The Emergence of the New Cinema and Literature of Age," www.lets.umb.edu/documents/whatisanelderquest.pdf (accessed 19 June 2013).
[2] "What is an Elder Quest."
[3] Ibid.
[4] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949).
[5] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
[6] See http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/03/18/the-return-of-the-multi-generational-family-household. (accessed 30 June 2013).
7. Douglas Brode, *Multiculturalism and the Mouse: Race and Sex in Disney Entertainment* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005). Brode remains one of the few critics these days arguing that Disney's representation of other cultures is progressive.
8. For a discussion regards film theorists who distinguish between First, Second, and Third Cinemas, see, for instance, Anthony Guneratne and Wimal Dissanayake, eds, *Rethinking Third Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
9. See www.journeysinfilm.org (accessed 19 August 2013) for a full discussion of how multicultural films from around the world might be used in classrooms, including *Whale Rider*.
10 See www.jku.at/org/content/e54521/e54528/e54529/e178059/Bandura_SocialLearningTheory.ger.pdf (accessed 12 April 2013).
[11] David Buckingham, *Media Education: Literacy, Learning, and Contemporary Culture* (London: Polity Press, 2003).
[12] Journeys in film.
[13] See Nancy Larrick, "The All-White World of Children's Books," *Saturday Review* 48 (11 Sep. 1965): 63-65.
[14] See Norton for definitions of multicultural children's literature that have expanded to include age as well as ethnicity and gender.
[15] See Danny Wedding and Mary Ann Boyd's *Movies and Mental Illness: Using Films to Understand Psychopathology* (Boston: Mcgraw-Hill, 1999).
16 See Allan Beveridge, "Images of Madness in the Films of Walt Disney," *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 49, no. 5 (2004): 618-620.
[17] See Andrea Lawson and Gregory Fouts, "Mental Illness in Disney Animated Films," *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, May 2004.
[18] Erik Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed* (New York: Norton, 1997), 65.
[19] Erikson, *Life Cycle*, 65.
[20] Laura James, *Tigger on the Couch: The Neuroses, Psychoses, Disorders and Maladies of our Favorite Childhood Characters* (London: Harper Collins, 2007).
[21] See http://www.zurinstitute.com/cinema_therapy_children_course.html (accessed 19 August 2013).
[22] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London: Routledge, 1994).
23 See Ronal Miller, Salman Schachter, *From Ageing to Sageing: A Profound New Vision of Growing Older* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1995) 215-224.
[24] See Naomi de la Torre, "Parenting Grandparents." SheKnowsParenting, http://www.sheknows.com/parenting/articles/847077/growing-trend-grandparents-raising-children (accessed 19 August 2013).
[25] Erikson, *Life Cycle*, 65.
[26] Ibid, 65.

Learning with Disney: Children's Animation and the Politics of Innocence

David Whitley
Lecturer in English, Film and Children's Literature in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract • This article reconsiders the concept of innocence in relation to animated films for children, focusing particularly on Disney but additionally drawing on examples from other traditions. The author argues that the notion of innocence within these films is potentially double-edged, encompassing both actively transformative and more vulnerable, passive properties. Children's animation is not simply culturally conservative, however, but also rehearses other possibilities, often in a playful form. The article suggests that what children learn from Disney and other animated films is shaped in complex ways by responses to the quality of innocence with which such films are so often imbued.

Key words • animated film, images of childhood, cultural nostalgia, Disney films, gender, innocence, *Kirikou*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*

In recent years, the question of what children may learn from watching films has become a particularly vexed issue. This is especially true in the realm of animation, where Disney's cultivation of the attribute of innocent, family entertainment as a central strand of its marketing has come under intense critical scrutiny from film, cultural and educational theorists. Henry Giroux's book *The Mouse That Roared: Disney and the End of Innocence*, with its central chapter titled 'Learning with Disney',[1] simply brought into the clearest possible focus what had become virtually axiomatic in many academic studies of Disney animation for a number of years: the perception that the much vaunted "innocence" of Disney films was primarily an illusion. Beneath the appealing, brightly coloured surface of the films' comic gags and songs, underpinning all the adventure, enchantment and romance of their plots, lay a darker side, it was repeatedly asserted. Marc Eliot, indeed, gave his 1993 biography of Disney the provocative subtitle of *Hollywood's Dark Prince*,[2] seeking to ground what he perceived as the films' more disturbing undercurrents in unresolved aspects of Walt Disney's psyche. But, more widely than this, there has been a prevailing view that the didactic function, if not the conscious intent, of Disney films is to support an ideologically conservative world view based unquestioningly on a narrow, hegemonic interpretation of middle American values. So pervasive is this 'sophisticated' view of Disney animation that it

has begun to underpin the - sometimes contradictory - ways that the films are viewed worldwide. In the Global Disney Audiences Project, for instance, (a major research initiative carried out in 2000 to "analyze the reception of Disney products internationally")[3] David Buckingham concluded that it had become extremely rare to find adults responding to the survey in Britain, who were prepared to argue that "Disney might actually have any positive influence on children".[4] This view was characteristic of the survey's findings worldwide. Interestingly, though, the perception of Disney as exploiting audiences through commodification and manipulation of response was often counterbalanced by a feeling that popular films may have embodied a more authentic and benign experience within an older culture. Buckingham notes that, in "general...the commodification of Disney was defined...as a decline from a more innocent time – or even a betrayal of it."[5] He goes on to suggest that such perceptions "attest the powerful connection that is often drawn between ideas of 'culture' and 'childhood', and the related opposition between 'culture' and 'commerce'. In this account, authentic culture is often identified with a form of innocent pleasure – and it is this that is so deviously exploited by the operations of the market."[6]

The reductive force of arguments suggesting that innocence in Disney films is a mere palimpsest, manipulating young viewers towards ultimately limiting modes of ideological conformity, thus seems to exert an influence over audiences. But audiences' sense of the cultural value of Disney animation appears at once more ambivalent and more complex than this. This may be due in part to the way innocence – and particularly innocence of the child figure – has been positioned within literary and dramatic traditions more widely. Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale,* for instance, provides a classic instance of the way child innocence may be viewed as both passive and, paradoxically, as powerfully moving. In act two of the play, the noblewoman Paulina suggests that the intransigent and insanely deluded king, Leontes, "may soften" and become more reasonable "at the sight" of his infant child. "The silence often of pure innocence," she concludes, "[P]ersuades when speaking fails." (II.*i.*37-39) It is particularly interesting, in the context of assessing the effect of film language, that Shakespeare's emphasis should fall so strongly on the image of the child as spectacle here, as object of the viewer's "sight". This spectacle is perceived as primal, superseding words. The figure of the innocent child appears more effective as a means of persuasion than the most eloquent language, however, precisely because innocence seems devoid of intention or design. As Leo Braudy has remarked, "[i]nnocence just *is*";[7] innocence doesn't express any deliberate intention and cannot be controlled by institutional forces

because it doesn't seek to control. As a mode of being, innocence lies beyond the reach of linguistic intentionality. Nevertheless, as Paulina's speech indicates, innocence may be positioned so that it becomes an agent of change. When Christ urged his disciples to become as "wise as serpents and as innocent as doves,"[8] he sought nothing less than to change the way human beings acted in the world, forever.

Innocence as Agency - or Passive Goodness?

This inherent doubleness in the way innocence is perceived is of particular interest in relation to children's films. It has often been suggested that innocence is a quality that adults project onto children – something adults feel themselves to have lost. Children, it is claimed, do not see themselves as innocent, nor relate to its significance as a category.[9] No doubt there is some truth in this. But to see childhood innocence as simply a symptom of adult nostalgia, or lack, is to fail to engage fully with the transformative power it is accorded in many of our most popular and important narratives. And since this transformative power is a primary agent in what we take or learn from films – their educative function – it is vitally important to explore and understand its basis. No doubt children learn something different from watching the films adults have made for them than adults will take from the same films. But it is worth remembering that, in many of the most significant narratives involving child protagonists, the adult learns as much from the child as the child does from the adult. George Eliot's *Silas Marner* is an exemplary fable embodying an educative process that points both ways in this respect. But this archetypal structure has been repeated many times in film narratives, too, from Chaplin's *The Kid* (1922) through to Pixar's recent offering *Brave* (2012). Indeed, one might posit that nearly all films involving children appear interested, to some degree, in exploring what adults learn from the child's mode of being and apprehending the world, as well as what children learn from experience.

Theories of Innocence in Film

To explore the complexity of the effect films have further, I will consider two alternative theoretical positions, which propose different ways of understanding the cultural work that films enact. The first of these is articulated in a particularly suggestive form by Leo Braudy, though aspects of this theory also inform the work of a number of significant film and cultural theorists. Braudy argues that popular films act "as sounding board or lightning rod for deep-rooted audience concerns."[10] He suggests that "there is a constant interplay between

the stories told in film and fiction and the stories told in journalism, on television news, in casual conversation and in classrooms. Many of these stories are not simply the by-products of more explicit and self conscious political formulations, but voice deeper disquiets that cut across an entire cultural landscape."[11] Braudy is particularly interested in the way such "disquiets" may focus on large, diffuse and unstable concepts such as "nature" and "innocence" – "at once embodying both ideal and critique"[12] – and his own analysis centres probingly on the "dynamic reciprocity between the sometimes pat resolutions of individual stories and the frequently gaping irresolution of their social implications.'[13] It is here, and in the hybridisation of genres so characteristic of film's development within modern popular culture, he suggests, that these narratives speak to audiences' disquiets, as well as their desires. This is not simply a medium for ideological manipulation, but also exercises troubled sites of meaning in pleasurable forms.

The second strand of theory I would like to draw on proposes two contrasting modes for assessing particular films' cultural and educative effect on audiences. Nadia Crandall[14] goes back to seminal debates about the role of popular culture between Theodor Adorno and Ernst Bloch to suggest alternative modes of assessing the ideological functions of film narratives. The exemplary text she uses to explore and ground these theories is the DreamWorks animation *Shrek*, but the conceptual basis for her argument obviously has much wider applicability. Crandall positions Adorno as a seminal theorist within traditions viewing popular culture as primarily an instrument of what she calls "coercive ideology." From this point of view, mass culture functions as part of a hegemonic means of social control, "inculcating a kind of passive acquiescence"[15] through the superficial pleasures it affords. Bloch's view, by contrast, though by no means simply celebrating popular culture, sees more positive potential in its energies. This is particularly evident in forms deriving from oral narrative, such as fairy and folk tale. Crandall draws on Bloch's theory of "anticipatory illumination" which "states that since alternative societies, indeed alternative worlds, are always present as a possibility even in their negation, fairy tales offer an insight into their condition and hope for change."[16] This is inevitably a rather crude summary of complex theoretical positions, but Crandall's study of how critical judgments accruing from these alternative traditions might be brought to bear on a particular film narrative opens up perceptions that are relevant to the argument I am developing here.

To pursue such connections further, I will now focus in depth on two, contrasting examples. These films (both of which are adaptations of stories with origins in folk tale

traditions) draw on different archetypes of innocence that have strong currency within film narratives for children. They also test some of the theoretical concepts I have outlined above in particularly illuminating forms. The films I have chosen to compare in this way are Disney's first animated feature, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and Michel Ocelot's more recent *Kirikou* (1998).

Innocence as Passive Goodness in Disney's *Snow White*

The classic Disney animation, *Snow White*, is particularly useful in grounding this argument, as it has often been cited as seminal within the Disney canon, illustrating the function of an underlying coercive ideology in especially clear form. Although there are obviously variations in terms of the way particular aspects of the film are interpreted, a number of critics and cultural theorists have seen the overall function of the film in this way, and there are important common elements underlying this position.[17] Perhaps the most fundamental common element in this critical tradition is the perception of the heroine's role as essentially passive. There have been a number of important critiques of the way female protagonists in fairy tales were rendered progressively more passive as the stories were appropriated within literate, bourgeois culture;[18] as well as attempts to revive a greater range of traditional tales from diverse cultures featuring more vital and vigorous heroines.[19] But the figure of Disney's Snow White is often cited as an especially sentimental and sweetly acquiescent exemplar of passivity in terms of female role models. The popularity of the film, it is argued, has allowed this version of the fairy tale to be predominant within contemporary children's imaginations.

Snow White is pictured, at the start of Disney's film, reduced to a condition of servitude in the wicked Queen's household. She is even dressed in the picturesque rags that formed part of sentimental depictions of child poverty from the eighteenth century onwards. She appears to accept her condition with no hint of resentment, however - epitomizing a particular quality of childlike innocence. Indeed, when she has been driven from the castle by the queen's murderous plot against her, she appears to replicate this subordinate role in the dwarves' cottage, immediately offering to serve the little men through taking on the menial duties of cooking and cleaning, in exchange for their allowing her to take up residence. Snow White is thus a passive victim of the evil queen's machinations, according to this reading, and has internalised the subordinate function of her feminine role to the extent that she offers herself in an equivalent position within the patriarchal order of the dwarves' household. Although she is the titular heroine of the story, she is attributed no agency within the main

directives of the plot, eliciting instead sentimental pathos from the audience for her role as victim. The final apotheosis of this exemplary fable of female passivity occurs when Snow White reaps the rewards of her acquiescence in the film's closing sequence: she is rescued by the prince from her spellbound state of unending sleep, a condition that might be taken as synonymous with her ideological role in the film as a whole. The essentially passive role that embodies Snow White's apparently simple, childlike innocence is thus taken as embodying an underlying ideology of female subordination within patriarchy in a particularly potent form. The film has been cited as a virtual primer for the domestic virtues enshrining women's ideal roles in mid-twentieth century America. Maria Tatar, for instance, claims that "[I]n one post-Disney variant of the story after another, Snow White makes it her mission to clean up after the dwarves ('seven dirty little boys') and is represented as serving an apprenticeship in home economics…The Disney version itself transforms household drudgery into frolicking good fun…"[20]

This reading of the film has been very influential in recent years and is, in many ways, persuasive. It acquires added force through comparison with the brothers Grimm versions of the story, in which the dwarves are extremely house-proud and the cottage is a model of cleanliness and order when Snow White enters it. Persuasive though this interpretation of the educative force of the film is, though, in many respects, it does not tell the whole story. Indeed, it would be hard to conceive why the film would have retained so much of its popularity in more recent times, if it were simply a cipher for a now outdated set of values concerning female domesticity. It is tempting to explore, here, as Crandall does in relation to the *Shrek* films, whether the elements of coercive ideology that undoubtedly exist in *Snow White* may be matched with aspects of the film that could be construed as enabling "anticipatory illumination". Crandall's analysis of *Shrek* suggests that the film contains both potentialities, her ultimately positive critical evaluation resting on a sense that *Shrek* opens up more possibilities for emancipatory questioning of traditional forms than the classic Disney modes that it so frequently invokes and parodies. In this respect, though, Crandall's use of Bloch to develop alternative readings may not be the most fruitful approach for assessing other potentialities in *Snow White,* since the Disney film never contests traditional modes of apprehension in the way that *Shrek* does. I will return to Crandall's use of Bloch's theory in relation to *Kirikou,* where it is more genuinely illuminating and relevant. Here, though, I suggest that we need an alternative theory of the way play is incorporated in children's films to account for the effect of *Snow White* on audiences in a more than one dimensional form.

Indeed, the study of children's films in general could benefit from much stronger engagement with the rich literature on play and children's learning that exists within educational theory than has hitherto been the case.

"Innocence" as Play, Rehearsing Forms of Agency

Play has a strong association with childhood innocence conceived as an active quality, rather than as unworldly powerlessness that moves audiences because of its depiction of inherent vulnerability. In this respect, play serves as a domain within which we might both qualify and question the interpretation of Snow White's role in Disney's film as simply passive acquiescence. The concept of play suggests possibilities beyond reading straightforward role models, embodying coercive ideology, into the action of the film, since play is essentially an open form. Within play, children rehearse different possibilities for their development – sometimes contradictory in nature – rather than locking themselves into a single, determined pattern. This is crucial in relation to Disney's *Snow White*, where play is such a central, constitutive part of the film. *Snow White* opens with the heroine already engaged in playful interactions that clearly compensate, in an imaginative realm, for the oppression and isolation that would otherwise appear to determine her identity. Like many children, who create imaginative forms and spaces within which they can express their private thoughts and desires, Snow White is depicted as talking to her animal friends, the doves, about her longings at the start of the movie. While it is true that this motif serves the more obvious purpose of locking Snow White's future development into alignment with the film's romantic plot, it also rehearses a mode of being that will be exercised in much richer and more multidimensional forms when she enters the green world of the dwarves' forest cottage. In the forest, where the vast majority of the film's action takes place, there is a massive extension of the role of what one might call "serious play", with the figures of different animals especially. I call this 'serious play' because much of it is apparently task oriented, which has enabled it to be read off simply in terms of its function affiliating feminine ideals to housework. But, in fact, the creative élan with which this, no doubt ideological as well as literal, work is depicted enables it to have more of the open quality of play than straightforward, coercive didacticism might ordinarily allow. To take just one example, consider the extended sequence in which Snow White and her forest animal friends set to and clean the dwarves' cottage.

This sequence, synchronised to the song Whistle While You Work, has been justly celebrated for the joyous *esprit* with which the animators have responded to its central theme. It remains one of the most delightful passages in the film to watch. It is not just the dexterity and inventiveness with which the visual gags have been linked together, however, which make this sequence so eminently watchable; nor even the charm of the lively musical accompaniment to which the movement is coordinated. The playfulness of the scene also engenders a childlike perspective on the world, that we might be justified in calling "innocent", since it resonates with the underlying qualities of the green world within which the action takes place. Perhaps the most graphic evidence of this thematic richness is afforded by the way dirt is represented. Dirt has a complex symbolic significance within nearly all human societies, since it is associated with disease and death, and must be managed within regimes of cleanliness; yet it is also, ultimately, a constituent of soil and growth, the form into which all life must return in a cycle of renewal. Perhaps for this reason, children are often fascinated by dirt in a way that adults tend to find astonishing or even distasteful. Indeed many educationalists recommend that children should be allowed to engage in tactile, messy activities when young, seeing this as foundational in the healthy development of creative instincts. In a similar way, Disney's film is also fascinated by dirt:[21] if you include the scenes of the dwarves washing, nearly a quarter of the length of the entire film is taken up with activities relating to the management of dirt in a household context, within scenes that barely advance the main plotline of the film at all. Although one might understand this, from the standpoint of adult didacticism, as providing exemplary images for child viewers who may themselves be reluctant to acquiesce in adult regimes of cleanliness, these sequences take too much delight in tactile engagement with dirt and messiness for this didactic impulse to be straightforward. Within the housecleaning sequence alone, we are invited to experience the dirt repeatedly through direct contact with the animals' bodies, as they swish cobwebs and accumulated dust up with their tails, lick plates clean with their tongues and rub clothes along the ridges of upturned turtles' carapaces as simulacra for washboards. This playful delight in engaging with dirt is rarely noticed by commentators, but it accounts for much of the childlike pleasure that the sequence produces. Although it does not necessarily run counter to adult perspectives on the ideology of housework, it engages with a very different realm of experience: one that is, from a child viewpoint, much closer to animal nature. Indeed, this gleeful drawing of bodies into contact with the dirt that constitutes the earth could perhaps be conceived as illustrating Stanley Cavell's insight that "movies arise out of

magic: from below the world."[22] With the lightest of comedic touches, the film restores a joyful unity to the more sombre, religious edict that we are constituted by the dust to which we will all return.

One might, indeed, speculate that the appeal of Disney's film resides as much in the work that its comedy performs at a mythic, as at a social, level, and that the two are inevitably intertwined within the delicate web of its light fantasy. Leo Braudy has suggested that the appeal of popular cinema resides not simply in its capacity to provide escapist entertainment, but also in its offering a forum where unresolved elements in a culture, that are not addressed adequately within other public forms of discourse, may be expressed in ways that satisfy a collective need.[23] From this perspective, *Snow White* is notable for its cultivation of a space within which markers of difference in terms of wealth and power can be dissolved. Susan Honeyman has remarked that "[R]ather than settle for the impossible illusion of accessing child-minds, we spatialise childhood to receive us by creating escapist fantasy worlds."[24] She goes on to suggest that "[A]dults fantasise a 'locus amoenus' (friendly place) for child characters, through whom we can vicariously enter as well."[25] The dwarves' cottage, where so much of the action of *Snow White* takes place, is undoubtedly such a *locus amoenus.* But it is also a kind of innocent green paradise, an Edenic retreat for the imagination, where the domestic rituals of modern life are transformed into a dream world: here work is joyful and nature is integral to what it means to be at home on earth. Historically distanced from the moment of its inception, we may see this fantasy as a thin cover for the patriarchal ideology of an age where audiences were already becoming largely separated from nature within urban environments. But it may also be – as Eisenstein saw Disney's creative enterprise more generally – a kind of lyrical daydream which does not "give birth to action" but is, rather, a space "you escape to, like other worlds where everything is different, where you're free from all fetters, where you can clown around just as nature itself seemed to have done in the joyful ages of its coming into being..."[26]

Innocence as Critical Questioning in *Kirikou*

Kirikou, the second film I shall consider in depth here, epitomises a very different type of innocence. In many ways the space within which it imagines childhood appears to be the antithesis of Honeyman's *locus amoenus.* Ocelot based his film on a West African folk tale and set it in a traditional African village, devoid of any of the trappings of modernity. The opening of the film shows the eponymous hero being brought forth (literally from his

mother's womb) into a world where he is exposed straightaway to oppression and danger. In a bold opening sequence, the tiny figure of the new-born Kirikou immediately becomes aware that his community is under threat from a sorceress who terrorises the village and has devoured nearly all the men who live there. This might appear analogous to William Blake's striking lines from Infant Sorrow about the vulnerability of children entering the brutal, fallen world of adults: "Into the dangerous world I leapt/Helpless, naked, piping loud". Except that Kirikou is conceived imaginatively as anything but helpless, embodying the innocent optimism of the folk tale with full potency from the outset. Kirikou faces the world of adult experience and oppression full on, but he is endowed from birth with extraordinary powers of insight, articulacy and physical movement that belie his naked, tiny, infant body.

The distinctive qualities of this film are germane to my argument in two ways. First, and most obviously, the film embodies a very different kind of childlike innocence to that which characterises Disney's *Snow White.* We might define the innocence of the child in *Kirikou* as "active", in antithesis to the largely passive qualities espoused in *Snow White*, although, as we have already seen, this doesn't quite tell the whole story. Thomas De Quincey offered an eloquent version of the "effect …upon society" of childhood innocence, perceived in the passive mode, when he suggested that,

> [through] the helplessness…the innocence, and…the simplicity of children, not only are the primary affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities that are dearest in the sight of heaven – the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly – are kept in perpetual remembrance and their ideals continually refreshed.[27]

There are dangers in accepting this passive version of childhood innocence wholesale, however, and *Kirikou* operates as a potent reminder that the "simplicity which is most alien from the worldly" may still be actively and challengingly engaged with the world. Kirikou's most obvious childlike quality is his persistence in asking questions about troubled aspects of the world that adults have learned to accept and suffer. In doing so, he eventually learns that the secret of the sorceress's oppressive power resides in her own suffering, which he alleviates, in the process breaking the magic spell that has held the adult community enthralled. The film thus operates as a fable showing how, as Susan Honeyman puts it, "[A]s a function of our shared cultural imagination, childhood undoes experience."[28] The film achieves this through representing childhood as an active force. Kirikou's boundless energy

remains closely connected to the unexamined primary constituents of the earth that underlie communal experience, providing a poetic foundation for the film's revitalising ethic. It is no accident, in this respect, that the tasks Kirikou's tiny body is shown as making him uniquely fitted to undertake involve him travelling through tunnels under the earth, first to restore the village's water supply and subsequently to discover the secret of the sorceress's power. The film generates renewal poetically from these journeys "below the world". Gaston Bachelard has remarked on how "poetry puts language in a state of emergence, in which life becomes apparent through its vivacity…poetry appears as a phenomenon of freedom."[29] Ocelot has achieved something similar with the poetics of film language in *Kirikou*. His protagonist is convincingly displayed as in a continual "state of emergence," through which the world is revitalised and eventually appears afresh.

The second point I wish to raise about *Kirikou* is that it takes the form of a traditional didactic fable, rather than engaging with the postmodern aesthetics that have characterised so much recent film animation for children in the West. The film embodies a number of clear messages for its young audience: that being 'small' has its own virtues and should not be underestimated; that one should never accept abuses of power, but should try to understand their causes, as well as confront them; that the child's instinct for questioning is essential for real transformation to take place; and that society's self-interested propensity to avoid the truth requires unremitting courage, commitment and integrity to confront and change. It is significant, in this respect, that the heroism *Kirikou* embodies is one where the individual's achievement is wholly bound up with the fate of the community s/he serves. Kirikou could be viewed as demonstrating a kind of self-realisation in the course of the film – which his magical transformation to a full grown man after he has relieved the sorceress of her suffering at the end perhaps symbolises. But this self-realisation is achieved through his working tirelessly on behalf of the village community to which he belongs. It is this which makes the ambivalent attitude of his community towards Kirikou, and the village's initial rejection of him when he presents himself with the reformed sorceress at the end, so powerful. The strong communal basis for identity is distinctive in terms of the values that the film espouses. The film's educative function, in this sense, might be thought of as belonging to the past, rather than as fully assimilated within the predominant conditions of modernity. Certainly it is different from the individualism that characterises most Western animated films for children, in this respect. This does not appear to be simply nostalgic, however, and one could also argue that it is precisely this alignment with the past that gives *Kirikou* its

radical power, its paradoxical potential for anticipatory illumination, in Bloch's terms. In an influential essay, Raymond Williams suggested that one could discriminate between dominant, emergent and residual ideological forms within modern cultures; he argued that emergent and residual modes could each be seen as operating either as alternatives to the dominant culture or as enacting forms of resistance, in opposition to it.[30] The "traditional" nature of the fable that Ocelot constructs in *Kirikou* might be taken to incorporate elements of a residual culture, within Williams' terms of reference. The challenge that this offers to viewers – its illuminating power – clearly comes from its harnessing aspects of older cultures in ways that suggest searching alternatives to the dominant assumptions of Western modernity.

Alternative Points of View

It has become customary within cultural studies to treat all signs of didactic intent within narratives for children as coercive ideology and to find positive value only in the deconstructive, parodic and more ambiguously intertextual elements which films such as *Shrek* exhibit. Taken to its logical conclusion, however, this would seem to lead to the rather odd viewpoint of adults having nothing positive to teach children through the cultural forms that they offer them, other than to distrust. Iain McGilchrist offers a trenchant critique of the more extreme instances of such postmodern aesthetics within adult culture when he argues that "the coupling of emotionally evocative material with a detached, ironic stance is in fact a power game, one that is being played out by the artist with his or her audience. It is not so much a matter of playfulness, with its misplaced suggestion of innocence, as a grim parody of play."[31] One way of understanding innocence, as embodied in film narratives, by contrast, might be to demonstrate how films exemplify the conditions of trust within which children can continue to learn something positive from adults, as well as adults being moved by and learning from the child. There is an extraordinary image towards the end of *Kirikou*, where the child hero, having learned the true nature of the sorceress's evil from his grandfather, says that he is tired and asks if he can curl up on his grandfather's lap. The encircling form of the grandfather's arms, offering the child sanctuary, is reminiscent of the mother and child sculptures that Henry Moore created so evocatively – and, indeed, of the space of the nest, which Gaston Bachelard suggests is the "origin of confidence in the world…an urge towards cosmic confidence."[32] There is a different quality of didacticism involved here to that found in cultural forms where there is one-way traffic of adults imposing their fixed agenda on

credulous children. This is more reciprocal, dynamic and poetic in the insights which it yields. In the case of *Kirikou*, the film also appears more authentic, because of the strategies it uses (including Senegalese musicians and voices) to create an idiom adequate to the representation of African culture. Ocelot contrasted his own attempt to portray the "powerful realm" of Africa in a mythically stylised form that he nevertheless felt to be connected to an essential reality, with Disney's *The Lion King*, which, he claimed, "used African settings but not Africa nor the Africans."[33]

I have analysed these two films at some length in order to establish a broad typology of innocence in children's animation. The first category, of passive innocence, has tended to draw opprobrium from scholars of children's literature and culture. Victor Watson, for instance, has argued that nineteenth century novels developed a morbidly sentimental view of child innocence, often assigning the figure of the "redemptive child", who can "restore goodness and joy in the most hardened and embittered adult", to an early death.[34] A number of other important writers have also been deeply suspicious of the way the concept of innocence has been applied to children's narratives, and, indeed, to children.[35] Nevertheless, the quality of passive innocence still retains a powerful role, I would argue, not only in more run of the mill but also in many of the finest and most subtle animated films. It is a central quality not just in *Snow White,* but also in much of classic Disney. The figure of the innocent child or young animal who engenders sympathy, when exposed to hardship or threat, is manifested strongly in *Bambi*, *Dumbo*, *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty* and even *The Jungle Book*, to name just a few of the earlier classics. But this archetype has remained active in more recent children's animation too, some of extremely impressive quality. It is the key element in Isao Takahata's *Grave of the Fireflies,* for instance, a harrowing story that charts the lives of two children left destitute in the aftermath of the allies' fire-bombing of the Japanese city of Kobe. The film is a heartbreaking mixture of elegy for lost innocence and a savage indictment of society's indifference. The archetype is also present in some of Hayao Miyazake's most touching and popular work too (such as *My Neighbour Totoro*); in DreamWorks' elegy to the horses and Indians of the nineteenth century American plains, *Spirit*; in Warner Bros *Happy Feet;* and in some of Pixar's best films, such as *Finding Nemo* and *WALL•E*. One could argue, indeed, that Pixar's acclaimed *Toy Story* trilogy is in many ways a narrative of innocence lost and recovered; much of what makes the films so funny and touching resides with the audience's perception of the toys striving for heroic agency whilst actually being small, vulnerable and dependent. I have argued that contemporary academic

writing tends to be out of sympathy with this archetype in its more obvious forms, and to see it as a vehicle for adult agendas and ideologies which are questionable. Yet, as the analysis of *Snow White* indicates, films deploying this underlying structure may appear more multileveled and richer if we take greater account of the playful, plasmatic or even poetic qualities that animation is a particularly apt medium for developing. In our haste to adopt a stance that will resist dubious social models and stereotypes, we may pay too little attention to playful energies of the form that are often more rebellious, lively and interesting.

The second category of innocence I have explored here is more likely to win critical approval, since modern societies place more value on the active than the contemplative life. Disney and Pixar have tended to cultivate this archetype more frequently in a postfeminist era, partly in response to audience's perceived sensibilities, but perhaps also to fend off some of the criticisms of passive female heroines in the earlier canon. Certainly, heroines from the late 1980s onwards have tended to be defined as rule breakers, actively seeking a way of life beyond the constraints that their cultures or families offer them. This pattern can be seen clearly in *The Little Mermaid* (1988), *Beauty and the Beast* (1992), *Mulan* (1994), *Pocahontas* (1995), *Tangled* (2010) and *Brave* (2012). Some interesting questions emerge when comparing these narratives with the exemplar I have chosen in *Kirikou*, however, where the positioning of innocence as active questioning is arguably closer to authentic roots in traditional culture. In a number of the more recent Disney/Pixar films, rebellious heroines who question the role ascribed to them are only able to realise themselves by moving away from the place of their origins, suggesting that inherent contradictions can only be resolved by displacement onto a utopian landscape elsewhere. This is most notably the case in *The Little Mermaid*, where the heroine must move literally out of the watery element defining her cultural and biological roots, in order to fulfil her desires. But Belle, in *Beauty and the Beast*, also abandons the parochial culture of her village life for the larger potentiality represented by a mythical castle, without a trace of regret. In the same way, Snow White is rather abruptly whisked away from her more vital community of forest animals and dwarves to live in the prince's castle, in the earlier movie. The more recent *Tangled* follows a similar pattern, though it is interesting that it is the image of the city, rather than the isolated and archaic fairy tale castle, that serves as a space for emancipated desire to be realised here.

In other films, which are characterised to a greater extent by affiliation with historical legend, as opposed to fairy tale archetype, allegiance to the community of origins is maintained, however, despite conflict and strain, in a pattern that is at least superficially

similar to *Kirikou*. In *Mulan*, *Pocahontas* and *Brave*, the heroine elects to stay within her home community, whose values have undergone a degree of adjustment in response to the challenge she has represented. It is notable that in producing the latter films, with their stronger historical roots, Disney/Pixar expended considerable effort in what one might call strategies of cultural authentication. In developing the imagery, soundtrack and cultural nuances of these films, in other words, the production team undertook extensive research (consulting with Chinese, Native American and Scottish representative groups) and hired a significant proportion of actors whose origins were affiliated to the films' respective cultures to perform the voice overs for significant roles. These strategies are similar to many of the ways in which Michel Ocelot tried to centre his narrative of *Kirikou* within a genuinely African culture. Debates surrounding the relative success of these strategies would benefit from more sustained scrutiny, at both a theoretical and empirical level, since they relate, ultimately, to what I have defined as the politics of innocence within the culture that we offer to children.

It is widely assumed that the cultivation of such strategies of cultural authenticity by a global corporation such as Disney/Pixar should be viewed with suspicion and subjected to the most intensive critical scrutiny in terms the degree to which the films license deviation from historical accuracy. The strong presumption is against any form of innocence in terms of the depiction of cultural difference. Where a film is made by a supposedly more independent *auteur*, such as Michel Ocelot, on the other hand, the presumption is that such strategies will at least partially break the spell of the kinds of Western hegemony depicting cultural difference that Edward Said anatomised in *Orientalism*.[36] The presumption is in favour of a kind of radical innocence engendered by the *auteur*, in other words, whose allegiances remain at least partially rooted within the culture s/he is representing.

Without abandoning this presumption, it may be timely to probe it with a little more openness in response. As Ursula Heise has pointed out recently, cultural theory has tended to underestimate the progressive potential inherent within a global imaginary (whose outlook is inherently cosmopolitan) and to venerate the radical authenticity of localised versions of cultural affiliation too uncritically.[37] Some of the animated films distributed by Disney in recent years – such as Pixar's *WALL•E* and Studio Ghibli's *Princess Mononoke* – suggest that fables produced for children may invoke a quality of innocence that reflects on some of the most profound issues we face in the modern world, whilst retaining global commercial viability. But even popular films of less distinction than these – such as *Spirit*, or *Happy Feet*

or *The Bee Movie* – demonstrate the validity of Braudy's claim that "a common sense of loss" amongst adults in our culture has engendered a category of films dramatizing "ceremonies of innocence that can restore the natural core of belief, in the world, in the country, and in the self."[38] If adults stand in need of a cultural space where this this "natural core of belief" can be renewed, whilst still rehearsing the troubled apprehensions that place it under threat, then surely children need this even more. The evaluation of films that feed this need is a particularly complex and difficult task in our time, where sentimental forms of affirmation are often contested strongly by the claims of a potentially overbearing critical consciousness. If we pose the question of what children learn from films, however, it must surely include whatever meaning innocence continues to have in our increasingly sceptical age. Although "learning with Disney" may not embrace the radical potential of the more transformative models of active innocence explored in this article, it nevertheless draws on playful and rebellious energies, whose educative functions are by no means as uniformly repressive or limited as has sometimes been implied.

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Conceptions of Nation and Ethnicity in Swedish Children's Films.

The Case of *Kidz in da Hood* (*Förortsungar*, 2006)

Anders Wilhelm Åberg

Senior lecturer in film studies at Linnaeus University, Kalmar/Växjö, Sweden

Abstract • Swedish children's films frequently deal with issues of nation and ethnicity, specifically with "Swedishness". This may be most obvious in films based on the works of Astrid Lindgren, which abound with nostalgic images of the national culture and landscape. However, films about contemporary Sweden, such as *Kidz in da hood* (*Förortsungar*, 2006) address these issues too. *Kidz in da hood* is about children in the ethnically diverse suburbs of Stockholm and it tells the story of a young fugitive, Amina, who is cared for by a young bohemian musician. It is, interestingly, a re-make of one of the first Swedish children's films, *Guttersnipes* (*Rännstensungar*, 1944). In this article I argue that *Kidz in da hood* is a contradictory piece, in the sense that it both celebrates and disavows "Swedishness", as it substitutes the class conflict of *Guttersnipes* for ethnic conflict.

Key words • ethnicity, nation, remake, Swedishness

Children's films tend to be educational by definition. They take part in the construction of collective identities, and they set and disseminate ideologically informed standards of thought and behavior for their implied audience. Children's films, as opposed to family films, to use the distinction made by Bazalgette and Staples, are often partially funded by public bodies, at least in Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries.[1] Therefore it is possible that children's films may be influenced by dominant and "official" discourses. In Sweden, furthermore, children's film has been regarded as a broadly educational enterprise ever since the first discussions of the genre in the 1940s with a strong emphasis on what children might learn from the cinema.[2]

Many Swedish children's films have been preoccupied with negotiating and teaching the elusive quality of Swedishness. This quality is arguably at the core of a national discourse which seems invariably to favor and value that which is considered Swedish, be it food, consumer products, crime fiction, landscape or conceptions of national character and identity. The nationalism of this discourse tends to be the "banal nationalism" analyzed by Michael Billig, a kind of national common sense fuelling very general "good feelings" about Swedishness, and equating it with what is, again in general terms, "good."[3] However, there are also examples of blatant, celebratory nationalism and chauvinism, the difference being more a question of degree and specificity than of kind.

The clearest cases of children's films dealing with Swedishness in this fashion may be the adaptations of Astrid Lindgren's literary works, for example Lasse Hallström's Noisy Village films of the 1980s. These films, set in the early part of the twentieth century, are regarded as heritage films. They offer an idyllic view of Swedish history and the Swedish landscape and stylistically they invoke the Swedish romantic painters that were popularized at the turn of the twentieth century.[4] The films have, like Lindgren's books, been exported, thereby projecting internationally a somewhat idealized self-image of Sweden. Especially in Germany perhaps, this has added to the almost mythical image of Sweden and Scandinavia in general as a kind of *heimat* abroad for Germans to yearn for.[5]

A closer examination of Swedish children's films reveals that the national discourse is sometimes central to their meaning and ideological function, at least in the domestic context. In this article, I will focus on Ylva Gustavsson's and Catti Edfeldt's film *Kidz in da Hood* (*Förortsungar*, 2006). This film is a remake of Ragnar Frisk's *Guttersnipes* (*Rännstensungar*, 1944). *Guttersnipes* is regarded as a children's film classic in Sweden, one of the very first of its kind. I will argue that choosing to adapt this particular classic film is significant and I will conduct a comparative study that straddles the history of children's film in Sweden and makes it possible to explore contemporary contradictions and tensions in conceptions of nation and ethnicity in Sweden.

Nationhood and Ethnicity as Themes

In her article "Themes of Nation," Mette Hjort proposes some useful distinctions concerning the theme of nation in the cinema.[6] She argues that the "nation" is a topical theme, as opposed to a perennial theme like "love". That is, the theme of nation is specific, bound by historical contingency and invested in the current ideologies and self-representation of a particular nation, usually the one where the film is set and/or produced. For example, the perennial theme of "community" can be articulated in terms of nation, thereby topically thematizing for example a certain historical formation of "the Danish". As Hjort underlines, this explains why "most film-makers would reject outright the idea that they are committed first and foremost to the making of films that contribute to the thematics of nation."[7]

Almost every realistic film has a recognizable setting that is, in a sense, national. Elements like language, fashion, historical events and landmark buildings may be obviously Swedish, for example. Does that mean that the film is about Sweden, the nation? Hjort calls this "banal aboutness" with reference to Billig and distinguishes between films merely set in a nation and

films that clearly direct focal attention to signifiers of nation, thereby thematizing the nation in question.[8] This theoretical distinction is not clear-cut, but highlights that a certain amount of consistent emphasis (iconography, narrative, dialogue etc.) is necessary to distinguish "banal aboutness" from thematization.

Hjort argues that in principle true thematizations of nation can be monocultural, saturated by the (stereo)typical traits of a single national culture, or they can be intercultural, focusing on conflict and contrast.[9] One might add that these strategies can coexist in the same film. This seems to introduce an ethnic element into the analysis. The relationship between nation and ethnicity is quite complex. Some scholars claim that national communities may have deep roots in preexisting ethnic communities.[10] Modernist theories of nation and nationalism usually stress the arbitrariness and artifice of conceptions of national *ethnies*, underlining their functional role in the formation of nineteenth century nationalism.[11] In comparatively monocultural nation states, such as Sweden before the mid 1960s, citizenship and ethnicity can seem almost indistinguishable. Hence, the term "Swede" once uncontroversially denoted a Swedish citizen that was defined as ethnically separate from indigenous others, such as the Sami who were conceived to be a foreign people living in parts of "our" country, a people without a country of its own. Swede also defined a citizen as separate from all peoples of other nations regardless of various degrees of kinship (for example, the Norwegians were seen as "our brothers", the Japanese were not). Sweden these days is more multicultural and the issue of Swedish ethnicity tends to be politically controversial; the term "Swede" to refer to ethnicity is now a contested term.

In sum, when the nation is presented on film, ethnicity tends to be a part of the process. However, the relationship between nation and ethnicity is not always clear. What is clear is that conceptions of Swedishness have ethnic as well as national elements, and one should expect this to be reflected, and refracted, in films participating in the national discourse.

Children, Film and the Nation in the 1930s and 1940s

In his seminal dissertation of 1946, the literary historian Staffan Björck gives the first thorough account of the construction and dissemination of "a new Swedish sensibility" in literature, the arts and the public debate during the decades around the turn of the twentieth century.[12] In response to crises such as the disruption of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905 and extensive emigration, a new national (and nationalist) discourse emerged. In contrast to earlier forms of nationalism, it focused somewhat less on the warrior

past of kings and Vikings, and more on the people's relationship with the land and the folk culture of the peasantry as the basis for a contemporary national character, in other words for Swedishness. Keywords in this form of "integrative nationalism" were "the people," "home," "earth/landscape," and "race."[13] Vital elements of this essentially conservative discourse crossed over into the political rhetoric of the evolving Social Democratic Party, which dominated Swedish politics from 1933 to 1976. The political metaphor for the modern welfare state (made popular by Per Albin Hansson, leader of the Social Democrats, in a speech in 1928) became *Folkhemmet* (the home of the people). This metaphor incorporated conceptions of national community from the current national discourse, but directed them towards the future (rather than the past) and added an element of modern, scientific rationalism. Notoriously, the notions of race and racial hygiene remained crucial in politics and the sciences alike, certainly throughout the 1940s.[14]

As Benedict Anderson has argued, any modern national "imagined community" needs to be upheld by infrastructures of information and knowledge, such as the media and the educational system.[15] These infrastructures are used to foster community. In the 1930s and 1940s the general consensus was that the school system should inspire wholesome patriotism and a sense of national community. As Nils Olof Bruce, Head of the Board of Education for Public Schools from 1925 to 1934, remarks while denouncing "excessive nationalism," about the teaching of history in public schools:

> It has rightly been said, that knowledge of its common history is of utmost importance for the emergence of national consciousness in a people. Even if the children cannot fully understand the historical context or see past cultures through the eyes of that time, they can, by being acquainted with our people's destiny in times of despair and prosperity, learn how strongly the current population depends upon the deeds of past generations. Thereby the sense of community with one's own people is strengthened, as well as the sense of responsibility for the future.[16]

Historian Anne-Li Lindgren has demonstrated that this ethos of national community was also mediated in school radio broadcasts and children's magazines aimed at upper secondary school pupils in the 1930s.[17] The material she has researched is evidence of frequent links being drawn between Sweden and Swedishness, and positive values and virtues.

In the field of film history, P. O. Quist has discovered that national community and Swedishness were recurrent dominant themes in Swedish cinema of the 1930s. He argues that this general trend was an ingredient in the construction of the mentality of the early *Folkhem*

era.[18] The importance of film as part of the national discourse was by no means an isolated phenomenon of the 1930s. Several Swedish government reports dealing with film in the 1940s and 1950s heavily promote the national value of a vital domestic film industry. For example, in a report on state support for film production from the early 1950s the national aspects of the issue are unambiguously expressed:

> The Swede in general wishes to hear his own language, and to see Swedish nature, Swedish life and Swedish customs reflected on the silver screen. Therefore, domestic film production represents national value. … It is hardly an acceptable prospect that the tastes, opinions and needs of the general public should be cultivated and nourished exclusively by foreign products, and the milieus, ideas and impressions they offer, without the complement of Swedish images and thoughts. Swedish film is, or can be, much like the Swedish theatre, the Swedish broadcast radio and the Swedish press, an excellent instrument to keep the vitality of our distinctive Swedish character.[19]

This national discourse was the foundation and the catalyst for the first attempts to create cinema for children in Sweden.

Guttersnipes

Before the 1940s few, if any, children's films were produced in Sweden. In the early 1920s, a succession of "rascal" films about naughty and feisty children was produced. Drawing on Bazalgette's and Staples' influential distinction between family films and children's films, these were quite obviously family films, making no discernible effort to promote the point of view of the child.[20] *Guttersnipes* and its successors in the 1940s and 1950s, while still formally family films appealing to all ages, did in fact respond to a debate about the need to produce good quality films for children. This debate later fed into state film policies, laying the grounds for a system of regulation and support of domestic production of good-quality children's film in Sweden.

Guttersnipes was based on a play for children by Åke Hodell, first performed at Folkets Park in Malmö. After reasonable success as a play it was adapted for the screen using some of the original cast from the stage production. The story is about Ninni, a wheelchair-bound orphan who lives in a poor neighborhood in Malmö. She is cared for by Fahlén, a poor artist, and Miss Sanner, a female social worker. In order to take care of Ninni, and perhaps adopt her, Fahlén needs a steady income to pay for food and rent. After he refuses to make fake paintings for a crooked art dealer Miss Sanner helps him to arrange a successful show of his

pictures. Fahlén also enlists the help of a doctor to operate on Ninni. The subplot concerns Ninni's friends (the rascals and guttersnipes of the title) and their attempts to catch two thieves who have stolen a cash-box from a local fruit dealer, a crime that Fahlén is suspected of committing. Finally, the thieves are caught, Fahlén befriends Högstrand, the owner of the apartment block, who earlier threatened to evict him, and they decide to build a vacation home for poor children in the countryside. In the final sequence, all the children, Fahlén and Miss Sanner (now a couple) as well as the Högstrands go to the countryside, where Ninni takes her first steps after a successful operation.

The plot and themes of *Guttersnipes* are presented against a backdrop of current conceptions of national community, as outlined in the previous section. The themes of nation and ethnicity only occasionally come to the fore, but then at important plot points where Swedishness is used as a contrast or as common ground. The most important conflict in the film is class conflict, primarily expressed by the poor housing of the lower classes. The landlord, Högstrand, and Fahlén represent the antagonist and the protagonist in the struggle for a better life for the proletarian guttersnipes, Ninni being simultaneously the most lovely and pitiful among them. Other meaningful characters are clearly readable in this scenario with the mean doorkeeper Mrs Karlsson playing the part of the class traitor, while Miss Sanner and the doctor represent the forces of progressive social politics and scientific rationality that characterize the social democratic welfare state. The theme of class conflict is further developed in a scene where Högstrand's adopted son Palle (whose lower class origins are implied) is drawn to the community of the guttersnipes but is beaten up by them.

The film carefully constructs and resolves class conflict. In a few steps it constructs a national and ethnic community that supersedes class divisions. First, the classes are ethnically defined (or divided). When Fahlén tries to make money from his art, an art dealer depicted as a familiar Jewish stereotype offers him a job as a forger. Fahlén contemptuously throws "the Jew's" money back in his face. Correspondingly, the two thieves hunted down by the guttersnipes are street musicians and would probably have been understood by contemporary audiences to be *tattare* (pikeys or gypsies), although this may not be as obvious to a modern audience as the Jewish stereotype.[21] Thus, the good capitalists as well as the good proletarians are defined in relation to ethnic outsiders. These portrayals conform to familiar patterns in the Swedish cinema of the 1920s and 1930s, where the stereotypes of "the Jew" and "the *tattare*," are often used in contrast to the positive values of Swedishness.[22] P. O. Quist has argued specifically that the repeated use of stereotypical ethnic outsiders is indeed one of the

strategies used to construct and reinforce conceptions of a central "normal" ethnic identity in the cinema of the 1930s.[23]

When Högstrand has realized that Fahlén is an upright man and a competent artist he reaches out to him in a gesture of reconciliation. They shake hands and set out on a common project for a common good. Reconciliation of class conflict was a recurrent theme in this period; it could even be said that it was the overarching domestic political theme of the time. The ending of the film takes the form of a common celebration, away from the cramped backyards of the city in lush natural surroundings, the epitome of the idyllic iconography of the national landscape, referencing for example Carl Larsson, one of the most prominent and appreciated painters to emerge from the current of national romanticism at the turn of the twentieth century. The evocative nationalist images aroused by the landscape are in many ways secondary to the celebration of nature itself. The scenes could have taken place in a German or French landscape, but the celebration of community in nature played emotionally into the hands of the Swedish audience and provided a convenient and recognizable marker of national community and reconciliation.

The Nation and Children's Film after 1980

The period after 1980 can be described as the post-*Folkhem* era in Swedish modern history. In political and scholarly debates, there has been an increasingly urgent awareness of an irreversible political as well as cultural shift. This awareness has been expressed in debates about the sustainability of the welfare state, about immigration and an increasingly multicultural society, about Sweden's entry into what is now the EU, and about the globalization of the economy. One element in these debates has been an introspective preoccupation with the specific traits and conceptions of Swedish culture and identity coupled with a sense of loss and nostalgia. In turn, this has attracted the interest of historians and ethnologists.

In the early 1990s the ethnologists Billy Ehn, Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren noted the frequently expressed worries about "the washing out and dilution of national identity" and the increasing interest in the issue of "Swedish culture."[24] They claim that the decade from the early 1980s to the early 1990s produced more scholarly work and serious debate on this issue than the whole of the twentieth century up to that point. They tentatively explain this development by pointing to similar trends of increased nationalism and ethnification in other

parts of Europe, notably the Balkans, and to domestic political debates as well as the loss of a sense of direction and purpose in society.

Löfgren refers to mental as well as material processes in the developing welfare state as the *nationalization of modernity*.[25] Frykman argues that this process was dependent on social progress and political reform, both in reality and as a utopian goal. Sweden was moving forward, with social mobility and equality as the reward for those citizens who wanted it and were prepared to work for it. The educated middle class therefore abandoned retrograde cultural nationalism and looked instead towards a common, better future. However, this development has now stagnated. The upper and upper-middle classes have, in a sense, broken the contract of communal progress towards the future. The modern mentality of the twentieth century, which demands that the state should lead, plan and guarantee progress for all, is now a fairly widespread attitude *outside* society's elites, articulated somewhat paradoxically, as nostalgia for the *Folkhem* era.[26] This nostalgia can easily transmute into populism and resentment, and consequently nostalgic rhetoric and a veneration of the *Folkhem* era has become the hallmark of the nationalist, anti-immigration party The Swedish Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*), which entered the Swedish parliament (*Riksdag*) after the 2010 election.

This sense of nostalgia and its corresponding fixation on the issue of Swedishness also permeated much popular culture at the time, and still does. This is noticeable in everything from the retro sensibility of interior decoration to the comical essays on nerdy Swedishness in Lasse Åberg's domestic hit film cycle *Package Tour* (*Sällskapsresan*, 1980), *Package Tour II – Snowroller* (*Sällskapsresan II – Snowroller*, 1985), *SOS – Amateurs on the Sea* (*SOS – En segelsällskapsresa*, 1988) and *The Involuntary Golfer* (*Den ofrivillige golfaren*, 1991), the four top grossing Swedish films between 1980 and 1999, rivaled only by the iconographically romantic and nationalistic; albeit entirely mythical, *Ronia the Robber's Daughter* (*Ronja Rövardotter*, Tage Danielsson, 1984).

One of the clearest manifestations of the cultural need for nostalgia was a veritable wave of children's films and films about childhood set in the past. The tendency was described by the leading children's film critic Margareta Norlin as "a return to the idyll of the 1950s."[27] This trend includes, in addition to a number of Lindgren films, the popular Little Jönsson Band cycle, the domestic blockbuster *Sune's Summer Vacation* (*Sunes sommar*, Stephan Apelgren, 1993), and critically acclaimed tales of childhood such as *My Life as a Dog* (*Mitt liv som hund*, Lasse Hallström, 1985), among others. Stories about children from other, non-

Swedish, backgrounds are conspicuously absent. I am aware of only three feature films released since 1980 and suitable for audiences under the age of eleven whose central characters are not defined as ethnically Swedish. In other words, the multiethnic mix of citizens from different national and ethnic backgrounds in what is sometimes called "The new Sweden" is virtually invisible in contemporary Swedish children's film.

Kidz in da hood

In the cultural and cinematic context described, *Kidz in da Hood* (2006) stands out as an attempt to introduce ethnic diversity into modern Swedish children's film. The two directors, Ylva Gustavsson and Catti Edfeldt, were veterans of Swedish children's film. Edfeldt started at a young age as the narrator in Olle Hellbom's Bullerby films in 1960 and 1961 and has sustained a career as actor, director and casting director. Gustavsson had worked in various functions on several productions since the 1990s. *Kidz in da Hood* was something of a hit and a late breakthrough. It won several awards, including a clean sweep at the Guldbagge gala, Sweden's version of the Oscars, where the film was awarded prizes for best film, best director, best script and best male actor in a leading role in 2007.

Kidz in da Hood can be considered as an updated remake of *Guttersnipes*, adapting the story line as it does to a tale of the lower classes in the "gutter" of the multi-ethnic suburb. To wit, there is no legal bond between *Kidz in da Hood* and *Guttersnipes*. Nowhere, for example, is it indicated that the former is an adaptation of Åke Hodell's original play. But remakes can display varying degrees of "closeness" to the film remade. They can exist anywhere along a continuum starting with the faithful adaptation of a work and ending with intertextual homage. A remake is generally recognized as such on the grounds of similarities in narrative, character and themes with an earlier film. In several reviews of *Kidz in da Hood*, it was explicitly treated as a remake of *Guttersnipes*, so this relationship was recognized and entered the public discourse around the film. The film clearly succeeded in what is, according to Thomas Leitch, one of the goals of remakes in terms of address, who writes that "they provide additional enjoyment to audiences who recognize their borrowings from their sources".[28] In *Kidz in da Hood*, the story, main characters, theme and setting is similar to *Guttersnipes*, and there are a number of playful allusions to the predecessor, but there are also some interesting differences of emphasis. It tells the story of Amina an orphan fugitive who is cared for, and ultimately adopted, by the bohemian rock musician Johan who helps her hide from the authorities to avoid deportation. He is aided by the social worker Janet, with whom he falls in

love. The subplot concerns an ethnically mixed gang of suburban friends (the *kidz in da hood*) that pursue, and finally catch a pair of thieves.

The overall artistic choice of remaking a classic seems crucial to the film's apparent central concern, that is, the sustainment of community in the face of diversity. The self-conscious intertextual relationship with *Guttersnipes* includes an element of historical mirroring which invites the spectator to ponder over differences and similarities between past and present Sweden. Hence, the introductory montage sequence first places Sweden in a global context. The aerial shots of Fittja suburb outside Stockholm, accompanied by a pumping rap score, emphasizes that this could be a tough, low-rent neighborhood anywhere in the urbanized world; for all we know it could be the Bronx, New York. The lyrics of the rap song performed by a young rapper on a roof top specify the setting as Swedish, and introduce the historical context by making references to *Guttersnipes*:

A long, long time ago
This was a meadow
With flowers and green
And a lot of flies, you know
Inside the city, everything's a slum
People piling up, fifteen of them in a room
They came out here from the city to mellow
Walking barefoot on a picnic, you know
The building started, the city grew
Away with all the flowers and green, you know
From all over the world people started moving in
I can make you dig the groove we're in
We're the kidz in da hood, kings of the concrete jungle, you know.

The intended significance of the sequence seems fairly obvious. "A long time ago" the underclass lived in the city center, and it was, by and large, ethnically Swedish. The lyrics pinpoint the "typically Swedish" passion for outdoor hikes, which also manifests itself in the closing scenes of *Guttersnipes*. Nowadays, by contrast, the underclass lives in the suburbs and is ethnically mixed ("from all over the world"). The film thereby shifts the weight from class conflict to ethnic conflict, or at the very least introduces ethnicity as an essential element in present-day class conflicts. Needless to say, this reflects real change, since all available

demographic data demonstrates that immigrants are over-represented in the lower classes in Sweden, and that notions of ethnic difference are relevant in this social dynamic. So that a high degree of perceived ethnic difference from Swedes (African or Middle Eastern ethnicities for example) co-varies with a low social position, whereas a low degree of perceived ethnic difference from Swedes (Norwegian or British ethnicities for example) co-varies with a comparably high social position.

The rapper (who we subsequently learn is called Marco) is used as a framing device in the film. He introduces the film's setting and main theme from within the narrative space of the story, but stands aloof and distant from the action. The roof top suggests an overview and a privileged perspective. At the end of the film, he reappears to comment on the ending and perhaps to ensure the audience's understanding of it). These are his only appearances in the story. The rest of the introductory rap sequence bears out the importance of ethnicity, as the rapper introduces the central characters, each a version of an ethnic stereotype. We meet the gang of kids, who sport fashionable street wear, ride skateboards and play street basketball. Then we are introduced to Maggan Svensson, described by the lyrics as the "cop" of the neighborhood, who "squeals like a pig". Her name and appearance unambiguously place her as an ethnically Swedish lower-class person ("white trash"). She is a down-at-heel blonde, dressed in a black bomber jacket covered with patches, among them a conspicuous Swedish flag. In this context, the flag suggests that she might be a racist. Finally a Finnish man is introduced, using the most familiar Swedish stereotypes about the Finns: his name is Pekka, he is a drunk and a hopeless dresser.

In this sequence, the film demonstrates a profoundly contradictory stance towards the issue of ethnicity, seemingly stating that ethnicity matters and yet ethnicity does not matter. The gang of kids is ethnically mixed, which is clear from their physical appearances and names, but their specific ethnicities remain quite vague. Amina is Sub-Saharan African, one of her friends is clearly Swedish, and some of the others might be of Latin American and Middle Eastern ancestry. This vagueness seems to be quite deliberate, suggesting the idea of the "melting pot", the well-functioning multicultural community where ethnicity is secondary, or even irrelevant. However, the film constantly emphasizes ethnicity and nation and at times these seem to be the main issues at hand. In Hjort's terms, *Kidz in da hood* is an intercultural thematization of ethnicity and nation. While *Guttersnipes* highlights ethnicity in order to set the boundaries of a given national or ethnic community, ethnicity and national community are constantly invoked and of significance in *Kidz in da Hood*.

A closer look at the ethnic spectrum of the film reveals that only two well-defined ethnicities are clearly represented among the characters in the film. Maggan Svensson, Johan, the rock musician, Amina's friend Mirre, at least one of the thieves and a few peripheral characters are all clearly Swedish, and Pekka is clearly Finnish. Amina, though highly individualized, can be identified as Sub-Saharan African, but that is not a specific ethnic category.[29] Actually, she is, for all practical purposes, simply "black". Janet the social worker, and a local shopkeeper are played by two well-known singers, Jennifer Brown and Dogge Doggelito (Douglas León). The audience may deduce the ethnic identity of their characters through previous knowledge of the stars' backgrounds as well known musicians, but in the film this is not clarified. Essentially in ethnic terms the film displays Swedes, a Finn, and others (non-Swedes).

The theme of nation is at the heart of the film. Amina is the counterpart of Ninni in *Guttersnipes*. She is not, however, confined to a wheelchair. Her problem is that she risks being deported from Sweden. Johan needs to adopt her so that she can stay. Of course, this is also a perennial theme of family and belonging, but the real drama ultimately hinges on the threat of deportation. She is, as it were, "crippled" by her ethnic and especially national otherness. Only when she becomes part of the national community, formally and legally, can she be saved.

As argued above, the film seems to stress the similarity between the historical Swedish underclass and the contemporary multi-ethnic underclass, in other words, the parallels between the guttersnipes and the *kidz in da hood*. However, there are glaring differences between the two films in terms of narrative construction. In *Guttersnipes* the ideology behind the main conflict in the drama is very clear-cut, Högstrand, the capitalist, stands against the goals of Fahlén and the guttersnipes, who represent the underclass. In the end they are reconciled and find a common goal. The central dramatic conflict in *Kidz in da hood* is very different as there is no equivalent of Mr. Högstrand. Despite the similarities in dramatic structure and the fact that so many of the characters from *Guttersnipes* have couterparts in *Kidz in da hood*: the clearest instances being Ninni and Amina, Fahlén and Johan, Miss Sanner and Janet, the mean doorkeeper Mrs. Karlsson and Maggan Svensson, the two thieves, the fruit dealer and the shopkeeper, no character in the film personifies the forces working against the protagonists.

There are two candidates for this dramatic function, although neither fulfills it entirely satisfactorily. The most obvious is Maggan Svensson, although she is, as mentioned, the

counterpart of the mean doorkeeper and she has no real power or influence, unlike Högstrand who personifies almost absolute power through ownership. The reason for Maggan's hostility is vague. In the first half of the film she is a meddling killjoy, but in the final sequences her friends, some aging hot-rod enthusiasts, actually help Amina escape from a refugee camp. The other candidate for this role is the authorities, chiefly in the form of the social board that makes the adoption decision. But the board and its reluctant head are introduced fairly late in the story and the obstacle they constitute is rapidly overcome.

What then is the nature of the force working against the protagonists? Who or what would deny Amina her happy ending? The film leaves the precise answer to this question unspoken.

Teaching "The New Sweden"?

Kidz in da hood has a double ending. The first involves closure and a sense of equilibrium: The thieves are caught, Johan adopts Amina, Janet and Johan end up as a couple and provide Amina with a "proper family". These storylines end in a scene celebrating community, much like in *Guttersnipes* but here it takes the form of a musical Christmas show performed by the kids. Then follows a closing rap sequence, which mirrors the opening sequence of the film and frames the story whilst also providing a bridge to the end credits, just as the introductory rap sequence forms a bridge from the credit sequence into the narrative space. Marco raps that all has ended well, but, "It's real bad when kidz have to hide from the cops, so they don't throw you out." He sees a new fugitive family that arrives looking for a place to hide so as to avoid deportation.

In spite of a formally happy ending to the main plot, the film lacks the sense of reconciliation that is so powerful in *Guttersnipes*. In fact, it ends on a somber note that is unusual in Swedish children's film. In the final analysis, the film seems to state that the position of the antagonist (the Högstrand of *Kidz in da hood)* is held by mainstream Swedish society. As no single character personifies "the system"; the rules and regulations, the politicians, legislators and officials that pose a threat to Amina's future, it remains vague and viscous. In one key scene, a nurse asks Amina and Johan why they did not bring Amina's grandfather, who has just died, to the hospital earlier. Amina says, "He was afraid of you. You'd only give away where we live, and then you'd throw us out!"

It is reasonable to ask what *Kidz in da hood* tries to teach its audience. After all, it is a film that appears to offer a political and moral lesson. But what is it? And what value and weight is ascribed to Swedishness and to the national community in this lesson? It seems, at a

fundamental level, to be a plea for solidarity: Swedish society at large should treat immigrants more humanely and generously. The implied target of this plea in the domestic context is the generalized national "we" that indeed includes the film-makers and the majority of the domestic audience. In the terms explicitly stated by the film, this means "we" should treat "them" (people like Amina) more humanely and generously, that is, by *not* throwing "them" out at the first opportunity "we" have. This "we" refers to being Swedish in legal and territorial terms, hence the focus on places of refuge, and on the threat of literally being moved by force outside the national borders. However, the film also suggests (through references to *Guttersnipes*, for example) that solidarity with underprivileged groups is part of the Swedish cultural and political tradition. "We" can learn from history that the generosity once extended to the indigenous underclass can and should be extended to the present-day multiethnic underclass. I believe that this reference to a benevolent but somehow peculiarly Swedish sense of solidarity is also at play in the scenes where we see Amina reading Astrid Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking*. In the contemporary discourse on national identity in Sweden, Astrid Lindgren is often evoked as one of most influential writers to have captured the cultural, historical and emotional "essence" of Swedishness. Therefore the presence of the book works as short hand for the realization by Amina that Sweden and Swedishness are not really a potential threat, it is a cultural realm that can also be entered for positive reasons. Furthermore, whereas Astrid Lindgren herself, together with her total body of work, has acquired an almost metonymical relationship to Sweden, Pippi Longstocking could be interpreted as a figure of identification for Amina, since she is a strong, independent girl living in Sweden, but with a father who is a "Negro King" (though he is, of course, imagined to be a Swedish "Negro King").

If this is a fair interpretation of the film's agenda, it seems that it is trying in fact to achieve the *opposite* of *Guttersnipes*. Where the earlier film used ethnicity to define separate senses of national and ethnic "we", *Kidz in da hood* optimistically tries to transcend ethnic differences in the name of inter-ethnic solidarity within, and possibly beyond, national borders. Ethnicity is a relational phenomenon, however, the notion of "us" being predicated on the notion of "them", and vice versa. A pessimistic reading of *Kidz in da hood* would suggest that the film's inability to avoid posing its problem in ethnic terms ("we," the Swedes in power, against "them," the powerless others) ultimately leaves "us", the mainstream Swedish audience, with a self-serving sense that generosity and solidarity are, after all, part of "our culture". National community (as far as it is possible) will be on "our" terms.

Conclusion

Guttersnipes is arguably the first children's film classic in Sweden. It has been remade several times and its themes of social reform, solidarity and reconciliation of class conflict make it an emblematic film of the "The Home of the People": the modern Swedish welfare state after the Second World War. The remaking of this film in 2006 makes it possible to address issues of multi-ethnicity in a Swedish context by appealing to cultural memory. Recasting the Swedish underclass of *Guttersnipes* as the multi-ethnic underclass of *Kidz in da Hood* invites the predominately Swedish audience to recognize the plight of the multiethnic underclass as a universal problem which previously applied to "us" as it now does to "them". In other words, the connection to *Guttersnipes* underpins the filmmakers' apparent intention: to invoke solidarity with the powerless and underprivileged, and to specifically address the problems of illegal immigrants. *Kidz in da Hood* is a significant film, being one of very few Swedish children's films that represent ethnic diversity. In fact, as I have argued elsewhere, Swedish children's film generally has been strikingly homogenous, and in recent decades increasingly nostalgic, picturing an idyllic, historical Sweden. However, *Kidz in the Hood* remains contradictory, in the sense that it tends to celebrate ethnic difference while at the same time disavowing it. The film's ending points to this contradiction, especially when compared to *Guttersnipes*. The original film ends in harmony and communion between classes in a national space, where the problem of class conflict is, by suggestion, solved. The later film appears comforting on one level, as Amina is embraced by "Sweden," but on another level the problem seems to persist in the form of a lack of symmetry. In other words, in contrast to *Guttersnipes*, *Kidz in da Hood* fails to articulate any common ground where conflict can be resolved; in fact it fails to clearly articulate the conflict it attempts to address. Given the limitations of the genre and of audience expectation this is perhaps not surprising because the problem it tries to address is one of ethnicity, appearing to suggest that "we" (mainstream Swedish society) are actually the antagonists in this drama, and that being the case, why should being embraced by "us" constitute a happy ending? This seems to be the core contradiction of the film, and one which reflects a very real contradiction in contemporary Swedish society.

[1] Cary Bazalgette and Terry Staples, "Unshrinking the kids: Children's cinema and the family film", in *In Front of the Children: Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences*, Cary Bazalgette and David Buckingham, eds. (London: BFI Publishing, 1995), 94ff.
[2] Malena Janson, "Bio för barnens bästa: svensk barnfilm som fostran och fritidsnöje under 60 år" (PhD diss., Stockholm University, 2007), 50-53.
[3] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995), 8f.
[4] Anders Åberg, "Re-making the National Past: The uses of nostalgia in the Astrid Lindgren films of the 1980s and 1990s," in *Beyond Pippi Longstocking: Intermedial and International Aspects of Astrid Lindgren's Works*, Bettina Kümmerling-Mebauer and Astrid Surmatz, eds. (London & New York: Routledge, 2011), 73-86.
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[18] Per Olov Quist, *Folkhemmets bilder: Modernisering, motstånd och mentalitet i den svenska 30-talsfilmen* (Lund: Arkiv Förlag), 250-282 and passim.
[19] SOU 1951: 1, "Statligt stöd åt svensk filmproduktion", 24.
[20] Bazalgette and Staples, "Unshrinking the kids", 94ff.
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Paratexts in Children's Films and the Concept of Meta-filmic Awareness

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer

Professor in the German Department at the University of Tübingen, Germany

Abstract • This article demonstrates, on the basis of recent research in film studies and media literacy, that filmic paratexts play a significant role in contemporary children's films. It shows that paratexts effectively comment on feature films by, for example, anticipating the film's plot and characters in the opening credits, and by pursuing the film plot in the end titles. Thorough analysis of children's films reveals that paratexts stimulate the child viewer to develop a competency that might be characterized as "meta-filmic awareness", which is the capacity to distinguish between different levels of plot, communication, or complexity within a film. In keeping with these findings, this article represents an exploration of what we might call a meta-critical approach toward children's films.

Key words • end credits, film title, media literacy, meta-filmic awareness, opening credits, paratext, peritext

Introduction

A happy family is celebrating the ninth birthday of their daughter. Everybody is laughing, making jokes, throwing paper streamers into the air, and admiring the presents and birthday cake. The girl is particularly drawn to a miniature paper-doll theater displaying characters figures from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. Since the figures are very small, the girl uses a magnifying glass in order to see all details of the setting and the costumes. When she is attentively looking through the magnifying glass, the paper dolls are clearly silhouetted against a blurred background. When the girl removes the glass, the paper dolls and the theater setting look like minuscule rags without recognizable shapes, while the surroundings are clearly visible. As she switches between the two perspectives, the girl's perception becomes blurred. She perceives her surroundings as if covered by a veil. These strange shifts in point of view are additionally emphasized by a game of deception, thus creating an enigmatic atmosphere of uncertainty about what is really happening. These scenes are complemented by sequences that depict the girl swinging high into the air and whirling around until she becomes dizzy. This sequence of short episodes is the beginning of the children's film *Phoebe in Wonderland* (USA 2008, directed by Daniel Barnz), which focuses on a young girl suffering from Tourette syndrome.[1] Since this sequence is interrupted by inserts informing viewers about the film title, the director, the producer and the actors, it is apparent that the

sequence belongs to the film's opening credits. When the last insert vanishes, the credits smoothly blend into the feature film, thus indicating that the film sequences in the credits lead the viewer into the film story.

The film *Dumbo* (USA 1941, directed by Ben Sharpsteen) begins in a different way. As is common practice with older films for children, the opening credits immediately start with the film title depicted against a setting that shows a circus tent. The subsequent images consist of multicolored posters which give information about the producer, director, sound designer, and other relevant members of the film crew. Although the color design and the characters and animals depicted on the posters make clear reference to the film's circus topic, the credits introduce neither the main characters nor the film's plot. The opening credits appear to serve effectively as a frame that accentuates the textual information. The screen layout is relatively static, with a plain background; the only change consists in the overlying posters. This arrangement is evocative of the pages of a book rather than of films. The passage from credits to feature film is indicated by a clear cut, rather than the one segueing seamlessly into the other.

This comparison reveals that there can be a wide spectrum as regards the arrangement and the expressive function of a film's opening credits. While the opening credits of *Phoebe in Wonderland* make reference to the film story's background and introduce the main character, the opening credits of *Dumbo* focus on the circus setting. The same applies to the end credits: the Disney film shows the word "end" in a frame against a neutral background, and gives no further information about the director and the film crew, since they have already been namechecked in the front credits. Barnz' film, by contrast, includes more details in the end credits. The film's final sequence focuses on a stage presentation of *Alice in Wonderland* showing Phoebe as Alice. She talks with another actor, who is playing the Caterpillar. The film ends abruptly with the Caterpillar's question "And who are you?" followed by a black screen. Several seconds later, the scrolling of names and credits starts; the viewer is still able to hear the invisible stage presentation throughout.

These examples not only document the development of opening and closing credits within children's film over the decades, but also emphasize the increase in importance of these parts of films. If viewers miss or ignore the opening and closing credits of *Dumbo*, they do not miss any information that is crucial or facilitating to their understanding of the film. In striking contrast to this, the opening credits of *Phoebe in Wonderland* already create tension by making viewers keen to find out what will happen to the girl and her family and to solve the puzzle of the girl's dizziness. Moreover, these two films demonstrate plainly that

children's films today are increasingly incorporating the opening and closing credits as inherent parts of the action. Consequently, one might assume that the comprehension of contemporary children's films not only involves the film's functions and structures, but also those parts of it that do not belong to the actual storyline of the film, such as trailers, film logos, opening and closing credits. These parts are usually referred to as "paratexts", a notion that has achieved acceptance as a theoretical term in academia since the appearance of Gérard Genette's benchmark study *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation*.[2]

Paratexts in Literature and Film

Although Genette defines paratexts as potentially involving both linguistic and visual elements, he focuses exclusively on literary works. Genette distinguishes between a primary text and a secondary text, or paratext, which functions as a comment on, complement to, or frame of the primary or basic text. The French title of the book, *Seuils* ("Thresholds"), indicates that the function of paratexts is to create a connection, a place of interface between the basic text and the reader. They accompany the primary text and hence are placed at its beginning or ending and at intervals in the flow of the text, such as at the beginning of chapters and at the end of pages. In other words, paratexts expand the basic text at its places of commencement and closing; they seem even to "transgress" internal boundaries, such as the bottom of the page, for instance, when they appear in the form of footnotes.[3] Research on paratexts is concerned not only with individual forms of paratexts, but also with the interaction between these forms, with the aim of developing an appropriate taxonomy of paratexts. The importance of paratexts for the interpretation of literary texts and their impact on the reader's reception process have been investigated in literary studies and media studies.[4] Scholars have successfully transferred Genette's concept to other print media, such as non-fiction literature, picture books, and comics, as well as audiovisual and digital media, such as film, TV films, and computer games.[5] Although these studies appear to indicate that understanding paratexts calls for specific previous knowledge and cognitive abilities on the part of the reader, there is scant research on the significance of paratexts for children's education and teaching in schools. We may feel some surprise at this fact, as the comprehension of paratexts is arguably an important aspect of media literacy. Without awareness of paratexts in a range of media, recipients will miss crucial information that might influence their understanding und interpretation of specific texts and media.[6]

Although some film theorists have criticized the adoption of Genette's concept for the investigation of films, especially with regard to the unspecific application of the notion of

"text", several academics have suggested extending the definition of the term "text", arguing that this term should encompass texts both in written forms and in other narrative art forms, such as illustrations and film images.[7] Further issues that should be considered in this regard are the soundscape, consisting of sounds, music, and voices, that aurally supports a sequence of opening or ending credits, as well as other aspects of filmic paratexts, such as typography and the arrangement of text on the screen, which influence the narrative and visual information presented such as the size of script used and changes in sound levels, which can be used to express an increasing intensity of emotion. The discipline of film studies distinguishes between peritexts and epitexts of films on the basis of the distinction drawn by Genette between the two terms. In this regard, logos, film titles (including sub-titles), opening credits, end credits, inserts, and subtitles belong to the category "peritexts", while trailers, film stills, interviews, additional film sequences (director's cut), reviews, and bonus material on DVDs are assigned to the category "epitexts". The "feature film" is equivalent to Genette's characterization of the "primary text". Even though, in the last decade, a number of monographs and collections of essays have explored the role of paratexts in cinema and television, the analysis of paratexts in children's films is still at a fledgling stage.

In light of the increasing complexity of trailers, opening and closing credits in children's films, the investigation of these features might be considered to be a vital step towards a theory of children's film. Further, paratexts in children's films have an educational impact for they guide viewers' expectations and facilitate cognitive movement from the perception of everyday life to that of filmic illusion. In this article, I will first demonstrate the diversity of paratexts in selected children's feature films, with specific emphasis on opening and closing, after which I will analyze the impact of these paratexts on the meaning of each film. Finally, drawing on the concept of "meta-filmic awareness", I will discuss how the comprehension of paratexts calls for the exercise of specific cognitive abilities.

The Variety of Paratexts in Children's Films

From the beginnings of films for children in the 1920s until the 1970s, children's films generally adhered to rather simple paratextual concepts. One strategy consisted in ascribing to opening and closing credits an exclusively framing function by inserting the textual information they were to transport onto an unchanging background with an accompanying soundscape. The text, particularly the names of the film's director, producers, and cast, were usually presented in the opening credits, while in most cases the end credits simply showed the words "The End". Another strategy consisted in references to book design and theater. In

such practice, the credits we typically shown either on the pages of a book as they turned, as in the Disney film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (USA 1937, directed by David Hand),[8] or projected onto a stage curtain, with the curtain's opening separating the opening credits from the commencing film. Often, a figure appears which functions as the narrator of the subsequent story. However, this narrator only introduces the story, while his narration transgresses into the characters' dialogues. This narrator is then shown again at the end, when closing the curtain, or sometimes in window sashes, as "The End" is faded in. This strategy is relatively typical of Russian fairytale films from the 1940s to the 1970s.[9]

While these paratexts establish a relationship between film and media developed prior to film (here, theater and books), other systems of semiotic reference have come to the fore since the 1980s. The increasing variety of paratexts in children's films has led to the integration of elements of the wider symbolic world around a film into its plot and into extended opening and closing credits. For instance, characters are introduced in the end credits[10] that do not appear in the feature film. Opening credits might pick up the history or origins of the feature film, interpictorially refer to other films by the same director, or allude to a subsequent story, thus preparing the way for a sequel. As an example, the numerous *Shrek* films typically introduce new characters the end credits and develop them in subsequent sequels. Another example might be the fairytale film *The Story of Poor Hassan (Die Geschichte vom armen Hassan*, GDR 1956, directed by Gerhard Klein), whose opening credits show the film crew during their preparations for the first film shot. In a variation on this theme, the end credits of *Toy Story 2* (USA 1999, dir. John Lasseter) interpictorially refer to the animated film *A Bug's Life* (USA 1998) by the same director. We may conclude from these observations that paratexts are regarded as suitable territory for developing the field of reference of a film. In general, children's films contain peritexts including a logo, opening credits with a title,[11] end credits, inserts and sub-titles. In the following passages, I will demonstrate the diversity of uses to which paratexts can be put in film by detailing some striking examples from children's films from a number of countries.

The German film *Krabat* (Germany 2008) by Marco Kreuzpaintner initially opens with the iconic logo of Twentieth Century Fox. The studio's name is depicted in golden letters that shine on the roof of a futuristic building, while floodlights illuminate the blue evening sky. The subsequent shot alters this well-known logo; the background changes to a deep blue, almost black, with several black ravens circling around the building in an anticipatory reference to the apprentices who turn into ravens at the Black Mill in the film. The transformation or alternation of film company logos and other paratextual elements of a film

has become a relatively frequently used device over the last decade, often serving to blur the contrast between the feature film itself and the obligatory information framing it, such as logo and credits. A film's opening credits generally fulfill the function of establishing the design and structure of the film. The opening credits of *Krabat* alternate between short film sequences and black screens with white lettering, which, after being shown for some seconds, disperses like flour dust, a clear allusion to the subsequent story. In contrast to the sophisticated opening credits, the end credits are reasonably conventional, scrolling against a constant and neutral background.

The film *My Friend Joe* (USA 1996), directed by Chris Bould, which centers on the unusual friendship between a shy boy and a confident circus boy who eventually turns out to be a girl, immediately opens with a visual enigma. For some seconds the viewer sees a glittering surface of water that looks like an abstract pattern. Suddenly something falls into the water, causing a large splash. This image fades into a black screen onto which the film title appears. Afterwards, the scene returns to the water, revealing the cause of the splash. A boy has jumped from a rock into the water. Three boys standing on the rock and one boy swimming in the sea can be seen in a shot/countershot sequence. The camera changes seven times between their different points of view, thus providing the audience with first impressions on the boys' characters and relationships. This action is repeatedly interrupted by black screens with text information about the director, the main actors, the production team, and the title of the novel the screenplay is based on. This filmic strategy creates a sense of fragmentation, an impression additionally emphasized by changes of scene, such as a cut to the protagonist's father driving to the harbor to buy fish for dinner, and elisions. Viewers are therefore encouraged to fill in for themselves the gaps created by the black screens showing the credits and the abrupt changes of scene in their attempt to connect up the different situations shown in the fragments. The inserts locate this three-minute film sequence as part of the opening credits; however, the credits are closely linked to the film itself, with the plot commencing on the first shot, which precedes any credits. A viewer who does not watch the opening credits may lack basic information that might facilitate their understanding of the plot.

This example, but also the opening credits of *Phoebe in Wonderland*, point to an interesting shift in recent years in the relationship between the credits and the film itself. Where the elements of the plot are incorporated into the opening credits, the notion of "paratext" in Genette's sense might be called into question. The film sequences embedded between the text inserts become part of the overall film narrative, thus making their

paratextual character much more uncertain. Film theorists' views as to the exact status of the credits in this sort of case differ, although the majority continues to insist they are paratext. Scholars working in paratext studies suggest broadening the concept in order to encompass new developments of paratext design in various media.[12]

A typical property of the animated films produced by Pixar Studios is the strategy of retelling the film's story in the closing credits. A case in point is Andrew Stanton's *Wall-E* (USA 2008), the story of a robot, Wall-E, who has the Sisyphean task of cleaning up the polluted earth after all humans have abandoned it to live in a gigantic space shuttle. After the humans' return to earth from outer space, the camera zooms close up to small green plants, then slowly re-zooms until the viewer sees the earth as a small planet in outer space. First, this striking sequence of shots presents the counterpoint of the feature film's beginning, in which the camera slowly moves from outer space to a close vision of the protagonist Wall-E, who seems to be the only inhabitant of earth. Second, this sequence also conveys the insight that perception is influenced by perspective: seen from outer space, nothing has changed on earth over the course of many decades and even centuries, but at close range, the difference is evident. The subsequent end credits reinforce the feature film's ecological message on another level of meaning, namely as a passage through the history of art, opening with drawings that bring to mind cave paintings of the Stone Age, followed by Egyptian frescoes, Japanese ink drawings in the manner of Hokusai, paintings from the Renaissance, and pictures that reference various artistic styles and could be ascribed to famous painters such as William Turner, Georges Seurat, and Vincent Van Gogh. Strikingly, characters from the feature film are inserted into the pictures; they include Wall-E, Eve, the spaceship's commander, several children, and the spaceship itself. The film leaves to the viewer the decision as to whether this humorous picture sequence should be interpreted as a reference to a new beginning of the history of mankind, or as an invitation to reflect anew upon the conservation of nature. While more educated viewers with a knowledge of art history might enjoy the allusions to famous paintings, the majority of viewers, including children, will certainly recognize the main characters hidden in the drawings and paintings. The strategy of continuing the narrative by telling an alternative story in the paratext may serve to encourage the viewer to pay proper attention to the end credits, but also to more generally acknowledge the sophisticated and artistic potential of filmic paratexts.

Inserts and comments spoken by characters that do not appear in the film are notable features of the British film *Babe* (UK, 1995), co-written and directed by Chris Noonan. Several times, the film features inserts of black screens bearing well-known proverbs in white

lettering which make allusion to the situation in the film, while a small circle, rather like the lens of a camera, opens in one corner, reveal three mice which comment on the animals' behavior on the Hoggetts' farm. Their remarks fulfill the function of a kind of Greek chorus, since the mice are not characters of the feature film itself. The textual elements and the clear distinction between film and black screen are evidence that the mice belong to the filmic paratext rather than to the plot's action. These filmic passages include an alternative strain of narrative to the main one, a device which adds a layer of complexity to the film . Moreover, the inserts reference aesthetic features of the silent film, thus contributing to the film's nostalgic feeling. What is also striking in this film is the musical score that accompanies the opening credits and is in fact essentially a retelling of the entire plot.[13]

The final example is drawn from Wes Anderson's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (USA 2009), whose screenplay is based on Roald Dahl's children's novel of the same title. Apart from the fierce debate among film critics as to whether this film should be classified as a children's or family film, *Fantastic Mr. Fox* is notable for the diversity of forms in which it alludes to the original book. The opening credits display the cover of the book's US edition.[14] A hand, in shot, holds the book for several seconds so that the viewer is able to perceive Donald Chaffin's illustration on the cover, which depicts a rural landscape with a tree on a hill. Mr. Fox leans against the tree, gazing into the distance. The camera zooms into the image, which becomes the first shot of the film, created using stop motion technique. A closer look reveals that the person holding the book is wearing a brown cord suit; the protagonist Mr. Fox wears such a brown cord suit with a white shirt and a beige slipover. These pieces of clothing are trademarks of Wes Anderson, who was the model for the design of the fox puppet. Hence, this short sequence of the opening credit interpictorially refers to a person outside the film, yet involved with it, and makes the external connotations to both the original book and the director evident. This puzzling game of identities continues in the film and is likewise extended to other characters; for instance, attorney Mr Badger's clothing and habits reflect those of Roald Dahl, and Mr Badger's office is a meticulous replica of Dahl's study. If we adopt the view that Dahl intended to represent himself in the character of Mr Fox, we can observe a complex set of referents and references: An American film director adopts a children's novel written by a British author, but bestows upon the protagonist that actually is the author's self-portrait his, the director's own characteristic traits, whereas Dahl is depicted in the figure of the pedantic and grumpy badger.[15] In this way, the paratext and its interaction with the filmic text point both to the original work and to the autobiographical references in the novel and the film. The paratext becomes a vehicle of Anderson's coded messages to

those viewers with the insider knowledge required to understand them. The play on a number of identities and the inclusion of the creator in the work of art have been in use of aesthetic strategies since the Renaissance. In this way, Wes Anderson enters a tradition whose manifestation here is equivalent to an extent to Alfred Hitchcock's cameo performances.

Consequently, the opening credits *Fantastic Mr. Fox* disclose an underlying multiple coding that simultaneously presupposes sophisticated knowledge of complex references and reveals ironic inconsistencies. However, these densely packed opening credits beg the question of who the implied audience here actually is. One might assume that not only children, but also those adult viewers who do not have the relevant background knowledge, are left out of these in-jokes. The tongue-in-cheek allusions in Wes Anderson's film are apparently addressed toward insiders, while the majority of viewers are excluded from these sophisticated and hidden references.

These examples indicate that paratexts in contemporary children's films are inextricably connected with the films they enclose. Opening credits are increasingly being given the function of acting as lead-ins to the film story and introducing the audience to the main characters. However, they still belong to the filmic paratext, since they are distinguished by the alternation of film sequences and text inserts which give typical paratextual information, such as the title and names of the film's director, producers and actors. A key difference consists in the integration of credits. When the last credit disappears, the paratext moves seamlessly into the feature film. Camera work and scene changes often have a distinct character in the paratext and in the main film. Paratexts in modern children's films tend to use more cuts and changing camera perspectives than does the film itself. The opening credits carry as much information as possible is on the film's setting, main characters, and socio-historical background. This often entails rapid switching between different locations and figures, marked by jump cuts. As soon as the film proper begins, the film sequences are extended, so that the film looks calmer in comparison to the opening credits, allowing the viewer more time to engage with the characters and the film story.

Closing credits in contemporary children's films fulfill other functions. They facilitate the viewers' smooth transference from film illusion to everyday life. Further, where they provide a space for the continuation of the plot, they challenge their audience to consider possible retellings and alternative versions of the story they have been following. This narrative strategy is often used to prepare sequels or prequels to popular films. Some children's films also use the end credits to reflect upon the production process. A case in point is John Lasseter's *Toy Story 2* (USA 1999). While the credits are scrolling on a black screen, a

small window opens in the upper left-hand corner, showing fictitious outtakes featuring the digitally created main toy characters complaining about the film crew and grumbling over the numerous repetitions of the same scene to which they are subjected. A Barbie doll even giggles over her slips of the tongue. This strategy consciously perpetuates a fiction of the reality of these characters' existence, while the fictitious episodes act as a parody of other film endings featuring outtakes. These closing credits additionally emphasize the nature of film as construct, calling for metafictive awareness on the part of the viewer, that is, her awareness of the processes that are necessary for the construction and production of films.

We have seen that paratexts have become parts of contemporary children's films which are inseparable from the film itself. There is rewarding research potential in the investigation of this phenomenon through, for instance, the history of children's films or comparison of the paratexts in children's films with those in family films and films targeted at a young adult audience. These, however, are questions for a separate study; we will move now to considering the competencies children need to acquire in order to recognize and understand paratexts in children's films.

Paratexts and the Concept of "Meta-filmic Awareness"

In Genette's theory, paratexts have the function of facilitating their recipient's transition from her everyday life to the fictitious world presented in diverse media. This idea is, of course, also applicable to film; opening and closing credits draw their audience's attention to the film's beginning and ending, thus enabling attachment to and then detachment from the film illusion. Furthermore, credits have a metafictive function in that they emphasize that films are works of art produced by a film team working in a film studio. This effect is stressed further by actors shown on inserted photos or small films.[16] The animated films produced by the Pixar studios are notable for employing this strategy by including fictitious outtakes or mock interviews in order to highlight the film's illusionary character.[17] Such paratexts stimulate audience attention to the credits, without which attention they might potentially miss relevant information. Elaborate, detailed end credits which include enigmatic images encourage the viewer to remain in the cinema until the last black screen. We might expect that in such conditions, reader response is altered, a change which has implications for media education.

One major purpose of media studies consists in the analysis of the competencies that are required for an understanding and appreciation of films in general. Media education, in particular, explores children's growing capacities in the handling of audiovisual and digital media in order to foster their "media literacy". Academics working in this area are called

upon to engage with theoretical approaches deriving from developmental psychology as well as from media studies, film studies, and media education.

Children clearly have to acquire the linguistic, cognitive, and aesthetic abilities that are essential for competent engagement with films. A number of different concepts of literacy relate to film; they include visual literacy (comprehension of images in general, including maps, drawings, and photos), literary literacy (text and scripts), and multimedial literacy in the narrower sense (an appreciation of the complex relationship between image, text, and sound). In its original sense, the discipline of media literacy investigates the acquisition and the interaction of these capacities. Scholars in literacy studies argue that the abilities that are relevant to an understanding of symbolic languages, such as lettering, images, and films, are not innate, but must be acquired in a long process. Failure to acquire these abilities implies an inability to competently handle different media and understand their meaning. Films are prime examples of multimodal media in that they are distinguished by diverse symbolic systems whose meanings have to be mastered by their recipients.[18] In this context, I would argue that the study of media or film literacy needs to additionally take account of paratext in order to develop an awareness of the important information they transmit. We might ask the following questions. What can children learn when they read paratexts in films? Which abilities are required?

A precondition for the comprehension of paratexts is the acquisition of specific cognitive capacities. Studies in developmental psychology emphasize that the acquisition of Theory of Mind (TOM) is an important step in a young child's development. Children usually acquire TOM when they are about four years of age. TOM is defined as the capacity to empathize with other people, to distinguish, in other words, between one's own point of view and those of others.[19] In addition, TOM enables people to anticipate and comprehend other people's feelings and thoughts. TOM enables children to understand the variety of perspectives depicted in media, ranging from picture books to children's novels, computer games, and films, and the range of procedures used to give expression to these perspectives. Film, for instance, is distinguished by different camera perspectives, cuts, and camera shots.

This complex network of perspectives calls for the viewer to distinguish between the effects of the range of techniques used in films in order to access these different points of view. Another necessary precondition for comprehending the semiotic systems of film paratexts consists in the ability to differentiate between script, sound, and image; in contemporary children's films in particular, in which the plot often begins to unfold in the opening credits, the capacity to make such distinctions is key to comprehension. In the case of

films targeted toward kindergarten and pre-school children, who are usually unable to read the text in the credits, the incorporation of plot elements into paratextual components of a film serves to bridge a filmic "idling cycle" and prevent young children from disengaging with the credits.

This notwithstanding, even pre-literate children are very often acquainted with the distinction between script and pictures, an awareness they acquire from sharing books with caregivers or looking at mixed-media examples such as posters or products in the supermarket. When exactly this acquisition process takes place is still a matter of debate, although there are indications that it might happen at a relatively early stage, at the age of around two years. Although children under an age ranging, according to the age of commencement of schooling, from four to seven years are generally unable to read the textual elements of picture books, including their paratexts, they are nevertheless able to pay close attention to the images on the front and back covers and the illustrations printed on the endpapers, which often contribute to a better understanding of the picture book's story. Although the significance of paratexts in picture books has yet to be thoroughly investigated, scholars such as Evelyn Arizpe, Janet Evans, and Lawrence Sipe have outlined ways of encouraging children to interact with aspects of books that include paratexts.[20]

The interplay between paratextual signals and the recipient's processing strategies represents an extremely complex process. If we wish to create a precise, paradigmatic definition of "paratextuality", we will need to investigate the strategies required for a recipient to comprehend paratexts in a number of different media. These strategies involve the specific competency of reflection upon the structure and functions of these media. It is evident that this ability must be acquired over a long period of time, similarly to all other abilities necessary for the comprehension of artistic devices used in works of art. The awareness and understanding of filmic paratexts is based upon seven abilities:

1. The knowledge that a film consists of multiple parts, specifically, in this instance, paratexts and the film itself.
2. The knowledge that paratext and film are interconnected.
3. The capacity to differentiate between paratexts in various modes (logos, titles, opening credits, closing credits, inserts, sub-titles).
4. The distinction between visuals, sound, and text.
5. The appreciation of filmic codes; examples are the recognition of gaps,[21] voiceovers, cuts, montages, and different types of shots.

6. The identification of the transition between paratext and film.
7. The ability to remember aspects of the opening credits, such as their framing function, allusions to characters and settings, recurrence of particular elements in the closing credits).

Film literacy requires recipients to understand a number of different types of knowledge, including linguistic knowledge, knowledge about visual and film codes, and world knowledge. Filmic paratexts also foster knowledge of the multiplicity of levels of plot, communication, or complexity within a film. Drawing audiences' attention to paratexts stimulates them to reflect upon the diverse functions of films. In analogy to the already established notions of "meta-linguistic awareness"[22] and "meta-literary awareness,"[23] which designate to the capacity to contemplate the meaning and function of language and literature respectively, I would like to propose the term "meta-filmic awareness" to describe the ability to reflect and reason on the structure and functions of films. Paratexts can play an important role in this regard, as they consciously draw the viewer's attention to the artificial character of films. The concept of meta-filmic awareness might also point to the multiplicity of possibilities that the analysis of paratexts offers for a theory of children's films as well as for media education in general and film education in particular. The process of children's developing insight into how a film is constructed, which entails an awareness of the fact that the film consists of several components which together represent a coherent work of art, may take place automatically by means of simply watching films; however a recognition of significance of the "accessory parts", as Genette's characterization of paratexts puts it, which are filmic paratexts may require a conscious process of education.[24] Such an education would enable children to understand what a paratext is and which purposes they fulfill in relation to the film they frame. At the same time, the examination of paratexts leads to an extension of the notion of "text", which incorporates diverse medial forms such as script, image, and sound.

As this overview demonstrates, the significance of paratexts in children's films has not yet been considered in film studies and media literacy studies; it is an issue that has considerable potential to open up new perspectives on the analysis of children's films. An interdisciplinary approach encompassing film studies, media literacy, developmental psychology, and picture theory might help to develop these theoretical frameworks as a step toward a theory of children's film.

Conclusion

As we have seen, paratexts play a crucial role in modern children's films. While older children's films in the period from the 1930s until the 1980s consciously refer to images relating to books and the theater, contemporary children's films make use of rather more complex strategies. Although scholars working in media and film studies have already emphasized the importance of filmic paratexts to the interpretation of feature films produced for an adult audience, there is as yet only scant research into the function of filmic paratexts in children's films. Our analysis of selected children's films released since the end of the 1990s revealed that paratexts are gaining increasing significance in individual films in terms of their potential to enhance or even decisively influence its understanding; in this way, they stimulate the child viewer to develop a competency that we might characterize as "meta-filmic awareness". Since paratexts are present in all media, be they print, audiovisual or digital, the teaching of a thorough awareness of paratexts as a media competency is likely to contribute, in the long term, to an improvement in children's media literacy levels.

[1] The film was presented with a special award at the Lucas children's film festival in Frankfurt in 2008. Nevertheless, some critics doubt whether this film is accurately characterized as a children's film. My view is that *Phoebe in Wonderland* belongs to the category of "crossover films", that is, films that address children and adults alike and that are open to interpretation on different levels.

[2] See Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [1989], 1997).

[3] Cf. Uwe Wirth, "Paratext und Text als Übergangszone," in *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur*, ed. Bernd Neumann and Wolfgang Hallet, (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009), 167-180.

[4] See, for instance, Klaus Kreimeier and Georg Stanitzek, eds., *Paratexte in Literatur, Film, Fernsehen* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004), 6-8; Andrzej Gwozdz, *Film als Baustelle. Das Kino und seine Paratexte* (Marburg: Schüren, 2009), and Alexander Böhnke, *Paratexte des Films* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009).

[5] On paratexts in picture books, cf. Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott, *How Picturebooks Work* (New York: Garland, 2001), and Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer and Jörg Meibauer, "On Strangeness in Pop Art Picturebooks: Pictures, Texts, Paratexts," in *Beyond Borders: Art, Culture, and Narrative in Picturebooks*, ed. Evelyn Arizpe, Maureen Farrell and Julie McAdams, special issue of *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship* 2 (2011): 1-19.

[6] Cf. Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, "Didaktik der Paratexte," in *Paratext und Illustration*, ed. Michael Baum and Beate Laudenberg, special issue of *Jahrbuch Medien im Deutschunterricht* 2011 (Munich: Kopaed, 2012): 50-74.

[7] In chemistry, "parafilm" denotes an extendable, translucent foil used for sealing containers. See: http://www.2spi.com/catalog/supp/parafilm.php, accessed 20 January 2013. We might consider adopting this term into the vocabulary of film studies; it might provide us with a term for the specifically complex nature of paratext in films, which incorporate sound and images as well as conventionally understood "text".

[8] Andrew Adamson's film *Shrek* (USA 2001) picks up and even parodies the book metaphor. The opening credits commence with an open book on whose page the text "Once upon a time there was a lovely princess" is printed. Shortly after, a green paw rips the page, accompanied by a bawdy remark about the princess and a heap of excrement. After this, the main protagonist is shown exiting the bathroom clutching the book. This book is shown once again in the end credits. The film's final sequence depicts the bridal couple's departure in a coach. The last image is frozen and metamorphosed into a book illustration with the accompanying text, "And they lived ugly ever after".

[9] See, for example, the Russian fairytale films *Morozko* (Adventures in the Magic Forest, 1964) and *Ogonj, woda i medyne truby* (Fire, Water, and Trumpets, 1968), both directed by Alexander Rou.

[10] The opening credits of all the animated films produced by Pixar show a short sequence with a moving lamp that has come to be regarded as the studio's distinctive characteristic.

[11] The titles of children's films are subject not only to historical change, but often also to change in translation. A case in point is the Irish-British co-production *Into the West* (Ireland 1992, directed by Mike Newell) whose German title is *Das weiße Zauberpferd* (The Magic White Horse). The original title emphasizes the migration of the so-called tinkers in Ireland, while the German title stresses the film's magical atmosphere, thus evoking the expectation of a fantasy film. Moreover, some children's films have sub-titles, while other titles are structured according to the series principle in order to elicit a recognition effect; one example of the latter is the series of seven Harry Potter films (UK 2001-2011, various directors). Cf. Regine Boucheari, *Filmtitel im interkulturellen Transfer* (Berlin: Frank and Timme, 2008).

[12] Cf. Klaus Kreimeier and Georg Stanitzek, eds., *Paratexte in Literatur, Film, Fernsehen* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004).

[13] I wish to express my thanks to one reviewer who indicated the importance of the musical score in this film. The eminent role of musicality in infancy and childhood learning has been investigated in Stephen Malloch and Colwyn Trevarthen, eds., *Communicative Musicality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[14] The British version was illustrated by Quentin Blake.

[15] See Adrienne Kertzer, "Fidelity, Felicity, and Playing Around in Wes Anderson's *Fantastic Mr. Fox*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2011): 4-24.

[16] An example is the closing credits of the German children's films *The Wild Hens (Die Wilden Hühner*, Germany 2003, dir. Vivian Naefe) and *The Mother-of-Pearl Color (Die Perlmutterfarbe*, Germany 2008, dir. Marcus Rosenmüller).

[17] Cf. the discussion of this topic in Christian Stewen, *The Cinematic Child. Kindheit in filmischen und medienpädagogischen Diskursen* (Marburg: Schüren, 2011), 56ff.

[18] Cf. Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996).

[19] Heinz Wimmer and Josef Perner, "Beliefs about Beliefs. Representation and Constraining Function of Wrong Beliefs in Young Children's Understanding of Deception", *Cognition* 13 (1983): 103-128; and Martin Doherty:

Theory of Mind. How Children Understand Other People's Thoughts and Feelings (New York: Psychology Press, 2008).

[20] Cf. Evelyn Arizpe and Morag Styles, *Children Reading Pictures: Interpreting Visual Texts* (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003); Janet Evans, ed., *Talking Beyond the Page: Reading and Responding to Picturebooks* (London: Routledge, 2009), and Lawrence Sipe, *Storytime: Young Children's Literary Understanding in the Classroom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007).

[21] The concept of the gap ("*Leerstelle*") in children's films has yet to be investigated. For gaps in films aimed at adults, see Fabienne Liptay, "Leerstellen im Film," in *Bildtheorie und Film*, ed. Thomas Koebner and Thomas Meder (Munich: Text & Kritik, 2006), 108-134.

[22] This academic notion, proposed by the linguist Jean Gombert, designates the ability to reflect upon language in different respects. Cf. Jean Gombert, *Metalinguistic Development* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[23] Meta-literary awareness denotes the ability to reflect upon the structure and function of literature, the ability, for instance, to distinguish between author, narrator, and character, to comprehend metaphor and irony, and to recognize metafiction. Cf. Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, *Kinderliteratur, Kanonbildung und literarische Wertung (*Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2003), 214ff.

[24] Case studies about children's understanding of paratexts in children's films do not yet exist. In this respect, the studies by Arizpe and Styles, Evans, and Sipe (see endnote 23) might be a useful frame of reference for the application of Genette's concept to the analysis of films for children.