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Memoirs of a humanoid: Welsh representation in micro budget filmmaking

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**MEMOIRS OF A HUMANOID: WELSH REPRESENTATION IN
MICRO BUDGET FILMMAKING**

By

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Presented to Bangor University in fulfilment
of the thesis requirement for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Welsh stereotypes and tropes on film. Welsh people are as diverse and complex as the Welsh countryside; however, this is not expressed in films that showcase Welsh characters. This is explored using Plato's allegory of the cave as a basis for its method. Plato stated that if three prisoners would be kept within a cave for their entire lives with the only stimulation being shadows projected on a wall, that then their reality would be based on the assumption that those shadows were real. In our real world, this study suggests that those shadows represent stereotypes, and that if three people were locked in a cinema with only films to view for an understanding of the Welsh people, their view would be extremely different from reality. This is precisely the question asked by this thesis.

In Plato's allegory, one of the prisoners is eventually released into the real world, at first this scares and shocks the prisoner, however, over time the prisoner adapts and realizes that the shadows they had viewed within the cave were fiction. What the practice element of this thesis does is to juxtapose the real, in the form of a documentary, with the false, in the form of a B-Movie. Documentary is widely considered as a representation of reality, the actual, historical world. The B-Movie represents a fictitious world, a world made almost entirely on a Hollywood sound stage. The dichotomy between these genres allows this research to highlight the absurdity of Welsh stereotypes. However, since documentary is in some cases as much of a fiction as scripted fiction films, the documentary is, in fact, presented as a mockumentary. This thesis is practice-based inquiry that uses serendipity as a methodology in order to make discoveries. The overall goal is to reveal how simplistic stereotypes and tropes in cinema productions obscure reality and real life characters. However, as this research includes a reliance on serendipitous theory, the eventual outcomes are potentially unknown from the outset. This work aimed to juxtapose the fact and fiction with the dichotomy between B-Movie and Documentary with the goal of dealing with the larger issues of representation using the Welsh as a microcosmic representation of any stereotyped group. What will be shown in the conclusion is that the practice element of the thesis is greater than the sum of its parts, and rather than merely displaying fact vs fiction the film becomes indefinable performative documentary

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MEMOIRS OF A HUMANOID: WELSH REPRESENTATION IN MICRO BUDGET FILMMAKING

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this thesis is to explore the representation of the Welsh in English language film, mostly English and American produced feature films. This will be done using a practice-based methodology, which will entail the production of a feature length film. The aim of this film is to illustrate existing tropes and stereotypes are too simplistic to represent the cultural and social complexity of Welsh life. Raymond Williams once asked the question: ‘Who speaks for Wales?’,¹ and the answer he abruptly gave was ‘Nobody’². He found this encouraging, as it meant that ‘everybody should and have the right to speak’.³ However, this is not true when discussing Wales in regard to cultural and national identity. In film, Wales has been spoken for, primarily by the English and American film industry. From the earliest interpretations in films that used the South Wales miners’ strike^{4 5 6} as their central plot point to the Universal horror classic *The Wolf Man*⁷, Wales on film has been spoken for, spawning a number of stereotypes and tropes in the process. It should now be noted that the majority of stereotypes represented in this study predate film, and that the introduction of cinema was merely the newest technology that allowed stereotypes to be perpetuated further. This is not a study on the evolution of these tropes and the discussion regarding the possible origins and examples of specific stereotypes. This research on past tropes was mainly carried out through a practice-based methodology and as such serendipitous events could potentially occur while filming. Therefore a deep and vast understanding of the visual representation of the Welsh is required in order to identify serendipitous discoveries and findings that might arise during the practice element of the thesis.

¹ Raymond Williams and Daniel Williams (eds.), *Who Speaks for Wales?: Nation, Culture, Identity* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 3.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

⁵ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

⁶ *A Run For Your Money* (dir. Charles Frennd, 1949).

⁷ *The Wolf Man* (dir. George Waggner, 1941).

As this is a thesis is practice-based research; the tropes will be analysed in the production of the feature film called *Humanoids From Wales*. The goal of which is to highlight the falsity of Welsh tropes, by juxtaposing two distinctly opposite representations of the Welsh parallel to each other. The reason why this practice-based thesis is conducted via practice rather than purely theoretical work is because by presenting both stereotypes in the film medium and within the same film, it heightens and identifies the comparability of both representations. This was done by making the film as two distinctly opposite sides of the spectrum, one as a documentary that represents reality and the historical world, the second as a B-Movie, which is a genre synonymous with the repetition of stereotypes and false shorthand⁸. The inspiration for this structure came from Plato's allegory of the cave.⁹ In Plato's allegory, he stated that if three prisoners were made to watch shadows on a wall for their entire lives, then these shadows would be their reality. Much like how popular culture, such as television and film, informs our reality. However, if one of the prisoners was released to the outside world, at first the true reality would seem strange and disorientating to the prisoner. A lifetime in the cave would mean that his eyesight would take time to adjust to the natural light, over time the prisoner would adapt and realize that the shadows from the cave had merely been a distorted representation of reality. This research will show that humanity or human kind (much like the prisoners in the cave) are viewing a representation of the Welsh people as a false shadow version. Nevertheless, documentary theory¹⁰ shows that all representation, positive or negative, is a matter of perspective, a view. As such, the documentary will be presented, as a mockumentary as it understand that any representation is a shadow, or an interpretation of reality.

The theoretical aspect of this thesis is best described as an instruction manual, as one might receive with the purchase of a table from Ikea. The table, or the representation of the Welsh on film, is inevitably the final product, however, its construction relies on a number of different elements. First the instructions, these are a vital part of the process as they are required in order to understand what parts are needed and which tools. The documentary and the B-Movie are merely the unassembled parts: separately without the aid of the instructions, these separate elements seem unrelated. The practice-based methodology is the set of tools required

⁸ Gregory Solman, "The Bs of summer" *Film Comment* (Vol. 29:4, 1993), 10, p. 12.

⁹ Nathan Andersen, *Shadow Philosophy: Plato's Cave and Cinema* (Routledge, 2014).

¹⁰ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010).

to bring the documentary and B-Movie together. All elements are required in order for this research to be understood. As such, this thesis begins with a literature review for the representation of the Welsh on film, followed by a review of the practice-based methodology, followed by a brief discussion regarding the theory for documentary and B-Movies. An in depth theoretical discussion regarding documentary and B-Movie is not required, however, key elements of both genres will be discussed to aid understanding of why these types of films best juxtapose one another.

From there, it will be shown how the representation of the Welsh has changed very little over the centuries, transitioning from old-time nursery rhymes¹¹ to modern day film.¹² It should be noted that a historical context for these representations will not be discussed as this research primarily concerned with the modern interpretation of the Welsh. For the most part, historical representations of the Welsh are used only as inspiration for concepts discussed in the overall research film *Humanoids From Wales*.

From there the rationale behind the use of both documentary and B-Movie will be addressed. This begins with the documentary, giving a brief history of documentaries followed by the aesthetics that make a film identifiable as a documentary; specifically, the six extant modes of documentary. Moving on from there, a detailed description will be given discussing my own personal, practical history in the documentary genre, three case studies will be given that discuss documentary from a practitioning perspective, and how the theory in the previous chapter relates to real world practice. The next section discusses mockumentary; it will here be shown that an understanding of documentary modes is not only required but fundamental to the understanding of the mockumentary. The chapter concludes with a justification for the use of the mockumentary, specifically the idea that since representation can never be accurate, being merely a view or a matter of perspective, to present the reality section of the film as documentary would therefore undermine the entire argument of the thesis. However, an idea of reality is required to be able to juxtapose reality with the overtly fictional world of the B-Movie. The next chapter discusses in detail why the B-Movie presented a world that not only juxtaposed next to reality would represent un-reality, but is also a platform to research Welsh stereotypes. The chapter begins with a brief history on the origin and meaning of the

¹¹ Opie, Iona, and Peter Opie (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (Oxford: UP, 1997).

¹² *A Way of Life* (dir. Amma Asante, 2004).

term B-Movie, follows the evolution of the term and discusses the numerous theories regarding what the term means today. Moving on from this will be an aesthetic breakdown of what was classified as a B-Movie over the last century, from the economical meaning of the term to its present day cultural meaning. This will be followed by my own personal experience producing B-Movies, specifically three case studies that discuss the modern day meaning of the term. It should be noted that the classic use of the term B-Movie ended with the end of the 1950s and the introduction of the antitrust laws. These prohibited studios from producing and distributing their own films. The chapter concludes with a discussion outlining why the B-Movie represents the extreme version of the stereotypical representation of the Welsh. Once the individual parts of the metaphorical flat-pack table have been discussed, the means by which these parts are placed together in order to research specific Welsh stereotypes is outlined.

Chapter 5 shows how specific stereotypes are exploited and satirized in the produced film. The film is broken down into three separate sections. The first is a short film that appears at the beginning of *Humanoids From Wales* and is titled *Welsh Flag*. This establishes the tone of the film, in a sense setting the stage for the two main aspects of this thesis, the documentary and B-Movie. The documentary or mockumentary showcases stereotypes in a subtler manner, merely referring to past stereotypes rather than confronting or conflicting them. However, the B-Movie represents Wales in a polar opposite manner to the documentary using B-Movie tropes and storylines in order to highlight the absurdity of the stereotypes being presented.

The thesis concludes with an in-depth discussion on what was learnt as this research was being carried out while discussing unintentional conclusions that occurred regarding the classification of *Humanoid From Wales* as a documentary, mockumentary, B-Movie or double feature. This showcases that this is new research, since no other academic work has been done using a practice-based methodology to highlight findings regarding Welsh stereotypes and tropes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis is primarily research into the Welsh representation on film using a practice-based methodology. That said, the areas that will be researched are numerous. Since this is practice-based, it goes without saying that literature and academic theory regarding practice-based research will be discussed. However, this is only one element of the research: in order to carry out practice, there needs to be an understanding of the field being researched as well as the means to research. There needs to be a theoretical understanding of the nature of Welsh representation on film, as well as an understanding of how this can be done on a practice basis. As such, a literature review will be given of both Welsh Representation on Film and a theory regarding Micro Budget Filmmaking. However, micro budget films are not a genre or film kind in or of themselves; therefore the practice element of this thesis also delves into the filmic modes used in the practice section of the research. Specifically, the film *Humanoids From Wales* is comprised of two separate modes of filmmaking. The first half is a mockumentary film and the second is a B-Movie. As such, academic theory will also be included regarding Documentary and Mockumentary as well as B-movies. Finally, to close this explanation for the numerous literature reviews contained in this chapter, an analogy will be given to explain why all these elements are required. This thesis is potentially a flat-pack table that needs construction. The table, once constructed would constitute the Welsh representation on film, the practice-based methodology would be the instruction manual, and mockumentary and B-movies are the tools used to construct the desk. Not forgetting micro budget filmmaking theory, being simply the ability to open the box in which the desk was purchased.

Welsh Representation on Film

The literature discussed below is by no means all that will be referred to in this thesis. The subject of this study is vast and an exhaustive literature review of all sources would exceed the word limitation of this research. The intention behind the literature review is to identify any gap in our knowledge in regard to the discussion of Welsh national identity and specifically to identify where this study can be placed. However, while there is no academic practice-based writing referring to the representation of the Welsh, there is yet much theoretical academic writing on the

subject. The book *Neighbours from Hell? English attitudes to the Welsh*¹³ by Mike Parker discusses much of the same subject matter as this study. It also researches a number of the same primary sources. It goes into great detail in outlining the numerous ways in which ‘the English’ have portrayed ‘the Welsh’. What differentiates this present study from *Neighbours from Hell* is that it will have a stronger leaning towards Welsh representation in film. Other literature that documents and discusses Welsh representations includes Peter Lord’s research *Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640 – 1860*.¹⁴ The book provides an insight into visual representations of the Welsh that predate film. The chapter *A view from the outside – Poor Taff, 1640 – 1740* gives an in-depth insight into some of the earliest instances of representations of the Welsh in media. Images such as *The Pleasant History of Taffy’s Progress to London; with the Welshman’s Catechism*¹⁵ give one of the earliest representations of the Welsh stereotype “Taffy”. The book *Celtic Identity and the British Image*¹⁶ by Murray G. H. Pittock also discusses representations of the Welsh that pre-date film, focusing on representations from *Gerald of Wales* as well as *Shakespeare*. These two sources are used extensively in this research because they deal with Welsh national identity from as early as the 12th century in texts such as those by *Gerald of Wales* and later in the 16th century *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*.¹⁷ Lord’s research only extends to the 18th century and is used as a background to this study and as a means to locate other avenues of research. *Celtic Identity and the British Image* similarly deals with historical representations of the Welsh character and tropes and will be primarily used as background research.

In the film world the most comprehensive piece of literature regarding cinema and Wales is undoubtedly Dave Berry’s *Wales & Cinema: The First Hundred Years*¹⁸. The book ‘has done more for Welsh cinematic culture than any other singular artefact’.¹⁹ It chronicles and catalogues the history of cinema in relation to Wales from the creation of film up to 1994 when the book was first published. As well as

¹³ Mike Parker, *Neighbours From Hell* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2007).

¹⁴ Peter Lord, *Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640 – 1860* (Aberystwyth: Planet, 1995).

¹⁵ F. Thorn, *The Pleasant History of Taffy’s progress to London: with the Welshman’s Catechism* (London 1800).

¹⁶ Murray G. H. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (Manchester: UP, 1999).

¹⁷ Andrew Borde, *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (London: N.Trubner & Co., 1870), p. 127.

¹⁸ David Berry, *Wales and Cinema: The First Hundred Years* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1994).

¹⁹ Steve Blandford, *Film, Drama and the Break-up of Britain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), p. 95.

documenting key events, Berry analyses the representation of Welsh characters in film. It criticizes films such as *How Green Was My Valley*²⁰ for representing Wales as ‘an Irish Shangri-La’. However, the book’s primary goal is to document film in Wales and the representation of the Welsh in film.

*Wales: The Imagined Nation*²¹ by Tony Curtis discusses Welsh national identity from film to theatre. The book also dedicates an entire chapter to *Images of Welsh Women*. This chapter gives an insight into a number of stereotypical representations of Welsh women: ‘the Welsh Mam; the Welsh Lady in National Costume; the Pious Welshwoman; the Sexy Welshwoman and the funny Welshwoman’.²² This chapter will be discussed in detail in the section titled ‘She is small; she wears plain dresses and an apron; her hair is in a bun’.²³ However, the chapter describes in detail one of the first Welsh archetypes, the ‘Welsh Mam’. The chapter entitled *Wales in the Movies* discusses a number of Welsh representations in film from *Zulu*²⁴ to *The Last Days of Dolwyn*.²⁵ However, the book was published in 1986 and therefore obviously makes no reference to films produced in the 1990s in Wales.

Woodward²⁶ and Blandford²⁷ have written extensively on films produced during and since devolution in Wales or the transitional period (1990s), namely *Twin Town*,²⁸ *House of America*²⁹ and *Human Traffic*.³⁰ Woodward states that the Welsh filmic image has been shifting since the 1970s and this shift away from an orientalist, romanticized vision accelerated at the end of the 20th century.³¹ The films produced at the end of the 20th century, Woodward argues, deal with the notion of Welshness, Englishness and Britishness in Wales.³² Woodward agrees with Ed Thomas who states:

²⁰ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

²¹ Tony Curtis, *Wales: The Imagine Nation* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986).

²² Ibid, p. 229.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ *Zulu* (dir. Cy Endfield, 1964).

²⁵ *The Last Days of Dolwyn* (dir. Emlyn Williams, (1949).

²⁶ Kate Woodward, ‘Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,’ *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, Winter 2006), p. 62.

²⁷ Steve Blandford, *Film, Drama and the Break-up of Britain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007).

²⁸ *Twin Town* (dir. Kevin Allen, 1997).

²⁹ *House of America* (dir. Marc Evans, 1997).

³⁰ *Human Traffic* (dir. Justin Kerrigan, 1999).

³¹ Kate Woodward, ‘Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,’ *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, Winter 2006), p. 53.

³² Ibid, p.52.

*The Old Wales is dead [...] The Wales of stereotype, leeks, daffodils, look-you-now-boyo rugby supporters singing Max Boyce songs in three-part harmony while phoning mam to tell her they'll be home for tea and Welsh cakes has gone.*³³

Woodward then states, regarding the films *Twin Town*, *House of America* and *Human Traffic*:

*Although these young directors returned to the old traditional Welsh themes and stereotypes of the past, they distorted, satirized and transformed them, and therefore, the influence and significance of Wales' cinematic past on these films is highly evident.*³⁴

She argues that during this period of change 'it was felt [in] the film world and in the wider artistic community, that this was the golden opportunity to bury old stereotypes and prejudices on screen once and for all'.³⁵ Woodward believes that the films produced during the '90s cast off romanticized images of the Welsh.³⁶

Before, as has been stated above, the 'Welsh' were, in a way 'orientalised',³⁷ in films such as *How Green Was My Valley*³⁸ and *The Proud Valley*.³⁹ Marc Evans felt that films from the transitional period, namely *House of America* and *Twin Town*, were engaged in an argument with the past. Dave Berry also confirmed this, believing that the film *Twin Town* perpetuated negative imagery associated with the Welsh. All three films display numerous Welsh stereotypes. The characters are portrayed as poor. The main character in *Human Traffic*⁴⁰ (Jib played by John Simm) works for minimum wage at a money hungry corporation, similar to the mine owner in *How Green Was My Valley*.⁴¹ The main characters in *Twin Town*⁴² as well as in *House of America*⁴³ are unemployed. In all three films the Welsh characters are portrayed as sexually promiscuous. Jib's mother (played by Helen Griffin) in *Human Traffic* is a prostitute; the twins' sister (played by Rachel Scorgie) in *Twin Town* works in a brothel. In *House of America* the brother and sister (played by Steve

³³ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, Winter 2006), p. 53.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid, p.54.

³⁶ Ibid, p.55.

³⁷ Ibid, p.54.

³⁸ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

³⁹ *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

⁴⁰ *Human Traffic* (dir. Justin Kerrigan, 1999).

⁴¹ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

⁴² *Twin Town* (dir. Kevin Allen, 1997).

⁴³ *House of America*, (dir. Marc Evans, 1997).

Mackintosh and Lisa Palfrey) have a sexual relationship. Music or musicians are an important part in all three films. In *Human Traffic*, clubbing on the weekend is what the characters live for. In *Twin Town* karaoke is a fundamental social activity. The Twins (played by Rhys and Llyr Ifans) in *Twin Town* are untrustworthy thieves, which perpetuate stereotypes from the 12th century. Marc Evans concludes that he believes that the argument involving Welsh national identity that occurred during the transitional period in these films was now over in the 21st century.

Woodward's '*The Desert and the Dream*': *Film in Wales since 2000*,⁴⁴ attempts to 'trace developments in film in Wales during the first decade of the new millennium'.⁴⁵ She declared that the films from the transitional period, '...in many respects, proved a false dawn'. However, Woodward's article uses the film *Patagonia*⁴⁶ as its primary point of discussion. However, since *Patagonia* is mostly a Welsh language film, it will therefore not be included in this study. Woodward's work makes no mention of films such as *Evil Aliens*,⁴⁷ *The Dark*,⁴⁸ *The Baker*⁴⁹ and *Devil's Bridge*⁵⁰ even though these films were produced in the time period she is discussing.

The current research is original and can be considered as an advancement to the sum of knowledge on this subject, because no academic research has been published that discusses Welsh stereotypes post devolution. As a methodology practice-led research with film as the creative practice has not been used before to explore tropes and stereotypes associated with Welsh national identity at PhD level.

Practice-led research

According to Smith and Dean, practice or art as research is relatively new in academic circles.⁵¹ The problem that Heidegger⁵² suggested is that art or Practice-led research is like a 'shimmering veil'⁵³ and that all that can be viewed is the veil itself. In

⁴⁴ Kate Woodward, 'The Desert and the Dream': Film in Wales Since 2000,' *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, (Vol. 9:3, 2012), 419 - 435.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 422.

⁴⁶ *Patagonia*, (dir. Marc Evans, 2010).

⁴⁷ *Evil Aliens*, (dir. Jake West, 2005).

⁴⁸ *The Dark*, (dir. John Fawcett, 2005).

⁴⁹ *The Baker* (dir. Gareth Lewis, 2007).

⁵⁰ *Devil's Bridge* (dir. Chris Crow, 2010).

⁵¹ Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Practice-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh: UP, 2012), p. 2.

⁵² Heidegger, M., *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1977), p. 25.

⁵³ Ibid.

Dallow's work,⁵⁴ art in practice-led research could represent any of the arts, '... regardless of whether the specific instance of creative arts practice being investigated sits within or across the visual or fine arts, the performing arts and music, creative writing and media arts'.⁵⁵ Dallow continues that art, in some senses, goes against the traditionally recognized facets of research, as it moves forward by acquiring an understanding of the field it is researching as it progresses: 'The undertaking of creative practice usually means having to advance without a theory, or to go beyond theory, initially at least, to work beyond established practices and 'outside' of the disciplinary protocols'.⁵⁶ To this extent, insight is achieved through the act of practice. Practice-led research and research-led practice are problematic terms, because the identification of research as one or the other requires the identification of a starting point. Practice-led researchers have acquired skills and understanding of the practicalities involved in their research. This can be considered to be a level of research-led activity, before the initial practice-led activity has begun.

Filmmaking as practice-based/art-based research could involve studying the technicalities of how the camera works; e.g. how one can manipulate the iris in order to achieve the desired effect, and what camera angles are used to convey different emotions. Even a study of the techniques themselves would require secondary research into the uses of said techniques to produce the desired effect. These forms of study could be classified as research-based practice - in that investigation has been carried out in order to enable the practice side of the study. However, these basics can be considered as pre-knowledge of the field and are not viewed as research in the conventional sense. Practice-based/art-based research requires a level of theoretical knowledge to give insight into the field in which the practice element will be explored. Dallow suggests that this type of research is; 'a threshold between conscious thought and unconscious feeling, an opening onto a liminal space where rationality (theory) and irrationality (experience, emotion, art) mix in the individual creative *act* (practice)'.⁵⁷ McIntyre⁵⁸ states that the practice-based researcher is similar to a scientific researcher:

⁵⁴ Peter Dallow, 'Representing creativeness: practice-based approaches to research in creative arts,' *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* (Vol. 2:1, 2003, 49-66).

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 50.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

⁵⁷ Peter Dallow, 'Representing creativeness: practice-based approaches to research in creative arts,' *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* (Vol. 2:1, 2003, 49-66), p. 50.

⁵⁸ Philip McIntyre, 'Creative Practice as Research: 'Testing Out' the Systems Model of Creativity through Practitioner Based Enquiry,' *Speculation and Innovation: applying practice led research in the Creative Industries* (Vol. 27, 2001).

*... one could argue that if there is little distinction to be made between science as a creative process and art as a creative process, as is assumed by many of those investigating creativity [...] then the possibility exists that a similar set of ontological and methodological layers may be built upon from within art practice.*⁵⁹

The practice-based researcher has undergone some level of research in order to reach the level at which the research can be carried out. Csikszentmihalyi agrees:

*For creativity to occur, a set of rules and practices must be transmitted from the domain to the individual. The individual must then produce a novel variation in the content of the domain. The variation then must be selected by the field for inclusion in the domain.*⁶⁰

Csikszentmihalyi here uses domain ‘... in this model [as] a structured knowledge system the person must access’.⁶¹ The field is the area which is ‘constituted by all those who can affect the structure of the domain’.⁶² He states that the practice-based researcher does not work in a vacuum. There is a domain which needs to be accessed. The act of researching a concept through artistic practices, informed by concepts, involves the artistic act itself being analysed as a piece of research: ‘an idea of creativity that incorporates them within an interactive system with circular causality which can be studied by investigating moments within it’.⁶³ The problem confronting the researcher occurs when presenting results derived from this methodology and how to go about it. Harper⁶⁴ suggests that practice-based research is primarily achieved after the creation of the practice element, because ‘post-event’ analysis (that is, analysis after the ‘event’ of creating) can produce knowledge about the artefacts produced. It does not easily produce knowledge about the practices themselves’.⁶⁵ This process is called ‘Practitioner Based Enquiry’ or PBE for short; it requires the researcher to be self-reflective or self-reflexive. However, these terms differ. A self-reflexive approach requires the practitioner to research or examine his own creative

⁵⁹ Philip McIntyre, ‘Creative Practice as Research: ‘Testing Out’ the Systems Model of Creativity through Practitioner Based Enquiry,’ *Speculation and Innovation: applying practice led research in the Creative Industries* (Vol. 27, 2001), p. 2

⁶⁰ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (ed. Robert Steinberg), *Handbook of Creativity*, (Cambridge: UP, 1999), p. 315.

⁶¹ Philip McIntyre, ‘Creative Practice as Research: ‘Testing Out’ the Systems Model of Creativity through Practitioner Based Enquiry,’ *Speculation and Innovation: applying practice led research in the Creative Industries* (Vol. 27, 2001), p. 3.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ G. Harper, ‘The future of humanities’, *Campus Review* (Vol. 19:17, 2009), 16–17.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 47.

process. Conversely, a self-reflective approach involves: ‘practice [as] a process of learning and developing through examining our own practice, opening our practice to scrutiny by others, and studying texts from the wider sphere’.⁶⁶

The subject of the current research is the uses of Welsh tropes or stereotypes. As such, scrutiny of the practice-based research (the film *Humanoids from Wales*) by others is not included or required as part of the study. *Humanoids from Wales* is not discussed as a piece of work in a professional sense, because it is a work which has been created to inform the researcher and advance knowledge in the field. This is an issue which practice-based researchers or practitioners have faced. While Dallow⁶⁷ asks what would differentiate an industry professional from a practice-based researcher, the conclusion that Parr draws concerns the ‘intent’ behind the creative process.⁶⁸ Innovative work, in the professional world of film, even if it leads to ‘breakthroughs in the field of practice’,⁶⁹ is primarily for the creation of a product and not to advance knowledge; this is the intent of these ‘professional’ innovations. What differentiates practice research from either professional practice or academic theoretical work is the intent behind the research and the process which the artist/researcher has undertaken. According to Candy there are two kinds of practice-orientated research:⁷⁰ Practice-led research and practice-based research. Practice-led research documents the actual practice itself, rather than choosing a specific field in which to research. Nevertheless, practice-based research does require an element of practice to be carried out. Candy says that ‘claims of originality and contribution to knowledge may be demonstrated through creative outcomes in the form of designs, music, digital media, performances and exhibitions’. Also:

[w]hilst the significance and context of the claims are described in words, a full understanding can only be obtained with direct reference to those outcomes. A practice-based PhD is distinguishable from a conventional PhD because creative outcomes from the research process may be included in the submission for examination and the claim for an original

⁶⁶ Gillie Bolton, *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development* (London: Sage Publications, 2010), p. 4.

⁶⁷ Peter Dallow, ‘Representing creativeness: practice-based approaches to research in creative arts,’ *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* (Vol. 2:1, March 2003), p. 53.

⁶⁸ G. Parr (ref. Peter Dallow), ‘Representing creativeness: practice-based approaches to research in creative arts,’ *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* (Vol. 2:1, March 2003).

⁶⁹ Peter Dallow, ‘Representing creativeness: practice-based approaches to research in creative arts,’ *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* (Vol. 2:1, March 2003), p. 53.

⁷⁰ Linda Candy. ‘Practice-based research: A guide.’ *CCS Report 1* (2006), p. 2.

*contribution to the field are held to be demonstrated through the original creative work.*⁷¹

Research on Welsh stereotypes in film should be practice-based; indeed, Tomasulo would support that film theory without practical film knowledge is flawed:

*Teaching filmmaking without being cognizant of fundamental cinematic theories de-means film craft to the mere level of an amateur workshop. And the opposite: studying film history and theory without a corresponding experience in the elemental aspects of filmmaking leaves theoretical research without a solid basis, forcing students to plunge into abstraction.*⁷²

This background research was carried out for two reasons; firstly to understand the theoretical ideas surrounding the practice-based methodology and secondly to give a deeper understanding of the methodologies available.

Serendipity

The term serendipity was ‘coined by Horace Walpole in 1754 with reference to the Three Princes of Serendip who were always making discoveries by accident.’⁷³ More recently it has been defined by Foster & Ellis as ‘making discoveries by accident and sagacity, of things which one is not on quest of’.⁷⁴ However, the meaning of the term has changed somewhat since it’s inception. The term is difficult to define as ‘the goalposts are always moving; different people have different understandings of serendipity and these understandings are likely to change and perhaps evolve as they are challenged by new (and different) experiences.’⁷⁵ Dervin & Foreman-Wernet discuss ideas of how humans make sense of unfamiliar information specifically how the individual must adapt in order to extract meaning from the unfamiliar.⁷⁶ Fundamentally adaptation is key in both Micro Budget Filmmaking as well as

⁷¹ Linda Candy. ‘Practice-based research: A guide.’ *CCS Report 1* (2006), p. 3.

⁷² Frank P. Tomasulo "Theory to practice: integrating cinema theory and film production." *Cinema Journal* (Vol. 36:3, 1997), 113-117 p. 116.

⁷³ Allen Edward Foster, and David Ellis. "Serendipity and its study." *Journal of Documentation* 70.6 (2014): 1015-1038 p. 1.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Stephann Makri, , and Ann Blandford. "Coming across information serendipitously—part 1: a process model." *Journal of Documentation* 68.5 (2012): 684-705 p. 2.

⁷⁶ Brenda Dervin, Lois Foreman-Wernet, and Eric Lauterbach. *Sense-making methodology reader: Selected writings of Brenda Dervin*. Hampton Pr, 2003.

serendipitous research, as both rely on flexible and adaptive practitioners. It is important that researchers are aware of the theory of serendipity, as a major element of Lawley and Tompkin's model requires practitioners to 'recognize potential'⁷⁷ from 'unexpected events'⁷⁸ and eventually 'seizing the moment'.⁷⁹ It is therefore important that serendipity is correctly defined. McCay-Peel states that when serendipity is discussed in general terms, it is a term used to describe unintentional discoveries:

When serendipity makes an explicit appearance in general information models it is in the form of serendipity-related constructs such as information encountering (IE) (Erdelez, 2005), passive search (Wilson, 1999), or incidental information acquisition (IIA) (Heinström, 2006) in which something—a hyperlink, a miss shelved book—leads an individual to diverge from an intended path.⁸⁰

Describing this form of serendipity as pseudo-serendipity refers to 'finding something that was sought in an unexpected manner, not just finding something unsought.'⁸¹

However, McCay-Peel believes; 'no factor [...] is more strongly associated with serendipity than the "prepared mind"'.⁸² This is constant in a number of serendipitous models,⁸³⁸⁴ and is fundamentally the importance of the background research.

Carrying out any kind of practical filmmaking work has been preceded by some kind of background research, as the amount of pre-knowledge required to carry out the task of filming an event requires preparation. Apart from fundamentals such as charging batteries and setting the correct white balance, knowing what one should film requires pre-knowledge. Without this research, filming would be the equivalent of running in to a forest with a camera and making a documentary about tall buildings.

Serendipitous research requires research to facilitate discovery in practice-led research. Discoveries can be found when events coincide with information gathered

⁷⁷ J. Lawley, and Tompkins, P. (2008) Maximising serendipity, p. the art of recognising and fostering potential, www.nlpconference.co.uk/

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Lori McCay-Peet, and Elaine G. Toms. "Investigating serendipity: How it unfolds and what may influence it." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 66.7 (2015): 1463-1476 p. 2.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid, p.3.

⁸³ J. Lawley, and Tompkins, P. (2008) Maximising serendipity, p. the art of recognising and fostering potential, www.nlpconference.co.uk/

⁸⁴ Stephann Makri, , and Ann Blandford. "Coming across information serendipitously—part 1: a process model." *Journal of Documentation* 68.5 (2012): 684-705.

⁸⁵ Allen Edward Foster, and David Ellis. "Serendipity and its study." *Journal of Documentation* 70.6 (2014): 1015-1038.

before said event. McCay-Peel state that; ‘four key factors appeared to facilitate the CONNECTION element of serendipity: (a) *Openness*, (b) *Prepared mind*, (c) *Ability to make connections*, and (d) *Enables connections*.’⁸⁶ The previous sections within this chapter can be viewed as the information required in order for serendipitous research to be carried out. From the outset of this thesis, the fundamental goal was to produce a feature film that juxtaposed fictitious and realistic depictions of Welsh characters. It was important to this research that the likelihood of serendipitous discoveries occurred. Therefore, the overall, goal was set and the plan was put into place, yet the details of what would be discovered was still undiscovered:

‘General information needs, seeking, and use models are characterized by their often-purposeful frameworks. Although serendipity is not immediately evident in these goal-outcome information models, they often describe parts of the experience.’⁸⁷

Therefore as much information as possible needed to be gathered regarding the representation of Welsh on film from visual, literature and a couple of instances, gaming.

From this base research a vast mental archive was procured that allowed potential discoveries to be identified. It is important to note that the playground by which the research is carried out facilitates the researcher, creating ‘environments that are *Trigger-rich* allow individuals to brush up against information and ideas they may not have otherwise encountered that have the potential to spark serendipity.’⁸⁸ McCay-Peel uses the word trigger as an identifier of undiscovered ideas, therefore the creation of ‘trigger-rich’ environments is essential for the discovery of new information. The documentary and B-Movie genres were chosen for numerous reasons, however, one of the main reasons was due to my own personal, as well as academic experience with both types of filmmaking. Both these genres not only complimented each other in the proposed fiction and fact dichotomy, but also facilitated the researches’ aim to analyze both genres and allowed for fertile environment for serendipitous events. It will be shown in the following chapter how both genres rely on the filmmaker’s spontaneity and flexibility in allowing the free

⁸⁶ Lori McCay-Peel, and Elaine G. Toms. "Investigating serendipity: How it unfolds and what may influence it." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 66.7 (2015): 1463-1476 p. 10.

⁸⁷ Lori McCay-Peel, and Elaine G. Toms. "Investigating serendipity: How it unfolds and what may influence it." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 66.7 (2015): 1463-1476 p. 2.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 9.

thought to occur, as both types of filmmaking relies heavily on last minute decision making and on the hoof changes (this will be discussed deeper in the following chapters). However, both documentary and B-movies require research, as a lack of research in both fields would weaken the potential triggers to identify discovery; ‘The prepared mind primes individuals to recognize potential triggers, helps them make connections, and follow up on them. Without the prepared mind there would be no connections to make.’⁸⁹ The most potent way for this to occur would be to find Welsh documentaries and B-Movies that include Welsh characters. Therefore, it should be understood that the background research for serendipity includes films, text and media that might never directly or indirectly be of use in this thesis. This should not be mistaken with unfocused direction, rather a trial by error model of discovery. After all this research is gathered, the practice element of the thesis is the serendipitous playground, in which serendipitous discoveries occur. However, the researcher needs to be prepared for the information to be discovered, meaning that self-reflection is required in order to identify the discovery.

Documentary and Mockumentary

Documentary is a tool that will be used in this research on the Welsh representation on film. However, as the documentary being presented in *Humanoids From Wales* is in fact a mockumentary, there is a required understanding of the documentary modes needed to achieve this goal. The first instance of research into this field is in David Bordwell and Kirsten Thompson’s *Film Art* which discusses the forms of documentary from Categorical, Rhetorical and Abstract.⁹⁰ Roscoe and Hight believe that much of the documentary landscape... ‘range and diversity of documentary texts and practices, coupled with the contradictions and tensions in the underlining factual discourse, does not make documentary an easy concept to pin down and define’.⁹¹ As such, they rely on Nichols definition of the term; he states that there are six modes of documentary; expository, observational, interactive, reflexive, performative and

⁸⁹ Lori McCay-Peet, and Elaine G. Toms. "Investigating serendipity: How it unfolds and what may influence it." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 66.7 (2015): 1463-1476, p.12.

⁹⁰ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p. 134 -141.

⁹¹ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 14.

poetic.⁹² This background research will work towards giving some insight into what can be done in order for a film to be identified as a documentary. However, this research's solo purpose is to inform the second part of the documentary research, specifically research on mockumentary or fake documentary.

The term mockumentary (much like documentary) has its critics. In the book *F is for Phony*, the editors insist on using the term 'fake documentary' as they feel that the term mockumentary prevents the film from doing anything other than mock.⁹³ While within the same book Alisa Lebow believes that the term mockumentary is merely a label and that the mockumentary mode can in fact 'copy, mimic, gimmick, play with, scorn, ridicule, invert, reverse, repeat, ironize, satirize, affirm, subvert, pervert, convert, translate, and exceed documentary style'.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Roscoe and Hight's *Faking it* follows a similar narrative in discussing, firstly, the modes of documentary suggested by Nichols, advancing the argument to discussing mockumentary as a challenge to an audience's understanding of documentary.⁹⁵ In turn this research was carried out in order to classify *Humanoids From Wales* as Fake Documentary, Mockumentary, Performative, or reflexive.

B-Movies

The term B-Movie post 1940s is a debatable term, therefore the literature review will begin with discussing the term from its creation to its economical demise in 1943. Following on from there, theory regarding trashy, camp, bad film, cheesy and genre films will be discussed. The term B-Movie originates in the wake of the great depression. Cinemas received a dramatic slump in attendance, as a result the studio system offered the general audience the incentive that they would receive two films for the price of one: the A-Movie and the B-Movie. The A-Movie would contain all the named stars and have higher production value; the B-Movie meanwhile was produced quickly, cheaply and with no name-recognized actors. This is the original, economic definition of the term put forth by Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn,⁹⁶ as

⁹² Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 198.

⁹³ Juhasz, Alexandra, and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth's Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 7.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 223.

⁹⁵ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 188.

⁹⁶ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975).

well as Blair Davis⁹⁷ and Don Miller.⁹⁸ The term became problematic in the wake of the anti trust laws as studios stopped making A and B movies. However, the term B-Movie is still used when describing films from this period to present day; the most common theme in the films is that they were genre films, mainly horror or sci-fi. Through John Fiske's cultural economy the term has evolved, meaning that it has cultural significance.⁹⁹ Davis suggested that Fiske's model means that the B-Movie can be analysed using 'camp theory' and 'trash aesthetics'.¹⁰⁰ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn do carry on from the 40s by discussing specific case studies in which B-Movie directors achieved success after the anti trust laws.¹⁰¹ From the 40s, the B-Movie became synonymous with lower-quality sci-fi and horror films, specifically films that had a lower production value than bigger budgeted films.

The primary focus of this study discusses the type of B-Movies that are described by Barry Atkinson as 'Atomic Age Cinema.'¹⁰² Speaking specifically, these were films that reflected America's fear of nuclear science and UFOs in the 50s and onward. There is much work on B-Movies from different perspectives, from Thomas Doherty's *Teenagers and Teenpics: The Juvenilization of American Movies in the 1950s*,¹⁰³ to *Horror at the Drive-In: Essays in Popular American* by Gary D. Rhodes.¹⁰⁴

However, this is primarily a study on Welsh stereotypes, and as such no works have been done regarding the Welsh in B-Movies: therefore, this research was predominantly carried out in order to inform the conventions and practices undertaken by B-Movie film makers, rather than as a theoretic critique of the genre.

⁹⁷ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016].

⁹⁸ Don Miller, "B" Movies (New York: Ballantine, 1988).

⁹⁹ John Fiske, 'Understanding pop culture.' Reading the Popular (Vol. 1-13, 1989).

¹⁰⁰ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁰¹ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975).

¹⁰² Barry Atkinson, *Atomic Age Cinema: The Offbeat, the Classic and the Obscure* (Parkville: Midnight Marquee Press, 2014).

¹⁰³ Thomas Doherty and Thomas Patrick Doherty. *Teenagers and teenpics: Juvenilization of American movies* (Temple: UP, 2010).

¹⁰⁴ Gregory Albert Waller, *American horrors: essays on the modern American horror film* (Illinois: UP, 1987).

Micro Budget Filmmaking

The literature for micro budget filmmaking is a problematic field, as filmmaking on no-budget relies heavily on the resourcefulness of the filmmaker. *The Guerilla Film Makers Handbook*¹⁰⁵ is a useful tool that discusses case studies of low-budget filmmakers who have achieved the goal of being a professional filmmaker as well as detailed breakdowns of industry standard terms and equipment; terms such as prosthetics, pyrotechnics and animatronics, and equipment like dolly, track and jib. However, the majority of the equipment is often out of reach due to budgetary restrictions. The book also discusses camera techniques; such as the purpose behind wide and long lenses and how/why one should use a narrow or wide depth of field. This is a good basis, yet much of the information is out of reach without financial support. Therefore, starting one's career with zero financial support offers much more effective learning material for a prospective filmmaker.

The two other main sources of information that are extremely informative are the website *No Film School*¹⁰⁶ and Robert Rodriguez' book *Rebel Without a Crew*.¹⁰⁷ The *No Film School* website gives a detailed breakdown on nearly anything an aspiring filmmaker might need. This is in the form of shorthand descriptions or video explanations. They cover the theory behind filmmaking as well as ways in which filmmakers can use everyday items to replicate expensive film equipment, such as using a wheelchair or skateboard to replicate a tracking shot. Meanwhile, Robert Rodriguez is one of the founders of modern day micro-budget filmmaking. *Rebel Without a Crew* not only gives insight on what is required to be a filmmaker but it also demystifies the snobbery regarding lower budget films; 'Make a movie that Hollywood could never make no matter how much money they have'.¹⁰⁸ A book in a similar vein is *The Evil Dead Companion* which is extremely similar to Rodríguez' book, but from a different period. *The Evil Dead Companion*¹⁰⁹ discusses the backgrounds of the makers behind *The Evil Dead*, specifically how they made a short

¹⁰⁵ Chris Jones and Genevieve Jolliffe, *The Guerilla filmmakers handbook* (London: A&C Black, 2006).

¹⁰⁶ *Filmmaking Guide*: <<http://nofilmschool.com/>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁰⁷ Robert Rodriguez, *Rebel without a Crew* (London: Faber & Faber, 1996).

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 203.

¹⁰⁹ Bill Warren, *The Evil Dead Companion* (London: Macmillan, 2001).

film, *Within the Woods*,¹¹⁰ as a showreel short of what they planned to do as their feature. From there it explains how the filmmakers developed new filming techniques due in part to their lack of budget. This is followed by a few micro-budget success stories with Kevin Smith's *Silent Bob Speaks*¹¹¹. The main difference between the three books is that Raimi and Rodriguez are primarily concerned with pushing the boundaries technically while still telling a compelling story, while Kevin Smith relies on witty dialogue to carry the films. The three approaches are good insights regarding the idea that equipment and budgetary shortfalls matter very little. However, these are cases of filmmakers who started from a similar socio-economic situation to most prospecting filmmakers.

Books that are also insightful and useful aids are *My First Movie*¹¹² and *The Cinema of George A. Romero*.¹¹³ *My First Movie* is structured as twenty interviews with professional filmmakers such as The Coen Brothers, Oliver Stone and Ken Loach; however, the book is concerned with experiences and is less descriptive in regard to the grassroots filmmaking process. *The Cinema of George A. Romero* similarly discusses the experience of making *Night of the Living Dead* rather than being a detail technical breakdown of the film's making. However, as filmmaking is a medium that changes quickly in regard to technical equipment much of Romero's filmmaking equipment would be either too expensive or much cheaper: more aesthetically pleasing equipment might be available in modern times. This is primarily the main source of information for micro-budget filmmaking, as a 'how to' book would be extremely problematic. Since all potential micro-budget filmmakers start from different locations with different abilities and resources: insight is required of how a film can be made by cutting corners rather than what is required. Therefore, case studies of professional filmmakers' micro-budget beginnings are more beneficial than a book that outlines a rigid set of instructions.

¹¹⁰ *Within the Woods* (dir. Sam Raimi, 1978).

¹¹¹ Kevin Smith, *Silent Bob Speaks: The Collected Writings of Kevin Smith* (London: Miramax Books, 2005).

¹¹² Stephen Lowenstein (ed.), *My first movie: twenty celebrated directors talk about their first film*. (New York: Pantheon, 2000).

¹¹³ Tony Williams, *The Cinema of George A. Romero: Knight of the Living Dead* (Columbia: UP, 2015).

3. PLANNING

There are three sections in this planning chapter. The first section, places the argument, contextualising why this thesis is timely and required. The second section outlines the specific philosophical theories that will be discussed within the context of this research. Followed by case studies on Micro Budget Filmmaking specifically how this type of filmmaking fits well with both Documentary and B-Movie filmmaking. More specifically, how Micro Budget filmmaking relies on creativity and an element of adaptability, which facilitates the researcher with the prepared mind a space or playground to allow serendipitous discoveries. The following chapter will further explain how Documentary and B-Movies relate to the overall thesis question. The first section

Welsh Representation on Film: Conceptualizing the Argument

The main purpose of this section is twofold, and it is therefore structured in such a manner. The first half of this section researches the meaning of national identity, specifically: what are the ideas that surround the classification of nationhood. Following on from this is a brief discussion on how a national identity is created or informed; in a context of internal forces as well as external. This process starts by discussing historical examples of the Welsh tropes, that have existed in recent centuries, progressing to the specific stereotypes that can be seen regarding the Welsh on film. This will transition to the second part of this section, that will extend what was discussed in the **Literature Review** and contextualize the argument for this thesis; where it specifically belongs in regard to previous studies of Welsh stereotypes in film. Then we will discuss stereotypes that can be seen in films that pre-date and follow the devolution vote in Wales. This is done in order to showcase two specific points, a) that devolution affected the representation of the Welsh in film very little, and b) to place this research in the context of the representation of Welsh in film.

A ‘nation’ according to Anderson, ‘is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.’¹¹⁴ Nations are imagined, due to the fact that ‘a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community

¹¹⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 2006), p. 6.

consider themselves to form a nation.’¹¹⁵ These communities (nations) in turn define themselves by the other, or conflicting, imagined communities;

*Culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with the nation or the state; this differentiates ‘us’ from ‘them,’ almost always with some degree of xenophobia. Culture in this sense is a source of identity, and a rather combative one at that.*¹¹⁶

Anderson expands on this, stating that, ‘those active in nationalist movements are usually those whose professions are concerned with the handling of language’¹¹⁷ in this instance, in terms of terminology creation, rather than Welsh or English. These imagined communities or nations, be it Wales, England or America all have national identities, formed both internally and externally.¹¹⁸ over the last century, Wales’ external national identity on film has been primarily created by the Hollywood film industry, followed by the English film industry.¹¹⁹

Raymond Williams asks... ‘Who Speaks for Wales. [...] Where is it now, this Wales, Where is the real identity? The real culture?’¹²⁰ Williams believes that if the Welsh language were to die out then... ‘with the language goes the literature, and with the literature a history, and with the history a culture’,¹²¹ Welsh culture or national identity are tied to the language. He continues by stating that the Welsh language was declined... ‘by the Industrial Revolution and its movements of people. It was also driven back by conscious repression, by penalty and contempt, and in a late phase by deliberate policy in the schools’.¹²² This conscious repression and contempt is further emphasized when studying the Welsh on film. There is extensive academic work studying ‘British cinema’, however, the majority of this work is predominantly by English films meaning that, ‘for most people the term ‘British’ remains synonymous with English’,¹²³ that ‘British Cinema’ up until recently has been a façade for ‘English Cinema’.¹²⁴ Williams states that the Welsh, ‘have been

¹¹⁵ Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965), p. 169.

¹¹⁶ Luisa Del Giudice and Gerald Porter (eds.), *Imagined States: Nationalism, Utopia, and Longing in Oral Cultures* (Utah: UP, 2001), p. 102.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Muzafer Sherif, *In common predicament: Social psychology of intergroup conflict and cooperation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966).

¹¹⁹ Tony Curtis, *Wales: The Imagine Nation* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986), p. 162.

¹²⁰ Raymond Williams and Daniel Williams (eds.), *Who Speaks for Wales?: Nation, Culture, Identity* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 3 - 5.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Steve Blandford, *Film, Drama and the Break-up of Britain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), p. 19.

¹²⁴ Steve Blandford, *Film, Drama and the Break-up of Britain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), p. 19.

defeated, colonized, penetrated, incorporated. Never finally, of course'.¹²⁵ National identity can be, 'seen as a never – ending 'narration' in which, in contemporary culture, the media play a crucial part'.¹²⁶¹²⁷ Woodward believes that: 'many English and American directors who have attempted to depict some aspect of Wales have, in fact, created what Edward Said would call an "Orientalized" view of Wales'.¹²⁸

Woodward here refers to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which applies to nations that have been 'othered' by a foreign group. *Postcolonial Wales* asks whether Wales can be classed as postcolonial (it is stated that 'postcolonial' can be used as a generic term for a subjugated country)¹²⁹ or Post-colonial (an actual ex-colony). It is understood in some academic circles that Wales could be classified as an English colony in the era between 1282 and 1400 and that Wales at this time displayed the characteristics of a colonized society.¹³⁰

*The English continued their work of building a network of castles with which to keep the Welsh subjugated; the Welsh had inferior status under the law and the English monopolized the higher offices of administration. English people were settled in Wales, especially in boroughs, and in places the indigenous population was exported.*¹³¹

This period can be classed as the 'first English Empire'.¹³² However, Aaron and Williams state that Wales cannot be compared to other colonies of the later British Empire, because 'Welsh people made money out of slavery: they were not slaves themselves'.¹³³ Therefore, it is assumed that Wales cannot be classed as 'post-colonial' and that the Welsh had a 'willing involvement' in the British Empire. This could be a thesis in itself and is not the intention of the present study. However, for the purposes of this thesis, it is worth noting that Aaron and Williams state that Wales can be classified as 'postcolonial'.

¹²⁵ Raymond Williams and Daniel Williams (eds.), *Who Speaks for Wales?: Nation, Culture, Identity* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 9

¹²⁶ Prys Gruffudd, 'Remaking Wales: Nation building and the geographical imagination, 1925 – 1950', *Political Geography* (Vol. 14:3, 1995), 219-239.

¹²⁷ Steve Blandford and Stephen Lacey. 'Screening Wales: Portrayal, Representation and Identity: A Case Study,' *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*, (Vol. 6:2, 2011), 1-12.

¹²⁸ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, Winter 2006), p. 54.

¹²⁹ Chris Williams (eds. Jane Aaron and Chris Williams), *Postcolonial Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p. 4.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 10.

The meaning of post colonialism, ‘has come to represent an increasingly indiscriminate attention to cultural differences and marginality of all kinds, whether a consequence of historical experience of colonialism or not’.¹³⁴ Aaron and Williams continue by asserting that Wales should, ‘do well [...] to avoid what Said [...] called “rhetoric of blame”’.¹³⁵ However, in the case of this research, blame is not the issue. The origin of specific stereotypes relating to Wales is a worthwhile study, because these still influence the attitudes and behaviour of outsiders towards people living in Wales today. Postcolonial research is therefore not necessarily associated with previously colonized nations¹³⁶ and whether, therefore, Wales can be classified as post-colonial or not is irrelevant. Postcolonial theory can be legitimately applied to the study of the representation of Wales and its inhabitants.

Orientalism discusses the marginalisation of a group of people: it is the ‘othering’ of a specific people by making broad assumptions about their lifestyle or mannerisms.¹³⁷ In March 2001 Anne Robinson appeared on the BBC show *Room 101*.¹³⁸ The show’s name comes from the George Orwell book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (originally published in 1949). In the book, ‘Room 101’ contained ‘the worst thing in the world’.¹³⁹ The UK TV show asks celebrities to place their pet-hates in the fictional room. In Robinson’s case, she chose ‘The Welsh’, asking the show’s presenter, Paul Merton, ‘what are they for?’ Merton finally judged that he could not place the Welsh into the eponymous ‘Room 101’. Merton countered that her ‘main complaint is that they [“the Welsh”] speak Welsh’, to which she replied ‘it [to place the Welsh into Room 101 for speaking Welsh] seems very reasonable to me’. Jeremy Clarkson similarly criticized Wales during a cancelled talk show in which he ‘placed a 3-D map of Wales in a microwave and switched it on’.¹⁴⁰ He followed this with an article in *The Sun* tabloid that stated that the Welsh language should be abolished’.¹⁴¹ Xenophobia towards the Welsh is a very socially accepted form of racism, as neither

¹³⁴ Chris Williams (eds. Jane Aaron and Chris Williams), *Postcolonial Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p. 12.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹³⁷ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1978), p. 39.

¹³⁸ *Room 101* (BBC: Hat Trick Productions) 2001.

¹³⁹ George Orwell, *1984* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949).

¹⁴⁰ ‘Jeremy Clarkson under fire over call for Welsh language to be abolished’, *Wales Online* <<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/jeremy-clarkson-under-fire-over-1808877>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴¹ ‘Jeremy Clarkson under fire over call for Welsh language to be abolished’, *Wales Online* <<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/jeremy-clarkson-under-fire-over-1808877>> [Last accessed 2016].

Robinson nor Clarkson received disciplinary action from their employer. However, this racism is not exclusive to shock-jockey presenters, as Rhiannon Cosslett reported in *The Guardian* that ‘an English minister, when asked what the future held for Wales, replied “sheep and singing”’.¹⁴² The question was asked in the context of Welsh independence following Scotland’s ‘no’ vote in 2014. Just a quick search on Twitter can showcase how Welsh xenophobia is a socially accepted form of racism. Aaron Ramsey received numerous derogatory comments on the social media site when he tweeted in Welsh.¹⁴³ Continuing with Welsh international footballers, Gareth Bales’ decision to play for Wales rather than England cost him millions in sponsorship deals and mystified English media.¹⁴⁴ However, when Wales’ National Assembly financially supports its citizens with lower University tuition fees it is branded as a Welsh/English ‘apartheid’.¹⁴⁵ How can it be an ‘apartheid’ if Wales and England are two separate countries? Wales is synonymous with being the lesser, if England is Coke-Cola, Wales is Diet Coke.

During an episode of *QI* Stephen Fry asked Rob Brydon the question: ‘What is the difference between a Carlisle surprise, a reverse Canterbury pleasure and a sheep tied to a lamppost in Cardiff?’ Brydon responded: ‘Now this is another example of the institutionalized racism that is accepted when it’s directed towards the Welsh’.¹⁴⁶ It should be noted that the tone of the segment is designed in jest. However, the show has been scrutinised for its humour in the past, as they had joked about a man who survived both Fukushima as well as Hiroshima:

In the programme, when debating whether Yamaguchi was the luckiest or the unluckiest man on the planet, one panellist said: "Is the glass of water half full or half empty? Either way, it is definitely radioactive ... don't

¹⁴² Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett, ‘I’ve been a closet Welsh nationalist – but it’s time I came out’, *The Guardian Online*: <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/26/welsh-nationalist-wales-independence>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴³ Alicia Melville-Smith, ‘Welsh footballer Aaron Ramsey tweets in Welsh, is abused for not speaking English’, *The Independent Online*: <<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/welsh-footballer-aaron-ramsey-tweets-9463234>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴⁴ Tim Rich, ‘Gareth Bale would have ‘made millions’ if Real Madrid star had picked England over Wales, says agent Jonathan Barnett’, *The Independent Online*: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/international/gareth-bale-would-have-made-millions-if-real-madrid-star-had-picked-england-over-wales-says-agent-10492331.html>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴⁵ Graeme Paton and Rosa Prince, ‘Higher tuition fees but only if you are English’, *The Telegraph Online*: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/8171825/Higher-tuition-fees-but-only-if-you-are-English.html>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴⁶ *QI* (BBC: Talkback) 2003 – 2016.

*drink it." The same joke about an Auschwitz survivor and Zyklon B would never have passed.*¹⁴⁷

QI is a show that has arguably no malicious intent, rather it exemplifies the most intellectual jesting. However, this incident does suggest that there are certain subjects in comedy that are considered less taboo than others, and that a dislike of the 'Welsh is the last permitted bigotry'.¹⁴⁸

This is a prime example of the entire nation being dismissed as some sort of worthless and irritating 'other'. As Abrams would say, 'this erases all intra-group differences'. Although this was a comedy programme and it could be said that the Welsh reaction lacked the ability to take a joke, the simple fact is that references to Wales are never on the basis that it is a nation of individuals - the joking is relentless and repetitive and the attitudes may, as Jan Morris¹⁴⁹ would contend, have become normalized.

Conventionally, *Orientalism* as a term primarily regards the Western perception of the East. Edward Said states that: 'one could speak in Europe of an Oriental personality, an Oriental atmosphere, an oriental tale, Oriental despotism, or an Oriental mode of production, and be understood'.¹⁵⁰ Palfreyman¹⁵¹ describes *Orientalism* as 'the quintessential Othering'.¹⁵² Palfreyman continues by stating that:

*[the] term Othering refers to the ways in which the discourse of a particular group defines other groups in opposition to itself: an Us and Them view that constructs an identity for the Other and, implicitly, for the Self.*¹⁵³

'Othering' as a process attempts to distance one group from another by making judgments of the 'other' based on stereotypes, usually negative, creating 'a socially constructed (albeit influential) *representation* of a group of people'.¹⁵⁴ An 'Othered' or Oriental representation of a people will therefore be incorrect as it homogenizes a

¹⁴⁷ Clinton Godart, 'Japan is right to be angry at QI atom bomb joke': <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/08/japan-qi-atom-bomb-joke>> [Last accessed 2016].

¹⁴⁸ Morris, Jan, 'Mocking the Welsh is the last permitted bigotry,' *The Spectator*: <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/5200003/mocking-the-welsh-is-the-last-permitted-bigotry/>> [Last accessed 2014].

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin: London, 1978), p. 31.

¹⁵¹ David Palfreyman, 'Othering in an English Language Program', *TESOL Quarterly* (Vol. 39:2, 2005), 211 - 233.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 214.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 213.

¹⁵⁴ David Palfreyman, 'Othering in an English Language Program', *TESOL Quarterly* (Vol. 39:2, 2005), p. 214.

large group of people to enable those outside the group to ignore the detail of individuals and personalities. However, factual basis is irrelevant in ‘othering’ or Orientalism, as Said states:

*The phenomenon of Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient [...] despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a “real” Orient.*¹⁵⁵

If ‘othering’ is, in fact a process relying on stereotyping, and these stereotypes are predominantly negative, then a great deal of damage can be caused to humanity. An article by Morris¹⁵⁶ in *The Spectator* supports the fact that these negative stereotypes aid the ‘othering’ of the Welsh and led to socially ‘permitted bigotry’:

*In England it is open-season still for Welsh-baiting. The Welsh joke flourishes. The Welsh language is still an object of derision. Scoundrels still ‘welsh’ upon their creditors. [...] Who has not heard the English tourist complaining that the moment he and his family walked into a Welsh pub, ‘they all started jabbering in Welsh?’*¹⁵⁷

Said’s *Orientalism* states that the: ‘Orientals are inveterate liars, they are “lethargic and suspicious,”’ and ‘in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race.’¹⁵⁸ During the centuries pre-dating film, this ‘othering’ of Welsh characters are easily identifiable, according to Peter Lord’s *Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640 – 1860*¹⁵⁹ (his book provides an insight into visual representations of the Welsh predating film). The chapter *A view from the outside – Poor Taff, 1640 – 1740* gives an in-depth insight into some of the earliest instances of representations of the Welsh in print media. Images such as *The Pleasant History of Taffy’s Progress to London; with the Welshman’s Catechism*¹⁶⁰ gives one of the earliest representations of the Welsh

¹⁵⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin: London, 1978), p. 5.

¹⁵⁶ Morris, Jan, ‘Mocking the Welsh is the last permitted bigotry,’ *The Spectator*: <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/5200003/mocking-the-welsh-is-the-last-permitted-bigotry/>> [Last accessed 2014].

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin: London, 1978), p. 39.

¹⁵⁹ Peter Lord, *Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640 – 1860* (Aberystwyth: Planet, 1995).

¹⁶⁰ F. Thorn, *The Pleasant History of Taffy’s progress to London: with the Welshman’s Catechism* (London 1800).

archetype; *Taffy*. Taffy who would later inspire the nursery rhyme *Taffy was a Welshman*:

Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief;
Taffy came to my house and stole a leg of beef;
I went to Taffy's house and Taffy was in bed;
So I picked up the Gerry pot and hit him on the head.¹⁶¹

Further, Giraldus also wrote in *Descriptio Cambriae*¹⁶² in 1194 that the Welsh live 'by plunder, and disregard of the bonds of peace and friendship.'¹⁶³ This is an early example of a Welsh character being portrayed as untrustworthy.

Another early instance of a Welsh character being represented is in *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*¹⁶⁴ from 1547. It repeats the statements made by Giraldus, perpetuating the trope of the Welsh as thieves; 'And there be many of them the whyche be light fingered, & loueth a purse; but this matter lastly is reformed'.¹⁶⁵ Along with Welsh characters' penchant for thievery, Lord also believed that 'the predominant characteristics of the late eighteenth century Welsh person remained stupidity and poverty'.¹⁶⁶ The Welsh tropes are not solely seen as poor thieves that are intellectually challenged, Welsh characters are often portrayed as 'drunks'. Both *The Perfidious Welshman*¹⁶⁷ and *The Blue Books*¹⁶⁸ claim that drunkenness is an issue for Welsh characters: *The Blue Books* accounts 'drunkenness' as the reason for a child that attended school unwashed; 'that it was owing to the drunkenness of the parents that the child was in such a miserable state'.¹⁶⁹ However, the *Blue Books* also attributed a number of other Welsh stereotypes such as sexual promiscuity to their drunkenness: 'More often, however, it was accompanied in the accounts by other items from the roll-call of anti-social activities, such as fighting (I,

¹⁶¹ Opie, Iona, and Peter Opie (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (Oxford: UP, 1997).

¹⁶² Betty Radice, *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London: Penguin Classics, 1978).

¹⁶³ Edward D. Snyder, 'The Wild Irish: A Study of Some English Satires against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh', *Modern Philology* (Vol. 17:12, 1920), p. 153.

¹⁶⁴ Andrew Borde, *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (London: N.Trubner & Co., 1870).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 128.

¹⁶⁶ Peter Lord, *Words With Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640 – 1860* (Aberystwyth: Planet, 1995), p. 68.

¹⁶⁷ Arthur Tysilio Johnson, *The Perfidious Welsh* (London: Stanley Paul & Co, 1910).

¹⁶⁸ H.R. Vaughan Johnson, R.R.W. Lingen, Jellynger C. Symons, *Reports of the commissioners of enquiry into the state of education in Wales* (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1847).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 255.

350-1), 'sabbath-breaking, cursing and swearing' (I, 335), prostitution (I, 366), and 'illegitimacy and profanity' (III, App. 153)'.¹⁷⁰ *The Perfidious Welsh* shares this belief of the Welsh sexual deviant and suggested that incest is rife among the 'Welsh'.

¹⁷¹ However, there are numerous other examples of sexual promiscuity among the 'Welsh'. The *Blue Books* make reference to the loose morals of the Welsh:

*But there is one vice which is flagrant throughout North Wales, and remains unchecked by any instrument of civilization. It has obtained for so long a time as the peculiar vice of the principality, that its existence has almost ceased to be considered as an evil; and the custom of Wales is said to justify the barbarous practices which precede the rite of marriage.*¹⁷²

To summarize, Welsh characters are often stereotyped as having low intelligence, liars, sexually promiscuous, substance abusers and obsessed with music. One or more of these tropes or stereotypes can also be found in most films that portray Welsh characters throughout most of the twentieth century. The film *A Run For Your Money*¹⁷³ was seen as an attempt at utilizing the trope for comedic effect:

*Some English-based critics have sharpened their invective on the film, seeing it as a failed attempt by Ealing to 'wring some laughs from the Welsh way of life'; Terrance Pettigrew claimed it sent up the Welsh as timid, mindless yokels by presenting 'two likeable Welsh dimwits on a big city jamboree' [...] the film settles too easily at times for clichés and asinine comedy.*¹⁷⁴

The film *10 Rillington Place*¹⁷⁵ utilized the trope of a Welshman as intellectually challenged as he is described as 'primitive sort of creature, but nothing abnormal, medically speaking'.¹⁷⁶ The film is based on the true events of the wrongly incarcerated and executed Welshman Timothy Evans. The real murderer John Christie even convinces Evans take blame for the death of his wife by reminding him of perpetual untruths stating: 'who do you think they would believe Tim? Everyone

¹⁷⁰ Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books: Wales and Colonial Prejudice* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 147.

¹⁷¹ Arthur Tysilio Johnson, *The Perfidious Welsh* (London: Stanley Paul & Co, 1910).

¹⁷² H.R. Vaughan Johnson, R.R.W. Lingen, Jellynger C. Symons, *Reports of the commissioners of enquiry into the state of education in Wales* (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1847).

¹⁷³ *A Run For Your Money* (dir. Charles Frennd, 1949).

¹⁷⁴ David Berry, *Wales and Cinema: The First Hundred Years* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1994), p. 217 – 218.

¹⁷⁵ *10 Rillington Place* (dir. Richard Fleisher, 1971).

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

around here knows about the stories you come out with'. Evans retaliates; 'it's just storifying, everyone knows that'. The film, intentionally or not, inevitably identifies Evans' inability to tell the truth and his lack of intelligent communication skills as the predominant reasoning behind his incorrect incarceration and execution. Welsh characters are very often portrayed as substance abusers, from Richard Burton in *Candy*,¹⁷⁷ to the majority of the cast in the film *Grand Slam*,¹⁷⁸ to the Jackal and Hyde type character Morgan Femm (played by Boris Karloff) in *The Old Dark House*.¹⁷⁹ Sexual promiscuity is also rife in films that portray Welsh characters; Richard Burton plays a sexual deviant in both *Candy* as well as *Under Milk Wood*.¹⁸⁰

Finally, the only stereotype that can be considered positive is the Welsh penchant towards music. This stereotype allows characters to overcome racism in the film *Proud Valley*¹⁸¹ as a black person is allowed to participate in the village choir because he is an exceptional singer, proclaiming that 'aren't we all black down that pit',¹⁸² after which one of the English character states: 'These Welsh are daft about music'.¹⁸³ In the film *Zulu*,¹⁸⁴ the Welsh love of song battles the Zulu army metaphorically, using song before the two actually physically do battle. The film's final sequence displays the horrors of war with the triumphant soundtrack of the Welsh platoon echoing the lyrics of the song Men of Harlech, 'Welshmen will not yield'.¹⁸⁵ Finally, returning to *A Run For Your Money*¹⁸⁶ where music is a prominent theme used for comedic effect, where in the film England has 'music by license only?' to which the Welsh character quips: 'What a country!'¹⁸⁷

This research is important because it is quintessentially tied to the study of Welsh stereotypes or national identity. Stereotypes exist from repetition, 'the stereotype can be defined as a recurrent pattern'.¹⁸⁸ Therefore a part can be shown that displays representation of a people in a specific manner that has lasted over a hundred years. It has even been systematically incorporated into official government papers, in

¹⁷⁷ *Candy* (dir. Christian Marquand, 1968).

¹⁷⁸ *Grand Slam* (dir. John Hefin, 1978).

¹⁷⁹ *The Old Dark House* (dir. James Whale, 1932).

¹⁸⁰ *Under Milk Wood* (dir. Andrew Sinclair, 1972).

¹⁸¹ *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

¹⁸² *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Zulu* (dir. Cy Endfield, 1964).

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *A Run For Your Money* (dir. Charles Frend, 1949).

¹⁸⁷ *A Run For Your Money* (dir. Charles Frend, 1949)..

¹⁸⁸ Ruth Amossy and Therese Heidingsfeld. "Stereotypes and representation in fiction." *Poetics today* (Vol. 5.4 1984), 689-700, p. 1.

regard to the *Reports of the commissioners of enquiry into the state of education in Wales*.¹⁸⁹ Therefore to truly contextualise this argument an understanding of the stereotypes that were perpetuated pre devolution Wales is fundamental. Academics such as Woodward and film Makers such as Mark Evans believed that the mid 90s, post devolution and with an independent Wales, would be a time that allowed the expulsion of these long standing tropes.

Raymond Williams believed that: 'Real independence is a time of new and active creation: people sure enough of themselves to discard their baggage; knowing the past as past, as a shaping history, but with a new confident sense of the present and the future, where the decisive meanings and values will be made.'¹⁹⁰ In the late 90s some believed that this 'real independence' arrived in Wales. In 1997 following Labour's electoral win there was a referendum in Wales concerning whether Wales should devolve and gain some level of political independence from English rule. According to Jones and Scully,¹⁹¹ much of the campaign relied on the popularity of the newly elected Prime Minister Tony Blair. Slogans such as 'Tony Blair says Yes'¹⁹² were used to push the vote. Jones and Scully state that, in order to gain the 'Yes' vote, Labour and Plaid Cymru worked diligently together. Home rule was achieved by the narrowest of margins (6,721 votes). This was in stark contrast to the Scottish devolution vote that had been won by what Jones and Scully call a 'thumping' majority.¹⁹³ However narrow the margin, Wales gained a level of home rule. As a result, Woodward states, this was a new period in Welsh history that gave 'true democracy in Wales with the dawn of the Welsh Assembly Government'.¹⁹⁴ In the wake of this 'true democracy', Welsh musicians such as Manic Street Preachers, Catatonia, Stereophonics and Super Furry Animals displayed an air of confidence. This period was named 'Cool Cymru'. According to Woodward¹⁹⁵ there was a 'cultural shift' in Wales. Woodward continued by stating 'that (in Wales) the

¹⁸⁹ H.R. Vaughan Johnson, R.R.W. Lingen, Jellynger C. Symons, *Reports of the commissioners of enquiry into the state of education in Wales* (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1847).

¹⁹⁰ Raymond Williams and Daniel Williams (eds.), *Who Speaks for Wales?: Nation, Culture, Identity* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 9.

¹⁹¹ Richard Wyn Jones and Roger Sully, *Wales Says Yes: Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2012), p. 17.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Richard Wyn Jones and Roger Sully, *Wales Says Yes: Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2012), p. 17.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, 2006), p.57.

cinematic shackles of the past have been broken',¹⁹⁶ stating that films such as *Twin Town*, *Human Traffic* and *House of America* were a new dawn in the national filmic identity of Wales. That the Welsh filmic image has been shifting since the 1970s and this shift away from a romanticized vision accelerated at the end of the 20th century, this transitional period in Welsh film would 'reject and cast off Welsh filmic inheritance, in fact they satirize and distort some of the themes that are considered inherently Welsh'.¹⁹⁷ She continues by stating that films produced at the end of the 20th century deal with the notion of Welshness, Englishness and Britishness in Wales.¹⁹⁸

*Although these young directors returned to the old traditional Welsh themes and stereotypes of the past, they distorted, satirized and transformed them, and therefore, the influence and significance of Wales' cinematic past on these films is highly evident.*¹⁹⁹

This is an opinion that is shared by Ed Thomas, who states:

*The Old Wales is dead [...] The Wales of stereotype, leeks, daffodils, look-you-now-boyo rugby supporters singing Max Boyce songs in three-part harmony while phoning mam to tell her they'll be home for tea and Welsh cakes has gone.*²⁰⁰

However, Berry argues that the film *Twin Town* portrays the Welsh in a very negative manner and that it is 'riddled with negative attitudes towards the Welsh and their preoccupations'.²⁰¹ Marc Evans, the director of *House of America* believed that these films engaged in an: 'argument with the past, with the Wales in which we [Evans and people of his generation] grew up'.²⁰² Evans continues by stating that Welsh filmic identity changed in the mid-1990s, and that 'it seems to me now that Wales is getting on with life and is less prone to arguing with itself about what it should be'.²⁰³

Woodward conceded that her hope for a dramatic change, that: 'freed directors to create and to respond to the process of nation building in artistic ways',²⁰⁴ was

¹⁹⁶ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, 2006), p.63.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 192.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 52.

¹⁹⁹ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, Winter 2006), p. 53.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 53.

²⁰¹ Steve Blandford, *Film, Drama and the Break-up of Britain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007), p. 95.

²⁰² Ibid, p. 98.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Kate Woodward, 'Traditions and Transformations: Film in Wales during the 1990s,' *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* (Vol. 6:1, 2006), p. 63.

actually 'in many respects, proved a false dawn',²⁰⁵ There was no change in the representation of the Welsh on film.

The three most discussed films produced during this period, *House of America*, *Human Traffic* and *Twin Town*, all continued with the tradition of portraying Welsh characters with age old stereotypes. *House of America*'s main protagonists were poor, stole from the local shop, lied and had an incestuous relationship between brother and sister. *Human Traffic*'s Welsh characters all indulge in substance abuse, the main character's mother is a prostitute and all the characters are brought together by their love of music. Finally, *Twin Town*'s main protagonists are drug loving, car thieves and their sister works in a brothel. However, this image of Wales is not exclusive to these three films. The film *Notting Hill* included a token Welshman in the form of Rhys Ifans' Spike. Smyth and Norquay stated that, 'that image only served to reinforce images of the Welsh as voluble sexual obsessives'.²⁰⁶ The film *A Way of Life*²⁰⁷ was released in 2004 with the BBC stating that the film was 'a raw and immensely moving drama about life on the wrong side of the South Wales tracks. This is a hugely accomplished British movie that deserves to be seen'.²⁰⁸ However, the film perpetuated the stereotype of the Welsh as poor and sexually promiscuous, as the main character must resort to prostitution to make ends meet. The film *Evil Aliens* was released a year later in 2005 and maintained the status quo in the representation of the Welsh in post devolution Wales. The film portrays the Welsh characters with eerie similarity to the Welsh characters seen in the *Old Dark House* from 1932. The Welsh characters are portrayed as people with low intelligence and high sexual deviance.

The purpose of this section is to contextualise the argument of this thesis, firstly by asking, "what is national identity and how it can be formed?" This was done by discussing Wales' position as a postcolonial nation; in regard to culture as opposed to economically, supporting the idea that Wales' national identity does in fact show signs of post-colonialism. The national identity of Wales showcases evidence of writers orientalisising the Welsh by portraying them as sexually deviant, untrustworthy, unintelligent and poor. In turn these traits can be found in the portrayal of Welsh

²⁰⁵ Kate Woodward, "'The Desert and the Dream': Film in Wales Since 2000," *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, (Vol. 9:3, 2012), 419 - 435. p. 422.

²⁰⁶ Eoin Flannery, Glenda Norquay, and Gerry Smyth, "Across the Margins: Cultural Identity and Change in the Atlantic Archipelago" (2003): 304-306, p. 139.

²⁰⁷ *A Way of Life* (dir. Amma Asante, 2004).

²⁰⁸ Adrian Hennigan, BBC Film Review:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/films/2004/10/28/a_way_of_life_2004_review.shtml> [Last accessed 2016].

characters from very early sources right up to modern day interpretations. This is such a pressing issue that in September 2015 (in the midst of discussion on whether funding should be cut from the BBC and S4C) a letter was sent from Welsh MPs stating that... ‘The media landscape across the UK is dominated by a handful of large corporations who fail to adequately represent the UK population and, in particular, the communities and cultures that exist in Wales’.²⁰⁹

To conclude, this section showcased how negative tropes (such as Welsh characters being liars and thieves) that have existed since 1194 can be found in modern day films. That Wales as a nation or an imagined community is defined and spoken for by external forces. The devolution vote in Wales, as well as the ‘Cool Cymru’, have been proven to be a continuation rather than a change of direction in the representation of the Welsh national identity on film.

Philosophy

The goal of this section is to discuss the concepts and philosophy that were considered when planning the practice-based aspect of this thesis. Specifically, the conflict between representations versus reality, the relationship between fiction and reality is evermore important if external forces control the fiction. This juxtaposition between fiction and reality is problematic when one considers that the predominant fiction is created externally, and that an internal national identity is overpowered. In short, what this section will show is the philosophy of representation when presented against supposed reality.

Wales is a nation riddled with dualities; from Welsh speaking Welsh, to English speaking Welsh, North Wales to South Wales, industrial coal and slate to agricultural, to name a few. These dualities can also be expressed for the Wales seen on screen juxtaposed with the Wales of the real world. This brings to question the nature of representation and of reality. Cavell states that:

To my way of thinking the creation of film was as if meant for philosophy – meant to reorient everything philosophy has said about reality and its representation, about art and imitation, about greatness and

²⁰⁹ *Calls for media reforms to 'represent Welsh culture':* <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-34119881>> [Last accessed 2016].

*conventionality, about judgment and pleasure, about scepticism and transcendence, about language and expression.*²¹⁰

The practice element of this thesis took the above notion of film as a vehicle for philosophy as its principal focus. This is, mainly speaking, in regard to the philosophy of Plato's allegory of the cave. To briefly summarize Plato's Allegory of the cave, Plato stipulated that three prisoners had been bound from birth in a cave, facing a wall and on the wall shadow puppets were being projected by individuals standing behind a fence with a fire projecting their movements. The prisoners facing the wall were unable to turn and see the puppet masters or the fire projecting the shadows. The 'prisoners would hold that the shadows (of the manufactured objects) which they see moving upon the wall of the cave before them were the only realities.'²¹¹ In this way, film is similar to these shadows. Anderson states in *Shadow Philosophy* that in films:

*We see people things we recognize and understand. [...] things we are familiar with from everyday life. Not always, of course. Some things we've never seen, whether because they go beyond the reach of our own experience, or because they don't exist at all [...]. We can accept and understand such things as part of the cinematic experience - [...] if they appear and behave as we expect they would if they happened to exist. Yet we know they don't.*²¹²

Plato's allegory continues, if one of the prisoners was taken and shown the fire and the shadow puppetry, then was taken outside the cave, into the real world, then it would be painful to his eyes at first but over time he would adapt. Once the released prisoner would return to his fellow prisoners he would be seen as someone who has been damaged by the experience as his eyes would now struggle to adapt to the low cave lighting. As such, the cave prisoners would not believe testimony from the released prisoner that the shadows are fake and be weary of his testimony of the outside world. This allegory perfectly describes the nature of stereotyping and the nature of representation versus reality.

As such, this allegory inspired this research to divide the practice element of this thesis to reflect the dichotomy of representation of the Welsh. By dividing the

²¹⁰ Stanley Cavell, *Contesting tears: the Hollywood melodrama of the unknown woman* (Chicago: UP, 1996), p. xxi.

²¹¹ John Henry Wright, 'The origin of Plato's cave,' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* (Vol. 17, 1906), 131-142, p. 131.

²¹² Nathan Andersen, *Shadow Philosophy: Plato's Cave and Cinema* (Routledge, 2014), p. 1.

film into two specific parts, the Mockumentary and the B-Movie, it not only represents the duality of Wales but the separation of reality and fiction. It will be further explained in the chapters that justify each section why these specific types of film were chosen. However, to briefly summarize, mockumentary relies on the audience's understanding of the nature of documentary, that reality being the truth. Parallel to this, B-movies are films that present outlandish fakeries. Showcasing these two separate filming modes highlights the nature of reality versus fiction. This is in keeping with Andersen's views of film, where he states that 'what we see on screen is both like the real world and shapes how we see things outside of the screen. It offers more than just a copy of reality, since it offers ideals, in relation to which we measure realities and consider them deficient'.²¹³

Therefore, now that it has been established that film can be viewed as mere shadows, what shadows have been cast of the Welsh? In the previous chapter, much was discussed regarding the national identity of Wales and the specific stereotypes and tropes that exist. Welsh characters are portrayed as working class or an underclass. Films from the mining period always portrayed the Welsh as the workers rather than the employers, modern films such as *House of America*,²¹⁴ *Twin Town*²¹⁵ and *This is Life*²¹⁶ portrayed Welsh characters as unemployed. From the inside, Wales has perpetuated the concept of the hard working poor as 'Y Gwerin Bobl' or 'Gwerin'. This term has changed over the centuries from being a term that 'differentiate[ed] the mass of people from the gentry',²¹⁷ to describing the Welsh 'as a cultured people intent on gaining self-respect and respectability'.²¹⁸ The word does have its critics, as it suggest the idea of an idealized vision of Welshness; 'the cultural nationalist ideology of the gwerin, meaning the (Welsh-speaking and rural) Welsh people (or folk) serves to exclude migrants who are not Welsh speakers from notions of 'true' Welshness'.²¹⁹ Regardless of the term's usage as an insular or exclusionary term (that is a discussion for another thesis) the term gwerin specifically refers to Welsh people as common folk. The Welsh are portrayed by external forces, as well as internal ones, as 'Folk' or 'Gwerin', this is entirely language dependant, it does not

²¹³ Nathan Andersen, *Shadow Philosophy: Plato's Cave and Cinema* (Routledge, 2014), p. 32.

²¹⁴ *House of America* (dir. Marc Evans, 1997).

²¹⁵ *Twin Town* (dir. Kevin Allen, 1997).

²¹⁶ *A Way of Life* (dir. Amma Asante, 2004).

²¹⁷ John Davies, Nigel Jenkins, Menna Baines and Peredur I. Lynch (eds), *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 343.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 343 – 344.

²¹⁹ Jonathan Scourfield and Andrew Davies, "Children's accounts of Wales as racialized and inclusive." *Ethnicities* (Vol. 5:1, 2005), 83-107, p. 109.

seem any leap of logic to discuss folk culture in regard to the study of Welsh representations.

In the previous section (that established the context of the argument as well as discussed some of the predominant tropes), it was shown that Welsh characters are often shown as sexually deviant, substance abusers and as having low intelligence. The stereotypical nature of Welsh characters as both poor folk as well as the aforementioned tropes mirror's Bakhtin's philosophy regarding Carnival: 'His folk are blasphemous rather than adoring, cunning rather than intelligent; they are coarse, dirty, and rampantly physical, revelling in oceans of strong drink, poods of sausage, and endless coupling of bodies'.²²⁰ However, it is vitally important that one understands Bakhtin's carnival in order to understand the philosophical thought process behind the production of the practice-based element of this thesis. The purpose of this thesis is to research Welsh stereotypes through film, in turn challenging tropes and asks questions of the Welsh national image; this perfectly parallels the ideas regarding Bakhtin's carnival:

*For Bakhtin, carnival is a world of ambivalent festive laughter, which brings together oppositions, sublimates death and dispels the fear of death by bringing birth and death together. Laughter for the sake of laughter; mocking the present official political system, religious dogmas and authoritative figures; grotesque realism; Billingsgate language; degradation of high images; celebration of the lower bodily stratum; crowning and decrowning of the king; and masquerade are some distinguishing characteristics of the discourse of carnival constructed by Bakhtin. Bakhtinian carnival implies the ambiguity of life and a blurred borderline between actors and spectators.*²²¹

The film, much like carnival, asks questions with the intention to bring 'together oppositions'. This referencing to the stereotyping occurs both from the external as well as the internal, by 'mocking the present official political system'. However, specifics of how this is done will be discussed in detail later when discussing the film directly. This supports the decision to divide the film into two separate modes. Plato's cave shadows were described as a form of theatre, as actors would move

²²⁰ Mikel Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Indiana: UP, 1984), p. xix.

²²¹ Gulnara Karimova, 'Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnavalesque Analysis of Popular Culture: Jackass, South Park, and 'Everyday' Culture,' *Studies in Popular Culture – Popular Culture Association in the South* (Vol. 33:1, 2010).

objects in order to project moving objects onto the cave walls. Therefore, the B-Movie should be viewed as carnival and the mockumentary reality. However, as the film is heavily influenced by carnival, it supports the decision to make the second part of the film a mockumentary as it ‘implies the ambiguity of life and a blurred borderline between actors and spectators’.²²²

To conclude, the philosophical ideas in regard to the practice element of this thesis are complicated, the reason for dividing the film into the B-Movie and the Mockumentary is because this replicates fiction and reality. However, by making a Mockumentary rather than an attempt at really making a documentary, it makes it clear that the B-Movie is a shadow on a cave wall while prompting the question, but how can the reality outside the cave be trusted? What if outside the cave is just another shadow being projected on a larger cave wall? By drawing parallels between Bakhtin’s carnival, making the mockumentary as opposed to a documentary, it makes it clear that representation is merely perspective and any representations are merely interpretations of reality. Doing this gives the film:

*... the right not to understand, the right to confuse, to tease, to hyperbolize life; the right to parody others while talking, the right not to be taken literally, not ‘to be oneself’; the right to live a life in the chronotope of the entr’acte, the chronotope of theatrical space, the right to act life as a comedy and to treat others as actors, the right to rip off masks, the right to rage at others with a primeval (almost cultic) rage.*²²³

The film questions Welsh stereotypes and national identity, not by suggesting their inaccuracies or suggesting accurate portrayals, only as the opportunity to evaluate perceptions of representation.

Micro Budget Filmmaking

This section uses case studies and theoretical works to discuss Micro Budget Filmmaking. This will be done by using a number of case studies and their works, primarily Sam Raimi/*Evil Dead*, Kevin Smith/*Clerks* and Robert Rodriguez/*El Mariachi*. However, films such as *Blair Witch Project*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*

²²² Gulnara Karimova, ‘Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnavalesque Analysis of Popular Culture: Jackass, South Park, and ‘Everyday’ Culture,’ *Studies in Popular Culture – Popular Culture Association in the South* (Vol. 33:1, 2010), p 38.

²²³ Mikhail Bakhtin (trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. Michael Holquist), ‘Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,’ in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 163.

and *Reservoir Dogs* will also be discussed. The main purpose of this section is to showcase a Literature Review of sorts, that discusses the variability and lack of a linear process that exists in micro budget filmmaking. Each case study showcases a variety of starting points. However, what this section does showcase is the key principals in this kind of filmmaking, mainly one's creativity and resourcefulness.

Robert Rodriguez states that 'the first lesson in filmmaking school of thought is that it's not your wallet that makes the movie, no matter what they tell you in school or Hollywood. [...] The idea is to tap yourself creatively'.²²⁴ He continues by stating that 'the biggest mistake you can make is trying to make a low-budget movie using techniques of the big budget movie'.²²⁵ He finishes this thought; 'Question everything, make your own rule book and invent your own methods'. Rodriguez took this mindset and used creative ways to get around renting expensive equipment; in *El Mariachi* he used a wheel chair as a substitute for a camera dolly. Bruce Campbell echoes Rodriguez mantra while describing Sam Raimi; 'the number one rule of the B jungle is "When in doubt – make it up as you go along."'²²⁶ Referring to the invention of Raimi's version of a steady cam, the 'shaky cam', as well as his replacement dolly, 'vas-o-cam'.²²⁷ Creativity is essential in making a micro budget film. However, creativity in concept should not overshadow practical possibilities. Kevin Smith based *Clerks* in a convenient store because he worked there and was allowed to film there. Robert Rodriguez merely had access to a camera and 'the guy with the guitar case full of guns'.²²⁸ It should be noted that Rodriguez included the school bus, bar, and hotel before scripting the film, stating that 'we knew these things were available to us beforehand so that's why they are specified in the script'.²²⁹

The key to micro budget filmmaking is the ability to be resourceful when making the film. However, it is important to use restrictions to one's advantage. In Rodriguez' case he used the lack of a good tripod to his advantage by filming the film *El Mariachi* mostly hand held, which in turn was praised by critics: 'Rodriguez shoots this story in a lively visual style that brings a lot of energy even to routine shots.'²³⁰ This is essentially one of the reasons why it was decided that *Humanoids From Wales*

²²⁴ Robert Rodriguez, *Rebel without a Crew* (London: Faber & Faber, 1996), p. 198.

²²⁵ Ibid, p. 201 – 202.

²²⁶ Bruce Campbell, *If Chins Could Kill: Confessions of a B Movie Actor* (London: Macmillan, 2002), p. 103 – 104.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Robert Rodriguez, *Rebel without a Crew* (London: Faber & Faber, 1996), p. 212.

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 211.

²³⁰ El Mariachi Film Review, *Roger Ebert Film Review*: <<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/el-mariachi-1993>> [Last accessed 2016].

would be both a documentary and a B-Movie. The in-depth rationale will be given in the subsequent chapters. However, briefly, filming and editing documentary is currently my profession and has been for a number of years, - I therefore understand the medium from a practitioner standpoint. The B-Movie meanwhile, is synonymous with poorly made sets, bad acting and poor scripting. Since I have no access to real, professionally-made sets, to experienced actors or have much experience in script writing, the B-Movie aesthetic suits my skill set as well as my resources while perfectly satirizing Welsh stereotypes.

What this section aimed to show was that filmmakers come from an array of different backgrounds and possess different resources. The main objective of said filmmaker is in his or her ability to harness and showcase their skills in a manner that uses their weaknesses as strengths.

Serendipity: The Happy Accident

An important asset of the micro budget filmmaker is their ability to recognise their strengths as well as their weaknesses. This includes the planning process as well as when filming is underway. If a scene or set-up is unattainable the filmmaker must adapt. This is also an important aspect of the practice-led researcher's arsenal, as it is fundamentally important that serendipitous events are acted upon and utilised within the practice-led research workspace. Identifying said discoveries and adapting in order to facilitate the findings and acting upon them is a fundamental part of not only micro budget filmmaking, but also serendipitous research. McCay-Peel and Tomas²³¹ states that the ability to adapt is important, however, in order for the trigger-rich and highly adaptable environment to exist a vast knowledge of the area of research is required in order for the researcher to identify a possible trigger.

This thesis' primary focus is the representation of the Welsh in English language film. However, potential triggering events could be brought on from areas outside film, specifically comics, TV, books and games therefore a vast expansive knowledge base is required in order to make the research environment as potentially trigger-rich as possible.²³² It will be shown in the following two chapters that

²³¹ Lori McCay-Peet, and Elaine G. Toms. "Investigating serendipity: How it unfolds and what may influence it." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 66.7 (2015): 1463-1476 p. 2.

²³² Ibid, p. 9.

Documentaries and B-Movies are genres that rely on the same skills that are required by both the micro budget filmmaker as well as serendipitous research. Documentary, (specifically Fly-on-the-wall, as it will be shown) is a genre that relies on minute-by-minute decision-making and depends on serendipitous findings as information is being discovered by the filmmaker on a real-time basis. B-Movies are in essence the micro budget filmmaking of the 40s and 50s, therefore creativity and spontaneity is vital in the genre.

What follows in the next two chapters is a description of what a documentary and B-Movie is from an academic, as well as an aesthetic standpoint. From there, my own personal experience with both film styles will be discussed, leading directly to why both genres are a perfect trigger-rich environment for serendipitous research to be carried out.

3. DOCUMENTARY

The aim of this chapter is to define why mockumentary was utilized, specifically showcasing that true representation is an unattainable goal since people are far too complex to be portrayed in film. This thesis chapter is divided into four sections. The first section is titled History of Documentary: it is a brief history of the documentary genre discussing what differentiates documentary from fictional films and where this thesis is placed in the discussion regarding documentary. It is followed by some pitfalls of the documentary, specifically what differentiates propaganda documentary from an objective representation. The second chapter, titled Professional Practical Research, details what was learnt from my first-hand experience working on a number of funded and broadcasted documentaries, specifically documentaries that were broadcast by BBC Wales and Channel 4. The second section of this chapter is important to understand the nature of serendipity and its importance in the advancement of knowledge, as it will be shown that it plays a vital role in the production of observational documentary. Section three; Aesthetics of a Documentary is a detailed breakdown of what is required in order to make a film identifiable as a documentary. This includes the type of camera used and quality of sound. The conclusion of the chapter Justification of the use of the Documentary Aesthetic makes the case for why the style or aesthetic is used in the practice-based element of this thesis. Expanding on this, it will be shown that mockumentary's serendipitous elements are essential in practice-based research.

Documentary

This section will discuss the notion of documentary, what the term refers to and what it means, specifically the historical meaning of the term and how it is perceived by audiences. More importantly, how the genre represents reality and conveys truth, this important information that directly relates to the discussion regarding the mockumentary. The mockumentary is identified as a genre that would not exist but for the documentary. as the genre relies entirely on the documentary aesthetic and modes. For an audience to understand a film as a mockumentary it is required that they first have some experience with the documentary. It is for this reason that any research analysing mockumentary needs, first and foremost, an understanding of

documentary.²³³ This is done predominantly by discussing theories regarding documentary and what identifies a film as such.

What defines a documentary? Nichols states that ‘documentary film has never had a very precise definition’.²³⁴ Roscoe and Hight state that documentary is ‘predicated on the existence of the fact/fiction dichotomy, with documentary on one side and drama on the other’.²³⁵ Nichols continues by stating that ‘documentary images generally capture people and events that belong to the world we share rather than present characters and actions invented to tell a story that refers back to our world obliquely or allegorically’.²³⁶ The Oxford dictionary describes the documentary as: ‘Using pictures or interviews with people involved in real events to provide a factual report on a particular subject’.²³⁷ This is a very misleading definition of the word, as it suggests that a documentary provides ‘a factual report on a particular subject’. Roscoe and Hight believe that documentary ‘holds a privileged position within society, a position maintained by documentary’s claim that it can present the most accurate and truthful portrayal of the socio-historical world’.²³⁸ However, the research that follows will show that documentary, for the most part, is an interpretation of facts, rather than a ‘factual report’. Before discussing this further, it should also be made clear that documentary, much like fiction film, has conventions and subgenres, and that the division between documentary and fiction is arguable.

According to McGill and Hill there are two forms of documentary: categorical and rhetorical.²³⁹ The Categorical form has more in common with the Oxford dictionary definition of the term, as the form attempts to convey information to the audience about the world.²⁴⁰ An example of this form is documentaries such as Planet Earth, Blue Planet or Life of Plants. For the most part this form of documentary aims to educate or inform. The second form of documentary is Rhetorical form. This form seems the most problematic for the Oxford dictionary definition of the term. McGill

²³³ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 8.

²³⁴ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 6.

²³⁵ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 8.

²³⁶ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 9.

²³⁷ Documentary Description, *Oxford Dictionary*:

<<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/documentary>> [Last accessed 2016].

²³⁸ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 6.

²³⁹ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p. 134 -141.

²⁴⁰ Documentary Description, *Oxford Dictionary*:

<<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/documentary>> [Last accessed 2016].

and Hill state that documentary ‘purports to present factual information about the world’ and that we assume that ‘the persons, places, and events exist and that the information presented about them is trustworthy’.²⁴¹ However, documentaries are not representation of real events. As John Grierson stated, they are ‘the creative interpretation of actuality’.²⁴² Documentaries are interpretations of reality. This is one fact that should be understood at the outset. The difference between documentary and fiction is a blurred-line at best, especially as a number of documentaries use ‘practices such as scripting, staging, reenactment, rehearsal, and performance’.²⁴³ Barnouw states that all documentaries make decisions, intentionally or not.²⁴⁴ He continues by stating that documentary is not truth but ‘evidence’ or ‘testimony’.²⁴⁵ By presenting this ‘truth’, the filmmaker is attempting to either sway opinion or encourage public discussion. This is an opinion shared by Nichols, as he states that ‘they (documentaries) make a case for a particular interpretation of evidence [...] they more actively make a case or purpose an interpretation to win consent or influence opinion.’²⁴⁶ Barnouw believes that through this attempt at influencing opinion by the documentary filmmaker, that documentary displays elements of propaganda interwoven into its creation, that it is difficult to ‘imagine a documentary, or a film, or any kind of communication, that is *not* propaganda’.²⁴⁷ The term propaganda is predominantly considered to be negative. This is in part due to its being heavily used during war-time. One example of this is *Triumph of the Will*,²⁴⁸ a film that was made to unite the German nation under the Nazi party, to promote; ‘total dedication to an ideal of a strong and united nation, to supermen and super-state – a transcendence’.²⁴⁹

At its core, the notion of documentary as truth depends on the audience. If the information being presented by the documentary is viewed by an audience member and is deemed as truth, the documentary is consumed as entertainment. If the audience deems the ‘evidence’ in the documentary as untrue, the documentary is

²⁴¹ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p. 128.

²⁴² Paul Ward, *Documentary: the margins of reality* (Columbia: University Press, 2012), p. 6.

²⁴³ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. xi.

²⁴⁴ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: University Press, 1993), p. 344.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

²⁴⁶ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 343 – 344.

²⁴⁷ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: University Press, 1993), p. 345.

²⁴⁸ *Triumph of the Will* (dir. Leni Riefenstahl, 1935).

²⁴⁹ Jack C. Ellis and Betsy A. McLane, *A new history of documentary film* (London: A&C Black, 2005), p. 114.

classified as propaganda.²⁵⁰ Therefore, audience interpretation of the evidence is fundamentally important to what differentiates documentary from propaganda. However, the filmmaker may not know that the information or evidence they are submitting is biased. Lester and Ross argue that it is somewhat impossible to be entirely objective, documentarians' perception of the nature of the world:

*Human perception is selective and partial. [...] Human beings do not perceive the world neutrally, uniformly, or completely. We filter; we ignore; we exaggerate. What we perceive, and what we are able to communicate to others, is affected by our identity, our culture, our experience, our worldview: in a word – our frame.*²⁵¹

This supports the idea put forth by Nichols,²⁵² in that the documentarian is inevitably destined to fail if their goal is to stay neutral and objective. The fact that they chose a specific subject matter, when they chose to record, and which characters receive most attention all support the claim that all documentaries have an agenda, even if the agenda is unknown to the director themselves; an apt analogy for this stance is given by Tuchman:

*The view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or backyard. The unfolding scene also depends upon where one stands, far or near, craning one's neck to the side, or gazing straight ahead, eyes parallel to the wall in which the window is encased.*²⁵³

However, according to McGill and Hight the rhetorical documentary form is further divided into three categories for a rhetorical form to present its argument. The first being *Arguments from source*, the second being *Subject-centred arguments* and the third being *Viewer-centred arguments*.²⁵⁴ The *Arguments from source* documentary tries to persuade the audience that the film is 'intelligent, well informed, sincere, trustworthy'.²⁵⁵ *Subject-centred arguments* try to appeal to 'beliefs common at the

²⁵⁰ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: University Press, 1993), p. 345.

²⁵¹ Susan Dente Ross and Paul Martin Lester (eds.), *Images that Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media* (London: Praeger, 2011), p. 30.

²⁵² Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010).

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p. 141.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

time in a given culture'.²⁵⁶ Meanwhile, *Viewer-centred arguments* make arguments that appeal to the audience's emotions.²⁵⁷ It should be noted that these forms are merely a manner in which the filmmaker can make their argument. The reason why this should be made clear at the beginning of this chapter is because there needs to be an understanding of what a documentary is before one can discuss its subgenre; the mockumentary. Hight describes the mockumentary as 'little more than a 'parasitic' form of the documentary', it therefore seems logical to understand the host before inspecting the parasite.

The aim of this section was to establish the modes of documentary, and that a documentary is a 'view' of an event through the lens or window of the director. Why does this matter? It matters because it establishes bias. Not that bias is bad, merely that the director is making a case rather than being objective.²⁵⁸ What has been discussed in this chapter is the theoretical classification of what defines a film as a documentary, specifically the genre's claims to truth or creative interpretation of truth. Now that the modes and forms of documentary have been addressed, the mockumentary is best identified by its aesthetic similarity to that of the documentary.

Aesthetics of a Documentary

The main goal of this section is to clearly identify the aesthetics that define a documentary. However, since documentary can be further dissected into six further modes, each mode will be discussed. This section will begin by identifying the six modes of documentary that were identified by Nichols.²⁵⁹

The first mode is the Expository Mode, this mode 'takes shape around a problem and attempts to persuade viewers of its answer to that problem'.²⁶⁰ The filmmaker in this instance is portrayed as an un-bias observer.²⁶¹ The documentary uses experts as representatives of their field of research who support the underlying argument that the filmmaker is putting forward. This is aided with the use of photographs as well as a voice-over narrator. Nichols argues that this mode of

²⁵⁶ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p. 141.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

²⁵⁸ Thomas Austin (ed.), *Rethinking documentary: New perspectives, new practices* (London: McGraw-Hill Education, 2008), p. 94.

²⁵⁹ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 18 – 20.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

documentary claims ‘validity for its truth, claims from the discourses and practices of journalism’, yet the mode is at times extremely biased as an interview with the opposing views can be manipulated by the interviewer. An example of this would be where the ‘interview will be conducted in such a way as to undermine the credibility or trustworthiness of the oppositional voice’.²⁶² This kind of documentary also makes use of reenactment in order to give the audience an insight into some of the actions that might have occurred off-screen. From an aesthetic standpoint; this mode of documentary is constructed from sit-down interviews, conventionally using medium shots of the interviewees, followed by graphical representations of facts, or possibly a reenactment.

The second kind is the Observational Mode (more commonly known as the ob-doc). Leahy states that the observational mode has ‘a “real” relation to the real in observational films, or at least a stronger relation to it’.²⁶³ Corner and Winston believe that observational mode has its origins with both *cinema verite* as well as Direct Cinema. Nichols agrees with this, stating ‘the viewer is provided with a window on reality – an idealistic (voyeuristic) spectator position’.²⁶⁴ However, he states that this format gives the illusion that ‘images are capable of ‘speaking for themselves’’,²⁶⁵ although (as Nichols states) images are not always a reliable source. This type of mode is shot conventionally on smaller hand held cameras with errors such as losing and regaining focus, crash zooms and camera repos edited into the final film.

The third kind of documentary is the Interactive Mode or Participatory Mode. The interactive mode is very similar to the expository mode with one significant difference, the inclusion of the filmmaker. Interactive documentary films are shot in a similar manner to the Expository mode using talking-heads and graphics to convey information. However, where it differentiates is when the filmmaker directly interacts with the interviewees, and Roscoe and Hight stated that ‘the insights offered through this mode are gained through those interactions’ between filmmaker and

²⁶² Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 18.

²⁶³ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 19.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

interviewees.²⁶⁶ Interactive films conventionally give first-hand accounts of events or ‘oral’ histories.

The fourth and fifth documentary modes are referred to by Roscoe and Hight as being newer documentary modes, with the Observational, Interactive/Participatory and Expository modes being classics. The Reflexive and Performative Modes are newer modes because they both question the nature of the documentary itself. The Reflexive mode is where ‘the process of negotiation between filmmaker and viewer becomes the focus of attention in the reflexive mode.’²⁶⁷ That the best ‘reflexive documentary prods the viewer to a heightened form of consciousness about his or her relation to a documentary and what it represents’.²⁶⁸ Reflexive documentaries attempt to adjust the viewer’s assumptions and expectations, using actors to retell stories belonging to others as though it was their own life experience, - in essence using actors to play a part. In doing this it attempts to make the audience more sceptical of the documentary and therefore more objective when receiving information from the documentary.²⁶⁹ The fifth mode of documentary is the performative mode, which is a more personal take on documentary as the filmmaker’s own journey of discovery. It therefore relies heavily on the documentarian’s personal perspective. The final mode of documentary being that of the poetic mode, which is structured more like a fiction film as it arrives at its final conclusion using ‘visual and acoustic rhythms, patterns’.²⁷⁰

It should be noted that these modes are identifiable by how they are presented. From a practical aesthetic, all documentaries use these six modes and, aesthetically, each mode identified above uses these four aspects. It is true to state that these five elements are often combined or used simultaneously. From an academic standpoint, the modes can be described as forms of methodology, while the aesthetics of documentary are simply the manner in which the camera and editing were used. However, it is vital to understand the modes as they inform the audience on the mode of documentary they are watching.

²⁶⁶ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 20.

²⁶⁷ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 194.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 197.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 198.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 198.

Mockumentary

This section will aim to define what constitutes mockumentaries and fake documentaries. Particularly, that mockumentary expects that the audience understands two aspects of documentary; first that documentary involves real people and that the genre has a specific aesthetic. This is followed by a brief discussion that showcases the pitfalls associated with the mockumentary, specifically how the assumed representation of a fictional character presented as reality can undermine the entire goal of satirizing representation. This is in regard to the film *Borat*²⁷¹ which aimed to use mockumentary to underline American anti-Semitism, and yet inadvertently created negative tropes for the nation of Kazakhstan. The section is concluded with a discussion regarding the mockumentaries classification as an independent genre or a mode of documentary.

One should note the debate regarding the classification of the mockumentary. Roscoe and Hight describe the genre thus: ‘Our definition of mock-documentaries is specifically limited to *fictional* tests; those which make partial or concerted effort to appropriate documentary codes and conventions in order to represent a fictional subject.’²⁷² Nichols believes that ‘mockumentaries clearly engage in a teasing dialogue with documentary conventions and audiences’ expectations, and docudramas draw much of their plot structure and character depiction from actual events’.²⁷³ Meanwhile Juhasz prefers the term fake documentary rather than mockumentary stating that, ‘I use the word “fake” because it registers both the copying and its discovering. A fake documentary is close to the real thing, but not close as to not be found out.’²⁷⁴ This means that fake documentaries or mockumentaries showcase a ‘self-conscious play with form, made apparent in its very failure, effectively challenges its own integrity and that of its original object as well.’²⁷⁵ McGraw and Hill describe mockumentaries so, ‘mock documentaries imitate the conventions of documentaries but do not try to fool the audiences into thinking that they portray

²⁷¹ *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (dir. Larry Charles, 2006).

²⁷² Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 2.

²⁷³ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 145.

²⁷⁴ Alexandra Juhasz and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth's Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 7.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

actual people or events'.²⁷⁶ This thesis uses the term mockumentary in reference to how Nichols describes the term as *a genre that exists as fictional with a sense of reality*.²⁷⁷ This is the primary reason why an understanding of documentary is required in order to research mockumentaries.

The mockumentary requires the audience to have prior understanding of two aspects in order for the film to be understood as a mockumentary. The first aspect being; that documentary primarily showcases 'real people, places and events, rather than fictitious issues'.²⁷⁸ And the second prime need for an understanding of documentary is that mockumentary 'involves the sustained appropriation of non-fiction codes and conventions, particularly those which constitute the documentary genre'.²⁷⁹ This awareness by the audience is fundamental, as Hight agrees, 'mockumentaries involve greater work on the part of the viewers in identifying the ontological status of a given text, and hence the modes of reading which should be adopted in approaching it'.²⁸⁰ However, Hight also admits that this means that the mockumentary can be viewed on many different levels; 'Audiences can enjoy the references to documentary and associated forms. [...] or audiences can choose to simply engage with mockumentary at a narrative level'.²⁸¹ However, he continues by further stating that a lack of understanding of the text as a mockumentary can have negative reaction from the audience.²⁸² In other instances, mockumentary has caused audiences to believe that actual documentaries are clever ruses, since the characters portrayed in the films are too quirky. For example, the film *American Movie*²⁸³ was believed to be a fake documentary in some circles.²⁸⁴ The film *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*²⁸⁵ is a film that is difficult to identify:

If I've got this logic right, Baron Cohen was recognized (winning a Golden Globe) for his exceptional and comprehensive ability to become someone

²⁷⁶ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p.132.

²⁷⁷ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010).

²⁷⁸ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 21.

²⁷⁹ Thomas Austin and Wilma de Jong, *Rethinking documentary: New perspectives, new practices* (London: McGraw-Hill Education, 2008), p. 208.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ *American Movie* (dir. Chris Smith, 1999).

²⁸⁴ Paul Ward, *Documentary: The Margins of Reality* (Columbia: University Press, 2012), p. 72.

²⁸⁵ *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (dir. Larry Charles, 2006).

*other than himself, his ability to ‘act’ out a fictional identity, while the people he shares the screen with were – and are – ‘real’ historical subjects.*²⁸⁶

The actor Baron Cohen in the film plays a fictional character. He interviews real people in his Borat persona. This questions in which genre *Borat* can be classified:

*The genre to which a film is assigned reflects how a culture understands the boundaries between perception and reality—what can be accepted on screen as true or false, right or wrong. Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan (dir. Larry Charles, 2006), for example, has challenged our cultural assumptions by challenging our generic assumptions. Is it a documentary? A mockumentary? A narrative fiction?*²⁸⁷

Torchin suggests that there are elements of Bruzzi’s ‘performative documentary’ due to the film’s ‘emphasis on performative elements of both the filmmaker and the subjects’.²⁸⁸ He states that Borat is similar to Rouch’s ‘ethnofictions’ or hoax documentaries and suggests that *Borat* will: ‘... question documentary authority, disorient the audience, and ask us to reconsider the premises that underpin the documentary’s claim to truth and knowledge’.²⁸⁹

The problem inherently lies in the fact that mockumentary films are conventionally presented as fiction films with a factual documentary format: ‘mockumentary sheathes its fictions within a documentary style’.²⁹⁰ Overall, *Borat* is identifiable as a documentary hidden as a mockumentary: ‘*Borat* suspends faith in the codes, the styles, and the politics of the traditional documentary, even as it promises to document what Americans fear most about themselves’.²⁹¹ The film uses the fake documentary style to lampoon cultural stereotypes. However, there is a negative side to presenting a mockumentary character in a documentary format as the Anti-Defamation League explains:

We hope that everyone who chooses to see the film understands Mr. Cohen’s comedic technique, which is to use humor to unmask the absurd

²⁸⁶ Lewis MacLeod, “‘A Documentary-Style Film’: Borat and the Fiction/Nonfiction Question,” *Narrative*, (Vol. 19:1, 2011), p. 111.

²⁸⁷ Leshu Torchin, ‘Cultural Learnings of Borat Make for Benefit Glorious Study of Documentary,’ *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* (Vol 38:1, 2008), p. 53.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Leshu Torchin, ‘Cultural Learnings of Borat Make for Benefit Glorious Study of Documentary,’ *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* (Vol. 38:1, 2008), p. 61.

*and irrational side of anti-Semitism and other phobias born of ignorance and fear. We are concerned, however, that one serious pitfall is that the audience may not always be sophisticated enough to get the joke, and that some may even find it reinforcing their bigotry.*²⁹²

This confirms that there is a need for the audience to be ‘sophisticated’ or understand that *Borat* is in fact a fictional character. The film is intended to hold ‘a mirror up to American culture in order to demonstrate, through comedy, how racist *Americans* are’.²⁹³ However, the pitfall that *Borat* has fallen into is that even though it may show how ‘racist *Americans* are’, the jokes are always aimed at the character *Borat* as he is ‘vulgar, savage, ignorant, barbaric, and racist’. *Borat* is entirely a fictional character, yet his comedy relies heavily on stereotypes and the audience’s acknowledgment that they (the audience) are in on the joke.²⁹⁴ Sacha Baron Cohen (the creator of *Borat* and the person who plays the character) has been criticized for his depiction of *Borat* as a Muslim, comparing his characterization to the modern day ‘coal-face’ (Al Jolson in *The Jazz Singer*).²⁹⁵ Al Jolson was a white man who painted his face black in the film *The Jazz Singer*²⁹⁶ to appear as or portray a black man. Chehade makes the argument that even though *Borat* is never identified as a Muslim in the film, he is intended to read as such and as a result *Borat* as a character adheres to a racist, negative depiction of a Muslim man. Cohen is neither from Kazakhstan, nor is he Muslim, and yet he is creating a stereotype of the Kazakhstani people:²⁹⁷ ‘This would not be quite as problematic if the *fictional* *Borat* did not come from a very *real* place and did not so obviously (mis-) represent Muslims’.²⁹⁸ In lampooning anti-semitism, sexism and racism, Cohen’s ‘portrayal of *Borat* represents anti-Muslim racism’.²⁹⁹ Cohen’s defence is that he felt that *Borat*’s nationality was unimportant and that the

²⁹² ‘Statement on the comedy of Sacha Baron Cohen, a.k.a. Borat,’ *Anti-Defamation League*: <http://www.adl.org/PresRele/Mise_00/4898_00.htm> [Last accessed 2014].

²⁹³ Ghada Chehade, ‘The Problem with Borat,’ *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), p. 63.

²⁹⁴ Bronwen Low and David Smith, ‘Borat and the Problem of Parody,’ *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education* (Vol. 11:1, 2007), 27 – 39.

²⁹⁵ Xymphora (ref. Gayane Torosyan), ‘In the Shadow of Borat’, *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), p. 11.

²⁹⁶ *The Jazz Singer* (dir. Alan Crosland, 1927).

²⁹⁷ Ghada Chehade, ‘The Problem with Borat,’ *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), 63 - 71.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

Kazakhstan he presented was fictitious.³⁰⁰ However, in his representation of a fictional Kazakhstani Muslim, as Chehade³⁰¹ points out, the film exposes one aspect of racism whilst confirming another:

*Overall, to be portrayed as a 'Jew-hating Muslim' is a form of racism and negative stereotyping, for clearly Cohen is not really attacking Jews. Indeed, as previously mentioned, even his Jewish 'victims' in the film ultimately found the film to be anti-Muslim.*³⁰²

Sasha Baron Cohen is an English-Jewish man who presented an image of a Kazakhstani Muslim man; it would seem that he is unable to extricate himself from this situation ideologically. If Cohen had not intended on being recognised as a Muslim, then he simply failed. It also highlights Cohen's dismissive attitude towards a country's national identity. Bizarrely, the jocular national anthem for Kazakhstan that Borat sings in the film was accidentally used in the 2012 London Olympic games for a Kazak gold medallist.³⁰³

The fact that a debate on the subject exists clearly underlines that some do view Borat in such a way. This confusion over Borat's comedic/racially offensive status is the dangerous side of the mockumentary that Hight discussed.³⁰⁴ However, Borat is a unique example, as it combines both fiction and reality. It seems as though Cohen learnt from his experiences producing Borat, as in his follow-up film *The Dictator*,³⁰⁵ Cohen set the main character's origins in a fictional country.

Roscoe and Hight argue that an understanding of the text as a mockumentary is not required for the text to be identified as a mockumentary.³⁰⁶ They continue by stating that mockumentary texts have a number of similar aspects to the drama-documentary and that the significant difference between the two is that the

³⁰⁰ 'The man behind the mustache,' *The RollingStone online*: <http://www.rollingstone.com/news/coverstory/sacha_baron_cohen_the_real_borat_finally_speaks/page/1> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁰¹ Ghada Chehade, 'The Problem with Borat', *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), 63 - 71.

³⁰² Ghada Chehade, 'The Problem with Borat', *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), 63 - 71, p. 70.

³⁰³ 'Borat anthem stuns Kazakh gold medallist in Kuwait', *BBC Online*: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-17491344>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁰⁴ Thomas Austin and Wilma de Jong, *Rethinking documentary: New Perspectives, New Practices* (London: McGraw-Hill Education, 2008), p. 211.

³⁰⁵ *The Dictator* (dir. Larry Charles, 2012).

³⁰⁶ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 53.

mockumentary contains ‘latent reflexivity’.³⁰⁷ They believe that mockumentaries make the audience ask the question; ‘can we really believe what we see?’³⁰⁸ They continue by stating that this is in ‘contrast to drama-documentaries, the closer that mock-documentaries get to the genre, the greater is the subversion or deconstruction of the relationship between documentary aesthetics and factual discourse’.³⁰⁹ The primary difficulty in *Borat* or its reading is that the film is both a mockumentary and a reflexive documentary. This is quintessentially what makes films such as *Borat* problematic. Large sections of the film can be viewed as obvious mockumentary while other sections are reflexive documentary. Albert Brooks states in regard to his film *Real Life: An American Comedy*:³¹⁰ ‘There’s no law that says we can’t start real and end fake.’³¹¹ The film *Borat* starts fictional then transitions to reality and ends fictional. The film starts by introducing *Borat* and his fictional home village, wife and family. Then the film takes this fictitious news reporter to interview real life individuals under the understanding that *Borat* is a journalist. In essence the *Borat* role in the mockumentary genre succeeds in its goal:

*Fake documentaries do and undo the documentary form, the film’s subject (theme, topic, storyline, characters), and the moral and social orders. They are formally rich as well as uniquely situated to reveal the certainties, as well as the lies, about history, identity, and truth that have sustained both documentary and the world it records. [...] Its formative and visible lies mirror the necessary but usually fabrications of “real” documentaries, and force all these untruths to the surface, producing knowledge about the dishonesty of all documentaries, real and fake.*³¹²

While being partially factual the ‘fake documentaries [mockumentary] are a special breed of parody in that they accomplish something different, something extra [...]. The fake documentary is simultaneously and definitively both parody *and* satire’.³¹³

³⁰⁷ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 53.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Real Life* (dir. Albert Brooks, 1979).

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² Alexandra Juhasz and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth’s Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 2.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

In closing, the mockumentary is a ‘signal, a scepticism towards documentary realism’.³¹⁴ It highlights documentary’s falseness:

*To some extent, the distinctions between different kinds of “faking” are not crucial, and no amount of conscious or intentional “faking” can undo the fact that documentary is itself already a fake of sorts, insofar as its claims to capturing reality have never yet proven fully authentic, definitive, or incontestable.*³¹⁵

This leads directly to why the mockumentary was used as a mode in order to research Welsh representation on film, as any form of reality would always be identifiable as containing forms of ‘faking’ or unrealistic elements. It is worth noting that this section has shown (using *Borat*) that mockumentary is a more problematic form of parody than one might have originally believed. While *Borat* might have exposed anti-Semitism, comments made by Cohen regarding his treatment of the Kazakhstan national identity as being unimportant showcases Cohen’s position in regard to the paradigm of the power which English and American filmmakers wield over lessrepresented nations.

Personal Experiences in Documentary

This section is entirely dedicated to my own experience as a filmmaking practitioner, this is done using case studies and discussing what was learnt from creating content for national television. Following on from there will be a brief discussion regarding how said practical experience relates to the theoretical aspects of the documentary genre. This research is funded in part by KESS (Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships). A requirement of receiving the funding was that the researcher must work in the film/media industry; I worked at Chwarel TV and Radio. Chwarel is an independent television and radio company that creates content for Channel 4, the BBC and S4C. While employed by Chwarel I undertook a number of duties, from sound and editing to camera. Discussing all the content in which I was part would be excessive as I worked on over thirty productions. As such, I will only highlight the productions that informed this research; namely, *Hotel Stephanie*,³¹⁶ *Horse*

³¹⁴ Alexandra Juhasz and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth’s Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 224.

³¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 223.

³¹⁶ *Hotel Stephanie* (BBC Wales: Chwarel) 2010 - 2011.

*Hoarder*³¹⁷ and *Hidden Houses of Wales*.³¹⁸ It will be shown that Serendipity is an important element in documentary, however, due to the heavily scripted nature of formatted documentary, serendipitous discoveries and events are bypassed intentionally. On the other hand, observational documentaries rely nearly entirely on serendipitous events, the likelihood of such events are increased with the amount of filming that occurs in contrast to the formatted style.

Hotel Stephanie followed millionaire hotelier and transsexual, Stephanie Booth in a fly-on-the-wall, observational documentary, which documented her during two major events. The first series followed Stephanie as she tried to keep six hotels profitable during the economic crash in 2008. The second series continued Stephanie's story as she expanded her hotel portfolio with the inclusion of The Winchester in Wrexham. The first series was shot over a number of months with over one hundred and sixty hours of footage. The BBC had commissioned Chwarel to produce four documentaries in each series, lasting roughly twenty eight-minutes. Therefore the shooting ratio for the first series was eighty-to-one. A hundred and sixty hours divided over three months equates to nearly two hours of footage per day. However, each workday lasted between ten and twelve hours: a large amount of the work included travelling, setting up equipment, archiving footage and planning which aspects of Stephanie's life would be filmed. Doing this increased the likelihood of serendipitous events as filming decreased towards the end of the filming schedule due to the understanding of which aspects of Stephanie's life were more likely to yield noteworthy events worth transmitting.

The first series was filmed on two different types of camera, the Sony Z1 and the Sony 570. The first series had two different directors, Ken Kirby and Sioned Morys. Ken Kirby preferred to use the Z1 as he felt that the camera was smaller and as such would be less intrusive towards the subjects of the documentary. Sioned Morys was trained with the larger Sony 570 and felt that the image that the 570 gave was, overall, more aesthetically pleasing. The second series was solely directed by Sioned Morys and was entirely shot on the Sony 750, which is the high definition replacement of the Sony 570. As to what was experienced filming the series - all information and all access were given to the crew by Stephanie Booth herself. Therefore, the series was entirely dependent on what Stephanie was willing to reveal.

³¹⁷ *Horse Hoarder* (Channel 4: Chwarel) 2012.

³¹⁸ *Hidden Houses of Wales* (BBC Wales: Chwarel) 2010 - 2011.

There were no attempts made by the crew to film aspects of Stephanie's life which she herself had not given the crew access to. This is important as the documentary was *de facto* edited and filtered through Stephanie. It should be noted that Stephanie did make reference to events such as her past as a prostitute, her family life as a man and her past as a Jehovah Witness. However, no attempt was made to investigate her past further. This was a fundamental part of the agreement that Stephanie had made with the production company before filming began; that the crew never try and investigate her past other than what was stated in her personal biography.³¹⁹ This was insightful, as it became clear that access to the subject trumps the desire of the documentary filmmaker to give the audience a wider picture of the true nature of events. As such, even I am unaware whether the Stephanie that was captured and broadcasted on BBC was truly the real Stephanie Booth. According to staff members from Stephanie's numerous hotels, Stephanie performed for the camera and reacted differently to her manner when cameras were not present.

Hotel Stephanie informed me that manipulating a documentary to present individuals in a positive manner does not always come from behind the camera. The production company's need for a commission can override a director's artistic integrity. This highlights the difficulty that filmmakers struggle against when attempting to create a fair representation of a character within a documentary. Graber states that 'The right to publish without restraint means little if journalists are refused access to sources of information'.³²⁰ What this means is that if a journalist is denied access for an interview or access to a press conference due to a past negative story, then it can potentially affect the manner in which journalists and filmmakers approach subjects. Filmmakers and journalists would need to balance between pleasing the needs of the subject while being subjective enough to tell a balanced story.

The second observational documentary which I took part in was *Horse Hoarder*. The documentary was a thirty-minute film that chronicled the life of Clwyd Davies and his legal trouble with the RSPCA, regarding claims of animal abuse. When filming began Clwyd was squatting in an abandoned farmhouse with sixty of his horses living on the surrounding land. Over the course of the documentary Clwyd tried to decrease the number of horses down to a manageable twenty, as per the RSPCA's request. The *Horse Hoarder* was an interesting documentary, as it

³¹⁹ Stephanie Anne Lloyd and Sandra Sedgbeer *Stephanie: A girl in a million* (London: Random House) 1991.

³²⁰ Doris A. Graber *Mass media and American politics* (New York: Sage, 2009.) p. 52.

presented a world that was very simplistic compared to the overall story that was unfolding. Sioned Morys aimed to shape the narrative to be about an old fashioned man who had lost his way in life due to the loss of his daughter, and to show the RSPCA as a faceless protagonist that didn't understand and cared little about him. Put simply, it was old time farming verses modern bureaucracy. This is particularly highlighted in one scene; the RSPCA felt that Clwyd was not decreasing the number of horses quickly enough; therefore they put it upon themselves to remove the horses one by one. During this scene the RSPCA failed to capture a horse by cohesion with food, and resorted to darting the animal with a tranquilizer gun. Meanwhile, Clwyd is shown eating a sandwich and laughing at the RSPCA from the side-lines, berating their 'understanding' of the animals. In reality, Clwyd had been told to not to feed the animals earlier in the day, in order to help with the relocation of the horse, yet he had fed them that morning (however, the feeding was not shown in the documentary). The RSPCA did dart the horse, but while in the documentary a scream is heard (assumed to have come from the animal) the scream was actually added in during post-production editing. This changes the events of the day, vilifying the RSPCA. Eventually Clwyd was found guilty of neglect and his sentence was a ban from keeping animals for five years. Following the verdict Clwyd vanished overnight and is still unaccounted.

The film showcases Clwyd as an approachable old-time farmer who has stumbled on hard times; however, he was a difficult man at times. At one point during the filming, Michelle (a local woman who was passionate about the care of horses and had vowed to help Clwyd) stated that she did not want to proceed with the documentary as Clwyd had had a confrontation with one of her staff. Clwyd verbally abused the members of the filming crew on more than one occasion. A Facebook page that was established called 'The Truth about Clwyd Davies' revealed his animal abuses, however a court ordered the page to be taken down. In reality the *Horse Hoarder* was a complex documentary, involving a stubborn old man's refusal to move with the times of animal care and as a result the RSPCA had no alternative but to intervene. The difference between *Horse Hoarder* and *Hotel Stephanie* was that *Hoarder* was a one-off, meaning that the director Sioned Morys had the possibility to tell the story she wanted. However, she watered down a complex situation into a basic "old fashioned versus modern times" conflict that didn't correctly reflect the reality of events.

The final documentaries that will be discussed are *Hidden Houses of Wales* and *Rolf on Welsh Art*³²¹ presented by Lawrence Llywelyn Bowen and Rolf Harris. Both series followed the same format exactly; both shows began with its presenter in a car that reflected their personality (Lawrence in an old, stylish Morris Minor while Rolf was driven from location to location in a VW Camper van). From there both presenters interviewed individuals who gave a historical background to a house, owner or artist. The only real difference was that at the end of each episode Rolf would paint a portrait in the style of a specific artist. Both shows followed the same blueprint: pieces to camera sandwiched between interviews, followed by voiceovers. This type of documentary is referred in the industry to as a formatted doc, while McGraw and Hill would classify this type of documentary as a categorical form,³²² meanwhile, Nichols describes this type of documentary as expository mode.³²³ However, Nichols does admit that documentaries have the capability of belonging to numerous documentary modes. Nichols does not include McGraw and Hill's categorical mode in his seven documentary modes.

This type of documentary is intended to transfer historical information to the audience via expert opinion and historical research, the main avenue of influence available to the director is their choice of expert. Primarily the choice of expert is not based on expertise but on their ability to speak well on camera. Also the major downside to this type of documentary is the broadcast time limit. Since each episode is required to be no more or less than 28 minutes, it means that some parts of history are omitted from the final film. This type of documentary is structured similarly to an essay or a thesis, in that they aim to take an audience on a journey of discovery within the chosen subject matter; it presents history in order to inform the audience. The main lesson learnt from creating this type of documentary is that the information is primarily prepared in pre-production. The interviewees are prepped before filming regarding which part of a specific history each is required to disclose. This type of show is scripted; however, it is not by interpretation of history rather by the omitting of certain facts, facts that might enlarge the story and might thereby endanger the running time.

³²¹ *Rolf on Welsh Art* (BBC Wales: Chwarel) 2012.

³²² David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeremy Ashton, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1997), p.133.

³²³ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 151.

This is by no means all that was learnt from each and every documentary that I took part in. However, these three lessons best summarize variations on similar themes. Overall, the handling of facts and the chain of events are major elements of documentary filmmaking, be it the need to retain access to a specific subject or the need to tell a concise story by omitting information in order to reach the target of a strict running time. The categorical or expositional mode of documentary is a scripted insight into history, with presenters shown as a person exploring a painter or house's history through staged and (to some degree) directed discussions with experts. While the observational mode showcases the director's need for access as well as their perception of events. Overall, what was learnt was that the censorship, scripting or the editing of facts that occur in documentary are created by the politics that reside behind the camera, or during the editing process. The need to secure a second series, either by pleasing the subject or keeping the client happy by making documentaries that adhere to running times. Documentaries undergo a vast amount of editing and scripting: and that does not bring the director's integrity into question. *Hotel Stephanie* was intended as a light-hearted adventure starring a quirky business woman; this is obvious in the director's choice of music. Is it therefore fair to criticize the film as disingenuous?

To conclude, this section's main aim was to showcase my own practical experience as a filmmaker, with supporting theoretical research stating that documentary is an interpretation of reality or events. Regardless of the intentions of the filmmakers, many forces dictate or edit said interpretation. As such, documentary's claim to the truth is shown to be as questionable as a witness in a courtroom. The filmmaker's perspective and intentions become the main aspect of scrutiny. This is why serendipity theory is so important for practice-led research. Pre-research builds the playground for which practice can allow the chance and identification of serendipity and new research to occur. It should be noted that the formatted documentaries did not allow any element of serendipity to occur which would advance knowledge in any way as the information discussed by the presenter and expert were pre-planned and any deviation or tangent would be quickly stopped. Experts would often add additional information to their interviews, however, due to time restraints or the lack of ability to attain historic portraits due to copyright restrictions, this kind of spontaneity was quickly squashed. This was vastly different on both the observational documentaries, as all the research was done entirely within the practice playground. Stephanie's story developed organically (of sorts, through

Stephanie's filter), and as filming progressed it became clear which aspects of her life would be filmed more than others. Clwyd's story on the other hand was identified from the outset. The serendipitous nature of his story was the RSPCA's court case against him and his reaction to it. Both observational documentaries relied heavily on real people reacting to events and their interactions with others. The research done early on in the filming schedule, gave an understanding to the filmmaker of when new information could be learnt about the characters, mainly when Clwyd and Stephanie were in situations that evoked humour or hostility. The identification of character traits was the serendipitous moments that were being explored in the production of both documentaries.

Rationale for the use of Mockumentary

This section works both as the rationale for the use of mockumentary as well as a conclusion for the documentary chapter. The rationale for the use of mockumentary as one of the modes by which Welsh Representation on Film might be researched are numerous. Firstly (and most obviously), is my personal professional history with the genre. Secondly, the philosophy behind this thesis is to question the nature of reality and, in turn, representation or national identity: it was therefore felt that if the starting point was Plato's allegorical cave, and if the shadows cast on the wall are the representations seen on film, then what is the reality outside the cave? Documentary is a genre that forges viewer-trust, wherein...

... an implicit contract is made between the filmmaker and viewer in which the filmmaker promises to deliver a truthful and honest portrayal, and in return the viewer will not question the reality of the images presented,³²⁴

As such, if the shadows represent the representations of past Welsh, the second aspect of the film needs to represent reality. The audience will, 'expect real people, places and events, rather than fictional characters and issues.'³²⁵ By doing this the documentary was intended to represent life outside the allegorical cave, a world in which 'Our fundamental expectation of documentary is that its sounds and images bear an indexical relation to the historical world... The literalism of documentary

³²⁴ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 22.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 21.

centres around the look of things in the world as an index of meaning'.³²⁶ By doing this it presents the viewer with a world they can relate to and understand as the historical world.

The film *Sleep Furiously*³²⁷ by Gideon Koppel also had an influence on the decision to make the film a documentary; it portrays the day-to-day life of a small rural town in mid Wales (Trefeurig). The main 'plot' of *Sleep Furiously* revolves around the community library van that visits one home after another. The library van is used as a narrative tool to move from location to location, as a 'purveyor of stories, both literal and metaphorical, as the community it serves faces the gradual loss of much of what helped to define it'.³²⁸ The film had a 'lack of a linear narrative flow',³²⁹ Koppel believed that 'Time is a critical dynamic within cinema [...] yet it's rarely imaginatively explored in mainstream cinema, which hangs on to notions of plot as the engine for narrative'.³³⁰ Making the documentary reject standard narrative devices (such as the three act structure and conventional film plot points) would give the film a level of reality. However, *Sleep Furiously* did use 'lots of construction within it'.³³¹ However, the key aesthetic aspect that *Humanoids* wished to inherit from *Sleep Furiously* was its 'recurrent points of view and compositional techniques – notably a ground level positioning of the camera',³³² in order to 'create a feeling of intimacy that does not tip over into presumed familiarity'.³³³ By presenting the documentary in a realistic manner it aimed to be understood as a documentary. In fact, the film was as much a fiction as the B-Movie.

Humanoids From Wales is a mockumentary, and as such the film is required to be seen as a documentary. By undertaking the conventions of the documentary it leads the audience to believe the occurrences it presents are real world events. The rationale for filming the first part of *Humanoids From Wales* as a mockumentary is the

³²⁶ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 22.

³²⁷ *Sleep Furiously* (dir. Gideon Koppel, 2008).

³²⁸ Philip Pothén, 'A Very Personal Journey,' *Podium* (Issue 13, 2009): <<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Publications/Publications-archive/Documents/Podium/Podium-13-Winter-2009.pdf>> [Last accessed 2016].

³²⁹ Philip Crang, 'After a Fashion', *Cultural Geographies* (Vol. 17:2, 2010).

³³⁰ Philip Pothén, 'A Very Personal Journey,' *Podium* (Issue 13, 2009): <<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Publications/Publications-archive/Documents/Podium/Podium-13-Winter-2009.pdf>> [Last accessed 2016].

³³¹ Philip Pothén, 'A Very Personal Journey,' *Podium* (Issue 13, 2009): <<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Publications/Publications-archive/Documents/Podium/Podium-13-Winter-2009.pdf>> [Last accessed 2014].

³³² Philip Crang, 'After a Fashion', *Cultural Geographies* (Vol. 17:2, 2010).

³³³ Ibid.

fact that documentary itself is fake or as Nichols calls it ‘a fiction (un)like any other’.³³⁴ Therefore, if the B-Movie represents the metaphorical shadows and the representations of the Welsh, then presenting a documentary as being the reality would be disingenuous as it is academically known to be a fiction. By making the film a mockumentary it intends to showcase that all representations are a matter of perception. If *Humanoids* aimed to represent the Welsh in a true manner it would have failed at the outset, since each perception of reality differs significantly from every other. Therefore, the mockumentary;

*do and undo the documentary form, the film’s subject [...], and the moral and social orders. They are formally rich as well as uniquely situated to reveal the certainties, as well as the lies, about history, identity, and truth that have sustained both documentary and the world it records.*³³⁵

The mockumentary is a parody, as it laments the allusion of reality and representation. Therefore, by making the film a mockumentary it perfectly represents the problematic duality that both fiction and factual films present when representing individuals on screen.

The final reason why the mockumentary was chosen was due to the genre’s reliance on serendipity and spontaneity, which in turn allows discovery. Mockumentary in a number of examples rely on the unknown, for example films such as Christopher Guest’s *Best in Show*³³⁶ and *This is Spinal Tap*³³⁷. These were mostly improvised films. The actors that performed in said films were given a character description and would be placed in scenes that required them to react to situations rather than act to scripted events. Meaning the actual dialogue was the creation of each actor’s character. This sort of spontaneity allows the actors to reveal elements of their characters that require the prepared mind to identify and expand upon to make unintended discoveries.

To conclude, the mockumentary was chosen as a mode to parody Welsh representation on film, due to the fact that (as a filmmaking practitioner) my professional experience is primarily in the documentary genre. Presenting the film in a documentary mode facilitates the philosophy of this research, as it juxtaposes

³³⁴ Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 8.

³³⁵ Juhasz, Alexandra, and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth’s Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 2.

³³⁶ *Best In Show* (Dir. Christopher Guest, 2000).

³³⁷ *This is Spinal Tap* (Dir. Christopher Guest, 1984).

assumed reality against blatant fiction in the form of the B-Movie. Doing so highlights the distinction between two supposed opposites. In turn, presenting the film as a mockumentary rather than an outright documentary parodies the notion of representation, since both mockumentary and the B-Movie are forms of fiction, further underlining the fact that all forms of representation are merely a view of an event.

4. **B - MOVIE**

The B-movie makes no attempt at realistic representation. This is one of the reasons why it was chosen in order to juxtaposed next to a genre that perpetuates the notion of truth. B-Movies are fictional representations that due to their historical rushed productions, utilized stereotypes and tropes for quick productions. As such, it perfectly parallels documentary's notions of 'real' representations. The reason for this is to display that the degree of deception regarding representation matters not, truth is unattainable. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first being the History of the B-Movie and what defines a B-Movie as a term (specifically, the economic reason why the B-Movie was created), moving on to how the term evolved over the decades and what the term means in modern dialogue. This is followed by a breakdown of the Aesthetics of the B-Movie, discussing what the aesthetics were with the 30s/40s interpretation of the B-Movie. However, as the B-Movie became splintered and divided over the decades, the discussion will continue with what possible aesthetics modern B-Movies might possess. From there, a Personal History with the production of B-Movies will be given, discussing what was learnt while making these films. The chapter concludes with a justification of why this filmic style was incorporated into the practice-led research *Humanoid From Wales*, specifically why the B-Movie is an apt genre to research stereotypes and tropes.

History of the B-Movie

This section gives a description of how the term B-Movie came into the public zeitgeist, specifically, the socio-economical origin of the term. It should be noted that the term 'B-Movie' in its modern day usage is significantly different to the term's origin. It will be shown that the term is used in modern times to signify a film that is conventionally from the horror or science fiction genres and that has a conventional "cookie cutter" plot with clichéd characters. However, the original use of the term related specifically to a group of films that were produced in the 30s and 40s. These films could be westerns, film noirs or horror, or any kind of film produced cheaply and quickly. Primarily, the term B-Movie, throughout its history, is used as a derogatory term that denotes a lesser film, be it in its original incarnation as a quickly made film to accompany the bigger budgeted 'A-Movie', or in its modern day usage as a sign of lazy writing and unoriginal story telling. The B-Movie is described

by the Oxford dictionary as; ‘a low-budget film of inferior quality made for use as a supporting feature in a cinema programme’.³³⁸ However, this description suits the terms historical use, but not its evolution. The B-Movie is a historical artefact that has evolved from a second-tier production to being, arguably, the modern A-Movie, since many of the big budgeted blockbusters could be viewed as B-Movies. This is, if the B-Movie is classified as a B-Movie due to recycled plot lines and subject matter rather than by production budget. Eight out of the ten highest box office earners of all time are, arguably, B-Movies.³³⁹ However, by the original definition, if the budget and production value of the film define its classification as a B-Movie, then none of the top ten films could be considered B-Movies. Arguably, if production budget defines modern day B-Movies, independent films such as *Clerks*,³⁴⁰ *Mean Streets*³⁴¹ and *Easy Rider*³⁴² should be classed a B-Movies.³⁴³ The aim of this chapter is to discuss the origins of the B-Movie in its historical context and expand on how the term continues to mean a production of lesser value, even though the term should not technically exist post 1950s.

The film industry during the 1920s became one of the world’s biggest entertainment industries.³⁴⁴ However, the Wall-Street Crash in 1929 had a massive effect on this blossoming industry. When the Great Depression reached the Hollywood film industry it had a monumental effect, ‘theatre admissions fell from 90 million per week to 60 million, gross industry profit fell from \$730 million to about \$480 million’.³⁴⁵ To counteract this the film industry, the studios and theatres, attempted to entice patrons by offering double-features, making ticket sales ‘a tempting two-fer’.³⁴⁶ The A-Movie primarily had the named stars and a big budget, while the Bs had relatively unknown actors and a limited budget. Solman stated that the meaning of the ‘B’ was twofold; ‘B stood for budget (low) as well as for something-less-than-A’,³⁴⁷ since B-Movies, conventionally, were ‘quickly and

³³⁸ B-Movie Description, *Oxford Dictionary*: <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/b-movie>> [Last accessed 2016].

³³⁹ *All Time Box Office*: <<http://www.boxofficemojo.com/alltime/world/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁴⁰ *Clerks* (dir. Kevin Smith, 1994).

³⁴¹ *Mean Streets* (dir. Martin Scorsese, 1993).

³⁴² *Easy Rider* (dir. Dennis Hopper, 1969).

³⁴³ The 50 Greatest American Independent Movies, *Empire Magazine Online*: <<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/features/50-greatest-american-indies/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁴⁴ Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *The Oxford history of world cinema*, (Oxford: University Press, 1997), p. 220.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ Gregory Solman, ‘The Bs of summer,’ *Film Comment* (Vol. 29:4, 1993): p. 19-22.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

cheaply made, formula fare'.³⁴⁸ As a result a slew of B-Movie production companies were established, companies such as Monogram and Republic. However, Bs were made by both high- and low-end production companies, companies such as Warner, RKO and Fox. Nonetheless, new B-Movie studios were born, the two principals being Republic and Monogram.³⁴⁹

During this time Hollywood studios system were in charge of films from conception right through to distribution because they owned a number of theatre chains: in essence, they had a monopoly on the market.³⁵⁰ This all changed when Antitrust Laws were introduced in order to stop studios from owning theatres on distributing their own films. As a result the film industry changed, and the B-Movie studios suffered. This meant that theatres did not offer the double feature in the form of the 'A' and 'B' and as such the economical classification of the B-Movie ended.

Davis believes the original meaning of the term B-Movie:

*the film industry saw a period of great success that lasted between fifteen and twenty years, from the early 1930s to the late 1940s. This period is referred to by many as the 'Golden Age' of Hollywood, and when it ended, so too did the B's according to the economic definition of the B-movie.*³⁵¹

She continues by stating that the term B-Movie then evolved: 'While the economic definition of the B-movie stresses a political economy approach, definitions inherent to contemporary models of the B-Movie are fundamentally different'.³⁵² Through Fiske's theory regarding 'cultural economy',³⁵³ the concept of the B-Movie changed from being a financial definition to a genre that is defined by its abilities, how it... 'circulates meanings and pleasures'.³⁵⁴ The 50s B-Movie became defined as 'B-film typically incorporate an examination of the B's through the context of audience reception, via such approaches as 'camp theory' and considerations of 'trash aesthetics'.³⁵⁵ Critics of the time were very sceptical of B-Movies of the period, 'It

³⁴⁸ Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *The Oxford history of world cinema*, (Oxford: University Press, 1997), p. 220.

³⁴⁹ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 18.

³⁵⁰ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016].

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ John Fiske, 'Understanding pop culture.' *Reading the Popular* (Vol. 1-13, 1989), p. 26.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 38.

became fashionable to disdain the black-and-white 'cheapies' made during the 1950s. [...] By categorizing certain films or groups of films as either 'worthwhile' or 'worthless,' these film fans believed they would legitimize their devotion to the genre in the eyes of their compatriots.³⁵⁶ Davis states that the study of B-Movies (following the end of the classic meaning of the term) becomes problematic, as there is not a specific group of films that can be defined as B-Movies. The B-Movie was relegated into meaning 'quickies,' 'cheapies,' 'low-budget,' or simply 'budget films'.³⁵⁷

In essence, the B-Movie label became anything that, 'the 'B' label has often been used to imply minor pictures or simply poor filmmaking, anything tacky or produced on a low-budget.'³⁵⁸ Twitchell argues that the reason for this is that tastes changed over the 70s and 80s and that 'almost by definition, what a generation ago would have been labelled common, unwashed, scumular, barbaric, or vulgar'.³⁵⁹ Davis argues that B-Movies have been analysed academically in a condescending manner: 'there has often been a tendency for 1950s B-Movies to be discussed with an undertone of condescension or bemusement - or treated as quaint anomalies at best'.³⁶⁰ Dixon agrees that B-Movies are viewed with contempt: 'they may be entertaining to read, and even factually accurate, they encourage the reader simply to belittle all 'B' movies, as if any film produced on a low-budget in a short period of time must be inherently worthless',³⁶¹ That 'the 'B' label has often been used to imply minor pictures or simply poor filmmaking, anything tacky or produced on a low budget'.³⁶² Davis progresses in her argument that B-Movies taxonomy becomes problematic past the 30s and 40s as 'labels such as trash cinema, cinéma vomitif and Sconce's paracinema have alternately been referred to by some as 'bad' films'.³⁶³

³⁵⁶ Randy Palmer, Paul Blaisdell, *Monster Maker: A Biography of the B Movie Makeup and Special Effects Artist* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1997), p. 252.

³⁵⁷ Blair Davis, *The Battle for the Bs: 1950s Hollywood and the rebirth of low-budget cinema* (Rutgers UP, 2012), p. 313.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ James Twitchell, *Carnival Culture: The Trashing of Taste in America* (New York: Columbia UP, 1992) p. 2.

³⁶⁰ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 44.

³⁶¹ Winston Wheeler Dixon, *The 'B' Directors: A Biographical Directory* (Metuchen, NJ.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985) p. 1.

³⁶² Bernard F. Dick, *The Merchant Prince of Poverty Row: Harry Cohn of Columbia Pictures* (Lexington: Kentucky UP, 1993) p. 120.

³⁶³ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 37.

However, Davis concludes that B-Movie classification changed over the decades from the B-Movie to being:

*less a distinct group of films than a particular reading protocol, a counter-aesthetic turned subcultural sensibility devoted to all manner of cultural detritus. In short, the explicit manifesto of paracinematic culture is to valorize all forms of cinematic 'trash', whether such films have been rejected or simply ignored by legitimate film culture.*³⁶⁴

Over the decades these B-Movies have been called terms including 'exploitation',³⁶⁵ 'grindhouse',³⁶⁶ 'cult', 'bad',³⁶⁷ 'shlock',³⁶⁸ 'camp',³⁶⁹ and 'trash'.³⁷⁰

Even though the classic use of the term ended in the 1940s, B-Movies continue to exist in the modern day, film critics in Empire magazine often review modern films as such, describing plot elements from *Equilibrium*³⁷¹ as: 'the usual B-movie sci-fi elements are satisfyingly present and correct'.³⁷² Describing the film *Howl*³⁷³ as: 'An unashamed B picture, but fun',³⁷⁴ and explaining how to place *Prometheus* in the Alien movie series timeline: 'Okay, first things first. Is it or is it not an Alien prequel? Yes, it is contained within the same universe and occurs prior (2093) to Scott's transcendent B-movie and subsequent chest-aches'.³⁷⁵ Post the 30s and 40s the term B-Movie is essentially used to describe any film that is formulaic and contains recurring motives. McCarthy and Flynn state that 'almost all of the s/k/h movies fit into some generic pigeonhole. And, as we all know, genre movies are "unoriginal". They have conventions that must be observed – the Good guy, the Happy Ending, the Mad Scientist.'³⁷⁶ The term B-Movie has evolved into describing

³⁶⁴ Jeffrey Sconce, "'Trashing' the academy: taste, excess, and an emerging politics of cinematic style," *Screen*. 36:4 (Winter 1995), p. 371.

³⁶⁵ Eric Shaeffer, *Bold! Daring! Shocking! True! A History of Exploitation Films, 1919-1959* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), p. 2.

³⁶⁶ Deborah Cartmell, *Trash aesthetics: popular culture and its audience* (Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997), p. 68-69.

³⁶⁷ Larry Buchanen, *It Came From Hunger!: Tales of a Cinema Schlockmeister* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996) p. 190.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Paul Roen, *High camp: a gay guide to camp and cult films* (Vol. 1. Leyland Pubns, 1993).

³⁷⁰ Mikita Brottman, *Offensive films: Toward an Anthropology of Cinéma Vomitif* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997) p. 4.

³⁷¹ *Equilibrium* (dir. Kurt Wimmer, 2002).

³⁷² Equilibrium Film Review, *Empire Online Review*: <<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/equilibrium/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁷³ *Howl* (dir. Paul Hyett, 2015).

³⁷⁴ Howl Film Review, *Empire Magazine Online Review*: <<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/howl-2/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁷⁵ Prometheus Film Review, *Empire Online Review*: <<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/prometheus-2/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁷⁶ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 6.

a genre film or bad film, there is no one definition for the term, the only consistency is that the term is used when a critic is referencing to something's flaws. However, Flynn and McCarthy argue that the modern day equivalents of the B-Movie are Independent movies:

*Since the mid-1950s, we have been in what might be called the 'Exploitation' B period (although many contemporary producers wish to avoid the B designation altogether). These films are usually low-budget and they are usually formulaic; but they aren't designed for the bottom of the bill anymore - or for double bills at all. And the distribution rules are out the window.*³⁷⁷

This is supported by Boyle who believes that; 'contemporary independent filmmaking stems from the films made outside of the major Hollywood studios'.³⁷⁸ The association of B-Movies with modern day independent film is, for the most part, from an economic standpoint, rather than a film's aesthetic look. But modern day micro budget filmmaking and independent films have more in common with the original meaning of the term B-Movie than modern day, studio produced, high budget films that are described as B-Movies.

Aesthetically the films of Christopher Mihm, or films from the Nihmiverse³⁷⁹ identifiable as B-Movies, are described as 'retro b-movie'.³⁸⁰ They are films made on a micro-budget with inexperienced actors and crew, made with a passion for the genre rather than for financial gain:

I made my first film as a tribute to my late father. Growing up he and I would bond by watching those cheesy old movies together. [...] I felt like I wanted to make a movie that my dad would have loved and one he and I would have enjoyed watching together. This is where "The Monster of Phantom Lake" came from. After releasing it, I had the opportunity to screen it at a drive-in in Wisconsin. Seeing it up on that giant drive-in screen was transcendent! Experiencing my cheesy 1950s-style B-movie at a

³⁷⁷ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 6.

³⁷⁸ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 341.

³⁷⁹ <<http://www.sainteuphoria.com/>> [Last accessed 2017].

³⁸⁰ <<http://www.roguecinema.com/an-interview-with-christopher-r-mihm-by-duane-l-martin-2.html>> [Last accessed 2017].

drive-in is one of the greatest moments of my life because it was THE perfect place to see it. I literally rank that experience up there with the births of my children!³⁸¹

Nihm states that his films are not conventionally successful as his films rarely make huge financial returns,³⁸² yet his films normally ‘break even at best’.³⁸³ However, he considers his films successful if they ‘make people happy’.³⁸⁴ His films are shown in a number of venues at ‘drive ins’, where he states that ‘people come up to me’ stating that viewing his movies have become a ‘family tradition’.³⁸⁵ Therefore, from an economical stand point his films do not share the same ‘made for profit’ goals as the original 30s a 40s B-Movies. His films primarily can be seen as an aesthetic relative to the original B-Movie. Both look alike, however, the purpose for their production are vastly different. Therefore, more will be discussed regarding films from the Mihmivers in the following section.

The term B-Movie evolved from a very specific description; a film that is made for little money with the sole purpose of being included as a supporting act for a major motion picture with a large budget and big named stars. The modern day term has multiple definitions; one definition is films produced by studios such as *Troma* and *Asylum*. These two studios produce quickly made, low-budget, genre films. However, *The Asylum* somewhat contradicts the original meaning of the term as a number of their films such as *Sharknado*, *Blood Lake* and *Android Cop* include big named stars such as Tara Reid, Shannen Doherty and Michael Jai White. Another definition of the term is merely a genre film, where budget and name recognition are not an issue for the term’s use, examples of which are the newest interpretation of Godzilla:

the Brit director’s take on the Toho studio icon gives full reign to his ability to create compelling imagery and a knockout monster mash. It’s a shame, then, that the movie gets caught between honouring the character’s B-movie conceit AND delivering a let’s-take-everything-seriously approach de rigueur in post-Dark Knight Blockbusterdom. If any film needed a sense of levity, it is one about a 355-

³⁸¹ <http://www.roguecinema.com/an-interview-with-christopher-r-mihm-by-duane-l-martin-2.html> [Last accessed 2017].

³⁸² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=261Pnx7KWs0> [Last accessed 2017].

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

*foot lizard hitting stuff.*³⁸⁶

Recently *Pacific Rim* was described as ‘a big, brash, unpretentious B movie that lives down to its billing: robots punching monsters — it does what it says on the Rim.’³⁸⁷

As well as *Super 8*;

*Abrams slipping gears into B-movie short-cuts. And while intriguingly Tolkienian in close-up, the alien turns out a confusing concept: evil yet wronged, beastly yet advanced, enigmatic yet possessed of a convenient telepathy to circumvent narrative snarl-ups.*³⁸⁸

These three movies alone had a combined budget of \$400 million, with named stars such as Idris Elba, Ron Pearlman and Brian Cranston to name but a few. These three alone are currently some of the biggest names in the film industry. The three features were directed by JJ Abrams, Guillermo del Toro and Gareth Edwards, directors who are praised for their work rather than lambasted by critics for indulging in B-Movie fare. The B-Movie is the Hollywood summer blockbuster, since *Jaws*,³⁸⁹ *Star Wars*³⁹⁰ and *Indiana Jones*³⁹¹ have all been described as B-Movies. This interpretation of B-Movie merely refers to genre film that relies on themes that were prevalent in B-Movies from either the 30s/40s or the 50s. *Jaws* ‘as a cultural phenomenon, the real story of *Jaws* is how a B-movie-style creature-feature became a genre-defining blockbuster that changed the face of modern cinema.’³⁹² While *Star Wars*’ George Lucas [...] ‘turned the B-Movie into every studio’s A-list.’³⁹³ Arguably, the B-Movie is the modern day A-Movie if the 30s and 40s classification of the B-Movie applies. These are the movies that have the highest budgets, the biggest named stars and are given priority by film distributors.

The third and final definition of the term is merely; independent and micro

³⁸⁶ Godzilla Film Review, *Empire Magazine Online Review*:
<<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/godzilla-2/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁸⁷ Pacific Rim Film Review, *Empire Magazine Online Review*:
<<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/pacific-rim/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁸⁸ Super 8 Film Review, *Empire Magazine Online Review*:
<<http://www.empireonline.com/movies/super-8/review/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁸⁹ Mark Kermode, *Jaws*, 40 years on: ‘One of the truly great and lasting classics of American cinema’ <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/may/31/jaws-40-years-on-truly-great-lasting-classics-of-america-cinema>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁹⁰ *Star Wars* (dir. George Lucas, 1977).

³⁹¹ Adam Chitwood, ‘Indiana Jones’ Movies Ranked from Worst to Best’, *Collider Article*:
<<http://collider.com/best-indiana-jones-movies-ranked-worst-to-best/>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁹² Mark Kermode, *Jaws*, 40 years on: ‘One of the truly great and lasting classics of American cinema’ <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/may/31/jaws-40-years-on-truly-great-lasting-classics-of-america-cinema>> [Last accessed 2016].

³⁹³ David Brin and Matthew Woodring (eds.), *Stover Star Wars on Trial: The Force Awakens Edition: Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Texas: BenBella Books, 2015).

budget filmmaking. Small budget filmmaking is made with no named-stars, with minimal crew and nearly no budget. It seems that the term in its modern usage is rarely used in reference to the mode of production and is for the most part used to describe genre films that can be described as ‘creature features’, ‘sci-fi adventures’ or ‘slather films’. The modern day usage of the word has very little in common with its origins and is rarely used to refer to westerns or gangster films.

The key point that should be taken from this section is the fact that the term B-Movie identifies a lesser quality product, this is regardless of the terms original definition. If the original use of the term was used correctly, independent films such as *The Usual Suspects*,³⁹⁴ *Reservoir Dogs*³⁹⁵ and *El Mariachi*³⁹⁶ could be classified as B-Movie noir films. However, the predominant use of the term in modern usage denotes, a film regardless of budget, as containing recycled elements and over used film motives. What follows is more detailed analysis of what aesthetically defines a B-Movie from different periods.

Aesthetics of a B-Movie

This section discusses exclusively the subject matter, aesthetic and mode of production of B-Movies, starting with the classic 30s and 40s B-Movies, moving on to the atomic age B-Movies of the 50s, closing with the genre’s eventual divide into high budget genre films and micro budget independent films. As stated in the previous chapter, the term B-Movie began as a term that referred to films that were created in order to create the double bill, giving cinema-goers a more enticing cinema experience. As a result, these original B-Movies were designed to be low-budget, quick films to produce:

B-Movies from the classic period were produced as cost effective as possible. This started primarily from the scripting process, films used as little sets as possible, characters would start scene in rooms rather than make an entrance due to the risk of the actor missing their mark and needing to have a second take.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ *The Usual Suspects* (dir. Brian Singer, 1995).

³⁹⁵ *Reservoir Dogs* (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1992).

³⁹⁶ *El Mariachi* (dir. Robert Rodriguez, 1992).

³⁹⁷ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 22.

A further example of this is the fact that ‘the Bs of the classic period were also always black and white, again due to budgeting reasons’.³⁹⁸ Often these films were so limited in their budget that extreme measures were taken in order to have numerous locations: ‘Why build an entire ballroom set at great expense. [...] (when you can rear) project the ballroom as a background behind a few actors?’³⁹⁹ B-Movies from the 40s took away any element of filmmaking that required any type of complexity to ensure the shoot went as quickly and smoothly as possible. Regular film production conventionally requires a great deal of blocking; what this means is that actors will rehearse their movements before filming so that the camera is in the correct location to capture their actions or that the actors do not bump into one another during the scene. However, scenes in B-Movies often faded in with the actors already at their marks, the characters would speak their lines and then the scene would end with another fade. McCarthy and Flynn believe that ‘this elimination of stage business, of entrances and exits, gives most Bs a strange, almost cryptic air of flatness and unreality’.⁴⁰⁰ Another reason why entering and exiting a scene were not required was because the sets were so poorly made that often the entire wall shook if the door was opened or closed. McCarthy and Flynn stated that, ‘A “B” movie is a movie in which the sets shake when an actor slams the door’.⁴⁰¹

B-Movies of the 40s were quickly made films with amateur crews, amateur actors, and could be any genre. The most prominent B-Movies of the 30s and 40s were ‘Westerns, gangster flicks, horror sci-fi movies, teenpix.’⁴⁰² The big change occurred with the introduction of the anti-trust laws, which fundamentally changed film production. During this time the B-Movie genre changed as well. The technical term for a B-Movie no longer applied, since production studios no longer produced two films in order to offer the double feature. However, what the antitrust law did was enable independent filmmakers access to making and releasing films; this helped usher in a new period for the B-Movie. Davis argues that this brought about the exploitation period.⁴⁰³ However, Andrews believes that B-Movies ‘can be made in any era, but the golden age was the 1950s and 1960s, when a public fascination with

³⁹⁸ Don Miller, “B” Movies (New York: Ballantine, 1988), p.15.

³⁹⁹ Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 341.

⁴⁰⁰ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn, *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 22.

⁴⁰¹ Barry Atkinson, *Atomic Age Cinema: The Offbeat, the Classic and the Obscure* (Parkville: Midnight Marquee Press, 2014), p. 10.

⁴⁰² Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 6.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 34.

outer space and fear of nuclear annihilation were at their zenith.⁴⁰⁴ Exploitation cinema is a wide-ranging field, as such this thesis will concentrate on one branch of the B-Movie evolutionary divide, specifically the 'Atomic Age: B-Movies'.

The 30s and 40s horror/sci-fi films were more concerned with folklore and myths, e.g. monsters like Frankenstein, Dracula and the Wolf Man. Following the end of the Second World War, and the fact that the atomic bomb had been dropped on Japan twice, the world saw a new wave of B movies, and after the seeming UFO crash landing in New Mexico, 'Horror, science fiction and fantasy cinema undergoes a renaissance'.⁴⁰⁵ Thematically, the 50s B-Movie changed; 'it's a fact – the explosion of fantasy films that sprung forth unchecked from the 1950s bore little resemblance to the product of the previous two decades.'⁴⁰⁶

The B-Movie economic label no longer applied, however, budgets remained low, with the main difference being that the subject matter of the titles changed. In the 50s there was a massive rise in the number of sci-fi movies created; films that oriented on either aliens attacking earth or the mutation of an animal that in turn went on a path of destruction. This was primarily spawned by fears that stemmed both from the use of the atomic bomb and the ramifications of its use. The creatures in these movies were metaphors for a larger more complex fear; 'the monster is the symbol of what we have to fear: it is not fear itself; it is the horror of what we have done, scientifically and militarily, to bring the world to the brink of destruction'.⁴⁰⁷ These films asked questions regarding 'the serious ethical implications of atomic use and development.'⁴⁰⁸ Davis' belief was that this was the exploitation period for the B-Movie, and in part this is true as these films exploited the fears and the lack of understanding the general public had in regard to new technologies and the advancement of science.⁴⁰⁹ A number of American films used the nuclear threat merely as a tool to create a monster, in Japan a similar trend occurred. However, in Japan the genre went by the name Kaju Eiga. Similarly to their American

⁴⁰⁴ Marke Andrews, *The Return of the B—Movie: B—Movies Feature Awful Acting, Bad Dialogue and Cheap Special Effects. So, What's Not to Like* (Vancouver Sun, March 13, 2004), D1.

⁴⁰⁵ Barry Atkinson, *Atomic Age Cinema: The Offbeat, the Classic and the Obscure* (Parkville: Midnight Marquee Press, 2014), p. 10.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Brian Murphy, "Monster Movies: They Came from Beneath the Fifties." *Journal of Popular Film* (Vol. 1:1, 1972): 31-44, p. 38.

⁴⁰⁸ Joyce A. Evans, *Celluloid mushroom clouds: Hollywood and the atomic bomb* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), p. 77.

⁴⁰⁹ David Kalat, *The Critical History and Filmography of Toho's Godzilla Series* (London: MacFarland & Company Inc, 2007), p. 13.

counterpart, the Kaju films involved massive creatures that had mutated due to nuclear fallout. Godzilla, one of the successes of the B-Movie genre is a prime case study of how these films used radioactively mutated monsters as metaphors for nuclear war. The plot of the film parallels the real life events that occurred during the Second World War, with Godzilla being an avatar for the atomic bomb.⁴¹⁰ However, Godzilla was Toho's second highest budgeted film of the year, this making it different to the B-Movies produced in America.⁴¹¹ Davis believes that there were three levels of B-Movies that existed during this period.⁴¹² The high-end B-Movies were produced by the Hollywood studios such as Columbia and Universal, films such as *Tarantula*,⁴¹³ *Revenge of the Creature*⁴¹⁴ and *Earth Vs the Flying Saucers*.⁴¹⁵ The mid-end B-Movies were produced by AIP, and the low-end being essentially independent films (such as the films of Ed Wood). This was a time when budget did not specifically identify the B-Movie, since B-Movies were being made with a range of budgets. Overall, what changed aesthetically is that the term B-Movie became the genre of the 'creature feature' or 'the space invaders'. A genre film has been the predominant use of the term right up to the present day.

Chronicling the aesthetic of the B-Movie from this point seems problematic, as the true meaning of term itself is debatable. The term has become a short hand manner to address 'creature features', genre film or independent film; 'Today the B designation - whether offered as damnation or praise has become a set of aesthetic criteria, not a matter of budget, ambition, or distribution pattern.'⁴¹⁶ However, Christopher Mihm is a filmmaker that has taken the B-Movie aesthetics and applied it to create modern interpretations of 'cheesy 1950s-style B-movie'.⁴¹⁷ His films have a micro budget but modern cameras and CGI equipment, yet stay strikingly similar to the aesthetics of the 40s and 50s, meaning that his films are all black and white. The monsters or aliens in Mihm's films are humans in costumes, the

⁴¹⁰ David Kalat, *The Critical History and Filmography of Toho's Godzilla Series* (London: MacFarland & Company Inc, 2007), p. 14.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Blair Davies, *The 1950s B-Movie: The Economics of Cultural Production* <http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1473877743716~778> (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), [Last accessed 2016], p. 279.

⁴¹³ *Tarantula* (dir. Jack Arnold, 1955).

⁴¹⁴ *Revenge of the Creature* (dir. Jack Arnold, 1955).

⁴¹⁵ *Earth Vs the Flying Saucers* (dir. Fred F. Sears, 1956).

⁴¹⁶ Gregory Solman, 'The Bs of summer,' *Film Comment* (Vol. 29:4, 1993): p. 11.

⁴¹⁷ <<http://www.roguecinema.com/an-interview-with-christopher-r-mihm-by-duane-l-martin-2.html>> [Last accessed 2017].

only exception to this rule is the creature in the film *The Giant Spider*⁴¹⁸, which was created using CGI. This was done intentionally to replicate the rear projection effect used in B-Movies of the 30s and 40s, such as *King Kong*,⁴¹⁹ and a staple of the genre in the 50s (see films such as *Godzilla*,⁴²⁰ *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*⁴²¹ and *Tarantula*⁴²²). The difference between Mihm's films and those that attempt to capture 'the genre's essence' (films such as *Mars Attacks!* and *The Lost Skeleton of Cadavra*) in Mihm's opinion is that they have 'a budget that made anything possible, doesn't have the authentic feel of those old movies'⁴²³ and that these films are 'a straightforward comedic spoof, poking fun at the wooden acting, low-budget effects and nonsensical plots.'⁴²⁴ Whereas Mihm's films are:

'serious attempts at making 'good movies' which are [then] presented in a very specific style. I direct actors to ignore the sometimes ridiculous nature of the situations their characters are in. I make it clear that, in the universe of these films, that man in a monster costume is a deadly creature and [my actors] should act as such. This earnest seriousness, and a palpable 'community theatre vibe', captures that old 'look and feel' so well.'⁴²⁵

In Mihm's opinion, films such as *Mars Attacks!*,⁴²⁶ *Eight Legged Freaks*,⁴²⁷ *The Lost Skeleton of Cadavra*⁴²⁸ and *Slither*⁴²⁹ are films designed as tongue-in-check, campy spoofs of the genre and its tropes rather than an honest attempt at replication of a B-Movie.

⁴¹⁸ *The Giant Spider* (Dir. Christopher R. Mihm, 2013).

⁴¹⁹ *King Kong* (Dir. Merian Caldwell Cooper and Ernest Beaumont Schoedsack, 1933).

⁴²⁰ *Godzilla* (Dir. Ishiro Honda, 1954).

⁴²¹ *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (Dir. Eugène Lourié, 1953).

⁴²² *Tarantula* (Dir. Jack Arnold, 1955).

⁴²³ <<http://screen-space.squarespace.com/features/2015/10/28/schlock-and-awe-the-christopher-r-mihm-interview.html>> [Last accessed 2017].

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ *Mars Attacks!* (Dir. Tim Burton, 1996).

⁴²⁷ *Eight Legged Freaks* (Dir. Ellory Elkayem, 2002).

⁴²⁸ *Skeleton of Cadavra* (Dir. Larry Blamire, 2001).

⁴²⁹ *Slither* (Dir. James Gunn, 2006).

Personal Experience with B-Movie

This section will include my own personal history with B-Movies, specifically fictional, genre films. These films were made for personal advancement rather than professional, financial gain. All three films can be classified by both the classical use of 'B-Movie' as well as any modern day definition of the term, since all films were made on no budget, by inexperienced crew/actors, in genres that are predominantly classified as B-Movies, e.g. Horror and science fiction.

The first fictional narrative film I created was *Zombie Dawn*⁴³⁰ which was produced as a dissertation film for my undergraduate degree in Communications and Media (through the medium of Welsh). The plot revolves around a fly-like virus that turns infected people into zombies. The main protagonist of the film is Cormac, an Irish man who has moved to Wales and is trying to learn Welsh. The film chronicles his last day as a Welsh militia attempts to clear Anglesey of the zombie threat. The short was very crudely shot over the course of two years, using my parent's bakery as a location. All the cast were friends and family and it has a *cinema verite* aesthetic due to lack of access to professional lighting equipment. I was required to be the scriptwriter, director, actor, make-up artist, set designer, editor, camera and sound. Due to my numerous roles on the film, Corman would class the film as a "B-Movie short", from an aesthetical and cultural standpoint.⁴³¹

The main lesson learnt from making *Zombie Dawn* was to "write small"; the original script included six cast members and a scene in which a character drives a van through a large group of zombies. The scene were storyboarded and seemed possible. In retrospect, a one-man crew made such elaborate plans impossible. Therefore, the film was stripped of its big set pieces and concentrated on making a smaller story that focused on one man's struggle in a post-apocalyptic future. Although the scale was possibly downsized, the overall themes of the original script remained in the downsized film. The film attempted to comment on the debate regarding the use of Welsh language in Wales, in regard to incomers. The film's narrative attempted to mirror the plot of *Night of the Living Dead*, replacing the American Black Commentary with Welsh language rights. It showcased that racism in Wales towards English incomers (in regard to terms such as 'twill tin pob sais' - Up

⁴³⁰ *Zombie Dawn* (dir. Siôn Griffiths, 2001).

⁴³¹ Beverly Gray, *Roger Corman: An Unauthorized Biography of the Godfather of Indie Filmmaking* (Los Angeles: Renaissance Books, 2000) p. 53.

yours all English people) was misinformed and bigoted. Therefore, zombies played a very small part in the overall film and were merely seen behind closed doors. This was intended as a metaphor that zombies can be seen as the 'other', while the Welsh militia represented that aspects of Welsh culture which intend to protect the Welsh language are in fact alienating people from their cause.

The main aspects that were learnt from the film were both narrative and technical; no sound equipment was used other than the camera's internal microphone and as a result all the audio sounds very loose with a lot of room atmosphere. The problem with this is that the bakery is located next to a busy road, which meant that the sounds of cars passing by could be heard in the audio. This was covered up somewhat by introducing a sound space to the film, however, it seemed especially problematic in scenes where Cormac spoke. In narrative terms, the film was extremely nuanced to the point that a lot of the plot detail was missed by some audiences, such as a theme of a small child who crept behind the main character; which was meant to represent Cormac's guilt for having killed said child off screen.

The second B-Movie I produced was created as a dissertation film for Bangor University Media Practice MA. The film is called 2025 and revolves around a group of university students who survive in a world in which the ozone layer has mostly disappeared, meaning that exposure to direct sunlight harms humans. The main protagonists are Emma and Ted; their journey in the film is to visit the grave of their young child that died due to unknown events before the start of the film. While on their journey they are pursued by three cult members wearing pig masks. The film concludes with Emma losing hope in humanity and deciding to commit suicide by walking out into the sun unprotected. Again, much was learnt from this film in a narrative as well as a technical sense. The film was intended as dystopic future film, where the cult members represented humanity's greed, which had led to environmental disaster. The dead child represented the possible future that humanity has lost due to our exploitation of the planet. However, lack of financial backing was a major difficulty in the film, as the sun's rays needed to seem lethally strong. The film required that the landscape was unpopulated due to the death of most of the population and, secondly, plant life needed to be non-existent. It was possible to avoid unwanted human participation by mostly filming in the early hours of the morning. Still, it was impossible to avoid the great deal of plant life in north Wales, meaning that the landscape did not meet the required burnt aesthetic. Technically,

sound was again an issue; this time an external microphone was used, but the technician in charge of the sound department knew very little about where to position the microphone and as a result the audio has a lot of feedback. Narratively the film conveyed its overall environmental message much more prominently than *Zombie Dawn*. However, the film failed to establish a larger scale and it therefore felt as though the massive world event seemed smaller than intended.

The third and final B-movie production experience was also a dissertation film produced for the New York Film Academy. The film was titled *Last Train Home*. Its plot was taken from an urban legend; the film centred on three friends commuting home after a night out. The three take the subway home and while on the subway the protagonist, Linda (played by Lara Fisher), notices an older lady. Sat next to her is a man in a hoodie, who is staring at Linda. Two of the friends reach their stop and leave Linda alone on the train. Now alone, Linda is suddenly approached by a random person, insisting that she exits the train. After much coaxing Linda follows the person off the train demanding an explanation. The mysterious person then explains that the woman staring at Linda was dead, suggesting that the person in the hoodie next to her had killed her. The film is currently on YouTube and has garnered 290,000 views, 3,000 likes and 300 dislikes. Technically this film worked as intended, meaning there were no sound issues or lighting issues. Narrative wise, there were no metaphors intentionally introduced into the film, this was merely an interpretation of an urban legend. The YouTube comment section gives some information of how the film was perceived; for the most part a large number of the commenters enjoyed this interpretation of the legend. The negative comments mostly centred on the dialogue, stating that the script was, for the most part, poorly written. The overwhelming lesson learnt from this production was the need to rehearse with actors, either on location or beforehand. This lack led to a number of YouTube comments stating that the acting was bad.

Over the course of making these films much was learnt in regard to technical technique and how to structure narrative. *Last Train Home* received a number of comments that stated that they did not understand the plot and that the killer was not identified clearly enough. Meanwhile, other comments defended the film's nuanced identification of said killer. At the forefront, all three films succeeded in being B-Movies in that they were made using a minimal crew, in minimal time and that the narratives (for the most part) worked to tell a scary story. The films taught me to

embrace the weaknesses of micro budget filmmaking in order to turn them into strengths. *Zombie Dawn* was shot entirely in one location, the zombies were not shown because I possessed little knowledge of zombie make-up and therefore the films plot had to be able to manoeuvre around this weakness. *Last Train Home* had two locations, both easily accessible because of the course I was taking part in. The only real failure amongst the three is *2025* because the film aimed to have the aesthetic of a *Mad Max*⁴³² film but North Wales is not an ideal location for arid landscapes.

Rationale for the use of the B-Movie

This section will rationally explain why the B-Movie genre was used in order to research Welsh stereotypes. However, the specific stereotypes researched in the film itself will be discussed in the following chapter as the film is specifically discussed.

There are four particular reasons why the B-Movie was chosen to research Welsh stereotypes. Firstly, the inspiration of the film primarily came from the allegory of Plato's hypothetical cave, the illusion of reality that film and television present to the audience. The film needed to be identifiable as a shadow on a cave wall contrasted to the real world, in order for the two sections of *Humanoids From Wales* to be visibly separate entities. Therefore, if documentary possesses the assumption of reality, the opposing element needed to be a stark contrast, and to be indefinable as a work of fiction.

B-Movie is a term that is often associated with the lesser: the name 'B-Movie' even implies the need for an 'A-Movie', however, the A-Movies are no longer addressed as such. The B-Movie is synonymous with lesser quality; 'One thing all these films [B-Movies] have in common - perhaps the *only* thing – is their utter disreputability'.⁴³³ This is visible in the term's classic usage as well as its modern day use. Any film described as B-Movie is often viewed as having lesser quality; a case study for this would be the career of James Cameron. He; 'cut his teeth as an assistant to B-movie producer Roger Corman',⁴³⁴ during which time he directed *Piranha 2*:

⁴³² Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 5.

⁴³³ *Piranha 2: The Spawning* (dir. James Cameron, 1981).

⁴³⁴ Xan Brooks, 'Avatar's 3D takes film to a new level (but you still need glasses)', *The Guardian Film Review*: <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/aug/21/avatar-3d-film-james-cameron>> [Last accessed 2016].

The Spawning.⁴³⁵ From there he developed technologies that dragged science fiction films; ‘out of their B-movie past’.⁴³⁶ However, from his breakout hit *The Terminator*⁴³⁷; ‘a B-movie with flair’,⁴³⁸ to the highest grossing film of all time, *Avatar*⁴³⁹; ‘the most expensive B-movie ever made’,⁴⁴⁰ James Cameron has arguably never strayed away from the B-Movie filmmaking (in regard to recycled plotlines and themes). However, the popular narrative maintains that ‘Cameron has been transformed from a B-movie filmmaker to a mainstream *conduit* for world affairs’.⁴⁴¹ The B-Movie classification of his films are regarded as potential pitfalls that his skill has managed to avoid, as the above description of *The Terminator* displays. *Avatar* is rarely described in reviews as a B-Movie, even though it has a number of B-Movie sensibilities such as its wealth of clichéd characters and recycled plot; ‘In terms of plot, then, this is “Dances With Wolves.” Seriously: It’s *the same movie*, re-imagined as a speculative-anthropological freak-out’.⁴⁴²

Reviewers often identify a film’s B-Movie roots and then decide if the film as a whole is considered good or bad, as a measure of its managing or failing to overcome said roots. Ridley Scott was praised for his approach to *Alien*⁴⁴³ because he would not treat the script as a ‘B monster movie’.⁴⁴⁴ And the his actors are applauded for the exact same treatment of the material; ‘It’s fascinating to see how much commitment the actors put into these scenes. Some actors might have looked at the script, saw an *It! The Terror From Beyond Space*-type B-movie and simply coasted through the shoot’.⁴⁴⁵ The B-Movie is often described as a fun but knowingly bad

⁴³⁵ Piranha 2: The Spawning (dir. James Cameron, 1981).

⁴³⁶ Bobby Johnson, ‘The technological secrets of James Cameron’s new film Avatar’, *The Guardian Article*: <<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/aug/20/3d-film-avatar-james-cameron-technology>> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴³⁷ *The Terminator* (dir. James Cameron, 1984).

⁴³⁸ Maslin, Janet, ‘The Screen: ‘Terminator,’ Suspense Tale’, *The New York Times Online*: <http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?_r=1&res=9D05E4D91539F935A15753C1A962948260> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴³⁹ *Avatar* (dir. James Cameron, 2009).

⁴⁴⁰ ‘Avatar – the Latest Anti-Western Movie From Hollywood’, *The Brussels Journal*: <<https://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/4225>> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁴¹ James Clarke, *The Cinema of James Cameron: Bodies in Heroic Motion* (Columbia: UP, 2014), p. 146.

⁴⁴² Avatar Film Review, *The Boston Globe Online*: <http://archive.boston.com/ae/movies/articles/2009/12/17/avatar_is_an_out_of_body_experience/?page=2> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁴³ *Alien* (dir. Ridley Scott, 1979).

⁴⁴⁴ David McIntee, *Beautiful Monsters: The Unofficial and Unauthorized Guide to the Alien and Predator Films* (London: Telos Publishing, 2005), p. 27.

⁴⁴⁵ Ryan Lambie, ‘Alien: how its physical acting makes a horror classic’, *Den of Geek*: <<http://www.denofgeek.com/uk/movies/alien/40879/alien-how-its-physical-acting-makes-a-horror-classic>> [Last accessed 2016].

film, as exemplified by the film *Black Sheep*⁴⁴⁶; '[the film] is a violent, grotesque, and very funny movie that takes B-movie lunacy to a delirious extreme',⁴⁴⁷ as well as *Eight Legged Freaks* description as 'A gem of a movie - a genuine "eww-gross" schlockhorror that's also a great send-up for fans of '50s B-movies'.⁴⁴⁸ When a particular B-Movie transcends the B-Movie status (e.g. *Indiana Jones* or *Star Wars*), the label is disregarded. The reason why this is relevant is because a similar effect occurs when discussing Wales; it has been discussed in a previous section that its association to England defines Wales.⁴⁴⁹ Using B-Movies as a genre/mode acts as an analogical sendup of the notion that Wales is the B-Movie to England's A-Movie. This is intended as a Bakhtinian carnival technique that lapoons the conflict between England and Wales, described by Morris as:

*The antipathy against Wales, [...] it is tinged always with contempt, and soured by incompleteness. Isn't Wales part of Britain — part of England, really? What's this nonsense about the revival of a language — don't they all speak English anyway?*⁴⁵⁰

Carnival enables one to parody the world by parodying oneself.⁴⁵¹ Making part of the film a B-Movie is intended to embody the stereotype, if England or Britain is the A-Movie, then Wales inhabits the world only as the B-Movie.

The B-Movie is not known for its originality or factual depiction of reality, in stark contrast 'you approach a B-Movie with other demands. [...] acting and action (or the suggestion of action) are the two most important B-movie components, set within the framework of a familiar story and familiar characterizations.'⁴⁵² As to the B-Movie audience; 'Often, we do not only accept the clichés but demand them, according to the picture's form: horror, mystery, Western, gangster musical.'⁴⁵³ In doing this the genre is known as films that 'generally, they lack originality; rely on

⁴⁴⁶ *Black Sheep* (dir. Jonathan King, 2006).

⁴⁴⁷ Black Sheep Film Review, *Rotten Tomatoes*: <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/black_sheep/> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁴⁸ Victor Olliver, Film Review, *Rotten Tomatoes*: <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/eight_legged_freaks/reviews/?page=2&sort=>> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁴⁹ See page 22.

⁴⁵⁰ Morris, Jan, 'Mocking the Welsh is the last permitted bigotry,' *The Spectator*: <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2009/07/mocking-the-welsh-is-the-last-permitted-bigotry/>> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁵¹ Mikhail Bakhtin (trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. Michael Holquist), 'Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,' in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 163.

⁴⁵² Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 57.

⁴⁵³ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 57.

repetition of stories, ideas, or gags; simplify storylines that beg for complex treatment; rework genre conventions into the most familiar trope.’⁴⁵⁴ This demand for repetition/tropes/stereotypes perfectly suited the allegory of film representing projections of reality. If B-movies rely on stereotypes it is therefore the perfect thing to use in order to research tropes. By using a platform such as the B-Movie to discuss stereotypes, it parodies those specific tropes by presenting them in clichéd ways, ‘a conceptually cheesy B-movie that doesn't take itself too seriously’.⁴⁵⁵ Newitz states that modern films are made intentionally ‘cheesy’ as it ‘describes both a parodic practice and a parodic form of textual consumption. It is the production of, and appreciation for, what is artificial, exaggerated, or wildly, explosively obscene.’⁴⁵⁶ He continues by stating that the uniting force in ‘cheesy’ films ‘is an idea of cheapness, usually a literal description of the low-budget production values of a B-movie.’⁴⁵⁷ It therefore seemed appropriate to use low-budget filmmaking techniques, as it was cheap (compared to the millions spent on regular, even independent or micro-budgeted films), and it was a way of ‘laughing at the racist historical “other.”’⁴⁵⁸ This was once aptly put, ‘Ultimately, cheese is the satire of narratives that could be called “cheap” for one reason or another.’⁴⁵⁹ This decision to highlight the ‘cheapness’ of *Humanoids From Wales* leads directly to the third reason why the B-Movie is a perfect platform to discuss Welsh stereotypes.

Boyle believes that modern day independent films have similar attributes to the classic 40s interpretation of the B-Movies.⁴⁶⁰ Neither Robert Rodriguez nor Sam Raimi had access to a professional steady-cam while making *El Mariachi* and *Evil Dead* (respectively). Instead, both developed techniques that became staples of their filmmaking styles. Similarly, Christopher Mihm believes that ‘a lack of resources forces me to do the best I can with what little I have. This mimics the ‘drive-in era’ of filmmaking, [when] filmmakers had to make things up as they went along’.⁴⁶¹ In turn, Mihm’s lack of resources gives his work the exact aesthetic look and charm that the audience levitate towards in his films. It was understood from the outset that the

⁴⁵⁴ Gregory Solman, ‘The Bs of summer,’ *Film Comment* (Vol. 29:4, 1993): p. 12.

⁴⁵⁵ Smart Popcom, <<http://www.smart-popcom.com/review/835/>> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁵⁶ Annalee Newitz, ‘What Makes Things Cheesy?: Satire, Multinationalism, and B-Movies’ *Social Text* (Vol. 18:2 2000), p. 61.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Barbara Boyle and Jason E. Squire (ed.), *The movie business book* (Simon and Schuster, 2004), p. 175.

⁴⁶¹ <<http://screen-space.squarespace.com/features/2015/10/28/schlock-and-awe-the-christopher-r-mihm-interview.html>> [Last accessed 2017].

practice element of the thesis would have a small fraction of the budget of the films it was researching, meaning *Humanoids From Wales* had a budget of around one thousand pounds while contemporary “low-budget” films such as *Way of Life* have a budget of 1.3 million.⁴⁶² *Humanoids* required a lot of willing participants who had no experience or prior knowledge of filmmaking. Similar circumstances were experienced by the creators of B-Movies, the genre is known for...

*The overlapping responsibilities [...] are highly similar to the shooting practices employed by many low-end B-movie filmmakers, including Jerry Warren. They can even be compared to an extent to the production methods of a middle-end B-movie director such as Roger Corman, whose actors describe regularly fulfilling duties behind the camera as well as in front of it.*⁴⁶³

It was known before shooting began that the cast and crew of the film would be friends, family and acquaintances; therefore, by revealing the film to be a work created by amateurs, it was inevitable that the film would have the B-Movie dynamic. It should also be understood that, I as a filmmaker have little experience in scriptwriting, therefore, it was understood that the script for the B-Movie would be amateur work. However, this is the exact manner in which Mihm writes his films as ‘I [Mihm] rarely [go] back and judiciously edit things after I finish the first draft. Since I’m making cheesy B-movies, I actually don’t want them to be “too perfect.” I like flaws. I feel they add to the authenticity of what I’m trying to accomplish!’⁴⁶⁴ Therefore, it was felt that my inexperience in scriptwriting would be a positive flaw or a happy accident in order to further embrace the B-Movie aesthetic.

In closing, the B-movie genre was used for four main reasons. Firstly, it paralleled the reality put forth by documentary. Secondly, it parodies its subject matter. Finally, because the film had a minimal budget, the film arguably could have been described as a B-Movie in the classic sense even if the aesthetic of the genre had not been embraced. However, a very important reason why the B-Movie was utilized as a tool to research Welsh representation was the urge to use the B-Movie in a carnival sense - to juxtapose Wales and the English language films against one another

⁴⁶² Emine Saner, 'Mum and dad never showed fear', *Evening Standard Online*: <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/film/mum-and-dad-never-showed-fear-7193589.html> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁶³ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 57.

⁴⁶⁴ <http://fastcheapmoviethoughts.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/christopher-mihm-on-giant-spider.html> [Last accessed 2017].

by making Wales and its people the very stereotypes that films perpetuated and thereby warped their national identity. In turn, turning the tables on the stereotypes, it intends to show the ridiculousness of said trope clearly identifying the ridiculousness of the idea behind the national identity. What follows in the next chapter is how the B-Movie was specifically used in order to parody selected Welsh stereotypes.

5. PRODUCTION

Before proceeding with discussing specific detail regarding the production of *Humanoids From Wales*, it seems appropriate to discuss in this introduction the creative process that laid the foundation for this research. As an academic researcher, the Wales I have seen in film and on television does not represent nor reflect the Wales I know or knew growing up. It is a foreign land that I have never encountered even though I have apparently lived in since birth. I have never worked in a mine, neither has any close relative, I can not sing or write poetry, and I would like to think of myself as not idiotic/sexually deviant or a substance abuser and I've never seen a rugby match. Therefore, the goal was to use the main influences I'd experienced living in Wales, mainly American films and BBC documentaries, to confront the fictional national identity Wales had been bestowed.

This chapter is broken down into three sections. They are titled; Welsh Flag, Mockumentary and B-Movie to coincide with the three different aspects of the practice element. Each section discusses the rationale and context for creative decisions made in the production, specifically, which stereotypes were evoked and explored in each section of the film. The chapter will conclude discussing the serendipitous discoveries that occurred during filming that lead to the final conclusion that analysis the film as well as the theoretical element as practice-led research and what this research has learnt.

Humanoids From Wales: Welsh Flag

The aim of this section is to justify why the short film was added to the production of *Humanoids From Wales*: specifically to set the tone of the film and set up stereotypes to be explored in the B-Movie and mockumentary.

The short film at the beginning is included for two reasons; firstly, to set the tone for the overall film, and secondly to establish the character traits of the protagonist. This will be discussed in detail in the mockumentary chapter. The main goal of this thesis and, in extension, *Humanoids From Wales* was to research Welsh stereotypes and representation in English language film using a practice-based methodology. The justification for using the mockumentary mode and B-Movie genre has previously been established. However, the uses of stereotypes within the film itself have yet to be discussed. What follows are the intentions behind some of the

creative decisions that were taken when creating the first chapter, specifically the short film discussing the Welsh flag. The film *Humanoids From Wales* is divided into three specific parts, the story of the Welsh flag, the mockumentary and the B-Movie.

However, they are all part of the overarching film.

The main focus when planning *Humanoids From Wales* was how to analyse stereotypes? At first, the concept was to juxtapose internal stereotypes with external ones. However, ‘Wales hasn’t got any history’⁴⁶⁵ according to Gethin in ‘*Cadw’r Chwedlau yn Fyw*’ (*Keeping the Legends Alive*). The character believed that the Welsh were ‘deceiving themselves with hand-me-down heroes or unreal clichés about nonconformity, radicalism, male choirs and rugby.’⁴⁶⁶ This sentiment was first addressed by Gwyn Williams:

Wales is a process.

Wales is an artefact which the Welsh produce.

The Welsh make and remake Wales

day by day, year by year, generation after generation

if they want to.⁴⁶⁷

Wales is as much a creation from outside as it is from within. The great tradition of the National Eisteddfod was revived to its current stature by Edward Williams (or Iolo Morganwg to use his bardic name), a man known for ‘elaborate fantasies, mythologizing and downright forgeries’.⁴⁶⁸ The Welsh harp was a creation of myth; John Parry helped to revive the triple harp as a Welsh bardic instrument, which was actually an adaption of the Italian baroque harp.⁴⁶⁹ What was learnt was that a number of iconic cultural characteristics of the Welsh from the inside were, in fact, re-creations of the past, or a re-interpretation. This inspired the idea of re-interpreting myths or old legends. The re-interpretation of history is a theme that has been dabbled with by a number of films. *Go*⁴⁷⁰, *Rashomon*⁴⁷¹ and *Courage Under Fire*⁴⁷² are just three examples where films show a singular event from the perspectives of different characters and therefore change the viewer’s perception of that event. This type of

⁴⁶⁵ Tony Curtis (ed.), *Wales: Imagined Nation* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986), p. 19.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 19.

⁴⁶⁷ Tony Curtis (ed.), *Wales: Imagined Nation* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986), p. 7.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 19.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 28 – 29.

⁴⁷⁰ *Go* (dir. Doug Liman, 1999).

⁴⁷¹ *Rashomon* (dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1950).

⁴⁷² *Courage Under Fire* (dir. Edward Zwick, 1996).

film narrative has now been classified as the “Rashomon effect”.⁴⁷³ This is often used in conjunction with an unreliable narrator, films such as *Usual Suspects*,⁴⁷⁴ *Memento*⁴⁷⁵ and *Fight Club*,⁴⁷⁶ where the narrator of the film (in these cases the protagonists’ recollection of events) is questionable. This kind of unreliable narrator coupled with the notion that Welsh characters are untrustworthy⁴⁷⁷ is the acorn that grew into the idea that became the tree that is *Humanoids From Wales*.

To clarify, the Welsh are predominantly stereotyped as being an untrustworthy people. From ‘Taffy is a Liar’ and ‘Welching on a bet’ to the brothers in *Twin Town* and the prostitute in *This is Life*, the Welsh cannot be trusted. This gave way to two concepts for the research film; the first was the idea that *Humanoids* could potentially be a retelling of historic events in Wales. However, this would have been problematic; as it has already been stated that documentary is my primary expertise, and secondly, as a micro budget filmmaker, access to period costumes and locations would have been very difficult to attain. Yet, it was still possible to include elements of the retelling of historical events using a technique known as ‘sweding’⁴⁷⁸. The term ‘sweding’ comes from the film *Be Kind Rewind*. The film deals with the notion of re-interpreting the past or pop culture; as such it became a main source of influence. The film revolves around a VHS rental shop in New York, owned by Danny Glover, who claims that the famous jazz musician Fats Waller was born in his VHS rental store. However, the store is in financial difficulty due to Glover’s inability to upgrade to DVD. Meanwhile, Glover goes on vacation, leaving Mos Def and Jack Black in charge of the store. Jack Black accidentally erases all the films from their VHS tapes. As a result, Def and Black attempt to remake all the lost films using props and materials found in any domestic setting, they eventually call this process ‘Sweding’, or as Jerry’s describes it; ‘It’s not the thing it was but now it’s a new thing based on the old thing.’⁴⁷⁹ Sweding is best described as:

the practice of recreating something from scratch using commonly available, everyday materials and technology. Items that are “sweded”

⁴⁷³ Haskins, Suzan, and Dan Prescher, ‘We Call it the Rashomon Effect’, *The Huffington Post Online*: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/suzan-haskins-and-dan-prescher/we-call-it-the-rashomon-e_b_4235194.html> [Last accessed 2016].

⁴⁷⁴ *Usual Suspects* (dir. Brian Singer, 1995).

⁴⁷⁵ *Memento* (dir. Christopher Nolan, 2000).

⁴⁷⁶ *Fight Club* (dir. David Fincher, 1999).

⁴⁷⁷ Edward D. Snyder, ‘The Wild Irish: A Study of Some English Satires against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh’, *Modern Philology* (Vol. 17:12, 1920), p. 153.

⁴⁷⁸ *Be Kind Rewind* (dir. Michel Gondry, 2008).

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

*look distinctively homemade, often bearing only the slightest resemblance to the original. While naïvely rendered, "Sweded" items are usually charming and highly amusing.*⁴⁸⁰

The 'sweded' films become a massive success in their small community, to the point where Black and Def become local celebrities. However, the studios that own the intellectual rights discover that they have been remaking Hollywood classics and seize all their films and demand that they stop making them. At this point, Glover discloses to Def that Fats Waller had never been born in the store. He then believes that Black and Def should make an original 'sweded' film with the narrative that Fats Waller was born in the shop stating; 'Hey, our past is ours so it can be whatever we want'.⁴⁸¹ This brings the community together;

*Through a process of mash-up, they created a new history for the town and enlivened the community. The power of collaborative art, in this case the remade films, is in its ability to move between the domains of the personal and the communal. It works in the space between the communal and the personal as a way of producing a connection that bonds individuals together. The collective myth of film can be remixed through the collective practice of reflexive making.*⁴⁸²

The film not only deals with the concepts of re-interpreting films but asks questions of how, 'Memory and perception allow for multiple interpretations of the same 'image' as a means of creating a new narrative of the event'.⁴⁸³ In the film, the history they were recreating with the help of the community became the 'new' history.

This trend of redefining history seemed to be similar to the rewriting of Welsh history by Iolo Morganwg, regarding the nationwide reintroduction of the Eisteddfod. What might be considered as one person's lie means nothing when the lie is created in order to bring a community together;

memories – especially when aggregated – are often flawed, incomplete, imperfect, or even inaccurate. However, instead of being considered detrimental, this 'human error' is implemental to social memory, as

⁴⁸⁰ Pelin Aytemiz, Thoughts On The New Dadaist Tactic Of Our Era: 'Sweded Films' And Michel Gondry's *Be Kind Rewind*, (2016), p 37 – 38.

⁴⁸¹ *Be Kind Rewind* (dir. Michel Gondry, 2008).

⁴⁸² Matthew Sutherland and Amy Counts, "'IMAGE'/I/'NATION': A CULTURAL MASH-UP." *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* (Vol. 30: 98, 2010), p. 14.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 13.

*indeed it privileges the common bonds between people and their pasts.*⁴⁸⁴

This idea, that history can be in the eye of the beholder and could be reinterpreted, inspired the opening scene in *Humanoids From Wales*.

The starting point for this was to ask the question: What is a symbol for Wales that is known both inside and outside the country? The inevitable answer was the national flag. Cerulo states that ‘National symbols-in particular, national anthems and flags-provide perhaps the strongest, clearest statement of national identity.’⁴⁸⁵ That flags represent totems; ‘that bear a special relationship to the nations they represent, distinguishing them from one another and reaffirming their identity boundaries.’⁴⁸⁶ The Red Dragon became the official flag for Wales in 1959. The myth behind the Welsh flag comes from *Historia Brittonum*.⁴⁸⁷ The story describes a battle between two dragons (one red and one white), with the Red Dragon inevitably winning the war. Now, the story of the flag is a metaphor for the war between the Britons and the Saxons.⁴⁸⁸ This very flag represented the conflict between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Therefore, under the guise of Iolo Morganwg’s reinterpreting past myths, it was concluded that reinterpreting this story using ‘sweding’ technique was both a creative manner of incorporating micro budget filmmaking techniques, as well as a way to explore Welsh national identity.

In a previous chapter, justifications for the use of Bakhtinian Carnival and the B-Movie film aesthetic have already been established. Further, the short story at the beginning of the films also uses Carnival in order to grow:

*the right not to understand, the right to confuse, to tease, to hyperbolize life; the right to parody others while talking, the right not to be taken literally, not ‘to be oneself’; the right to live a life in the chronotope of the entr’acte, the chronotope of theatrical space, the right to act life as a comedy and to treat others as actors, the right to rip off masks, the right to rage at others with a primeval (almost cultic) rage.*⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁴ Matthew Sutherlin and Amy Counts, "'IMAGE'/I/'NATION': A CULTURAL MASH-UP." *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* (Vol. 30: 98, 2010), p. 13.

⁴⁸⁵ Karen A. Cerulo, "Symbols and the world system: national anthems and flags." *Sociological Forum* (Vol. 8:2, 1993), p. 244.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Nennius, *History of the Britons* (Cincinnati: Standard Publications, 2008).

⁴⁸⁸ John Davies, Nigel Jenkins, Menna Baines and Peredur I. Lynch (eds.), *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 732.

⁴⁸⁹ Mikhail Bakhtin (trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. Michael Holquist), ‘Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,’ in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), p. 163.

Carnival was fundamental in folk culture and therefore, as a micro budget filmmaker, similar sentiment can be seen in the ‘sweding’ film technique. By showcasing this from the outset it establishes that the filmmakers who created the film as well as starring in the documentary embrace carnival sensibilities and also establishes the Welsh penchant for ‘storyfying’ events.

The short film, in essence, is meant as an introduction to the world in which the film exists. It establishes a comedic tone that will be expanded upon within the B-Movie, while attempting to establish that carnival is a fundamental technique. In that, the film embraces the lampooning of Welsh culture by becoming the stereotypes it is depowering. It also subtly informs the audience that Vaughan (as the director of the film) cares little about factual accuracy, showcasing him as the ultimate *Taffy*.

Humanoids From Wales: Mockumentary

This section discusses the theory behind decision to research Welsh representation using the mockumentary mode. This will be different to the justifications section as this chapter discusses the creative decisions that were made in creating the mockumentary. This is an explanation of the creative decisions undertaken while researching the representation of Wales in film. Specifically, identifying which stereotypes are represented and why they were included.

The main thought line that continued on from the Welsh Flag story was the concept of the unreliable narrator. The short film was created in order to set the tone for the rest of the film. The idea was that the short film would be the first film created by the filmmaker and that the B-Movie, *Humanoids From Wales* would be his second. Meanwhile, the mockumentary would work as a behind the scenes look at the film being made. However, the question remains: How does this research Welsh representation on film? It is designed in such a way that the film feels real. Firstly, it is presented in a documentary mode, and secondly, it does not initiate conventional filmic narratives in regard to the three act structure and plot points. The film merely chronicles the events that took place while shooting the B-Movie. However, this was a decisive rouse.

The aim of the double act film, an intertwined double-feature so-to-say, is to replicate the nature of reality as it applies to the allegory of the cave.⁴⁹⁰ The B-Movie

⁴⁹⁰ Nathan Andersen, *Shadow Philosophy: Plato's Cave and Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2014).

was intended as an easily identifiable work of fiction and the documentary as an allusion to reality. The B-Movie is the shadows on the wall and the documentary conveys life outside the cave. However, the documentary itself was a staged event, shot weeks after the filming of the B-Movie. The intention of this was to avoid the pitfalls faced by the film *Borat*. It was hailed as a film that combated Jewish anti-Semitism while being lambasted for its Islamophobia.⁴⁹¹ By making the documentary a mockumentary it intended to show that while mockumentaries ‘work on multiple levels both as parody as well as satire’,⁴⁹² that ‘parody look first to texts, satire toward the world’.⁴⁹³ The mockumentary’s satirical eye is aimed towards the stereotype of ‘*Taffy is a Liar*’. ‘Taffy was a liar’ and ‘a thief’; Geraldus would support this claim that Taffy the Welshman was untrustworthy, hundreds of years before the publication of the nursery rhyme, ‘Taffy was a Welshman’. The Welsh Flag story establishes that Vaughan as a filmmaker cannot be trusted as a reliable narrator, he is literally an unreliable narrator to the tale. As such, it is established that Vaughan is a liar.

Vaughan was not the actual filmmaker of *Humanoids From Wales* and as such the entire documentary is a work of fiction or a recreation. However, the cast is not entirely actors, as Vaughan is the only character who is a replacement. The rest of the cast were the people in charge of the duties that they carried out within the documentary. The purpose of this is to subtly rather than obviously address the stereotype that ‘Taffy is a liar’. The ‘Welsh’ have been portrayed as thieves, liars or generally untrustworthy for approximately seven hundred years. Giraldus wrote in *Descriptio Cambriae*⁴⁹⁴ in 1194 that the Welsh live ‘by plunder, and disregard of the bonds of peace and friendship.’⁴⁹⁵ The notion of the Welsh as thieves is also repeated in *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*,⁴⁹⁶ as the book’s imaginary Welshman states twice that Welshmen steal ‘And there be many of them the whyche be light fingered, & loueth a purse; but this matter lastly is reformed’.⁴⁹⁷ Furthermore portrayal of the Welsh as thieves can be seen in the nursery rhyme *Taffy was a*

⁴⁹¹ Ghada Chehade, ‘The Problem with Borat’, *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, (Vol. 11:1, 2007), 70.

⁴⁹² Juhasz, Alexandra, and Jesse Lerner (eds), *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth’s Undoing* (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2006), p. 2.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Betty Radice, *The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London: Penguin Classics, 1978).

⁴⁹⁵ Edward D. Snyder, ‘The Wild Irish: A Study of Some English Satires against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh’, *Modern Philology* (Vol. 17:12, 1920), p. 153.

⁴⁹⁶ Andrew Borde, *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (London: N.Trubner & Co., 1870).

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 128.

*Welshman*⁴⁹⁸ and in films that pre-date Welsh devolution; the main characters of *10 Rillington Place*, *Very Annie Mary*,⁴⁹⁹ *An Englishman That Went Up A Hill And Came Down a Mountain*⁵⁰⁰. This is a trend that continued past the devolutionary period and continued in the portrayal of the Welsh in *Twin Town*, *House of America* and *This is Life*, meaning that devolution in Wales had little effect on the national image of the Welsh. This supports the notion that Wales can be included in colonial theory as the Orientals are described as ‘inveterate liars’.⁵⁰¹ In both intelligence and integrity, Welsh characters display the same characteristics as Said’s ‘Orientals’.

This presentation of Vaughan as a fictional character (and as such an unreliable one) would suggest that the documentary is a fiction and ‘suggests a falsification of truth that would seem to invoke a world of fiction. It could be argued that an unreliable narrator works against the very definition of documentary filmmaking’⁵⁰². However, the rationale is that ‘the construct of an unreliable narrator can help draw attention to the rhetorical nature of documentary “truth.”⁵⁰³ The purpose of this is to question the nature of the stereotype:

*Unravelling the complex knot of power embedded in representations of documentary “truth” is an essential practice for filmmakers and spectators seeking to challenge systems of oppression as well as those simply seeking to become more self-aware and informed about the world. Unreliable narrators are merely one thread in that knot, but a discourse about the unreliable narrator as a construct in the documentary form is nevertheless a vital component of these larger conversations.*⁵⁰⁴

The goal is not to make Vaughan act in a comical way (like Borat) by openly mocking the targeted stereotypes, but by mocking the viewers’ belief of truth, and the notion that any representation is not informing or confronting a trope or stereotype.

The second stereotype to be addressed in the mockumentary is the Welsh Mam. The Welsh Mam is a common archetypal image of Wales; ‘Two Archetypal and quasi-mythical figures loom through the mist of our memory of Wales: the Welsh

⁴⁹⁸ Iona Opie and Peter Opie (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (Oxford: UP, 1997).

⁴⁹⁹ *Very Annie Mary* (dir. Sara Sugarman, 2001).

⁵⁰⁰ *An Englishman That Went Up A Hill And Came Down a Mountain* (dir. Christopher Monger, 1995).

⁵⁰¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: London, 1978), p. 39.

⁵⁰² Fiona Otway, "The Unreliable Narrator in Documentary." *Journal of Film and Video* (Vol. 67: 3, 2015): 3-23, p. 3.

⁵⁰³ Fiona Otway, "The Unreliable Narrator in Documentary." *Journal of Film and Video* (Vol. 67: 3, 2015): 3-23, p. 3.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 8.

Miner and the Welsh Mam. Both were invented by the nineteenth century'.⁵⁰⁵

Beddoe states that the Welsh Mam was created in the nineteenth century, and could not be found in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. Beddoe explains that the Welsh Mam did exist, in that during the nineteenth century she was promoted as such in order to bring 'stability [...] through strengthening the idea and the role of family'.⁵⁰⁶ She continues that the 'dependant wife was to become a symbol of working class male success'.⁵⁰⁷ Beddoe asserts that there are two stereotypes: 'the miner and the Mam are the stereotypes: the myth is that they had equal power or even that the Mam was the dominant power'.⁵⁰⁸ Beddoe concludes by suggesting that the myth of the Welsh Mam having equal power to her husband is false. However, for the uses of this study, the historical accuracy of the Welsh Mam is irrelevant. What is relevant is the fact that this archetype is identifiable as a stereotypical Welsh character. The Welsh Mam can be found in *How Green Was My Valley*⁵⁰⁹ and *The Proud Valley*⁵¹⁰ as well as in post devolution films. However, her representation has changed from being a housewife to a mentally fragile, broken psychopath in *House of America*, a prostitute in *Human Traffic*, and one could argue that the main character of the film *This is Life* is a prequel to either one, as it showcases a young mother becoming a pimp. The Welsh Mam still exists, but has been twisted from being a propagandist tool to being a negative interpretation of working class life. *Humanoids* merely presents her as Vaughan's mother, her career is never mentioned and her life outside this one scene is not expanded upon. The reason for this is to highlight the fact that the Welsh Mam does exist, so far as that Welsh people have mothers. However, she does refer to a nearby village, stating that Vaughan should base his film there, revealing that the people of that village 'do all kinds of things'. This was intended to mock the notion of the Welsh as the 'other', since humans inevitably see people from neighbouring villages, towns and countries as the 'other' and that stereotypes (be they national or regional) have no bearing on nationality, merely an 'us' and 'them' mentality.

The third and final stereotype addressed in the film was the Welsh trope of the community. By Welsh filmic stereotype logic an individual can be assimilated into a Welsh community so long as they adhere to the community's requirements; the Welsh

⁵⁰⁵ Deirdre Beddoe (ed. Tony Curtis), *Wales: The Imagined Nation* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986), p. 230.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 231.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

⁵¹⁰ *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

archetypal community is a very commonly repeated. The Welsh are presented as a horde or a tight knit group. In the film *The Proud Valley*⁵¹¹, David Goliath, an African American man, is accepting as a new member of the community because he is a good singer. In the film *The Baker*,⁵¹² the community saves Milo Shakespeare at the end of the film because they believed he has become one of them. In the film *Zulu*,⁵¹³ a character identifies the regiment as a Welsh community that has taken in English members; 'this is a Welsh regiment, man. Though there are some foreigners from England in it, mind'. One of the English members is Henry Hook. The film's depiction of Hook is vastly different from his real life reputation. Hook was neither a liar nor a thief. He was in fact a very loyal soldier. It is very interesting that he is portrayed as being dramatically different to his real life counterpart. Hook is described as: 'no good to anyone [...] you are here because you are a thief'. *Humanoids* showcases the Welsh community like a filmmaking community, including Japanese, American, English and Welsh. The intention is to show that Wales, much like most westernized countries, contains a mix of people, languages and cultures. This was intended to be in vast contrast to the film *Sleep Furiously*. The film romanticises Wales:

*It is a rural society, outwardly placid and at one with a landscape of stunning beauty, but in fact in crisis. Koppel's film takes as its starting point the closure of the local school, a definitive, calamitous loss for a place where shops and bus services have already vanished. The movie pays tribute to the grit of a people who may yet revive their economy, but it acknowledges a darker possibility, for which the sentimental note of an "elegy" is not appropriate. Slowly, but surely, Trefeurig appears to be dying, and Koppel's camera captures the consequent ripples of loss and regret.*⁵¹⁴

This is essentially the same summery that could be given to both *How Green Was My Valley* and *Proud Valley*, replacing the local shop with the mine. Films such as *Sleep Furiously*, *This is Life* and *House of America* all showcase a doomed version of Wales that is racist (*This is Life*), romanticized (*Sleep Furiously*) and inevitably damaged (*House of American*); all of which contain the bleakest of threats - the end of the

⁵¹¹ *The Proud Valley* (dir. Pen Tennyson, 1940).

⁵¹² *The Baker* (dir. Gareth Lewis, 2007).

⁵¹³ *Zulu* (dir. Cy Enfield, 1964).

⁵¹⁴ Peter Bradshaw, *Sleep Furiously* Film Review, *The Guardian Online*:

<<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/may/29/sleep-furiously-film-review>> [Last accessed 2016].

Welsh way of life. *Humanoids* mocks this by showcasing its characters as transitioning from Welsh to English without the introduction of evil English characters suspicious of the use of Welsh. There is no doomed endgame that will bring about the destruction of the Welsh way of life, merely integration with the modern world. However, the B-Movie ends with the destruction of Aberestron, a symbolic gesture and a continuation of the trend that the way of life in Wales is inevitably doomed.

To conclude, the aim of the mockumentary was to show subtlety in its use of carnival and the lampooning of Welsh stereotypes. The mockumentary is a work of fiction, but it should leave the audience questioning its factual validity. Its secondary goal was to be identifiable as reality versus the B-Movie fiction, juxtaposing the idea of Plato's shadow's versus the real world.

Humanoids From Wales: B-Movie

The purpose of this section is to discuss the specific stereotypes researched within the B-Movie. The B-Movie lives in stark contrast to the mockumentary in the fact that from the outset it should inform the audience that it is a work of fiction. This is done intentionally; so the Welsh stereotypes are clearly representations of Plato's shadows. From the outset this is clarified to the audience as the first scene is located on an alien planet. The film is a work of carnival as the entire premise of the film embodies Welsh stereotypes, the location is a fictional Wales that can only be found on film.

The film is set in the fictional town of Aberestron. This was done for a multiple reasons; firstly, to perpetuate the stereotype that films based in Wales are often set in fictional towns/villages, for example Llareggub, Hafoduwchbenceubwllymarchogoch, Llanwelly, Ffynnon Garw, Gwynfyd and 'Island of Scallad'. The second is concerned with the country's name, Cymru, and with the people being called Cymry. The name Wales was created externally. According to the Encyclopaedia of Wales the word Wales comes from Germanic *Walloon* and *Vlach* referring to the Welsh having been romanized.⁵¹⁵ However, the encyclopaedia does state that the word is generally known to come from the Anglo-Saxon words *wealas* or *walas*, meaning stranger or foreigner.⁵¹⁶ Therefore the town

⁵¹⁵ John Davies, Nigel Jenkins, Menna Baines and Peredur I. Lynch (eds.), *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 913.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*

was named Aberestron. The Aber was used as it is commonplace at the start of Welsh place names such as Aberystwyth, Aberdaron or Aberffraw. Conventionally it occurs in a town or village name if the place is located near water - this was required as a great deal of the film's plot occurs in a swamp. The second part of the name, *estron*, is the Welsh word for stranger. This was an intentional gesture towards the trope that place names in Wales from are often fictional.

In a number of films based in Wales such as *Devil's Bridge*,⁵¹⁷ *The Old Dark House*,⁵¹⁸ *The Wolf Man*⁵¹⁹ and *Evil Aliens*,⁵²⁰ the inhabitants are portrayed as rural, aggressive, unintelligent and superstitious, hillbillies: even the director of *Twin Town*, Kevin Allen, stated that: 'the rest of the UK (saw Wales) as a 'backwater'.⁵²¹ The film *Evil Aliens* shares Allen's views:

*Helpfully subtitled their dialogue, the film establishes Scalleum as a surviving bastion of Gaelic in Wales (a 'Fro Gymraeg' in Welsh), its isolation providing a linguistic sanctuary (much as the Aran Islands form a centre of the Irish Gaeltacht). By implication, this isolation also 'explains' their feral coarseness.*⁵²²

Conventionally, B-Movies occur in small American Rural towns, as such drawing the parallel between the portrayal of Wales and rural America seemed very apt for the subject matter. Rural people are often depicted, 'either as degenerates or as dull-witted xenophobes, the typical "crackers" and "hillbillies"'.⁵²³ [...] 'through the plotlines and characters of a variety of horror movies in which "victim" is coded as urban and both setting and "monster" as rural'.⁵²⁴ The previous quote could be used as plot description for the film *Devil's Bridge*,⁵²⁵ as the plot revolves around three English urbanites who travel to Wales and are terrorized by a Welsh farmer. Replace the Welsh and English dynamic and the film becomes an exact copy of *Deliverance*⁵²⁶

⁵¹⁷ *Devil's Bridge* (dir. Chris Crow, 2010).

⁵¹⁸ *The Old Dark House* (dir. James Whale, 1932).

⁵¹⁹ *The Wolf Man* (dir. George Waggner, 1941).

⁵²⁰ *Evil Aliens*, (dir. Jake West, 2005).

⁵²¹ Woodward, Kate. 'The Desert and the Dream': Film in Wales Since 2000.' *Journal of British Cinema and Television* (Vol. 9:3, 2012), p. 422.

⁵²² Philip Hayward, 'Western Edges: Evil Aliens and Island Otherness in British Cinema,' *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* (Vol.1:2, 2007), p. 94 – 95.

⁵²³ Timothy Silver, 'The "Deliverance" Factor,' *Environmental History* (Vol. 12:2, April 2007), p. 370.

⁵²⁴ David Bell (eds. Paul Cloke and Jo Little), *Contested Countryside Cultures: Otherness, Marginalisation and Rurality* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 95.

⁵²⁵ *Devil's Bridge* (dir. Chris Crow, 2010).

⁵²⁶ *Deliverance* (dir. John Boorman, 1972).

or *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.⁵²⁷ The film *Evil Aliens* represents the Welsh in a similar manner:

*Here the film condenses Anglo-British stereotypes and, arguably, a subliminal loathing of Gaelic -- and specifically Welsh -- cultural difference. The genre stereotype underlying this facet is the degeneration of rural white communities into feral 'white trash' that features in seminal US Horror films, usually set in the South, such as Deliverance (1972) or The Hills Have Eyes (1977).*⁵²⁸

Both the Welsh and rural North Americans have been portrayed by 'trading on assorted cultural myths – of inbreeding, insularity, backwardness, sexual perversion (especially incest and bestiality) – these rural, “white trash” are familiar popular cultural icons'.⁵²⁹ This is precisely the reason why the B-Movie genre perfectly reflects (as the shadows did in Plato's cave) a view of Wales gained from English language film. This is also the reason why B-Movie was the perfect format to do so; 'You approach a B movie with other demands. [...] acting and action (or the suggestion of action) are the two most important B-movie components, set within the framework of a familiar story and familiar characterizations.'⁵³⁰

By presenting the Welsh characters as clichéd stereotypes existing in a fictional Wales, the audience should be able to identify that these characters are fictional: “Parody” can only survive so long as there is common sense, so long as there is a discourse that takes itself seriously'.⁵³¹ By underlining the absurdity of these characters, based on a clearly false background cannot be identified as fiction then the *Evil Aliens*, *Devil's Bridge* and *House of America* have all worked as propaganda that justifies the representation of Welsh characters as inbred, xenophobic, unintelligent hillbillies, this is supported by Barnouw,⁵³² who believes that fiction is an effective form of propaganda; 'Decades of spy and outer-space dramas, a staple in much of the modern world, have been based on the premise that “we” are surrounded, on earth and throughout the universe, by enemies capable of

⁵²⁷ *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (dir. Tobe Hooper, 1974).

⁵²⁸ Philip Hayward, 'Western Edges: Evil Aliens and Island Otherness in British Cinema,' *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* (Vol.1:2, 2007), p. 94 – 95.

⁵²⁹ David Bell (eds. Paul Cloke and Jo Little), *Contested Countryside Cultures: Otherness, Marginalisation and Rurality* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 95.

⁵³⁰ Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn *The King of the B's* (New York: Dutton, 1975), p. 57.

⁵³¹ Stewart quoted in John Tulloch, *Television drama: agency, audience and myth* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 261.

⁵³² Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: UP, 1993), p. 345.

villainy.⁵³³ Barnouw here is referring to films with alien invasion plots, similar to the B-Movies most prominent in the 50s. This is relevant as this was another reason why aesthetics from 1950s B -Movies were used in *Humanoids*.

A number of sci-fi and horror films use monsters and aliens as metaphors for real life horrors. Two such films that are also referenced in *Humanoids From Wales* are *Godzilla*⁵³⁴ and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.⁵³⁵ *Godzilla*⁵³⁶ was made as a metaphor for the atomic bombs detonated on Japan during the Second World War.⁵³⁷ This was the reason why the Sheriff states at the end of the film that it was the third time in human history that an atomic bomb had been used in aggression against another nation. It is also the main reason why the Sheriff and Woods could not stop the bombing. The second film referenced by *Humanoids*, that also uses metaphor, was *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*,⁵³⁸ : the plot involves a small rural American town's human population being slowly replaced by an invading alien life form. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* used America's fears of the time about McCarthyism and communism and disguised them as an alien invasion film:

*Human beings are 'hosts to an alien form of life' in Body Snatchers. [...] The pods in Body Snatchers, and the people implanted with electronic control devices in Invaders from Mars, alienate their families by pretending still to be themselves. Reds were visibly alien in earlier red scares; they were the others. They moved inside our minds and bodies in the 1950s, and one could not tell them from anyone else. The vulnerability of the self to influence, upon which domestic ideology had hoped to capitalize, resulted in Communist influence instead. Surveillance and inquisition exposed domestic forces that had taken possession of the nation and the self. No longer part of a conflict between contrasting classes, 1950s Communists were the invisible member of (and thereby exposed anxieties about) American mass society.*⁵³⁹

The reason why this film was specifically referenced was due to similar reasons to the use of pod people in *Body Snatchers*. Welsh characters in films such as *The Old Dark*

⁵³³ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: UP, 1993), p. 345.

⁵³⁴ *Godzilla* (dir. Ishiro Honda, 1954).

⁵³⁵ *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (dir. Don Siegel, 1956).

⁵³⁶ *Godzilla* (dir. Ishiro Honda, 1954).

⁵³⁷ David Kalat, *The Critical History and Filmography of Toho's Godzilla Series* (London: MacFarland & Company Inc, 2007).

⁵³⁸ *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (dir. Don Siegel, 1956).

⁵³⁹ Michael Rogin. 'Kiss Me Deadly: Communism, Motherhood and the Cold War,' *Representations* (Vol 6, 1984).

House, Devil's Bridge and *Evil Aliens* are portrayed as insular people scared of incomers. This is clearly a response to historical aggression in Wales. The Welsh have reacted in many ways to events such as the drowning of Tryweryn under a reservoir; some individuals attempted to blow up parts of the dam, and there have been numerous accounts of burning foreign-owned summer homes. This is actually directly referenced in the film *Devil's Bridge*. Therefore, *Humanoids From Wales* is meant as a metaphorical parody of the Anglicisation of the Welsh. This is made clear if it is understood that the meteorite that lands in Wales is a symbol of Anglicisation, anyone it touches will inevitably turn into a Humanoid/Angle. This was not done in a negative political or nationalistic way, but uses the spirit of Carnival to take something that has long been associated with negativity and to merely laugh at the monsters (as Bakhtin would call 'Comic Monsters') of the past.⁵⁴⁰ This is true Carnival sense:

*[an] acute awareness of victory over fear is an essential element of medieval laughter. [...] We always find in them the defeat of fear presented in a droll and monstrous form, the symbols of power and violence turned inside out, [...] All that was terrifying has become grotesque.*⁵⁴¹

Roscoe and Hight also believed that; 'Parody I often associated with pastiche, irony, burlesque and carnivalesques'.⁵⁴² However, it should be noted that it is not only the Welsh characters who are infected by the anglicizing meteorite, two of the American characters are also turned into Humanoids. This was done as a satirical stance on the notion of the 'other' and the idea that anyone could become the 'other', Karimova believes that *Jackass: The Movie* often uses this carnival technique as a source of humour:

Another interesting Carnavalesque feature regarding Jackass is that there are costumes, masks, and make-up involved in the production of the movie, giving it a carnivalesque flair. The characters often dress in

⁵⁴⁰ Mikel Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Indiana: UP, 1984), p. 91.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight, *Faking it: Mock-documentary and the subversion of factuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 29.

*costume to resemble the devil, a baby, an Arab terrorist, an old man, etc., which are all illustrations of becoming the 'other' as it is in carnival.*⁵⁴³

The intention of the B-Movie was that it could be easily identified as a clear fiction, part of this was attempted by juxtaposing it to the reality within the documentary, and another element was to shoot most of the film on a sound stage.

Wales on screen is fabricated in a large number of films, as production crews rarely use Wales as a backdrop for Wales. It is true to state that this is even more so today than at any time before as films are often set in one city while shot in another. However, early examples of Wales were often shot on sound stages, films such as *Old Dark House*,⁵⁴⁴ *The Wolf Man*,⁵⁴⁵ *Halfway House*,⁵⁴⁶ *How Green Was My Valley*⁵⁴⁷ and *A Run for your Money*.⁵⁴⁸ Apart from one exterior shot, all of *Humanoids From Wales* was shot in a studio in Treborth, North Wales. This is despite the fact that the scenery visuals projected behind the actors are real-life locations situated less than ten miles from the studio. This was to reference to *How Green Was My Valley*. John Ford famously stated that he had little concern for the accurate depiction of the Welsh characters in the film: 'It's a Celtic Country, isn't it? [...] They're all Micks, aren't they?'⁵⁴⁹ Most of the actors in *Humanoids* do not have the accent of the geographical location that their characters ought to possess. The reason for this was to highlight that this version of Wales is fictional, indeed, so fictional that the town was fake, the locations were fake; the whole film should be unmistakable as a work of fiction. This is in turn to emphasize that this version of Wales is a projection on a cave wall, similar to the projection of the landscape that appears behind the characters.

To close, the film was intended to be viewed as a genre film using 'repetitive narratives, plots, characters and themes';⁵⁵⁰ they 'embrace a sense of newness in storyline, character motivation, themes and genre revisionism represent a stellar use the components of "film genre"'.⁵⁵¹ The purpose of this was to enable the audience to identify the stereotypes, in doing so the film uses the carnival technique, where 'self-

⁵⁴³ Gulnara Karimova, 'Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnavalesque Analysis of Popular Culture: Jackass, South Park, and 'Everyday' Culture,' *Studies in Popular Culture – Popular Culture Association in the South* (Vol. 33:1, 2010), p. 40.

⁵⁴⁴ *The Old Dark House* (dir. James Whale, 1932).

⁵⁴⁵ *The Wolf Man* (dir. George Waggner, 1941).

⁵⁴⁶ *Halfway House* (dir. Basil Dearden, 1944).

⁵⁴⁷ *How Green Was My Valley* (dir. John Ford, 1941).

⁵⁴⁸ *A Run For Your Money* (dir. Charles Frennd, 1949).

⁵⁴⁹ David Berry, *Wales and Cinema: The First Hundred Years* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1994), p. 161.

⁵⁵⁰ Jule Selbo, *Film Genre for the Screenwriter* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 3 – 4.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

reflecting parody of the dialogism inherent in language is often the style of the traditional fool, who mocks others' uses of words by using them himself.'⁵⁵² The B-movie is a carnivalesque approach to film stereotypes, thereby laughing at them while highlighting their existence.

Conclusion: Serendipitous Humanoids

What has been discussed in this chapter is the elements of *Humanoids From Wales* that were planned in the pre-production that deal with Welsh representation; specifically elements that incorporated aspects of Carnival in order to showcase the dichotomy between reality and fiction. What has not been discussed is the elements of the film that were serendipitous. The *Story of the Flag* is a scripted film, mainly because it contains a large amount of animation. For the most part the B-Movie was entirely scripted (see attachment 1), however, the actors were given free reign to adapt/improvise as much as possible. As a result, there were a number of elements in the B-Movie that enabled discovery. Some were minor elements of chance, such as Sera Owen's character walking in the woods late at night looking for her pet cat. The script stated that she was looking for her dog, but the day before filming, the dog had gone missing, leaving only a cat available to film the scene. This does not change the meaning of the scene it just showcases the potential for flexibility in B-Movie filmmaking. The major element of the B-Movie that revealed serendipitous was the inclusion of the song 'Men of Harlech'. Dave Clark suggested that he and Alex Hale's characters should sing the song as they stumbled drunkenly home. Without prior knowledge of the film *Zulu* and the cultural significance of the song, this discovery would not have occurred. However, this discovery allowed the film to lampoon a Welsh trope that was perpetuated by this very song.

Following on from this, the majority of the documentary is the creation of serendipity, as the majority of the film was not scripted at all and the actors/participants were merely reacting to situations. This was done purposely to evoke a modern sense of;

“a deliberate un-artiness, ‘raw’ material, randomness, openness to accident and serendipity, spontaneity; artistic risk, emotional urgency and intensity, criticism as autobiography, a self-ethnography, anthropological

⁵⁵² Mikita Hoy, 'Bakhtin and Popular Culture,' *New Literary History* (Vol. 23:3, 1992), p. 770.

autobiography...a blurring of any distinction between fiction and nonfiction: the lure and blur of the real.⁵⁵³

A number of elements were discovered due to this form of filmmaking. Firstly, it showed the diversity in the cast. The cast predominantly were chosen from proximity rather than acting ability (they are all mainly fellow filmmakers). However, by doing it this way, highlights the fact that Wales is not merely a struggle between Welsh and English, the cast consists of an American, a Japanese woman, a Scottish person, a number of English people and obviously Welsh. This serendipitous gathering of individuals directly contradicts the filmic narrative that Wales, especially North Wales, is represented as a predominantly homogenised Welsh only area. The comedy that is derived from Dave as the film's director of photography and Alex as the film's dopey extra was entirely conceived by both parties respectfully. Dave is English and from the Chester area, and Alex has lived in Wales the majority of his life, having moved here from England when he was a child. There was no attempt made to showcase both as the comedic characters of the film, yet they fulfilled these roles organically. However, it should be noted that the most serendipitous findings of the film was its genre classification. An important element of serendipity theory is evaluation of said discovery. As such, viewing *Humanoids From Wales* as a whole makes one question its classification as two distinctive entities or whether it can be identified as a complete film that can be identified as a performative documentary.

⁵⁵³ David Shields's *Reality Hunger: A Manifesto*

8. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this thesis was to explore the representation of Welsh characters in English language film; this was done using art as a path by which to explore the subject. What the artistic aspect of the research aimed to show was that true representation is an unattainable paradox. Through this research it has been shown that Welsh characters have been portrayed historically in what can be identified as a postcolonial fashion; the representations possess traits associated with postcolonial nations. These portrayals have been unshakable, from *The Pleasant History of Taffy's Progress to London; with the Welshman's Catechism*⁵⁵⁴ in the 19th century to the 21st century's Spike in *Notting Hill*,⁵⁵⁵ both representations of intellectually challenged Welshmen who travel to London. What *Humanoids From Wales* does is to juxtapose the filmic Wales and the interpretation of historical Wales with one another, and then the B-Movie shows how Welsh national identity has been by presenting Wales as a fictional version of itself, in a genre that is well known to represent recycled stereotypical characters and plots.⁵⁵⁶ By doing this, the film is informing the audience that the B-Movie is a fiction. This underlines Barnouw's belief that fiction is a much more potent component of propaganda than factual documentary.⁵⁵⁷

The B-Movies of the 40s and 50s used repetition of themes and stock characters (mainly due to financial restrictions) in order to churn out films as quickly as possible. Welsh representation in film follows this trend in that a large percentage of characters share similar attributes, such as poverty, lack of education, sexual perversion, substance abuse and a penchant for song. The B-Movie has characters that represent all these characteristics; the small-town Deputy shows a lack of education, the teens have premarital sex, the two drunks sing 'Men of Harlech' while walking home. The aspect of *Humanoids* that portrays poverty is in the film's production value. This was all intended so as to display the Wales that has previously been represented on film. The entire plot involves the actual destruction of Wales, rather than a metaphoric destruction of the Welsh way of life seen in such films such as *How Green Was My Valley*, *Proud Valley*, *Sleep Furiously* and *House of America*. It represents the view of Wales an audience might have if they had been living in a

⁵⁵⁴ F. Thorn, *The Pleasant History of Taffy's progress to London: with the Welshman's Catechism* (London 1800).

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ *Notting Hill* (dir. Roger Michell, 1999).

⁵⁵⁷ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film* (Oxford: UP, 1993), p. 345.

cave, watching nothing but films that represented Welsh character. Meanwhile, if said person would exit the cave and view Wales in its reality, the documentary would closer represent the Wales one might find. However, the manner in which reality is presented by documentaries is also fictional. Making the film a mockumentary rather than a straight documentary was intended to suggest that all representations are fictional, assumed truths are juxtaposed against blatant untruths.

Mockumentary is a mode that parodies and satirizes the nature of reality and the assumptions of truth that documentary claims. What *Humanoids From Wales* poses is that the B-Movie represents the shadows on Plato's cave wall and the mockumentary is the world outside the cave. However, as the film is a mockumentary (and it has been shown that documentary is also a fiction) then the world outside the cave represents another set of shadows cast in an even greater cave; knowledge is, after all, a never-ending quest. If the mockumentary had been presented as a documentary rather than a mockumentary, it would have undermined its own ideas, as all documentary is a construct. Therefore, by addressing the dichotomy between fiction and reality it satirizes the concept of a true representation, highlighting that the mockumentary only showcases the filmmaker's view of Wales.

The question that needs to be asked is, 'What has been learnt in this research?' Welsh representation has been discussed in the past; representation as matter of perspective has also been discussed. However, the representation of the Welsh using a practice-based methodology has not. What was learnt is that representation is fictional. The idea of an accurate representation is fictional. Wales, like most nations, cannot be represented as one image, be it the Welsh Mam in the traditional Welsh outfit, the choir singing coal miner to the poor, alcoholic, perverted idiot. It is true that some people might live up to these stereotypes, however, the vast majority of people differ dramatically from that which has been portrayed in film. This thesis' main goal is to question the nature of representation, yet it extends to asking questions on the nature of reality. For the most part, film and documentary do not intended to portray people in a negative manner, however, negative perceptions of groups can occur in real life without the need for negative reinforcement to occur though media: after all, stereotypes predate films. In a manner of speaking, the main element that was learnt in this thesis is that, what was originally intended to be a combination of B-Movie and Mockumentary has unintentionally become a performative mode documentary.

Nichols states that the ‘performative mode raises questions what knowledge actually amounts to.’⁵⁵⁸ This was not the original intention of the thesis, however, an argument can be made that *Humanoids From Wales* is neither a B-Movie nor a mockumentary, it is rather a performative documentary. The serendipitous nature of this research allows further reflection to reveal that the practice element is in fact a singular artefact, in the form of a performative documentary. By using serendipitous theory it allows discovery, Erik Davis believed that ‘juxtaposition is revealed as the basic formal operation of synchronicity, as two apparently unrelated events or elements suddenly form a secret link that strikes, in the mind of the perceiver, an evanescent lightning bolt of meaning’.⁵⁵⁹ *Humanoids* asks the question, ‘What besides factual information goes into our understanding of the world?’⁵⁶⁰ The fact that this thesis originated in questioning the nature of Welsh representation and suggested that representation is a matter of perspective would suggest that *Humanoids* asks the same questions that the performative mode asks. Such as, ‘Is knowledge best described as abstract and disembodied, based on generalizations and the typical, in the traditional Western philosophy? From this perspective, knowledge can be transferred or exchanged freely, and those who perform the transfer or exchange are but conduits for knowledge that remains unaltered by their personal involvement with it.’⁵⁶¹ If so, this means that personal interpretation of facts would not occur, therefore knowledge could be transferred without alteration throughout history. It is evident that *Humanoids* does not represent this belief, as the *Welsh Flag* short film at the beginning highlights the manipulation and interpretive nature of the transfer of knowledge. *Humanoids* embodies the notion that:

*knowledge better described as concrete and embodied, based on personal experience, in tradition of poetry, literature, and rhetoric? From this perspective, knowledge can be demonstrated or evoked but those who perform the demonstration or evocation, imbue what they do with a distinctiveness that cannot be easily replicated.*⁵⁶²

Performative mode showcases the complexity of the world, understanding that terms can mean different things to different people, and so does *Humanoids*. Nichols states that performative documentary... ‘underscores the complexity of our knowledge of

⁵⁵⁸ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 199.

⁵⁵⁹ Nomad Codes, Erik Davis p. 331.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid, p. 200.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

the world by emphasizing its subjectivity and affective dimensions'.⁵⁶³ *Humanoids from Wales* showcases a view of Wales seen from conventional film as well as the mock-up version of a micro budget filmmaker. The mockumentary is a staged film, however, all the dialogue from those scenes is entirely improvised, with much of the interaction being real-life friends communicating with one another. The only truly staged aspect of the film was that the roles given to them were fictional, the characters and dialogue were not acting. One contradiction to this theory that *Humanoids From Wales* can be seen as a performative documentary is that the B-Movie section was entirely scripted as a work of fiction. However, Nichols concedes that performative documentary, 'approaches the poetic domain of an experimental or avant-guard cinema',⁵⁶⁴ and he continues by stating that conventionally the performative documentary does this in a more subtle manner. Yet, we draw inevitably to the conclusion that while this research set out to discuss Welsh representation it has done so by becoming a performative documentary. Instead of simply satirizing the stereotypes or exploring them by approaching them in new ways, or totally contradicting them, the film represents both sides of the fictional Welsh represented world and allows the audience to question their own understanding of Welsh representation.

In closing, what was learned primarily in the thesis is the need to question Welsh representation, whether it be from a positive perspective or negative. It prompts the audience to ask themselves whether there any differences between two populations? In attempting to satirize the representation of the Welsh the documentary became centred on the question of representation, with Welsh being a microcosm group selected to juxtapose the supposed real with the fictional, becoming an unintentional performative documentary:

The world as represented by performative documentary becomes, however, suffused by evocative tones and expressive shadings that constantly remind us that the world is more than the sum of the visible evidence we derive from it.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶³ Bill Nichols, *Introduction to documentary* (Indiana: University Press, 2010), p. 202.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

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HUMANOID FROM WALES

by

Siôn Griffiths

1. EXT. SPACE. IRRELEVANT

Fade in on a large planet.

The planet is turning.

NARRATOR

Humans believed for centuries that they were the only intelligent life form in the universe....

The large planet explodes.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

They were wrong!

A meteor hurdles through space.

The meteor blasts the film's title across the screen towards the audience.

HUMANOIDS FROM WALES

The meteor smashes through the titles and continues on its travels.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

On this day. October tenth 1950. Planet earth learned that they were not alone in the universe.

The meteor is seen travelling towards earth.

2. EXT. MAKE-OUT POINT. NIGHT

Two cars are seen on top of hill overlooking a small town.

Two young couples are on the hood of their cars.

The first couple is John Jones and Mary-Jane.

The second couple is Will Williams and Bobby-Joe.

Both couples are in their mid-teens, they are all looking up at the stars.

Bobby-Joe suddenly shivers and frightens Will.

WILL

What are you doing?

BOBBY-JOE

Sorry I just had this weird feeling.

MARY-JANE

Are you ok? What was it?

BOBBY-JOE

I just felt like somewhere far far away that a thousand souls died. Like a planet with millions of life forms just went out.

MARY-JANE

Do you think anyone lives up there?

BOBBY-JOE

I think there are Star-men up there with orange hair and different coloured eyes.

WILL

Don't be daft! Space is empty.

MARY-JANE

I think people live up there.

JOHN

I think big spiders live in space, ones that impregnate you, then eat your legs and arms so all you can do is wait for their offspring to burst out your chest and then eat your dead corpse.

MARY-JANE

Don't! you're scaring me.

WILL

I would still be able to kick their ass. No spider creature could rape my face.

Suddenly a flash of light frightens the youngsters and a meteor is seen hurdling through the sky, crash landing about 200 meters from their position.

WILL (CONT'D)

Did you see that?

Will jumps off the car.

WILL (CONT'D)

Quick lets see what it was...

BOBBY-JOE

I don't want to go Will.

WILL

Don't be a baby I'm sure its just a plane. Are you guys coming?

MARY-JANE

I want to go home John, I'm scared.

John and Mary-Jane get off the hood of the car.

JOHN

We're heading home Will, no point chasing fallen stars.

WILL

Baby, it's probably an alien life. And I will be the one that finds it.

BOBBY-JOE

I'm scared though...

Will pulls Bobby-Joe closer.

WILL

Don't worry babe. You're with me. Ain't no Alien going to mess with the toughest guy Aberestron.

Will turns from the group and walks into the woods towards where the meteor fell.

3. INT. PRESIDENT SCIENCE OFFICE. DAY

One man in front of a chalk board can be seen wearing a white lab coat.

The man in the lab coat is Dr. Wood.

Suddenly the president of America walks in dressed in a suit.

With the president is special agent Lugosi wearing a military outfit.

PRESIDENT

What you got for me Wood?

DR. WOOD

Well it's quite simple sir, if you would like to take a seat I will explain.

The president and Lugosi sit down.

Dr. Wood spins his chalk board to the blank side.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)

In 1959, nine small meteors entered the earth's atmosphere.

Dr. Wood is also drawing the actions of the meteor.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)

Eight of the rocks burned up or disintegrated on entry, but one meteor crash landed in Wales.

The president stands up.

PRESIDENT

Wales! Wood? Where's that doctor?

DR. WOOD

If you just sit down I will explain.

PRESIDENT

There's no time to sit down Wood, national security is at stake here. We don't know if the meteor is worth money, we don't want the...

DR. WOOD

Welsh sir...

PRESIDENT

Yes Welshies... using this against us.

DR. WOOD

But sir, we don't know anything about the meteor yet, it could just be a rock.

PRESIDENT

We can't risk it. If there's a weapon to be used or money to be made it's our right from God as Americans to be the ones that benefit from this opportunity.

Lugosi steps up from his chair.

LUGOSI

This is where I come in?

PRESIDENT

I want you to go to.... Where is this place Wood???

DR. WOOD

Wales sir?

PRESIDENT
Yes Wood, pay attention.

DR. WOOD
Sorry sir, Wales is a small country in North West Europe. Part of the British isles sir.

PRESIDENT
What about the people and the politics? Is Agent Lugosi going to be ok by himself or will he need reinforcements?

DR. WOOD
He should be fine sir, they are a peaceful democratic people.

The president starts walking towards the door.

PRESIDENT
Good. Lugosi, go in there and take the rock. If you have any trouble take care of it....

The president turns to Dr. Wood.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
What's the population like in Wales?

DR. WOOD
Few million sir.

PRESIDENT
Good, if you get any trouble Lugosi just shoot your way out. If their government complains we'll just say that it was a diplomatic mission and that the Welsh are fundamental communist terrorists.

The president leaves the room.

Lugosi turns to Dr. Wood.

LUGOSI
Tell me everything you know about Wales.

4. EXT. SWAMP. NIGHT

Will and Bobby are walking through a swamp like area.

There is much smoke in the air from the meteor landing.

BOBBY-JOE
I'm scared Will.

Will keeps walking dragging Bobby-Joe behind him

WILL
Don't worry I will protect you.

The couple finally reach a clearing in the swamp where the meteor landed.

They both stand there in awe of the clearing.

Bobby pushes past Will.

BOBBY-JOE
What do you think it is Will?

Bobby-Joe rushes towards the meteor

The meteor is a glowing green rock.

She kneels down over the rock.

Will meanwhile is standing at a distance from the rock.

Bobby-Joe looks up to see Will standing upright like a deer in headlights.

BOBBY-JOE (CONT'D)
You drag me here and then you're the one that is the scardy cat.

Bobby-Joe walks over to Will and pulls him by the hand towards the meteor.

BOBBY-JOE (CONT'D)
Look, come on it won't hurt you.

Both kneel down in front of the rock.

WILL
What do you think it is?

BOBBY-JOE
Touch it!

WILL
You touch it.

BOBBY-JOE
Lets touch it together.

Bobby-Joe reaches her hand out to Will over the meteor.

Will slowly puts his hand out to hold Bobby-Joe's hand.

Suddenly Bobby-Joe grabs Will's hand and places both their hand son the rock.

Nothing happens.

WILL
Nothing happened

Will's overconfidence returns.

Bobby-Joe looks disappointed.

Will starts tapping the rock over and over again.

WILL (CONT'D)
Do you think we can sell it?

Suddenly while Will is trying to place his hands around the rock, it shoots out a green lightning bolt that starts turning Will into something different.

Bobby-Joe screams and the rock shoot a lighting bolt at her transforming her into another creature.

6. INT. PLANE. DAY

Agent Lugosi is flying a plane to Wales

LUGOSI
Check that ground control

An air stewardess walks into the cock-pit

STEWARDESS
Would you like your meal now sir?

LUGOSI
No time for food, this mission is to important.

STEWARDESS
Where are we?

LUGOSI
We're passing over where the meteor supposedly went down.

Both look down toward a woodland area on the ground

STEWARDESS
It looks normal

The Stewardess starts walking away.

LUGOSI

Wait look!

The Stewardess turns to look at what Lugosi has seen.

Down in the woodland there is a bright green light emanating from the woods.

STEWARDESS

What is that?

LUGOSI

Another life form maybe. A creature from beyond the stars. Something that has come to earth to destroy everything we hold dear. Liberty and freedom for all or maybe it could be just a bunch of kids having a party.

STEWARDESS

Oh! Good heavens!

LUGOSI

All I know is that I must go there and investigate.

7. EXT. MAKE-OUT POINT. NIGHT

Meanwhile John and Mary-Jane are still waiting on their car while looking up at the stars.

MARY-JANE

How long do you think they've been gone?

JOHN

Don't worry about them they're probably making out somewhere.

Mary-Jane sits back on the car

Suddenly noises can be heard coming from the treeline.

MARY-JANE

Did you hear that?

John sits up and slide off the hood of the car

He turns to Mary-Jane

JOHN

I think they're trying to play a joke on us

MARY-JANE

(Whispering) What should we do?

John takes Mary-Jane's hand

JOHN

(Whispering) We will creep up on them before they get the chance to creep up on us

John and Mary-Jane sneak up slowly on the shuffling bushes

Once at the bushes both separate and grab a branch

Each are standing like doormen ready to pull the door open for a client

John and Mary-Jane look at each other and smile

They mouth a count from three and then quickly pull back the branches

Suddenly two grotesque humanoid creatures are revealed behind the shrubs

Mary-Jane screams and runs towards the town

John falls down and then follows Mary-Jane

The two creatures walk towards their car and then stand at the top of the hill howling at the moon

8. INT. POLICE STATION. NIGHT

The police chief and his deputy is sitting in an office

Suddenly the doorbell rings

The chief looks up at the deputy

POLICE CHIEF

You going to answer that?

The deputy stand up and walks over to the door

He opens the door and agent Lugosi steps in

LUGOSI
Are you in charge here?

DEPUTY POLICE
No... um... I'm

The Chief stands up and takes charge of the situation.

POLICE CHIEF
I'm in charge here.

LUGOSI
Good. I'm Special Agent Lugosi, I'm here to investigate a meteor that landed in your town in the last couple of hours.

POLICE CHIEF
Meteor you say. Ain't heard no report of any meteors or little green men in my station.

LUGOSI
You have to help me find the crash site in order to make a full investigation.

Suddenly the doorbell rings again.

POLICE CHIEF
Get that will you.

The deputy answers the door.

John and Mary-Jane rush in.

JOHN
Aliens are invading!

Lugosi turns to John and grabs him by the arms.

LUGOSI
What do you mean son?

John and Mary-Jane are gasping for breath.

JOHN
We were at 'Make out hill'....

POLICE CHIEF
I've heard enough, these kids go up there and take all kinds of drugs

LUGOSI
You have to listen to them

POLICE CHIEF

I ain't listening to no teen dope
addicts, now all you people get out of my
station

The police chief and deputy start herding people towards
the door.

LUGOSI

You have to listen to me, these things
might be dangerous.

The herding pauses for a moment.

POLICE CHIEF

The romans couldn't Conquer Wales, some
green little asshole with a bad attitude
ain't going to either.

He continues pushing them out.

Once out the chief locks the door.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

Bloody hippies, can't handle their drugs.

DEPUTY POLICE

You think they're high Chief?

POLICE CHIEF

I hope so, if they ain't then we better
get ready.

9. EXT. TOWN. NIGHT

Meanwhile, John, Mary-Jane and Lugosi has just been
kicked out of the police station.

LUGOSI

Where did you see these things?

John is still kicking the police station door.

JOHN

You bastards! help us! What? Up on the
hill, up there.

John points to make out point

LUGOSI

We need to get there before these things
spread.

All three exit the shot running towards the hill.

10. EXT. PARK. NIGHT

Two men can be seen walking drunkenly in a woodland area.

Greg puts down his bottle and stops walking.

GREG
I want to pee.

Roy turns around.

ROY
You can't pee here it's not a toilet.

Greg sneaks over to Roy

GREG
Shhhh, no one will know.

Greg walks into the woods.

Roy stays behind.

ROY
I will stay here and guard the beer.

Greg walks deep into the forest.

GREG
Eeny, meeny, miny, mo, which tree should
I piss on.

Greg falls over while leaning on a tree.

He stands up and starts peeing.

Suddenly a humanoid appears behind Greg.

Meanwhile Roy is standing in the park looking at the stars.

He is spinning on the spot.

His POV makes it appear as though the stars are circling him.

Suddenly when Roy hears a scream from the woods he looks in Greg's direction.

When he brings his gaze down there is a humanoid standing right in front of him.

Roy screams and the camera disappears down his throat.

11. EXT. MAKE-OUT POINT. NIGHT

John, Mary Jane and Lugosi arrive at make-out point

LUGOSI
Where are they?

John looks around confused

JOHN
They were here.

MARY-JANE
We know where the meteor landed.

LUGOSI
Take me there.

All three run into the woods

12. INT. POLICE STATION. NIGHT

Both police chief and the deputy are answering phone calls non stop.

DEPUTY POLICE
Another report of a stranger in their garden chief.

The chief has two phones, one on each side of his head.

POLICE CHIEF
I know... I know... There are reports coming from every part of town.

The chief places both phones down.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
You know what we need to do son?

DEPUTY POLICE
Sorry madame just one moment please.

The deputy puts the phone down also.

DEPUTY POLICE (CONT'D)
What's that chief?

POLICE CHIEF

We need to suit up, get ready, grab your gun, we're going on a bug hunt.

Both men stand up and leave the police station.

13. EXT. SWAMP. NIGHT

John, Mary-Jane and Lugosi reach the site where the meteor landed.

The site has changed a lot.

The trees are now much more bushy, everything has grown a lot large than normal.

JOHN

Are swamps meant to look like this?

LUGOSI

No John they aint. The meteor must have mutated all the life forms that is in the area it landed in.

MARY-JANE

You mean those creatures were probably Will and Bobby-Joe?

LUGOSI

More than likely Mary-Jane.

JOHN

But how are we going to stop them and destroy the meteor?

LUGOSI

The same way you destroy any monster Johnny. You stab it through the heart or sever the head from the body.

MARY-JANE

What about the meteor?

LUGOSI

Don't you worry about that, I'll take that back with me for further research.

Suddenly one of the humanoids jump out of nowhere.

Lugosi sees the creature and smiles.

LUGOSI (CONT'D)
Don't worry guys I've handled worse in
the core.

Lugosi uses a stick to defend himself.

MARY-JANE
We can't kill it, it might be one of our
friends.

LUGOSI
There's not much friend left in this
thing.

Lugosi goes to hit the creature but it takes the hit and
just looks at Lugosi.

LUGOSI (CONT'D)
Tough guy eh?

Lugosi continues to hit the humanoid, the humanoid
eventually gets bored and hits Lugosi onto the meteor.

John and Mary-Jane look on in horror.

The creature starts walking slowly towards the couple.

Suddenly out of nowhere a gun fire is heard and the
humanoid falls on to his face.

The hero is the chief of police and his deputy.

John and Mary-Jane run up to them.

MARY-JANE
You saved us!

POLICE CHIEF
That's our job missy.

The chief walks over to the humanoid.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
I guess you kids weren't high after all.

Meanwhile the deputy is over by Lugosi.

DEPUTY POLICE
Chief I think he's dead.

POLICE CHIEF
I guess America ain't going to save the
day this time.

The chief and his deputy stand to look at the young couple.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

You kids have anywhere safe to go to?

JOHN

What about Lugosi? We can't just leave him here.

Suddenly Lugosi bolts up from the ground.

LUGOSI

I think something strange is happening to me.

Lugosi starts to transform into a bush like creature.

POLICE CHIEF

You kids take cover, we'll handle it.

The kids run into the woods leaving the chief and the deputy to take care of Lugosi.

DEPUTY POLICE

What we are going to do chief?

POLICE CHIEF

Shoot the thing until it stops moving.

The two police officers shoot at the creature to no avail.

DEPUTY POLICE

We cant stop it sir!

POLICE CHIEF

Run, save the town, I'll hold him off.

The deputy runs for safety while the chief stays and continues shooting the mutating Lugosi.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

Die you son of a bitch!

Lugosi has finished his transformation into a bush like creature.

He attacks the chief knocking him to the ground.

Once the chief is on the ground knocked unconscious Lugosi is about to leap on the chief.

Suddenly gun shots are heard echoing in the air.

The deputy merely ran away in order to flank Lugosi.

Lugosi turns his sites now towards the deputy.

As he approaches slowly the deputy is shooting.

DEPUTY POLICE

Die you bastard.

While stepping back the deputy bumps into something.

He turns to see the humanoid Bobby-Joe standing behind him.

He starts shooting the humanoid.

The humanoid goes down.

He turns back toward Lugosi but he is to close. Lugosi Swipes at the deputy knocking him to the ground.

Meanwhile the chief is waking-up.

The chief shoots at Lugosi but it has little effect.

Lugosi starts walking towards the chief.

He looks at his deputy and sees that his throat is bleeding.

He decides to run.

He reaches make-out point where John and Mary-Jane is trying to start their car.

POLICE CHIEF

Run you fools leave the car.

And he continues running towards the town.

Suddenly Lugosi runs towards the couple's car and scrapes John across the throat killing him.

Mary-Jane leaves the car and runs.

Lugosi runs after her and reaches her easily.

He jumps on her and then moves slowly to bite her face.

14. INT. POLICE STATION. NIGHT

The police chief bursts in through the door.

He marches immediately towards the gun cabinet.

Opens the cabinet and starts piling guns in his arms.

Behind him Dr. Wood walks into the station.

Dr. Wood pauses by a desk and picks up a large book.

The chief meanwhile is placing the guns and gathering ammo on a table to his right.

Dr. Wood slams the book down on the table.

The chief turns suddenly clasping a rifle.

Once he has noticed that the noise was made by a human rather than a humanoid he breathes a sigh of relief.

POLICE CHIEF

You trying to die son?

DR. WOOD

Having some trouble?

POLICE CHIEF

You could say that, who are you anyway?
You're not from around these parts

DR. WOOD

Names' Wood, I'm from the US military,
science core.

Dr. Wood extends his hand to shake.

The chief takes a step forward still pointing the gun at him.

POLICE CHIEF

The last American I meet killed my
deputy, you any different?

Dr. Wood takes off his glasses.

DR. WOOD

Agent Lugosi has been compromised I
assume.

POLICE CHIEF

What have you dirty Americans been up to
now? Using Wales as a testing ground for
super soldiers?

DR. WOOD

Sadly no. A meteor crash landed in this village and I suspect that a number of the locals have been infected by it.

POLICE CHIEF

What do you mean infected?

DR. WOOD

Are we close to the crash site?

POLICE CHIEF

What do you mean infected?

DR. WOOD

It's nearly 23 hours since the rock landed and people are already infected. If you don't take me to the site now, then you can kiss Wales goodbye.

POLICE CHIEF

You know how to use a gun?

The police chief gives Wood a gun and they both walk out of the station.

15. INT. POLICE CAR. NIGHT

The police chief is driving to the location of the crash site.

POLICE CHIEF

You going to tell me what's going on boy or are we just going to play I spy?

DR. WOOD

I don't think you want to know the gravitas of the situation.

POLICE CHIEF

I was in the great war, I think I can handle some little green men.

DR. WOOD

This is just the start we need to stop it before it turns into another World War.

POLICE CHIEF

The war?

DR. WOOD

Both World War one and two were the direct result of meteors landing on earth and transforming humans into violent creatures.

POLICE CHIEF

But these things didn't look human. I served during WW2 there was no creature from the black lagoon shooting no ray guns at me.

DR. WOOD

The humanoid is only the first part of the process. They will kill when first transformed and then slowly after enough death, they will retreat to a cocoon for one hour, exiting the cocoon as a perfect replica of their former self.

POLICE CHIEF

What? Sounds like bullshit to me. All I know is those arseholes that killed my deputy is going down.

The police chief speeds the car up.

Eventually they arrive at 'Make-out point'.

The car pulls over.

DR. WOOD

What are you doing?

POLICE CHIEF

We're nearly there. We should get out and walk the rest of the way.

The chief and Dr. Wood get out of the car and steps to the back of the car.

16. EXT. ROAD. NIGHT

The chief pulls out a hand gun and gives it to Dr. Wood.

POLICE CHIEF

Don't shoot yourself in the face.

He walks away from the car.

DR. WOOD

What about the rifles?

POLICE CHIEF

These things move to quick, by the time
you've got the rifle up, they'll be
eating your face.

Dr. Wood shuts the trunk of the car and follows the
chief.

17. EXT. MAKE-OUT POINT. NIGHT

The two arrive at 'Make-out point' sneaking by the side
of the car.

The two rest against the teenager's car.

The car is covered in some slime.

POLICE CHIEF

What the....

DR. WOOD

The humanoids must have tried to
replicate the car.

POLICE CHIEF

I hope that's what this is.

The chief has the slime between his fingers

The chief then starts walking towards the swamp

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

Follow me.

18. EXT. SWAMP. NIGHT

Both Wood and the chief sneak in to the swamp near where
the meteor hit.

POLICE CHIEF

This is it.

He pulls back a branch revealing that the swamp has
changed.

Now bodies line the sides of the swamp with the humanoid
version of Lugosi carrying the bodies and sticking them
to a cocoon.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

That's your guy right there.

DR. WOOD
The bush like thing?

POLICE CHIEF
That's him but what is he doing?

DR. WOOD
He's taking all the people that he's
killed and replicating them.

POLICE CHIEF
So he's bringing them back to life?

DR. WOOD
They are not the same people, they are
humanoid alien clones.

Suddenly, Lugosi is seen dragging the injured police
deputy, revealing that he is still alive.

The chief starts walking as though he is trying to step
out to save the deputy but he is held back by Dr. Wood.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)
What are you doing you fool.

POLICE CHIEF
He's alive.

DR. WOOD
That might not be him.

POLICE CHIEF
It's worth a shot.

The police chief pushes Dr. Wood out of the way and walks
towards the humanoid Lugosi.

He starts shooting at the Lugosi.

Dr. Wood also jumps out of the shrubs and starts shooting
Lugosi.

The gun shots do nothing to Lugosi and he pounces at Dr.
Wood scrapping his arm.

Meanwhile the police chief has grabbed a large wooden
stick and whacks Lugosi over the head.

Lugosi falls to the floor.

The chief picks up Wood and they both run for cover.

19. EXT. WOODLAND AREA. NIGHT

The chief and Wood come stumbling into sight.

DR. WOOD

I think we're far enough now.

They both fall to the ground.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)

Bullets did nothing to him.

POLICE CHIEF

They did nothing to him earlier either.

Dr. Wood looks at the chief.

The chief is reloading his gun.

DR. WOOD

You knew bullets did nothing and still went head first into that situation?

POLICE CHIEF

I thought my aiming was off last time.

DR. WOOD

Did you shoot him before he was transformed?

POLICE CHIEF

I don't think so.

DR. WOOD

What could it be?

Dr. Wood stands up.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)

Why is this humanoid creation immune to bullet fire? The Nazis tried to make their soldiers invincible but failed.

The chief stands up in a threatening way towards Dr. Wood

POLICE CHIEF

How far back does this go?

He grabs Dr. Wood by the neck.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)

Tell me everything you know.

Wood pushes him off.

DR. WOOD

Everything? This is information that you will regret finding out.

POLICE CHIEF

Let me be the judge of that.

DR. WOOD

Aliens and humans have been at war since humanity invented the first plane. Leonardo Da Vinci knew this. His painting in the Sistine Chapel was originally of a man touching an alien race. They tried again during World War one and two. Every human conflict in history or any corrupt politician is one of these alien humanoid replicas.

Dr. Wood sits back down on the floor.

DR. WOOD (CONT'D)

Hitler was a humanoid, and every greedy selfish money hungry human you meet is more than likely an alien replica spy.

POLICE CHIEF

Why haven't you told anybody about this?

DR. WOOD

Because people hate each other for the colour of their skins, for their creed, giving people a reason to kill is always a bad plan.

POLICE CHIEF

So you cover it up and fight the battle secretly?

DR. WOOD

Exactly. Atlantis existed you know, humans just sank it when it got overrun by humanoids.

POLICE CHIEF

How do we kill them?

DR. WOOD

Usually they die like humans but if you shot at Lugosi while he transformed then that must mean that he has assimilated the bullets.

Dr. Wood starts holding his arm in pain.

POLICE CHIEF
What's wrong? Are you ok?

Dr. Wood continues to hold his arm, falling to the floor in excruciating pain.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
Doctor? Doctor.

Wood takes hold of the pain for a moment.

DR. WOOD
I'm ok.

POLICE CHIEF
What's wrong with you?

DR. WOOD
I'm turning into one of them.

The chief places a gun to Dr. Wood's head.

POLICE CHIEF
But you're not convulsing like the others.

DR. WOOD
They changed from the meteor, I've just been infected by the carriers.

POLICE CHIEF
How are we going to stop them?

DR. WOOD
We need to blow up the meteor and kill Lugosi.

POLICE CHIEF
I have some TNT in the car will that destroy the meteor?

DR. WOOD
That should be fine.

POLICE CHIEF
What about Lugosi?

DR. WOOD
I'll take care of Lugosi.

They both run out of shot.

20. EXT. ROAD. NIGHT

The chief and Dr. Wood are standing at the back of the car loading TNT into a bag.

Suddenly the radio of the police car is heard making a noise.

RADIO

Chhhhh.... Come in agent 9.... Come in agent 9....

The chief and Dr. Wood look around for a while and then realise the sound is coming from the car.

They both walk around the car towards the front of the car.

The chief leans in and pulls out the mic for the radio.

POLICE CHIEF

Chief here, who is this?

There is a silent pause.

The chief and Wood look at each other for a moment.

RADIO

Wood.... Dr. Wood?

The chief hands over the hand set mic to Dr. Wood.

RADIO (CONT'D)

Doctor?

DR. WOOD

Yes this is Wood

RADIO

This is your commander and chief speaking. Have you found the rock?

DR. WOOD

Yes sir.

RADIO

You are advised that your mission directive is to obtain the rock and return it to the states within 24 hours. Are you able to complete this directive?

DR. WOOD

Obtaining the rock is now impossible, the only objective possible is the destruction of the rock.

RADIO

Unacceptable, you gain access to that rock or we nuke the site from space.

DR. WOOD

That would be killing millions of people.

RADIO

Casualties have been considered, the salvation of the rock is the only directive. If it is lost, all precautions must be taken.

DR. WOOD

Won't it be seen as a declaration of war?

RADIO

We have already won the war my friend, those rebels just don't know when to give up. I would run and hide if I were you doctor.

The sound of the radio being hung up is heard.

DR. WOOD

SIR? Sir?

POLICE CHIEF

Great.

Dr. Wood throws the radio mic back into the car.

DR. WOOD

I'm going to turn into one of them. That's the only way we can stop Lugosi.

POLICE CHIEF

You take care of Lugosi let me take care of the rest.

21. EXT. SWAMP. NIGHT

Dr. Wood and the chief are sneaking up to the site that the meteor landed.

DR. WOOD

OK I think it's time to fight

POLICE CHIEF

How come you have control of this when everyone else didn't?

DR. WOOD

I will also lose control. Shoot me in the face when I do.

Dr. Wood places his hand out for the chief to shake it.

POLICE CHIEF

Right in the face.

The chief shakes Wood's hand

DR. WOOD

It appears to be, go time.

Dr. Wood starts to convulse and changes into a humanoid swamp like creature.

He rolls on the floor in pain.

The chief looks on expecting the unexpected.

Suddenly Wood stands up and starts walking towards the Chief.

The chief pulls his gun up to Wood's face.

POLICE CHIEF

You stop right there!

Wood's stops immediately.

WOOD HUMANOID

(broken creature like) friend?

POLICE CHIEF

Yes. Friend. Now lets save the world!

The police chief walks past Humanoid Wood and towards the meteor crash site.

22. EXT. SWAMP. NIGHT

The chief and Wood walk slowly towards the meteor

They are surrounded by all of Lugosi's victims

They reach the meteor and the chief kneels down to place the TNT

Humanoid Wood is feeling one of the many cocooned humans

Suddenly Lugosi pounces out of nowhere and pushes the chief to the floor and grabs him by the throat.

Humanoid Wood is still distracted by the cocoons.

The chief is fighting to shout.

POLICE CHIEF
WOOOOOOD.

Humanoid Wood suddenly turns, runs and smashes into Lugosi.

The two humanoids battle.

Lugosi is generally stronger.

Wood holds his own for a while.

Lugosi gains the upper hand however.

Lugosi is about to give Wood the death strike.

Suddenly the chief swings in on a vine and kicks Lugosi in the face.

This gives Wood enough time to get his wits about himself.

While Lugosi is down, Wood picks up a massive stone and smashes Lugosi's head.

The chief meanwhile is finishing place the TNT on the meteor.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
Right that's done.

The chief runs away.

He turns to notice that Wood is standing right next to the TNT.

He turns back.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
WOOD LET'S GO

Wood turns to the chief and nods his.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
Come on, Dr. Wood is still alive in
there. Now come with me!

Wood looks at the fuse burning down and decides to follow the chief.

They run from the TNT and dive out of the swampy marsh just as the TNT explodes.

Both are on the ground and not moving.

The air is thick with smoke from the blast.

All the green swamp like trees are now white from the blast.

Wood starts moving.

He stands up and looks behind him at the blast site.

For a moment he looks down at the chief.

A moment passes while Wood just stares at the chief as though he is about to attack.

Suddenly the chief starts moving and groaning.

Wood stares at him for a moment.

Wood start moving towards the chief.

It becomes clear that Wood is helping the chief stand up.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
We made one hell of a mess.

They both look into the burnt remains of the swamp.

WOOD HUMANOID
(monster voice) mess.

The chief turns to Wood.

POLICE CHIEF
Thanks Wood, you've saved my country and
possibly the world.

The chief extends his hand.

Wood looks at the chief's hand.

He grabs the chiefs hand.

WOOD HUMANOID
(monster voice) friend.

Suddenly the radio of the car is heard.

The chief and Wood look over the landscape below.

RADIO
If there is anyone still listening then
we apologize for the decision we have
just made. Three fighter jets are headed
to your location where one Atomic bomb
will be dropped and will stabilize that
region.

The chief and the humanoid Wood look on as the Atomic
bomb is dropped on Wales.

POLICE CHIEF
(VO) On October the 10th 1950 America
dropped their third Atomic bomb on a
foreign land in an act of aggression
killing 2.5 Million inhabitants of Wales.

The Atomic bomb explodes.

All that can be seen on Wood and the chief's face is the
flash from the blast.

They both turn to look at each other as the blast races
towards them.

They share a look.

POLICE CHIEF (CONT'D)
Goodb.....

The sound of the approaching blast reaches a crescendo as
the chief is about to speak.

CUT TO BLACK