

REINVENTING CINEMA

*Movies in the Age of Media
Convergence*

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plot elements, including Carmela and Tony's marital conflict. In many ways, the video departed from the show's operatic style, choosing to tell the Sopranos' story in a format that a *New York Times* critic aptly described as "hyperglib, antic, and rendered at an auctioneer's pace."³⁴ For all of this, it would have been easy for HBO to demand that the clip be removed, but many of the show's executives saw the unexpected advertising as generating positive buzz among internet fans. The video supplements an original text or series of texts, with "Seven Minute Sopranos" offering not only a shorthand for recalling the intricate details of over seventy-five hours of episodes but also an interpretation of the show, focusing primarily though not exclusively on Tony's actions as a crime boss and reducing his domestic problems to an ongoing back story. Thus, instead of distracting from the show, the video serves in many ways to expand its reach as well as our definition of what counts as part of the world of the original text.

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INTERTEXTUALITY, FAKE TRAILERS, AND GENRE SWITCHING

Instead of anticipating upcoming films, most fake trailers mock the rhetoric of anticipation using the clichés commonly associated with movie trailers and advertisements. In one version a film is converted from one genre to a significantly different genre, a process that I refer to as a genre remix. Genre remixes, more than movie mashups in general, depict the modularity of most high-concept films. Perhaps the most famous example of genre remix is Ryang's aforementioned "Shining" trailer. The humor of "Shining" depends almost entirely on the viewer's familiarity with the original Kubrick film, but it also builds upon audience expectations about film trailers as objects and popular distaste for how trailers artificially shape expectations of a film. In transforming "Shining" into a family drama-comedy, Ryang carefully edited scenes to suggest bonding moments between father and son, while Jack Nicholson's feverish dancing is recast as cheerful exuberance, in large part through careful visual and sound editing. Ryang also uses editing devices such as wipes, infrequently used in narrative films but often appearing in trailers.³⁵ "Shining" culminates with Peter Gabriel's "Solsbury Hill," a song movie previews often include to market films with a romantic or emotional subtext, most memorably in ads for the Topher Grace-Scarlett Johansson romantic drama *In Good Company* and the Tom Cruise-Penelope Cruz romantic thriller *Vanilla Sky*. Thus the song helps to place Ryang's mock trailer in a subtle intertextual relationship not only with Kubrick's film but with the other film trailers that use that song, often without using it in the movies themselves.

While these trailers have frequently been read as mocking the Hollywood films that provide the source material for the video, the use of the Peter Gabriel song and the voiceover seem to suggest that it is the trailer itself that is the object of parody. As Mark Caro observes, "These people are making it impossible to view most movie trailers with a straight face. And that's a good thing."³⁶ Thus, instead of subverting Hollywood films themselves, fake trailers aim at an easier target, the Hollywood marketing machine that relentlessly promotes the latest films and by doing so emphasize the formulaic quality of all trailers and the Hollywood marketing machine in general. However, while movie trailers and the Hollywood marketing machine may be ripe targets for satire, it is worth noting that these fake trailers, at least in part, may be expressions of a desire for more transparent media. As Jonathan Gray notes in his discussions of *Simpsons* audiences, many of the viewers developed a shared community around the show's critical impulse, and Caro's comments illustrate the extent to which viewers might be seeking alternatives to what seems like an intrusive form of promotion.³⁷

While many movie remixes significantly rework the original film, most popular fake trailers seem to have at least some affection for their sources, serving as what Wes Gehring has referred to as "parodies of affirmation."³⁸ Most of the films that receive the fake trailer treatment are either recent theatrical releases (when the 2007 action blockbuster *300* was released to theaters, it was given the fake trailer treatment a number of times, even before the film was on DVD) or part of a relatively limited canon focusing on films made by popular male directors such as Martin Scorsese and Stanley Kubrick. As Klinger argues in her discussion of online movie parody videos, with which fake trailers have an affinity, "Parodies help the original to gain or maintain a toehold in mass cultural canons, just as they help to indicate what constitutes mass cultural legitimacy."³⁹ As a result, these mashups help to establish what films are most worthy of attention and commentary while ignoring others that seem less relevant or memorable. There are, of course, fake trailers that seem far less affectionate toward their original source, such as the "Scary Mary Poppins" trailer that appears to be hostile to the children's classic, turning it into an *Exorcist*-style horror flick. Similarly, *Sleepless in Seattle* is translated from a romantic comedy into a *Fatal Attraction*-style scorned-woman film, with the perpetually chipper Meg Ryan depicted as stalking Tom Hanks, whose manic energy becomes recoded as nervousness. Significantly, many of the films that are treated more negatively seem to be genres that are associated with women or girls, such as romantic comedies or children's musicals, suggesting in some ways that the trailer mashup may be a predominantly masculine genre.⁴⁰ This

gender bias also seems to be reflected in a number of video mashups meant to criticize 2008 presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. These depictions should lead to a discussion of how YouTube's populist sensibility can serve to license hegemonic masculinity online. These movie remixes, therefore, should be read as reproducing knowledge not only of film culture but also of a gendered knowledge as well.

"BROKEBACK" TRAILERS: SEX AND THE MOVIE MASHUP

When fake trailers first began to appear in 2006–07, one of the more popular and persistent subgenres was the "Brokeback" genre, which mashed together the structure and music of the original *Brokeback Mountain* trailer with the content of another film. These trailers often work to subvert the hetero-normative orientation of most Hollywood films, but they also parody *Brokeback*'s widely seen trailer with its unambiguous heartfelt pleas for tolerance that did as much as anything to cement Ang Lee's romance as the "gay cowboy" movie. These *Brokeback* spoofs, like much amateur content, range from insightful to insipid; however, their commentary on filmic depictions of homosocial relationships managed to attract attention from a number of mainstream observers, including *New York Times* television critic Virginia Heffernan.⁴¹ *Brokeback* spoofs invariably made use of Gustavo Santaolalla's mournful score, combining that with clips from the remixed film featuring the two male leads of another movie and the title cards from the *Brokeback* trailer hinting at the film's "taboo" topic. The most famous example is "Brokeback to the Future," which pairs Marty McFly and Doc Brown while making extensive use of the double-coding often associated with time travel to hint at a homosocial romance between the two. The *Back to the Future* films are, of course, especially ripe for a queer reading given that the time travel narratives often require Marty and Doc to stumble for explanations of their behavior, even to remain in hiding regarding their identity as time travelers. Moreover, the *Back to the Future* trilogy also offers the clever play with the incest taboo, especially in the first film of the trilogy, in which Marty travels to an era in which his mother is a teenager and he must resist her sexual advances and re-create the "primal scene" in which his parents first meet and fall in love.⁴² However, while "Brokeback to the Future" is informed by audiences more attuned to queer readings, the trailer's position with regard to that reading is less clear. Further, while such queer readings may have been novel when they were first introduced, they may actually point to a limitation of the web video as a form of organic film criticism.

Most people who encounter "Brokeback to the Future" will likely be familiar with the *Back to the Future* trilogy, whether they are repeat viewers or merely familiar with the star personas of Michael J. Fox (Marty) and Christopher Lloyd (Doc). Because of the ubiquitous *Brokeback Mountain* advertising campaign in 2005 and 2006, film fans would have been equally familiar with Lee's film and its promotion, whether they had seen it or not. This familiarity with both texts informs the humor of the trailer mashup and guides the "homosocial" reading of the *Back to the Future* trilogy via *Brokeback Mountain*. Like most fake trailers, "Brokeback to the Future" opens with a green ratings card, in this case warning viewers that the advertised "film" is rated R. The point here might be to suggest that a film with homosexual content would more likely receive an R rating than a similar heterosexual romance that would probably get a PG-13.⁴³

Like other fake trailers, "Brokeback to the Future" includes a brief glimpse of a studio logo, in this case Universal's, as Santaolalla's romantic score wells up in the audio track. After the ratings card, "Brokeback" introduces the fake trailer's central conceit, the romance between the trilogy's two central characters and companions in time travel, Doc and Marty. A sweeping crane shot from *Back to the Future III*, in which Doc and Marty travel back to the nineteenth-century American West, sets up *Back to the Future III*'s parody of Hollywood westerns. The crane shot of Marty's hometown of Mill Valley is followed by a black title card with the phrase, "From the producers who brought you *Brokeback Mountain*." The western motif is reinforced with additional shots of Doc and Marty riding horses and sleeping by a campfire, suggesting an intimacy that might not be as easily recognizable in a "straight" reading of their relationship. Like that for *Brokeback Mountain*, the "Brokeback" trailers typically hold their shots a little longer than most previews and make extensive use of fades and dissolves to suggest a sense of romance.

Keeping the premise of Doc and Marty as a romantic couple, "Brokeback to the Future" then features a shot from *Back to the Future* in which Marty tells the mad scientist, "I'm from the future, and I came here in a time machine that you invented." The line is delivered with an intensity that in the movie suggested urgency, as Marty desperately tries to find a way to return to the 1980s, but in the fake trailer the line becomes a profession of love between the two men. This reading is reinforced by a fade to black followed by titles that read, "It was an experiment in time," an idea visually reinforced by a shot of Doc Brown wearing dark protective goggles and holding a pair of jumper cables. The screen fades to black again with another title adding, "But the one

variable they forgot was love," with the word "love" lingering on screen just a few seconds longer to playfully emphasize the romantic text.

At this point, the trailer uses plot points from the three films to suggest a clandestine affair, and especially to hint at the age gap between Marty and Doc. Again, the coded language associated with time travel stands in for the secrecy of an affair between the two men. This is first suggested in a clip from the first *Back to the Future* film in which Marty's high school principal warns him, "This so-called Doc Brown is dangerous, a real nutcase. Hang out with him and you'll end up in real trouble." The video also recasts *Back to the Future*'s comic depiction of the incest taboo. In the original film, Marty is sent back to the 1950s, where he inadvertently interrupts the first meeting between his mother and father, unintentionally substituting himself as the object of his mother's affection. The video plays off this comic tension, including a scene from the first film in which Marty introduces Doc to Lorraine (Lea Thompson), telling her, "This is my doc, I mean uncle, Doc Brown." Marty's nervousness in the film is explained by the fact that Lorraine, his mother, has become attracted to him, but in the context of the video, Marty appears to be covering for an affair. Thus, Marty's fumbling explanations for why he can't become involved with Lorraine become recoded as his attempts to hide an affair with Doc Brown. Through such techniques, "Brokeback to the Future" established the basic structure of future "Brokeback" trailers, using decontextualized scenes and disjunctive editing to create the illusion of a romance between two male leads.

The "Brokeback" subgenre proved to be one of the more commonly imitated forms of the fake trailer, with "Point Brokeback" parodying the homosocial relationship in the cops-and-robbers/surfer movie *Point Break*, as well as "Star Wars: The Empire Brokeback," which finds a homosocial romance between the series' popular robots, C3PO and R2D2.⁴⁴ But like many others, the "Brokeback" genre depended in part on timeliness. As *Brokeback Mountain* aged, it lost its cultural relevance and video makers moved on to other genres. The project of creating queer readings of films with hypermasculine subject matter persisted, however, with one creative video maker producing "It's Raining 300 Men," a sly retake on Zack Snyder's action epic *300*, to the tune of the Weather Girls' "It's Raining Men." This approach also plays off the role of intertextual materials in "queering" popular celebrities. A similar video, "Gay Top Gun," appeared on YouTube in June 2006. In their attempts to identify the ways in which *Top Gun* "looks a little less than straight," the video's editors distance themselves from the "Brokeback" trailer for the film ("not the Brokeback trailer! Something different and

way funnier"); however, to suggest that a video is unpacking the "latent homosexual subtext" in a film in which there is very little that is actually latent exaggerates the insightfulness of this particular use of web video.

What is most compelling about "Gay Top Gun" is its use of Quentin Tarantino's cameo in the 1994 film *Sleep with Me* as Duane, a film geek who offers a "queer" reading of *Top Gun* during a drunken monologue at a party. Intercut with scenes from *Top Gun* that illustrate Duane's point, the short video seems to offer a nondescript if entertaining commentary on *Top Gun's* homosocial elements. Duane's comments are further reinforced through playful editing that lifts scenes from the film out of context. However, what seems significant here is the implicit rivalry between the movie "outsider," Tarantino, and the consummate Hollywood star Tom Cruise. In this sense, the video seems less interested in producing yet another queer reading of *Top Gun*, which would have been redundant even by 1994 when *Sleep with Me* came out, but instead puts into motion two competing versions of stardom, the film geek versus the pop fan. Thus, "Gay Top Gun" seemed to reflect a more general sensibility of web video, both in its attempt to canonize the image of a familiar, hip, Hollywood "indie" star in Tarantino while also seeking to distance itself from the Brokeback genre in general by offering something "new." While Tarantino's economic relationship to Hollywood by 2008 hardly made him an independent director, his stature as someone who makes films that defy conventional norms—the fragmented chronology, the extensive allusions to world cinema—code him as indie for many young film fans. The use of Tarantino as an "interpreter" of *Top Gun* offered the video maker a means to use the self-reflexive techniques of the mashup to challenge the authority of Hollywood films to control and shape meaning, while also seeking to reproduce a form of semiotic solidarity with other indie film fans, tying the video in with a larger film geek culture.

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS AND TRAILER MASHUPS

In addition to parodying movie trailers themselves, video mashup producers have also used the language of fake trailers to serve other, more explicitly political purposes, usually via an explicit partisan stance on a political candidate or issue. Because these fake trailers can be assembled relatively quickly through the combination of scenes from popular movies and from television news, political movie mashups represent an opportunity for what Patricia Zimmerman has referred to in the broader context of web cinema as a "rapid response to world events."⁴⁵ As a result, political mashups take us from the terrain of parody into something

closer to satire, commenting on current events rather than remaining content to focus on genre conventions. In fact, in many cases, the genre conventions themselves are used as a form of satire. Further, because the "snack culture" of web video privileges not only brevity but also timeliness, political commentary became an easy way for video creators to gain notice quickly while also weighing in on a current political affair. In essence, these political parodies allow mashup artists to break through the noise cluttering a specific political event and to comment, often humorously, on important issues. Like fake trailers, these rapid-response videos rely on our familiarity with both the political issue and the popular culture text used to comment on it, creating what might be regarded as a just-in-time political commentary. In fact, these videos came to be understood as the ultimate example of the disposable entertainment associated with snack culture, offering a quick observation about an event that would soon be lost in the constant cycle of news and spin. What seems significant about them, however, is their staying power in reinforcing specific perceptions of major political and public figures.

Much like the movie remixes, political parody videos as used during the 2008 U.S. presidential election relied upon a semiotic solidarity, with favored candidates being identified through editing or digital compositing with preferred characters or films. As a result, cultural fandom and political affiliation could be mapped onto each other in creative ways. Given his appeal to younger voters, it was probably no surprise that Barack Obama tended to receive the benefits of these popular-political expressions of allegiance, with Obama's two major rivals, Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican John McCain, often cast as villains or identified with undesirable semiotics. Finally, despite the Obama campaign's success in using the web to rally support from younger voters, it is important to be cautious about identifying YouTube and other video sharing sites with a purely utopian ideal of revolutionizing politics. Because the site privileges those videos that are most popular, oppositional or unexpected political messages can be ignored or marginalized. As Alex Juhasz has argued, political videos may receive less attention or disappear from view if they support controversial or radical political ideals: "The society's already accepted opinions about race, or politics, are most highly valued, receive the most hits, and thus are easiest to see."⁴⁶ Despite these potential problems, political parody videos often prove to be effective texts not only for reading political culture against the grain but also for thinking about our place within a wider film culture as well.

The use of popular culture to comment on politics itself takes on a variety of genres and styles, often using forms of shared textual tastes in

order to endorse or criticize political candidates. In “Godfather IV,” an appropriation of the conventions of the fake trailer made an overt political point about a current event: the Justice Department scandal in which then Deputy Attorney General Alberto Gonzales sought to get approval from Attorney General John Ashcroft for a new terrorist surveillance program. While the video likely requires a fairly deep and specific knowledge of the situation, it also uses the cinephiles’ shared distaste for the third *Godfather* movie to view the scandal as yet another bad sequel. In a slightly different approach, “Hillary’s Downfall” built upon a popular subgenre, or meme, of videos that uses scenes from the Hitler biopic *Downfall* but with new English subtitles designed to place the Hitler character in contemporary predicaments. In one example, Hitler is depicted as being on the phone with the Microsoft help desk; in another, he complains about his Xbox not working properly. In this case, Hitler literally becomes a beleaguered Hillary Clinton, his recognition that the war was lost being transformed into a commentary on Clinton staying in the presidential race long after the conclusion seemed inevitable. Here the association between Hitler and Clinton is meant not only to shock but to depict her as stridently authoritarian and antidemocratic. In this sense, the video reinforced the conservative frame through which Clinton is often perceived. A third set of videos used digital compositing to overlay the faces of Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and other public figures onto the stars of famous movies such as *Rocky* and *The Empire Strikes Back*. In the first case, Obama is transformed into “Baracky,” a strange hybrid of the underdog boxer and the superstar politician that culminated in Rocky/Baracky’s triumphant run up the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, creating in essence a visual fantasy of Obama winning the Democratic primary in Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, “The Empire Strikes Barack” depicted Obama as a light-saber wielding hero fighting back against a Hillary Clinton-Darth Vader hybrid. In all these cases, shared cinematic values become mapped onto shared political values, and the cultural texts become a means for video makers to comment on current events, sometimes in critical ways.

COMPILATION VIDEOS

While fake trailers are among the more dominant and widely discussed forms of movie mashup parodies, they are but one category of fan engagement with Hollywood films. Compilation videos provide yet another way for film cultures to come together over shared cinematic tastes. Like the fake trailers, compilation videos rely upon the ready availability of Hollywood film history, on the degree to which YouTube

not only materially but also metaphorically keeps all texts available for reuse and recycling into new narratives. There are dozens of examples of videos where the creators assemble video compilations of “best” and “worst” movie scenes. One of the more compelling examples of a compilation video is “100 Movies 100 Quotes 100 Numbers,” produced by the “Alonzo Moseley Film Institute,” a sly parody of the American Film Institute’s compilation shows in which they honor the Top 100 movies, 100 sexiest stars, the 100 greatest movie quotes, and so on. As I have argued, the AFI lists have come under scrutiny from film bloggers and reviewers because of the lists’ inherent biases in promoting a relatively safe film canon. Thus, like the blog lists, these compilation videos do valuable work in questioning the role of institutions such as AFI in normalizing and homogenizing taste. At the same time, the practice of sharing these videos also functions as a means of building community with other film fans, which this video does through the practices of creative citation. If film blogging represents a means for groups to develop a sense of connection, potentially across the globe, then web video extends this sense of what Acland has called “felt internationalism,” allowing viewers to “geek out” over the reinscription of several of their favorite movies into entirely new contexts.

While new editing technologies make these compilation videos much easier than they might have been in the past, they do require a significant amount of (unpaid) labor, especially for some of the more elaborate compilation videos. In this sense, they should be understood in terms of the tremendous investment—in time and attention—required to make them. The “Seven-Minute Sopranos” video, for example, took a reported 90 to 100 hours to edit and record sound. That time does not include the number of hours spent watching episodes of the show, often several times, that gave the editor-producers the knowledge of the show necessary to produce a factually accurate video about a TV series that had run for approximately 77 hour-length episodes when the video was made.⁴⁷ The “100 Movies 100 Quotes 100 Numbers” video, which has been viewed well over one million times, parodies the AFI compilation videos by including scenes of actors from prominent movies delivering lines with numbers in them, arranged to count down from one hundred to one, echoing the AFI practice of counting down to the highest-ranked film on their list.⁴⁸

Unlike the AFI list, the “100 Numbers” list favors films that might not be regarded as canonical by traditional standards, although many of the cited films—*The Breakfast Club*, *Dead Poets Society*, *The Princess Bride*, and *Midnight Run*, to name a few—betray a distinctly 1980s sensibility, turning the video into a kind of time machine for revisiting one’s

personal experiences with the cited movies. In her discussion of her students' repeat viewings of 1980s films, Klinger points out the ways in which repeat viewings can be used both as a form of personal therapy associated with comfort viewing and as a form of reinforcing "generational, gender, and other bonds."⁴⁹ These social elements are reflected in the ongoing stream of comments posted to the video's page on YouTube. While the vast majority of comments simply express fawning admiration for the video's cleverness, others transcribe or list their favorite quotes ("I knew 36 would be Clerks!"), while a somewhat smaller group cites films they think were wrongfully omitted ("42 should have been Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy"). In this sense, the video cannot be separated from the role of quoting favorite movies as a form of community-building as people discuss their shared memories of the movies cited in the video.

A similar compilation video, found on YouTube under the title "Women in Film," presents a much more complicated set of relations between images. Unlike the visible cuts in the "100 Numbers" video, "Women in Film" morphs between a number of Hollywood actresses, starting from Marlene Dietrich and Marilyn Monroe to Nicole Kidman and Catherine Zeta-Jones, and featuring Yo-Yo Ma's performance of the prelude to Bach's Cello Suite no. 1.⁵⁰ As a number of commentators, including *Hollywood Reporter* columnist Anne Thompson, pointed out, the effect of the video is somewhere between creepy and hypnotic, with viewers drawn into seeking out their favorite actresses while finding themselves similarly astounded by the skillful use of digital morphing technologies.⁵¹ In his discussion of morphing, Lev Manovich associates morphing with "the aesthetics of continuity," observing that "computer-generated morphs allow for a continuous transition between two images—an effect which before would have been accomplished through a dissolve or cut."⁵² By this logic, the aesthetic of continuity seems to reinforce the idea that these actresses remain the object of what Laura Mulvey famously described as the male gaze.⁵³ Like the classical Hollywood actresses described by Mulvey, the morphing between actresses in this video holds the viewer's gaze. The visual continuity between the actresses suggests and implicitly celebrates their similar appearances and the actresses become a site for contemplation for the viewer, prompting a couple of comments on the video site asking for a "Men in Film" video and others to note that few women of color were featured, which is more than likely the result of Hollywood's history of privileging whiteness than it is of the video maker's biases. In fact, the contemporary stars included Angela Bassett, Penelope Cruz, and a number of other black, Latina, and Asian stars.

More crucially, the use of morphing the video points to the ongoing remediation of film by video, a process evoked in the video's title, "Women in Film." And yet, the video retains a remarkable affinity for film itself as a medium, pointing to the ways in which digital media have incorporated and adapted to film not with a distinct rupture, but through continuities, embracing rather than rejecting film. Moreover, the "Women in Film" video, through its reverential use of these images of Hollywood starlets, reinforced via the classical music sound track, stands in stark contrast to the parody videos more commonly found on the web. Unlike the parody videos that define the video makers as "renegades," "Women in Film" is more explicit about its affirmative relationship to the Hollywood actresses it depicts. At the same time, the video seems to be compelled by a similar impulse for a shared community of appreciation for Hollywood films.

STUDIO APPROPRIATION OF MOVIE REMIXES

As movie remixes became more popular, movie studios increasingly recognized the potential benefits of engaging with the fan cultures that enthusiastically embrace their work. Hoping to capitalize on what amounted to a form of voluntary labor that was directing attention to major movie franchises, a number of studios began inviting fans to produce fake trailers and other mashup videos, even at the risk that fans might take that content in unanticipated directions, while most fake trailers and other remixes have been allowed to remain online.

In one of the more ambitious attempts to tap into fan activity, Twentieth Century Fox created Fox Atomic, a new genre label featuring horror films targeted at teen audiences. In the summer of 2007, they launched a blender tool that allows fans to create mashups using scenes from the label's upcoming films, including *The Hills Have Eyes 2*, *Shooter*, and *28 Weeks Later*. Of course, it's unclear whether the Fox Atomic experiment generated increased ticket sales; however, the web site presented itself as embracing participatory culture, with one executive seeking to describe Fox Atomic as "the anti-studio."⁵⁴ Fox clearly seemed to be trying to attract the enthusiasm and energy associated with fan communities, illustrating the ways in which these community-building and social activities can be appropriated by the entertainment industry. As a result, the Fox Atomic experiment illustrated the degree to which these fan activities are not inherently liberating. Significantly, Fox Atomic was relatively short-lived. Only a year after the label was established, its marketing wing was eliminated and brought back under the direction of its parent company.⁵⁵

Twentieth Century Fox used a similar approach when a fan-produced video celebrating its *Die Hard* films appeared on YouTube a few weeks before the summer 2007 release of *Live Free or Die Hard*, the fourth installment of the Bruce Willis action series. The video was posted by the novelty rock band Guyz Nite and featured clips from the *Die Hard* films and lyrics expressing the band's enthusiasm for the trilogy. When the video appeared, Fox initially demanded that YouTube pull the clip, but with the release of the fourth installment in the *Die Hard* film series, Fox not only invited Guyz Nite to repost the video to YouTube but also provided the band with an early synopsis of *Live Free or Die Hard*, as well as footage from the film that they could incorporate into a revised version of their video.⁵⁶ Fox then began using the song to promote the movie and DVD, even in a number of television commercials. While the studio was able to recognize the benefits of collaborating with their fans, their decision to incorporate the video into their marketing campaign also raises important questions about the limits of the fan-produced videos that are allowed to remain on the web. Unlike GWG's "5 Second Videos," the Guyz Nite song offered a much more affirmative treatment of the original films, uncritically celebrating John McClane's (Bruce Willis) model of wise-cracking bravado and resourcefulness. Thus, studios are more likely to block videos and other texts that offer a more critical approach or even an approach that takes a movie completely out of its original context.

CONCLUSION

By raising questions about why these new film cultures are identified with the home, trailer mashups represent an interesting challenge to traditional models of film studies that place emphasis on theatrical screenings. Instead of being associated with what Klinger refers to as "home film cultures," fake trailers, like the film blogs that link to and often discuss them, represent an emerging networked film culture in which film buffs produce, distribute, and discuss videos that rework and comment upon Hollywood films. These practices often allow for forms of critical engagement, whether through the parody of Hollywood marketing or through the use of cultural texts to comment on current affairs, but there have also been web sites such as Fox Atomic that seek to channel fan activity directly into the promotional aims of the studio. While it would be a mistake to read user-generated fake trailers as oppositional practice, they often parody the rhetoric of promotion found in movie trailers. Similarly, compilation videos, such as "100 Movies 100 Quotes 100 Numbers," offer an irreverent glance at the

processes by which classical Hollywood films become canonized—and marketed—to film audiences, even while they celebrate other films that may be perceived as wrongfully ignored or devalued. In both cases, however, an affirmative relationship to Hollywood film culture remains unquestioned. Thus, despite the revolutionary rhetoric that has come to define many of these changes, the rise of the fake trailer and other forms of web video implies not a radical break with the cinematic past but a series of continuities and reinterpretations of it. And ultimately these fake trailers illustrate that, whatever else digital cinema is doing, it is also quite clearly a means for expanding the sites where cinema can be commodified, for bringing movies to the widest possible audiences.

However, the reactions within the entertainment industry to these forms of fan activity cannot be separated from the industrial, social, and historical conditions that shape film exhibition, distribution, production, and consumption. While a number of media companies, including Viacom, have attempted to contain these fan productions, others, such as Fox Atomic, have sought to co-opt them by providing fans with material for creating their own videos. There is little doubt that such activities served primarily to promote the Fox Atomic brand as a kind of "anti-studio," one that dispenses with the opposition between fans and the studio, between producers and consumers. The fan activities on the Fox Atomic site remained oriented toward current and upcoming theatrical releases, retaining an emphasis on first-run features appearing in theaters.

While there will always be a number of efforts on the part of the entertainment industry to control or limit these intertextual practices, movie remixes continue to occupy a complicated position from which film culture can be viewed. The celebratory accounts of these mashups help to foster the utopian ideal that anyone with a computer is a potential producer, able to remix, rewrite, and reinterpret Hollywood movies. And, in fact, trailers often comment critically on the very processes of marketing, seemingly offering an alternative to a wider media culture that is seen as manipulative. At the same time, discussions of fake trailers provide individuals with opportunities for forging connections over shared cinematic tastes. These videos also allow users to find a new language informed by popular culture with which they can comment on current events. As a result, movie remixes, through their complicated renegotiation of intertextuality, illustrate the degree to which texts work in constant dialogue not only with other texts but also with audiences themselves. These texts should serve as an important reminder to scholars to remain attentive to the expanding film archive and its role in shaping interpretation.