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THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF AUTHORSHIP AND AUDIENCE IN THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF CHILDREN'S FILM ADAPTATIONS

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Abstract

In the public consumption of film adaptations of popular children's literature, which is, particularly in relation to the popular press, influenced by the marketing communications of the filmmaking team, the discursive negotiation of author and audience constructs is pivotal in the endeavor to side-step or manage the seemingly unavoidable discourses of fidelity. In this, child audiences are imagined and constructed in a variety of ways; however, these constructions generally have very little to do with actual children and much more to do with how the filmmakers wish/need to manage and negotiate the significance of both book and film authors. This area is largely unexplored in adaptation studies, for whilst the topic of fidelity proliferates the discipline, its function as a marketing tool - as well as its links to how author(s) and audience(s) are imagined and constructed - needs further investigation. What is clear in the following case studies is that the representations of audience(s) vary depending on the culturally understood personas of the author(s) at hand, therefore as the representation of the various book and film authors shift from case study to case study, so does the representation of the audience. In *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*, J.K. Rowling is deemed to be the primary authorial presence, and the audience are imagined as a cohesive, loyal group of avid readers. In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,* Tim Burton and Roald Dahl are equally significant (despite the lack of Dahl's physical presence) because they are both deemed to be outsiders, much like the audience members are all (implicitly and paradoxically) also deemed to be. In *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion The Witch and the Wardrobe,* Andrew Adamson is unable to compete with the emotional attachment many adult journalists and critics have to the book, and the result of this is that the discursive presence of the child audience is largely absent. All of these films were within a few years of each other, yet the 'child,' childhood more generally, and the intended audience are all constructed in very different ways demonstrating that what is important to those promoting (and often those consuming) a film is a solid author construct, and any discussions of children or child audiences only serves to validate these author figures.

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Academic Thesis: Declaration Of Authorship

I, Amanda Stephenson

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

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Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

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Date: 30th September 2015

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Preface

> ...it would be worth examining how the author became individualized in a culture like ours...at what moment studies of authenticity...began, in what kind of valorization the author was involved, at what point we began to recount the lives of authors rather than of heroes, and how this fundamental category of "the-man-and-his-work" began.[1]
>
> It is hardly surprising that lesser known literary texts are normally overshadowed and/or overtaken by their film adaptation... This trajectory, however, is reversed in adaptations of popular children's writing, where the battle between the book and the film is, it would seem, at its most ferocious.[2]
>
> From its inception, cinema lays claim to the child - both on and off screen.[3]

The aim of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the discursively constructed author(s) and audience in the press, marketing and reception material pertaining to three children's film adaptations. These constructions, as they appear in the materials studied (which, as I will discuss later, are wide ranging), are inextricably bound up with the underlying assumption that the film and/or book authors, as well as the audience, desire a 'faithful adaptation' of the book they love and that this 'fidelity' (however it is measured) is crucial to a film's success. Furthermore, as the representation of the author shifts with each case study, so does the representation of the audience so that the two remain, in the way that they are imagined and discussed, inextricably linked. However, because the representations of

[1] Foucault, *What Is An Author*, p205
[2] Deborah Cartmell, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, p175
[3] Lebeau, *Childhood and Cinema*, p7

the imagined audience shifts so much between case studies it is evident that these audience constructions say more about the author figure(s) than they do any real audience members. Thus, in all three cases here, the audience is imagined, constructed and represented in the way that best legitimises the author figure at hand as someone who cares about the source novel and can be trusted to adapt it. Therefore, according to this press material, fidelity matters to the authors because it matters to the audience, even though this 'audience' is largely constructed by the press and marketing apparatus itself in order to validate the author figures.

Before we move on it is important to note that in regards to 'marketing apparatus' I am not referring to the more obvious marketing paraphernalia of film posters and trailers. Rather, I am referring to the ways that quotes from directors, producers, screenwriters etc - which are intended to represent and promote the films in particular ways - find their way into press and reception material. These quotes, when combined with the journalistic, academic and viewers responses to films, work to construct authorship and audience in particular ways and with varying success. Therefore when I hereafter refer to 'press materials' I do so with the understanding that although not directly written or distributed by the filmmaking team, they are, generally, influenced and include direct quotes by the filmmaking team and thus serve a very important marketing function. Outside of this marketing function these materials also illustrate that there is still a profound cultural desire for the author figure, and that this (highly constructed) author figure cannot exist without his or her (imagined/constructed) readers and/or viewers. Furthermore, when I discuss reception material I am generally referring to viewer/reader comments found online or, at times, academic work regarding the case studies. Academic work is on occasion treated in this manner because at times academics (as I will discuss in detail later), demonstrate a lack of critical distance that situates them within the realm of 'fans.'

This thesis begins with an examination of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Chris Columbus, 2001). Here, J.K Rowling is the epitome of the constructed author, for her life 'story' and its relationship to the creation of *Harry Potter* has now reached mythical status. This highly constructed presence was overtly documented during the production of the film and served not only to perpetuate the Rowling myth (whose celebrity

presence has been hard to ignore), but also to offer 'proof' to the fans of the books that the film would be an 'authentic' portrayal of the novel because she would be overseeing it. Furthermore, all involved with the film (in particular the screenwriter, director and producer) are depicted in the press material as having this authenticity as their primary focus; however it was an authenticity that Rowling alone was - allegedly - able to approve. The audience, under the umbrella of both the myth of Rowling and the 'phenomenon' surrounding the *Harry Potter* books, were constructed as a homogenous group of child fans who were deemed to be the potential critics of the film - critics that the filmmakers (according to this press material) feared and were striving to please because they (the fans) had read and loved the books. In this way the construction of the child audience oscillates between the culturally familiar binary of child as idealised innocent and child as terror, and discourses surrounding the child performers' pranks on set also mirror this. Furthermore, in Chris Columbus' ability to elicit 'authentic' and 'true' performances from the children, he was deemed to further guarantee the 'authenticity' of the film, albeit in a rather different way to Rowling. In this way he was able to 'bring the book to life' and in the process gain *some* authorial significance in an adaptation where the notion of collaboration fails because of Rowling's dominance.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (written by Roald Dahl in 1964[4] and adapted in 2005 by Tim Burton), provides us with a different perspective on these issues. Here, fidelity is still an important topic in the press material relating to the adaptation; however, authorial focus/discussion is very much split between Burton and Dahl, who are generally perceived to be kindred spirits. This legitimises Burton's role as director and asserts him as the author of the film without undermining Dahl in any way. However, because of the (widely perceived), individualistic style of Burton, the original novel, in reality, becomes one of a body of past texts (including Burton's past work, the past acting work of Depp, the TV programmes and films that Burton is reported to have watched as a child) that the film is calling upon on an intertextual level. Furthermore, this sense of Burton and Dahl's individuality is reflected in the ways that the audience is perceived and represented in the press material because the audience is (paradoxically) imagined as a group of outsiders, much the same as both Burton and Dahl were reported

[4]Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

to be. Dahl and Burton were also deemed to question authority in their lives and their work, and are, as the discourses go, familiar with the 'dark recesses' of society and the human mind. The discussions surrounding the film attempt to also construct the audience in this way; however, because this film is an adaptation of a popular children's book, and the construction of the tormented outsider does not sit well with contemporary constructions of childhood, the promotional discourses ultimately fail to imagine the audience - particularly any child portion of the potential audience - in a cohesive manner. Furthermore, there is virtually no reference, aside from the odd cursory remark, to the child performers of the film. This is at odds with both of the other case studies covered here and further highlights the centrality of the author figures in discussions surrounding the film. Thus, while the child/adult binary that is so prominent in the other two case studies seems to break down here, there is an uneasy space left in the press material which signifies the failure of the promotional team to deal with this state of in-between-ness, and in not dealing with this the intended audience of the film is unclear.

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe (Andrew Adamson, 2005) offers a very different example of how this relationship between author and reader is constructed, for it appears that in many cases the original author of the books (C.S. Lewis), becomes synonymous with the remembering of a past childhood and the links this has to both literature in general and a wider sense of personal identity. As such, Adamson, academics and critics alike often discuss their own childhood reading of the *Narnia* books, and as a result of this the film seems to provide some kind of doorway to the remembering of ones own childhood self. Authorship is important in these discussions, as is the notion of fidelity, but what is most important is that the discussions surrounding the film invoke the idea of reading as something that we have highly personal and imaginative connections with. It is this reported connection, for Adamson, that works to authenticate him as the 'proper' director for the project. In this way, and despite this being an adaptation of a children's book, the discussions are much more focused on an adult audience than a child one, and as a result of this those involved in the making of the film, as well as those writing about it, heavily construct themselves in a nostalgic sphere that works to exclude contemporary children.

In order to examine this further I will be drawing together theoretical

input from disciplines including adaptation theory, literary theory (particularly relating to authorship and child readers), and theories of fandom and celebrity. I will also be considering work which deals more generally with children and television/film, the cultural construction of childhood, and philosophical work regarding both authorship and intertextuality. An examination of concepts such as fidelity and authenticity - in that they are inextricably bound up with ideas about authorship and audience - is also important to this study. It is important to state, however, that the uses of these terms in adaptation studies (which in themselves are not always consistent) do not always correlate with the uses of the terms in press and reception material. Because of this, and because there is already a wealth of work in adaptation studies relating to fidelity, I do not attempt to define these terms. Instead, I consider their roles in discussions surrounding the adaptations at hand, and examine how the discursive constructions of authors and audiences are used to preemptively deal with potential audience dissatisfaction on the grounds of fidelity.

Thus this thesis does not to attempt to textually analyse the books or the films themselves, although on occasion this is necessary. Rather, it seeks to examine the diversity with which the perceived relationship between author and audience is negotiated in the discussions surrounding children's literary adaptations, and the relationship that this has to the preoccupation with fidelity. This provides insight into the more general issues of authorship in adaptation studies as well as the ways that popular cultural discourses - particularly those that involve children - are disseminated and utlised in a commercial environment where adults need to both 'protect' children and make money from them. These discourses, which are inextricably bound up in the economic and power relations between adults and children, work differently in each case study presented here. In the promotion of *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* the child viewer is constructed as the loyal reader and feared critic that the filmmaking team care about pleasing; however, Warners' treatment of the supporting child actors, as well as child authors of *Harry Potter* fan sites, tells rather a different story whereby concern for the economic value of its' property (and by extension the economic value of children) appears to far outweigh any concerns for actual children. In *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* the adult/child binary is broken down, but this results in a problematic notion of the child that does

little to aid the promotion of the film, and in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* the child becomes the potential intruder upon adults' memories of reading the book, and as a result is edged out of the discussion in favour of adult nostalgia for childhoods past. Thus as well as commenting on the significance of authorship in the promotion of film adaptations, this thesis provides insight into the larger cultural dynamic between adults and children - children that have to, on a day to day basis, negotiate the ways that they are imagined and constructed with their everyday lives.

Chapter 1

Authors, Audiences and Children's Culture

Introduction

Authors are not simply flesh and blood people - they are ideologically and discursively constructed entities that function in a number of ways.[1] Through these constructions - at least as they relate to the adaptation case studies covered here - readers and viewers are invited to identify with different authors in very specific ways. Likewise, readers and viewers - or, at least, ideas about who readers and viewers are - are also highly imagined and discursively constructed by the people who are writing, producing, disseminating and consuming the film texts. These constructions (of book author, film author, reader and viewer) can be evidenced in, and guided/dictated by the texts themselves as well as, significantly, the discourses in the press and promotional material surrounding them.

In the film adaptations of the popular children's novels that follow, these constructions are particularly evident because in order to market the film to the widest possible audience, filmmakers and marketers have to negotiate a complex terrain that validates the film authors whilst avoiding the negation of the book author. Robert Stam, who generally deals with literary adaptations of canonical literature, argues that literary adaptations are

> ...caught up in the ongoing whirl of intertextual reference and

[1] Foucault, *Aesthetics - Essential Worls of Foucault 1954 - 1984*, p205

> transformation...in an endless process of recycling, transformation, and transmutation, with no clear point of origin.[2]

As is clear in the marketing and press material of the case studies that follow, this intertextuality not only implicates the texts and their authors themselves, but also ideas about who the readers and viewers, as culturally imagined groups, are. In this way, the constructions of author and reader/audience cannot be separated out, for the ways in which authors are constructed plays a pivotal role in determining reader/audience constructions, whilst constructions of the reader/audience are needed to stabilise and validate the identities of the authors. The relationship of the constructed audience to the production, promotion and reception of film and literary adaptations is largely unexplored. Recently, scholar Simone Murray has, in her work on the adaptation industry, considered the role of the book author in the marketing and publicity of film adaptations, but has not considered how constructed readers and audiences are enmeshed within this.[3]

In addition, when it comes to the adaptation of children's literature into film this 'ongoing whirl of intertextual reference' is further complicated by the fact the readers and audience members in question are generally imagined to be children who are themselves (along with the press and marketing material that writes about them) inextricably bound up in highly constructed and culturally pervasive perceptions of childhood.[4] This intertextuality also means that there are, in the following case studies at least, no distinct boundaries between the discourses found in the advertising produced by the filmmakers, the reception material found in popular press/internet discussion boards and, at times, academic discussions. Methodologically this has been challenging. Thus academic work, for instance, is at times presented alongside popular press articles and treated as reception material. This is inevitable given the interdisciplinary nature of the study and that

[2]Stam, *The Dialogics of Adaptation*, p66

[3]Murray, *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation*

[4]Allison James, *Constructing Childhood; Theory, Policy and Social Practice*; James/Prout, *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*; Hendrick, *Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretive Survey, 1800 to the Present*; Cunningham, *The Invention of Childhood*Allison James, *Constructing Childhood; Theory, Policy and Social Practice*; James/Prout, *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*; Hendrick, *Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretive Survey, 1800 to the Present*; Cunningham, *The Invention of Childhood*

journalists and academics alike tend to write about things that they are personally invested in, especially when in relation to children's literature.[5]

This thesis, then, takes the press material of three film adaptations of children's literature as its starting point, with the aforementioned caveat that this material serves a marketing function because it is influenced by the filmmakers and often directly quotes members of the filmmaking team. It is not the purpose of this thesis, however, to define what is or is not children's literature. As Karin Lesnik-Oberstein argues:

> We cannot actually say clearly what makes a children's book or not. The definition of a 'children's book' is still variously based on publishers' and editors' decisions, general trends of style [and] supposed or claimed readership...[6]

Thus I begin from the perspective that we are dealing with children's books because, aside from the fact that these books' status as children's books is clearly ingrained in public consciousness, the press discourses for the adaptations themselves clearly posit them as children's books. However I also keep in mind that the film industry seeks to maximise profit through appealing to as wide an audience base as possible - which will include adults - and that the novels themselves, as argued by Rachel Falconer, might well be, to some, considered 'cross over novels.'[7]

As well as a consideration of this press material, this thesis also considers academic work directly related to these texts and their authors, although as mentioned this is not always used for the same purposes. With regards to theoretical context, this study forms an intersection between adaptation theory, authorship theories and theories of childhood. Other theoretical input is valuable in relation to specific case studies, however it is these three disciplines that maintain relevance throughout the thesis. As mentioned, fidelity is of issue to me only insofar as it permeates press discourses, and it is not my intention to compare book and film versions of the texts as so often happens in the rather limited work on film adaptations of children's literature.[8]

[5]Lesnik-Oberstein, *Children's Literature; Criticism and the Fictional Child*, pp1-2

[6]Ibid., pp4-5

[7]Falconer, *The Crossover Novel: Contemporary Children's Fiction and Its Adult Readership*

[8]Street, *Children's Novels and the Movies*; Muller, *Adapting Canonical Texts in Children's Literature*

Before moving on to the three main case studies in subsequent chapters, this chapter identifies key areas of debate that contextualise the thesis as a whole. Prior to this, however, I would like to examine a very short example that is emblematic of the terrain I will be dealing with - namely the 2008 film adaptation of Cornelia Funke's novel *Inkheart* (Iain Softley). In this film the main protagonist, Mo (Brendan Fraser) is a 'silvertongue,' which means he is able to bring characters from stories to life simply by reading the stories aloud. The result of this is that characters are torn from their worlds (the worlds of the novels) and find themselves lost and disorientated in our world, which they neither recognise nor understand. The fire-eater Dustfinger (Paul Bettany) longs for the magic and family he left behind in his story, whilst other characters - mainly the antagonists - enjoy the freedom that this new capitalist world (complete with guns) allows. In the meantime, for every story book character that appears in our world, a person from our world disappears into the story of the book. The transfer of these characters between worlds is, therefore, permeated with a sense of nostalgia and loss, and we do not need to look far to find the longing for the 'magic' of literature in the promotion and reception of the film adaptations at hand. But with this longing for the transference of magic from one medium to another, there is the inevitable concomitant fear of the loss of 'magic' - and the success or failure in capturing this 'magic' is often what critical responses to the films come down to. Furthermore, adult critics' nostalgia for childhood (usually their own) is inextricably bound up in the desire that film adaptations somehow capture this 'magic' even though it is, ironically, closely tied with the individual act of reading and imagining.

The story of *Inkheart*, in both its book and cinematic form, also raises interesting questions about the act of writing and reading. Endings can - through the readings of 'silvertongues' - be changed, yet there is also an element of chance involved because how, exactly, the worlds are merged - or which characters end up changing worlds - is not controllable by either the original author(s), the 'silvertongues' that read their books or the characters that they have created. And the underlying question that persists throughout (but is never explicitly dealt with) is: did the author of the original book *create* the world through the act of writing or did he somehow become the medium through which the existence of this world came to be known? Certainly, when Dustfinger tells Fenoglio (the diegetic author of *Inkheart*,

played by Jim Broadbent) 'You do not control my fate!' as well as when Fenoglio is surprised to find himself imprisoned by his own characters, it is quite clear that the author is not as all powerful over his book or characters as he would like. Furthermore, the characters have back stories that fall quite outside of the time span of Fenoglio's writing - were these imagined by the characters after they suddenly came into existence through Fenoglio's writing? Or did Fenoglio, again, just somehow come to know about a pre-existing world in all of its detail (as J.K Rowling is very much deemed to have done in the first case study of this thesis)? And, at the end of the story, as Fenoglio is transported into the world of *Inkheart* when Meggie (Eliza Bennet) reads a new ending[9] in order to subvert the evil intentions of the anti-hero Basta (Jamie Foreman), it is clear that the world of Inkheart is perfectly big and strong enough to contain its author.

Struggles between the various authors for authorial recognition are, in the case studies that follow, also clearly evident. However each of the case studies manages these in different ways depending on how the constructions of book and film author are negotiated, and how the audience is constructed and imagined in relation to these authors. One difference between *Inkheart* and the case studies considered here is that in the film it is the child Meggie (Eliza Bennet) who is able to imaginatively create new endings for the characters, whereas in the press and reception material of the following adaptations, children's voices are rarely present, let alone powerful. In the case of *Harry Potter* there are, as I will discuss in more detail later, some child written reviews, and the press material largely constructs the child audience as potential critics that the filmmakers are in fear of upsetting with a poor adaptation. In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* however, the 'auteur' presence of Tim Burton dominates discussions to such an extent that the audience is rarely explicitly considered at all, and in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, the child audience is constructed as unable to appreciate the literature that their parents (and presumably the filmmakers) did when they were children.

Thus from this mini case study the following questions arise: What is the role and significance of the author? Exactly who, once reading and writing takes place that changes the story, can lay a claim to being the/an author?

[9]It is worth noting that in the novel it is the Father, Mo, that reads the new ending, however in the film adaptation it is his daughter Meggie.

Why is it so important that the silvertongues have to speak every word with love in order for their magical powers to work? For, just as a straight reading of the words by a Silvertongue will either not work or, as the example of Darius (John Thomson) demonstrates, work badly and give inconsistent and undesirable results, so the discussions surrounding these case studies are permeated with recourse to 'love' and its significance to the perceived success or failure of the films. It is worth noting here that whilst film success is generally measured in regards to a combination of economic capital and cultural/symbolic capital, in the realm of film adaptations of children's literature there is (as is the case with critics of children's literature[10]), much more significance given to the emotional and subjective responses of (adult) viewers. Furthermore, what becomes evident throughout the following case studies is that these emotional responses (which morph into quasi-critical responses) are very much implicated in cultural perceptions of childhood which are themselves inexplicably tied - in these case studies at least - to nostalgia and a longing for wonder and 'magic.'

Thus these questions regarding the status of authors and authorship, as well as the relationship these have to the differing ways that the child audience is constructed, are central to this thesis because they form pivotal themes in the press and reception material studied. Furthermore, the question about what happens when characters (and their stories) are taken out of one world and placed in another - as happens in *Inkheart* - is also central because when being transposed from novel to film those stories and characters have to be recognisable and yet 'fit in' with the new medium, and the anxiety that comes with this process is quite evident in the press and reception material studied, despite the fact that it works very hard to hide it. Thus the novels have to be 'brought to life' through the adaptation process, and as the silvertongues of Funke's novel will no doubt attest, this is no easy feat.

The (somewhat limited) reviewer responses to the film also reveal many of the issues that will be dealt with in much more detail throughout this thesis. Reviewer Justin Chang, for instance, made the highly general and derogatory statement that:

> Books are essential; movies based on books, not so much - this

[10]Lesnik-Oberstein, *Children's Literature; Criticism and the Fictional Child*

> is the lesson imparted by "Inkheart," a brisk, overstuffed adaptation of Cornelia Funke's international bestseller.[11]

He then goes on to explicitly make assumptions about how audience members will respond to the film when he says that '...one of the film's major flaws is that the characters seem to accept the rules much more quickly than the viewer will...'[12] and then says '...Iain Softley seems more interested in ushering his characters from point A to point B...than in fostering that all important sense of wonder.'[13]A sense of wonder, no doubt, that these audience members would get (according to Chang) if they read the book. The film, for Chang, is only redeemed by its textual references to children's literature. He says

> ...cheeky visual references to classic children's books - the flying monkeys from "The Wizard of Oz" ad the ticking croc from "Peter Pan" are among the creature shown here - keep the pic sporadically engaging and underscore its reverential attitude to literature.[14]

Chang wraps his review up by stating that the film '...unlike its assorted characters and critters, never manages to break free of the page.'[15] Implicit in this review are ideas about fidelity as well as the hierarchy of literature over books. He also discusses lack of authenticity regarding the sets and acting, as do other reviewers such as Sarah Sluis, who questions why '...Mortimer [has] an English-accented daughter and great aunt, but speak[s] with an American accent?' and whose review closes with the statement that 'Fans of Brendan Fraser's Mummy series will find a less precise fantasy than those films' rich Egypt backdrop, and a story more appropriate for the elementary-school set, especially on a rainy or snowy day.'[16] Here, the idea that the film might speak to an 'elementary-school' age audience is clearly intended to be a demeaning comment.

Before I move on to the three main case studies examined in detail in this thesis, however, it is important to examine the theoretical context of

[11]Chang, *Variety 413, Issue 5 [2008]*, p26
[12]Ibid., p27
[13]Ibid.
[14]Ibid.
[15]Ibid., p29
[16]Sluis, *FIlm Journal International 112 [2009]*, p36

these ideas about authors, audience, fidelity and authenticity. In order to do that I first turn to adaptation studies, which forms the primary contextual umbrella for this otherwise interdisciplinary thesis.

Adaptation Theory, Fidelity and Intertextuality

> Adapting a well-loved novel is always daunting. You don't want to upset the fans of the book...yet change is inevitable.[17]

For over a decade the majority of adaptation theorists have been looking for ways to move outside of the discourses of fidelity which are deemed to have plagued early adaptation critics such as Bluestone.[18] Thomas Leitch argues that 'Fidelity as a touchstone of adaptations will always give their source texts, which are faithful to themselves, an advantage so enormous and unfair that it renders comparison meaningless...',[19]while Robert Stam articulates some of the metaphors that can or have been utilised in an attempt to move away from fidelity discourses when he says:

> If "fidelity" is an inadequate trope, what trope might be more appropriate?...translation, actualization, reading, critique, dialogization, cannibalization, transmutation, transfiguration, incarnation, transmorgification, transcoding, performance, signifying, rewriting, detourment - all of which shed light on a different dimension of adaptation.[20]

This thesis is not, however, an attempt to suggest yet another metaphor for theorising the adaptation process or an attempt to define any boundaries for adaptation studies. Rather, it is concerned with fidelity discourses, and any of the other metaphors for adaptation, only insofar as they appear in the press and reception material relating to the case studies examined. At times these discourses and metaphors do find their way into academic writing about these adaptations, and these are analysed with the same rigor afforded to the press and reception material - and whilst this fluidity between academic and press/marketing material potentially creates methodological

[17]Kennelly, *Creative Screenwriting 12 [2005]*, p30
[18]Bluestone, *Novels into Film*
[19]Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, p16
[20]Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation*, p4

inconsistencies, it also highlights the fact that these discourses are, despite the attempts to move away from them, still very much present in a wide range of writing about adaptations.

This focus on fidelity in press and reception discourses is, some theorists argue, because of the (perceived) demands of the fans of the book. Cartmell, for instance, articulates this in relation to children's film adaptations of literature when she says 'Dogged by the demands of the fans for fidelity, both genres ['fantasy and children's literature on screen'] reveal a hostility between the screen and literary text...'[21] Likewise McFarlane argues, albeit in regards to adult viewers, that 'The fact is that filmgoers simply *are* interested in how filmmakers have gone about the business and art of transposition from one medium to another - and that this transposition and the processes involved constitute a phenomenon of continuing interest to large numbers of people.'[22] Whilst MacFarlane's statement is somewhat general, we can be sure that those involved in writing the press material studied here perceive fidelity as an important factor in attracting potential audience members. If this were not the case, fidelity discourses would not dominate the press material in the way that they do. What is also evident is that the perceived desire of fans for faithful adaptations is mirrored in the public representation of the filmmakers' intentions, for they often profess the desire to create faithful renditions of their source texts and they (apparently) do so for both the sake of their own reverence for the books as well as their fans. In this way, claims being 'true' to, 'loving' and 'caring about' the books are clearly an important part of attracting and reassuring potential audience members that the (faithful) film will be worthy of viewing, a message which clearly serves to ensure economic success.

Journalists and filmmakers alike, however, tend to be very vague about what a 'faithful' adaptation is - or, at least, the ideas about what make a faithful adaptation shift depending on the agenda and viewpoint of the writer (or speaker, in the case of transcribed interviews with the filmmaking team). Common in these discussions is the notion of 'bringing the book to life' as well as talk of maintaining the 'spirit' or the 'magic' of the book. In doing this they implicitly claim fidelity whilst, at the same time, disavowing it as something they need to strictly adhere to. Thus an adaptation might

[21]Deborah Cartmell, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, p2
[22]McFarlane, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, p15

be deemed unfaithful if fidelity is measured (for instance) through scene by scene comparisons; however what a particular writer perceives as a successful portrayal of the 'essence' of the book can and does provide grounds for arguing that an adaptation has been faithful even if many changes have been made to the plot, dialogue etc.

In this there is a fluidity and openness surrounding the terms utilised in the press ('faithful', 'authentic', 'in the spirit of' etc) that is clearly problematic in the field of adaptation studies where the underlying anxiety about the term 'fidelity' is omnipresent. The notion of the author is also important here because the film authors (which can include the director, scriptwriter, producer and other team members, but which is usually deemed to be the director) are often depicted as the protectors of the treasured texts and their authors - they are the people who profess that their adaptations will maintain the 'spirit' of the book. These discourses surrounding fidelity and authorship, which as mentioned often imply a reverence to the source texts, are prevalent in the press material pertaining to the following case studies. However, in shifting the focus from considerations of scene by scene faithfulness to notions of authenticity/the spirit of the book or, indeed, much more open uses of the term faithfulness, the press material attempts at once to privilege the source text whilst also working to ensure that the film is not perceived as secondary.

The notion of intertextuality is also an important aspect of the press material that follows for a variety of reasons. In *Harry Potter*, for instance, Rowling's now mythical life story becomes intertextually embedded into the press discourse and reception of the adaptation, and in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* Burton, Dahl, Depp (who plays Willy Wonka) and the characters of the film all become so intertextually entangled that the press material often self reflexively plays with this. In *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, Adamson's recourse to his child imaginings becomes so embedded in the way that the film text is presented that again, but in a different way to Rowling, his life story becomes central to the way that the film is - through quotes from him imbedded in the popular press - marketed. Thus, in the examples that follow, the intertextuality between the source novel and the film is only the starting point (or one amongst many) of the intertextual relationships we find in the press and reception material.

This thesis is not, therefore, concerned with what fidelity has (or has

not) been defined as in adaptation studies, or the intertextual relationship between books and films. It is, rather, concerned with how the manifestation of marketing communications in popular press material - which often come in the form of quotes from the filmmaking team and which seek to manage viewer reception - forms, alongside recourse to the biographies of both book authors and film directors, an intertextual network that generally aims to promote the films as 'faithful' adaptations when, in the more traditional and structural uses of the term, they are clearly not.

Emotion, Authenticity and the 'Spirit of the book'

> ...authenticity is a hook employed either as a hook to sell products and services...or a hegemonic discourse through which various ideologies are articulated.'[23]
>
> Magic, with children's adaptations, is centred around the ability to bring books to life as well as nostalgic ideas about the magical innocence of childhood...[24]

I will go into much more detail later about the discursive construction of childhood, but traces of these constructions do appear in the (somewhat limited) adaptation theory that relates to the film adaptations of children's literature. In her 2007 book *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, for instance, Cartmell says that 'Children, unlike adults, love to re-read their favourite stories; and, correspondingly, in adapting these texts, there will be higher demands on fidelity.'[25]Whilst this is a gross generalisation, I would say that the press material concurs with this in its *perception* of child audiences, and this again works to explain the reason that the filmmaking team work so hard to address issues of fidelity.

The idea of emotional attachment to source texts is, however, by no means limited to the discussions of child audiences in adaptation theory. In her 2008 book *Now A Major Motion Picture* Christine Geraghty says:

> Metaphors of adaptation and transformation have been a feature of the study of film adaptations and often carry emotional

[23]Phillip Vannini, *Authenticity in Culture, Self and Society*, p10
[24]Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation*, p7
[25]Cartmell, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, p168

> weight; the dominant trope of faithfulness indeed implies the possibility of betrayal and loss.[26]

Robert Stam had also made explicit reference to this in his 2005 book *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation.* He says:

> The traditional language of criticism of filmic adaptation of novels...has often been extremely judgmental...Terms such as "infidelity," "betrayal," "deformation," "violation," "vulgarization," "bastardization," and "desecration" proliferate, with each word carrying its specific charge of opprobrium....The notion of "fidelity" does, admittedly, contain its grain of truth. When we say an adaptation has been "unfaithful" to the original the very violence of the term gives expression to the intense disappointment we feel when a film adaptation fails to capture what we see as the fundamental narrative, thematic, and aesthetic features of its literary source.[27]

Here, Stam is attempting to balance distanced aesthetic judgement ('when a film fails') with the subjective aspect of this judgement ('to capture what we see as...'). Here, Stam's masculine[28] and structural approach to adaptation theory is clearly under threat by the (feminine)[29] emotional connection to the source novel - a threat which Stam works hard to contain in his structural analysis of '...narrative, themes and aesthetic features.' Here, a clear connection can be made to the child audience, who are not deemed to be distanced and analytical. Rather, their perceived 'passion' for the source texts (a passion which Shelley Cobb, in her article "Adaptation, Fidelity, and Gendered Discourses" convincingly argues is perceived as a feminine trait[30]) is accepted as inherent to their status as children. This perceived intrinsic quality of children (who love and re-read their books) works to further explain why fidelity discourses are so prevalent in press and promotional material, and how these discourses are inextricably linked to cultural perceptions of children and their (real and imagined) relationships to books and their authors.

[26]Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p11
[27]Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation*, p3
[28]Cobb, *Adaptation 4 [2010]*, p32
[29]Ibid.
[30]Ibid.

In "Reading Film and Literature", which appeared in the *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen,* Brian McFarlane argues that:

> ..."fidelity" (however distinguished) is a wholly inappropriate and unhelpful criterion for either understanding or judgement. It may be that, even among the most rigorously high-minded of film viewers confronted with the film version of a cherished novel or play, it is hard to suppress a sort of yearning for a faithful rendering of *one's own* [imagined] *vision of the literary text.* My italics are intended to highlight the impossibility of such a venture...[31]

Here, McFarlane is, arguably more explicitly than Stam, making reference to the individuality of audience members' reactions to adaptations. However what is also clear in the discussions surrounding the case studies that follow is that this individuality is, to varying degrees, disavowed in favour of depicting the audience as a coherent whole that is made up of members who all feel exactly the same about the source texts. This is most prominent in the first case study, *Harry Potter*, where all reader responses appear to be perceived as the same. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* complicates this because the audience are (somewhat implicitly and paradoxically) imagined as lots of 'loners' together, which itself is complicated by the fact that this 'loner' image does not sit well with contemporary cultural representations of childhood. In regards to *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* it is the adult audience, not the child one, that is deemed to have read and loved the books, which again complicates the representations of the child audience because it appears to be implicitly assumed that their entry to Narnia will be through the film rather than the book.

Bound up with perceptions of who the audience members are and what they want (or demand) from adaptations are ideas which take us back to the fluidity of vocabulary used in the press and reception material - a vocabulary which is, at times, at odds with the more traditional uses of the terms in both adaptation theory and critical theory in general. For instance, the words 'authentic' and 'authenticity' appear widely in the press and reception material relating to the case studies to hand, although the term itself is generally rare in adaptation studies. In one of the few examples of its use, Stam relates it to both realism and 'feeling' when he says:

[31]McFarlane, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, p15

> A purely formalist definition of "realism" emphasizes the conventional nature of all fictional constructions, seeing realism as nothing more than a constellation of stylistic devices, a set of conventions that, at any given moment in the history of art, manage, through the fine-tuning of illusionistic technique, to crystallize a strong *feeling* of authenticity [Stam's own emphasis][32]

However, whilst it is very clear how Stam is using the terms realism and fidelity here, he is again speaking from an analytical and structural (masculine) perspective and as a result the term authenticity, in its links with the feminine term 'feeling' seems to lose any rigid meaning. As I have stated, the term fidelity is used in a very fluid manner in press and reception material, and it is often just as easily substituted with the term authenticity. This is, perhaps, why the term 'authenticity' is not particularly common in adaptation theory, for it would add further ambiguity to a discipline that already has quite enough hazy and unclear boundaries to be dealing with - and when it does appear, as in Stam's quote above, it is very quickly marked as feminine and, as a consequence, left unexamined.

Despite this, the term is often used and clearly useful to the filmmakers and the popular press, particularly in their discussions about the child performers on set (I will come back to this later), and the success (or failure) of the film to portray the 'essence' or 'spirit' of the book, for those that succeed are deemed to offer some 'authentic' link to the source text, its fictional world and its author. Of course, in other adaptation genres the link between authenticity and realism might be all the more clear (such as, for instance, the historical adaptation) but this does not appear to be the case (or certainly is not the case with the case studies to hand) with adaptations of children's literature, where it usually means, paradoxically, the 'realistic' (or believable) portrayal of magic and fantasy.

One book that specifically deals with the notion of the 'spirit' of the book is the 2011 book *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*.[33] In the introduction of the volume the author writes:

> This...volume...adopts...the phrase "true to the spirit". This expression has the advantage that it avoids in its very formulation

[32]Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation*, p11
[33]Colin MacCabe, *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*

> any notion of a literal fidelity and demonstrates a greater sophistication in the general culture than adaptation studies allow.[34]

This move towards thinking about the 'spirit' of the text (yet again) seeks to move away from simple, comparative, fidelity discourses. Thus, for MacCabe et al you can be 'faithful' to a text whilst also making significant changes to it, so long as you capture the 'spirit' of the book. In his chapter "The Economies of Adaptation," which appears in the aforementioned book, Dudley Andrew says:

> Genuine fidelity...is like the "true realism" of [Bazin's] "Ontology" essay, with which [he] had challenged the surface realism of appearance. Just as true realism gets to the essence of its subject through the negative operations of allusion and ellipsis, so genuine fidelity abandons vain and simple-minded matching for creative transformation.[35]

The notion of novels having extractable 'essences' is a matter of debate, and Andrew does acknowledge that this still requires a level of 'subservience' to the text; however, whilst this approach embraces the fluid and dynamic relationship between texts it still does not successfully overcome the problem that the 'spirit' of a book might be interpreted differently by every reader. Nevertheless, this approach is much more in line with the way that the filmmaking team and the popular press discuss (or sidestep) issues of fidelity than the bulk of adaptation theory is.

Adaptation and Authorship

> The ferocious defense of literary works...rests on a rather recent, individualistic conception of the "author" and of the "work", a conception that was far from being ethically rigorous in the seventeenth century...[36]

> When a film is marketed as a faithful adaptation of a well-loved book, the most powerful spokesperson on the film's behalf is the book's author.[37]

[34] Colin MacCabe, *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*, p7
[35] Andrew, *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*, p38
[36] Bazin, *Film Adaptation*, p23
[37] Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, 3

As I have stated, the figure of the author - both the book author and the *perceived* film author, who is usually the director - is extremely important in discussions surrounding the adaptations dealt with in this thesis because they serve a very clear discursive function - namely to reassure potential audiences that the adaptation will do service to its source text whilst at the same time positing the film as a must see blockbuster phenomena. Because of this, it is worth taking a brief moment to consider some of Michel Foucault's thoughts on the author figure. He says:

> ...It would be worth examining how the author became individualized in a culture like ours, at what moment studies of authenticity and attribution began, in what kind of system of valorization the author was involved, at what point we began to recount the lives of authors rather than of heroes, and how this fundamental category of "the-man-and-his-work" began.[38]

These questions are significant to this thesis because the 'real' lives of the authors dealt with are very prominent (and also very diverse) in the ways that the press discourses play out and integrate author biographies. Furthermore, Foucault's links to authorship and authenticity is again important because it is not simply the text that the adaptations have to be seen to do service to, but also their authors. The choice of director then becomes very important because it is through them that the 'authentic' voice of the book author, and the world they created, is deemed to be realised.

In her book *The Adaptation Industry* Simone Murray relates the notion of the author to literary adaptations. She says:

> ...Romantic myths of semi-divine and socially autonomous authorial genius are...invoked by the adaptation industry itself to disguise its own operations. The adaptation industry...works insistently to cover its tracks - avidly playing to the cult of the celebrity literary author for its own commercial self interest.[39]

Murray is discussing adaptations of canonical adult literature, however her assertion is equally valid in regards to the adaptation of popular children's literature - or at least the case studies covered here. Furthermore, as I

[38]Foucault, *Aesthetics - Essential Worls of Foucault 1954 - 1984*, p205

[39]Murray, *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation*, p27

argue throughout this thesis, the discursive constructions of authors are inextricably linked to the discursive construction of child audiences who are generally perceived, by the filmmaking team, to identify with the book author. Thus what these case studies reveal is that whilst the 'death of the author'[40] has had significant impact in literary theory, the prevalence of director quotes and interviews in the adaptation related press, along with academic and public reception of the films, suggests that author figure is - in the speakers' and writers' minds at least - far from dead.

However, what is either explicitly stated in the marketing material, or if not generally implied, is that it is the audience that will judge whether and adaptation has been 'faithful to,' or depicted the 'essence of' the novels that they know and love - in other words, it is they that will judge whether a film author has succeeded or not. As such, the more active, readerly theories associated with the death of the author do, at times, come into play in regard to the way that the audience is spoken about. This dynamic shifts depending on the authors and texts at hand, as well as with how the audience itself is discursively constructed, and it is through this shifting that one can more closely see the author function at play.

The relationship (and struggles) between different authors in the adaptation process has been addressed in adaptation studies. Jack Boozer's 2008 book *Authorship in Film Adaptation*, for instance, investigates the relationship between book, screenplay and film.[41] He says:

> Beyond formalistic or poststructuralist cross-textual analyses...there should be room in the equation for consideration of the adaptive writer's and director's orchestration of voice and desire in cinema short of an overly romanticized auteurism...A revised contemporary sensitivity to adaptive film authorship would therefore also include the environments of all three texts - literary, script intertext, and film. All three can be sites of personal and cultural struggle and perhaps revelation.[42]

Whilst the focus throughout the book is generally on the significance of the screenplay, his thoughts are worth noting because whilst traditional auteur discourses do find their way into the press discussions to hand, they do not

[40] Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*
[41] Boozer, *Authorship in Film Adaptation*
[42] Ibid., p24

dominate because the balancing of author discourses in this material is far too complex for one mode of discourse to prevail. Furthermore, and again depending on the case study, the writer of the (intertextual) screenplay is also another voice that does (or does not) become significant in public authorial discourses. However, when this does occur - in particular in regards to *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* - the screenwriter is depicted as the person that has to somehow bring into balance two media as well as (at times) two visions (that of the book author and director). The screenwriter is not, in these instances, ever depicted as an author. This complexity of author discourses in adaptation theory is also addressed in Christine Geraghty's 2007 book *Now A Major Motion Picture*. She says:

> ...adaptations use literary references and publicity promotion to suggest connections with the author of the original source, but they also complicate questions of authorship...the original author and the film director are brought into a relationship that can shape how the film is interpreted...but writers, designers and stars can also add an individual signature that serves to make meaning. Adaptations layer one kind of author over another; more than other films, they equate meaning with authorial intention, but in doing so they also set the author in the context of a many layered construction.[43]

In the case studies that follow we can see this occurring in different ways, particularly in regards to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* where Johnny Depp, one of Burton's regular actors, is, as I discuss later, at times quoted and discussed in the press material in regards to his input. In *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* the authorial significance of the screenwriter and the director is at best downplayed and at worst totally disavowed. To add further complication to this, Leitch adds readerly approaches to this mix. He says

> ...texts remain alive only to the extent that they can be rewritten and that to experience a text in all its power requires each reader to rewrite it. The whole process of film adaptation offers an obvious practical demonstration of the necessity of rewriting that

[43]Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p197

> many commentators have ignored because of their devotion to literature.[44]

However, in the case of adaptations of children's literature, those rewriting the texts are adults, and therefore demonstrating 'literacy' on behalf of the child audience. This again works to position the child audience as hierarchically lower than the adult filmmakers who are doing the interpreting and rewriting - however the press material often (once again) disavows this by imbuing the constructed child audience with the ability to provoke fear in the filmmakers - and it would be reasonable to assume that this fear, which is usually explicitly related to whether children will think the film has been suitably faithful to the book, has its roots in the very real economic risk that filmmakers take when they adapt a popular children's book. In order to understand this more fully, however, it is important to examine some of the ways that children and childhood have, in culture more generally, been discursively constructed. Without this one cannot fully understand the complexities of how child readers, audience members and performers are imagined and discussed in regards to the case studies that follow.

The construction of childhood

> ...the 'child' is a construction, constructed and described in different, often clashing, terms. Furthermore, these constructions are the production of systems of purpose, which are fueled by need.[45]

> If children's fiction builds an image of the child inside the book, it does so in order to secure the child who is outside the book, the one who does not easily come within its grasp.[46]

Jacqueline Rose, in her book *The Case of Peter Pan, or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, says 'there is no child behind the category 'children's fiction', other than the one which the category itself sets in place, the one which it needs to believe is there for its own purposes.'[47] She argues that:

[44] Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, p13
[45] Lesnik-Oberstein, *Children's Literature; Criticism and the Fictional Child*, pp9-10
[46] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, p2
[47] Ibid., p10

> Children's fiction rests on the idea that there is a child who is simply there to be addressed and that speaking to it might be simple...children's fiction...hangs on...the impossible relation between the adult and child...[it] sets up a world in which the adult comes first (author, maker, giver) and the child comes after (reader, product, receiver), but neither of them enter the space in between... [48]

With mainstream film, success is primarily measured by profit (although cultural value is also important, especially in relation to adaptations of canonical literature), and as such the relationship between the filmmakers/distributors and the discursively constructed child is of the utmost importance because the child itself is of economic value. David Buckingham, who I discuss in more detail later in regards to the child as consumer (a notion which is present most prominently in regards to the first chapter here), addresses this when he says '..children have become more important (and indeed lucrative) both as a market in their own right and as a means to reach adult markets.[49] In this, there is a clear divide between children and adults whereby adults profit, in various ways, from children and childhood. However this divide - or rather how this divide is imagined in the press and reception material relating to the case studies that follow - becomes unstable and permeable. This occurs because constructions of children and childhood are put to different '...systems of purpose...',[50] whereby as the agenda of the writer/filmmaker shifts so do the constructions of both childhood and adulthood. These varying interests, then, mean that there is no homogeneous depiction of children and childhood, which in itself exposes the constructions as such. Michael Wyness, in his book *Childhood and Society*, articulates this in regards to culture in general when he argues that:

> adult/child boundaries are defined within societies from a series of perspectives of dimensions...We might think of this in terms of the different dimensions of childhood, with each dimension reflecting sets of interests that draw age-related boundaries at different points. For example, medical practitioners, legal experts, philosophers and politicians all have an interest in when

[48]Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, p1-2
[49]Buckingham, *The Material Child*, p1
[50]Lesnik-Oberstein, *Children's Literature; Criticism and the Fictional Child*, p10

childhood ends.[51]

As mentioned, in the case studies following these adult/child binaries are imagined in very different ways and generally serve the purpose of validating and selling a particular authorship model. For this reason it is important to do a short survey of the wide array of different cultural constructions regarding children and childhood, for it is from these - albeit in very diverse ways - that the filmmakers and press writers draw from. Of course, it is impossible to cover these in detail; however, generally speaking, discourses surrounding childhood fall into one of three basic categories: legal, sociological and psychological. There is obviously overlap between these categories and they do, at times, draw on each other to justify their own findings or beliefs (the legal system being the most obvious of the three drawing on the findings of psychological and sociological research). As Buckingham argues, however, there is much inconsistency between and within these discourses. He says:

> "Childhood" is...a shifting, relational term, whose meaning is defined primarily through its opposition to another shifting term, "Adulthood." Yet even where the respective roles of children and adults are defined in law, there is still considerable uncertainty and consistency.[52]

These legal, psychological and sociological definitions of childhood - through which adults exert power and control over children - come under scrutiny from constructivist theorists who are concerned with how childhood is socially constructed through political, social and economic forces, and how these are articulated and shaped by various forms of media (such as, for instance, the media discussed in this thesis). In the introduction to their book *Constructing Childhood*,[53] for instance, Allison and Adrian James state that they are interested in '...the authority of parents over their child and, more widely, of adults over children as a social category.'[54] In part, this entails the construction of a framework through which childhood is culturally imagined and through which control is exerted. Jen Quortrup also discusses the adult-centric imagining of childhood when she says 'All our knowledge on

[51] Wyness, *Childhood and Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Childood*, pp24-25
[52] Buckingham, *After the Death of Childhood*, p7
[53] Allison James, *Constructing Childhood; Theory, Policy and Social Practice*
[54] Ibid., p3

children and childhood seems to remain deeply and unreflectively centred around the experiences of adults...'[55] Likewise, Hugh Cunningham, in his 2006 book *The Invention of Childhood*, argues that '...mostly what we hear are adults imagining childhood, inventing it...children have to live with the consequences."[56] It is this assumption that children *do* have to deal with the consequences of the ways they are imagined by adults - even though it is, perhaps, impossible to measure these consequences or to understand how these consequences vary from child to child - that I have kept in mind throughout this thesis. In doing this I hope to interrogate and shed light upon these imaginings for, whilst my study is limited to how these constructions appear in discussions surrounding children's film adaptations, these hugely varied constructions are culturally ubiquitous and as such warrant interrogation.[57]

In this I hope to further examine, as James et al call for in their work, the '...deep rooted ambivalence about the nature of childhood, and by implication, of children themselves.'[58] The historicity of this ambivalence is examined by Harry Hendrick in *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood* when he charts the ways that constructions of children have moved between the child as a terror that needs to be tamed, and the child as an innocent that needs to be protected.[59] He argues that following these social constructions of childhood, the idea about class and 'proper' parenting became more prevalent. He says:

> ...clearly, by this time [1850s] the intention was to make [children from all classes] conform to a middle-class notion of a properly constituted childhood, characterized by a state of dependency...the campaign to reform produced the Youthful Offenders Act, 1854...[which] drew attention to the parent-child relationship with the latter being expected to exercise control and discipline; and emphasized the danger of those in need of 'care and protection' becoming delinquents.[60]

Here we can see correlations with ubiquitous contemporary debates where

[55]Quortrup, *A Voice for Children in Satistical and Social Accounting*, p89
[56]Cunningham, *The Invention of Childhood*, p12
[57]Allison James, *Constructing Childhood; Theory, Policy and Social Practice*, p6
[58]Ibid., p11
[59]Hendrick, *Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretive Survey, 1800 to the Present*, p34
[60]Ibid., p43

children are perceived as both vulnerable and in need of protection as well as, depending on the context, potential dangers to society. Given that all of these past debates implicitly or explicitly assume a child-adult divide it is no wonder that 'In debates of the 1930s...the "fundamental categories" of analysis had become "childhood-adulthood."'[61] In the case studies that follow, the negotiation of childhood and adulthood is also inextricably bound up with the notions of authorship and audience; however it is not a simple adult/child divide - rather, the filmmakers are generally depicted as being able to cross the boundary between adulthood and childhood (albeit in very different ways) in order to make films that children will want to see. Child audiences, on the other hand, range in their construction from nostalgically imagined readers (in *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*) to angsty loners (in *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*) to a generation that can no longer appreciate the wonders of a classic children's novel (in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*).

Traces of the above constructions (although these constructions oppose each other in many ways), can be found in accounts of childhood in contemporary cultural discourses. In relation to the case studies that follow, I consider how these are ultilised by the filmmaking team and press writers, as well as how they relate to the child performers. I also take into account more contemporary conceptions of childhood. For instance in his 2006 book *Childhood and Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Childhood*, Michael Wyness argues that children are 'constituent parts of the social structure,'[62] and as such should be imagined as a '...minority group with their own commitments and interests.'[63] Of course, the term 'minority group' also brings with it certain hierarchical implications; however Wyness is attempting to differentiate between discourses surrounding children's needs (an adult centric discourse) and those concerned with children's interests (a child centred discourse). He says 'in sociological terms children have been brought into view...they have acquired full social status, occupying subordinate positions within the social structure, as "dependent beings" rather than "dependent becomings"'.[64]

[61]Hendrick, *Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretive Survey, 1800 to the Present*, p42
[62]Wyness, *Childhood and Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Childood*, p27
[63]Ibid., p47
[64]Ibid., p48

Thus, whilst Wyness is not suggesting that children and adults should be fully aligned, or deemed equal (as such a thing could not be measured or enforced), he is arguing that the way the relationship between adults and children is perceived, and how real life experiences correlate to this perception, need to be addressed. It is easy to see, then, why there can be no concrete definition of what it means to be a child, to have a childhood or to be a member of the social group known as 'children.' However, as Wyness points out (and as I argue throughout this thesis), it largely comes down to the interests of the naming party. Here, the 'naming party' are, for the most part, filmmakers, academics and journalists, although I do - particularly in relation to Roald Dahl and C.S Lewis - look at autobiographical and biographical writing. In this, the ways that these discourses play out highlights how the different conceptions of 'childhood' can be utilised in order to sell products to children and their parents, and how the adult/child binary is managed (or not) in the discussions surrounding the three adaptations covered.

The Child Consumer

> Perhaps talking about children's fiction as commerce makes it too clear that what we are dealing with is an essentially adult trade. The association of children and trade is, however, a dangerous one...[65]

There has been recent popular and academic interest in the child as consumer. Jyotsna Kapur's 2005 book *Coining for Capital: Movies, Marketing and the Transformation of Childhood* tracks cultural perceptions of children since the eighteenth century to now and considers their relation to film texts, marketing and capitalism more generally. Taking a marxist/feminist stance she argues that we 'have to reclaim childhood' which, she argues, has been deconstructed in popular cinema over the '...last decade of the twentieth century as children are increasingly brought into the market as consumers and as protections previously granted to children by social policy are increasingly withdrawn.'[66] She does, however, attempt to move away from

[65]Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, p88

[66]Kapur, *Coining for Capital: Movies, Marketing and the Transformation of Childhood*, pp 166-167

the sentimental perceptions of childhood so prevalent in cultural discourses. She says '...we should think of them [children] as collaborators, begin our analysis and action from their vantage point, and not try to push them back into the prison house of the romantic and sentimental notion of children as Other.'[67]

David Buckingham succinctly reviews recent work on the child consumer in his 2011 book *The Material Child.*[68] Here, Buckingham discusses the polarized view of children and consumerism which tend to fall into the categories of viewing children as innocent victims of consumerism, or seeing children as empowered, discriminating and active consumers. Buckingham, however, questions these perceptions and says:

> Children are not *either* passive victims *or* empowered and autonomous social actors. Consumption is not simply a matter of manipulation and control *or* of choice and freedom. Consumers are not simply 'slaves to the brand', but nor are they joyfully creating their own meanings...such arguments on both sides appear to fall prey to a kind of easy sentimentality, whether that is expressed as grandiose intellectual pessimism or as a kind of postmodern wishful thinking.[69]

What is clear on both sides of these discourses is that the views of children and child consumers changes (as with other areas of social discourses surrounding children), depending on the agenda of the speaker. This further demonstrates that perceptions of children, even in more specific contexts, continually shift. Because of this, perceptions and representations of children and child viewers are pliable and can therefore be altered to suit the particular author/s and adaptation at hand. This is further complicated by the fact that, particularly in the first chapter below, the notion of the child consumer comes up against the notion of the adult as 'protector' of the child. Here, there is a conflict of interest between selling to (and potentially exploiting) the child, and protecting them. Furthermore, through their consumption practices the *Harry Potter* fans are seen to build a community which itself - particularly in regards to fan authored websites - offers peer

[67]Kapur, *Coining for Capital: Movies, Marketing and the Transformation of Childhood*, p167

[68]Buckingham, *The Material Child*

[69]Ibid., p226

protection from the (adult) corporate giants (Warners). Buckingham argues that

> It is partly through their consumption practices that children build connections with the people around them, and participate in the social world: identity or subjectivity is inevitably produced within consumer culture.[70]

This is most clearly seen in the first case study here, where the voices of actual children do make their way into the press and reception surrounding the film and where there is a cohesive imagining of the *Harry Potter* fan base. More generally, however, it is hard to imagine that the ways that children and child viewers are constructed in relation to popular films does not in some way impact their sense of identities, especially if the adaptations are of books that they have read and love. This sense of the viewers as having read and loved the books is also, of course, pivotal (along with perceptions of the author) to the discussions of filmmakers and journalists; and in any context where products are marketed to children there is a cultural fear about what this might be 'doing to' the children. In relation to this, Buckingham examines the type of vocabulary used by those who see children as victims. He says:

> Marketers are seen to be engaged in a 'war on children': they bombard assault, barrage, and even subject them to 'saturation bombing'. They 'take children hostage', invade, violate and steal their minds, and betray their innocence and trust.[71]

It is very clear that there are correlations here with the vocabulary of violence often utilised in the discussion of film adaptations of books whereby the books are potential victims of their adaptation. Thus, it would appear that the marketing of children's film adaptations of literature posits two potential victims: the children and the books. Both need to be protected - the book from its adaptation and the child from exploitation; yet those professing to care about the children and the books are the very same people that have the most to gain economically from the sale of the film. This dynamic is, discursively, dealt with differently in each case study presented here. In

[70]Buckingham, *The Material Child*, p226
[71]Ibid., p12

the first chapter, the filmmakers' professed 'fear' of the child 'critics' works to invite the child viewers to feel a sense of (imagined) empowerment; in the second chapter the auteur discourse problematises the notion of the child and as such does not openly acknowledge the economic significance of child viewers, and in our third chapter contemporary children seem to threaten adults' nostalgic memories of reading the book, which results in them (the contemporary children) being dismissed and disavowed. Before moving on to the first chapter, however, it is important to consider current debates around fandom because it is, as with other topics discussed in this introduction, vital to understanding the discursive construction of both authors and audiences.

Fandom

> ...fandom is an imagined community, but if so, it is a community that is constructed through the collective imagination. Its utopian imagination often fuels fandom's resistances to corporate efforts to commodify its cultural productions and exchanges. [72]

Fandom studies are important to this thesis for several reasons. Firstly, the potential child viewers are, generally, posited as fans of the books in the marketing discourse. Furthermore, as we will see in relation to *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, this childhood attachment to books does not seem to dissipate with age. Secondly, the filmmaking teams are often portrayed (or portray themselves) as being fans of the book; and thirdly, in the case of Tim Burton at least, the audience members, as presented in the marketing discourse, are deemed to be fans of Tim Burton as well as (or instead of) fans of Roald Dahl or *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Burton himself is, here, deemed to be a fan of a multitude of films and TV programmes that he saw as a child, and their influence on the film is often noted in the press discussions. Thus the notion of fandom is present in discussions surrounding these adaptations in a variety of ways, and the ways that the child fans are imagined and represented has much to do with not only discourses regarding fandom but also the discourses of childhood as discussed above.

[72] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, p xxix

The field of fandom studies has grown a great deal since the publication of two books in 1992: one being *The Adoring Audience*,[73] which was a collection of essays edited by Lisa A. Lewis, and the other being Henry Jenkins' *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture.* Jenkins' book, which was re-published in 2013 (with an additional chapter and a teaching guide) looks at the then current cultural stereotyping of fans of television series' such as *Star Trek* and *Twin Peaks.* Jenkins also considers (through anecdotal evidence) the ways that actual fans integrate their fandom of particular programmes into their lives.[74]

It should be noted that the fans of his study are all adult, and this in itself is significant when thinking about the child fans of the books considered in this thesis, because much of the negative stereotyping of adult TV fans (for example the Trekkies) centres around the notion of childishness and immaturity. Jenkins writes:

> ...Fans [of *Star Trek*] are characterized as "kooks" obsessed with trivia, celebrities, and collectibles; as misfits and "crazies"; as "a lot of over-weight women, a lot of divorced and single women";[75] as childish adults; in short as people with little or no "life" apart from their fascination with this particular program...'[76]

Jenkins also writes about how adult television fans are depicted as 'social misfits'[77] that are unable to 'separate fantasy from reality.'[78] However, when dealing with a child audience, those attributes (mixing fantasy and reality in play, being sexually immature and naive etc) are, in many academic and popular discourses, seen as positive attributes of a healthy and 'innocent' childhood. Furthermore, these child fans are - in regards to *Harry Potter* at least - depicted as a solid, coherent community rather than being depicted as 'misfits.' However the notion of the 'misfit' becomes very prominent in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, where the fans are paradoxically, as mentioned earlier, depicted as a community of misfits. Jenkins also discusses the

[73] Lewis, *The Adoring Audience*

[74] Recently one of my students proclaimed that at the age of eleven she convinced her parents to send her to boarding school because she 'thought it would be like Hogwarts' (it wasn't).

[75] Bacon-Smith/For an interrogation of the gendered nature of fandom read, *Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth*

[76] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, p 11

[77] Ibid., p 10

[78] Ibid.

notion of television fans being depicted as 'brainless consumers'[79] which of course bears a relationship to the ways that children (as highlighted by Buckingham above) are often depicted, although the reason for their unthinking consumerism is attributed to being young and innocent rather than being 'brainless.'

Following this, Jenkins talks about the "...discursive constructions of [*Star Trek* fans]" in relation to taste. This is significant because it highlights a deep seated cultural bias regarding which works should be considered culturally significant and which works should not. As mentioned earlier, in the case of adaptation studies, this has all too often meant that films adapted from books are seen as having a lower cultural significance than the books they are based on. This is also important in the field of children's literature that has, as Lesnik-Oberstein notes, struggled to gain academic credibility.[80] Jenkins argues that:

> To understand the logic behind these particular discursive constructions of [*Star Trek*] fans, we must reconsider what we mean by taste. Concepts of "good taste", appropriate conduct, or aesthetic merit are not natural or universal; rather, they are rooted in social experiences that reflect particular class interests.[81]

As mentioned above, when the focus is on children, ideas about appropriate conduct alter, and the 'immature' fannish behaviour of adult fans becomes the appropriate, innocent behaviour of children. However the 'discursive construction' of these fans is still occurring. One of the questions that this thesis attempts to interrogate, therefore, is what these child audiences are imagined (in press and reception material) to be fans of. For the most part the audiences are depicted as being first and foremost fans of the books, which the films will then need to live up to. This, of course, reiterates discourses familiar in adaptation studies about the book being the original, and most important, text. However the idea of children 'closely reading' the films (even if it is in order to spot differences and issues) bears similarity to Jenkins' notion of the close readings performed by fans of television programmes like *Star Trek* and *Twin Peaks* - it is obsessive and detailed and,

[79] Ibid.
[80] Lesnik-Oberstein, *Children's Literature; Criticism and the Fictional Child*, p2
[81] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, p 16

in the production and dissemination of knowledge and readings, also helps to form fan communities.

The communities of Jenkins' analysis are, however, often at odds with the producers when it comes to either ascribing their own meanings on to texts or in desiring particular outcomes for characters that differ from the direction the producers are taking them in. He relates this directly to children when he says:

> School children are taught to read for authorial meaning, to consume the narrative without leaving their own marks upon it...under this familiar model, the reader is supposed to serve as the more-or-less passive recipient of authorial meaning while any deviation from meanings clearly marked forth within the text is viewed negatively, as a failure to successfully understand what the author was trying to say.[82]

In the adaptations studied in this thesis, these issues appear to be played out between authors/directors/producers who must respect authorial meaning at the same time as claiming some authorial significance of their own, and it is the fans of the books that are deemed to be (by the filmmakers) the final judges of the film's successes or failures. However the producers are, as mentioned, also depicted as fans of the books which again works to collapse some of the binaries between producer and fan that Jenkins discusses. He says that 'One does not have to abolish all reverence for authorial meaning in order to recognize the potential benefits of alternative forms of interpretation and consumption...'[83] and this is, in the following case studies, one way that this very difficult balance of authorial credit is managed, for any alternative readings are justified, at least in part, by the desire of the 'fan' filmmaker to stay 'true' to the book that he (or indeed members of his immediate family) are fans of. At the same time, these filmmakers regularly talk of their fear of the child audience because it is they that must be satisfied/contained by the prescribed meanings of the producers.

Matt Hills, whose work analyses the work of Jenkins and other fan theorists, makes several points which are significant to this thesis. Firstly, he discusses the moral dualisms inherent in society which play out (in fan studies) in the arena of the academic versus the fan, with each category relying on

[82] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, pp 24-25
[83] Ibid., pp 25-26

the 'imagined subjectivity' of its community (ie, the rationality of academia and the emotional based investment of the fan) in order to dismiss/contain the other.[84] As we will see, in the case studies that follow, academics' responses are often as subjective as those found in journalistic writing. This also leads us to question how the 'imagined subjectivity' of the novels' fans is managed and constructed by the filmmakers who hope to sell the film and its merchandise, and the relationship these constructions have to the way that these child fans/readers are constructed in academic discourse. We also need to question how the 'moral judgements' inherent in the varying constructions of imagined subjectivity are at work in relation to filmmakers who are deemed to be film producers as well as fans of books (and/or their authors), and who are producing and selling those adaptations to children who are themselves part of a social group that are often central to (but excluded from) debates about morality. Thus, in the following case studies I consider how the moral binaries that Hills identifies work in relation to the adult/child and filmmaker/fan binaries - binaries which the press discourses often attempt, but ultimately fail, to collapse. Adults (filmmakers included) are meant (according to dominant social discourses) to uphold the innocence of the children as well as protect their imaginations and their personal (irrational) identification with the characters in the books. However, as I have stated, in this case the adult film producers are are also attempting to sell to the child audiences and thus there is a conflict of interest which, at times, results in the filmmakers downplaying the distinctions between adults and children that are, culturally speaking, very much in place.

Hills goes on to say that

> Imagined subjectivity is...not just about systems of value; it is also always about who has power over cultural representations and cultural claims to legitimacy, and who is able to claim 'good' and moral subjectivity while pathologising other groups as morally or mentally defective...academic practice...typically transforms fandom into an absolute Other.'[85]

Whilst academic attention to child fans is, in general, under-developed (although academic work on children's culture is on the increase) the representation of child fans in press discourses, in that they are seen as active

[84] Hills, *Fan Cultures*, p3
[85] Ibid.

and critical consumers, downplays the lack of power children face as a social group. This is exacerbated by the way that the filmmakers talk of their 'fear' of displeasing the child audience, which again suggests the children have a degree of power that arguably does not, in culture more generally, exist. However, despite the attempts to align the filmmakers with the child audiences through the alleged fandom of the filmmakers, the child audience is, to varying degrees, still posited as Other. This demonstrates that, as things currently stand at least, the discussions surrounding these adaptations are not able to construct the child audience in a way that escapes the shackles of the dominant social discourses.

Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World, which was published in 2007 and edited by Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss and C.Lee Harrison, attempts to summarise the various stages of fandom and consider ways in which the studies of fandom can move forward. Whilst there is, again, a notable absence of studies regarding child fans, the collection provides some useful insights. Firstly, the fan's centrality to current marketing is acknowledged when the author says:

> ...the fan as a specialized yet dedicated consumer has become a centrepiece of media industries' marketing strategies...Rather than ridiculed, fan audiences are now wooed and championed by cultural industries, at least as long as their activities do not divert from principles of capitalist exchange and recognize industries' legal ownership of the object of fandom.[86]

Thus while positive representations of fans are becoming central to marketing strategies, there is also the sense that those industries are still anxious about keeping those marketing discourses, as well as the actual fans that they relate to, under a tight control so that the financial interests of the industries, as well as the prescribed meanings of the texts they produce, are being upheld. Of course, when those fans are children the power dynamic is exacerbated because of the over arching social power that adults have over children. However this is problematised by the notion that children, in convincing their parents to spend money on their behalf, have some power which, potentially, can have a very real impact on the profits made by those industries. The author goes on to say that

[86]Gray/Sandvoss/Harrington, *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, p4

> the changing cultural status of fans is probably best illustrated by the efforts of those in the public gaze, such as celebrities and politicians seeking to connect with consumers and voters by publicly advertising their fan credentials...[87]

This is clearly pertinent to the marketing discourses that surround the adaptations in this study because the filmmakers themselves do, as mentioned, commonly posit themselves as fans of the books that they are adapting in an attempt to convince potential audiences (in particular those that have read and are fans of the books) that they are able to make 'authentic' adaptations. The notion of fan centred communities is also important in considering the marketing discourses surrounding the adaptations studied here, and this too has been an important part of fan studies to date.[88] The author says that:

> ...studies of fan audiences help us to understand and meet challenges far beyond the realm of popular culture because they tell us something about how we relate to those around us, as well as the way we read the mediated texts that constitute an ever larger part of our horizon of experience...Perhaps the most important contribution of contemporary research into fan studies thus lies in furthering our understanding of how we form emotional bonds with ourselves and others in a modern, mediated world.[89]

This is significant because this thesis deals with these 'bonds' on a variety of levels - we have the fans actual and perceived bonds with the books and their characters, and the bonds that the filmmakers hope these fans will have with the films. We also have the alleged bonds of the filmmakers to the books and their authors as well as the bonds that child audiences are invited to form with the filmmakers, characters, and film performers. We have the bonds that are clearly presumed (by the filmmakers and journalists) to exist between the fans of a particular book/film/character/actor/filmmaker etc and, finally, we have (in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* in particular) the bonds that adults have to their childhood selves. In order to understand how these perceived bonds relate to the constructions of authors and audiences in discussions surrounding film adaptations of children's literature

[87] Gray/Sandvoss/Harrington, *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, p5
[88] Ibid., p6
[89] Ibid., p10

we do, however, need to bring together the academic strands of adaptation theory, theories of authorship, fandom, children's culture, the sociology of childhood and celebrity. In doing this, and despite the fact that adaptation studies remains my crucial academic context, this thesis will make a valuable contribution to knowledge in all of these fields.

Chapter 2

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: The Struggle for Authorship and the Commodification of Childhood

> You've heard of *Harry Potter*, of course. The publishing phenomenon. The carefully mapped seven book series. The multi millionaire author. The mega budget motion picture. The boy loved by accountants, marketing directors and bookshop owners the world over.[1]

Introduction

In his article "Is there a text in this Advertising Campaign?: Literature, Marketing and Harry Potter"[2] Philip Nel examines the marketing phenomenon[3] surrounding the *Harry Potter* books as well as, to a lesser extent, the films. He argues that Rowling is very much aware of the 'aggressive marketing' surrounding the books and films and, in particular, draws attention

[1] Cochrane, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, p20
[2] Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*
[3] Ibid., p236

to the attempts that she has made to to control and, at times, subvert[4] the marketing and merchandising of the series[5] - behavior that is explained by Nel as being due to her (assumed) ethical code. Through this line of argument Rowling is posited as very much external to the marketing strategies that Nel discusses. As I will argue, however, Rowling is in fact central to this 'marketing phenomenon' as it relates to both the books and the films. It was *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, however, that established the authorial significance of Rowling in regards to the *Harry Potter* adaptations, and I have therefore limited my analysis to this film.

Furthermore, through examining Rowling as a key discursive element in the discussions surrounding the film we can begin to see how the audience, as imagined in relation to Rowling and, to a lesser extent, other members of the filmmaking team and the child cast, also form key elements of the press discourses. Unlike the two adaptations that follow, this film did not have any past adaptations to contend with (there was of course other visualisations of the stories in the form of illustrations, and other manifestations in the form of audio-books). This, in comparison to *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* which had to address (and dismiss) *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* in their promotional discourses, meant that the filmmakers could promote the film as THE blockbuster experience - an experience that Rowling, who was very much deemed to be present (as opposed to the deceased book authors of the following case studies) could validate in terms of its authenticity.

These press discourses have thus far received very little academic attention because the focus has primarily been on the textual analysis of the books. For instance, since the publishing of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 1997, the *Harry Potter* series has received a great deal of focus within the realm of children's literary theory. One pivotal example of this is Giselle Liza Anatol's 2003[6] collection of essays which aims to critically analyse the books from a variety of perspectives such as the representations of gender, otherness, class and Freud and the unconscious. One article,

[4]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p241

[5]Nel quotes an earlier *New York Times* article to evidence this, whose author states that 'She [Rowling] seems determined to separate the books from the aggressive marketing pursued by Scholastic, Warner Brothers and Mattel'.Cummins, *New York Times Higher Education Supplement 21st December [2001]*

[6]Anatol, *Reading Harry Potter*

which looks at the widely documented banning of the books as a 'reaction to the subversion of authority'[7] attempts to consider the reception of the books, but the essay soon reverts to the close textual analysis that is central to the other chapters.

Another edited collection, Elizabeth Heilman's *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter* (2008),[8] claims to '...bring scholars together from a diverse set of academic specialities to provide literary, cultural, sociological and psychological examinations of the Harry Potter books as both cultural products and literary texts.'[9] Heilman claims that the book approaches the Harry Potter 'phenomenon' from a poststructuralist standpoint which, for her, is a combination of structural analysis and cultural theory. She also makes the claim that the books' '...expansion into film...'[10] will be considered, although this goes largely unexplored. *Unlocking Harry Potter: Five Keys for the Serious Reader*[11] and *The Deathly Hallows Lectures*,[12] both by John Granger, are again close textual readings of the books from a variety of critical perspectives, as is *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter.*[13] There are also examples of authors who approach the Harry Potter books with more focus, such as *The Ultimate Harry Potter and Philosophy*,[14] *The Psychology of Harry Potter,*[15] and *Looking for God in Harry Potter.*[16] These again, understandably, closely analyse the books in the search for meaning and links to contemporary culture. Journal articles follow similar themes; the literary influences on the books,[17] queer theory,[18] race, [19] and the interrogation of the ideology of "safe parenting."[20] There are, however, works which do move away from a purely textual approach. Andrew Blake's 2002 book, *The*

[7]Anatol, *Reading Harry Potter*
[8]Heilman, *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*
[9]Ibid., p3
[10]Ibid., p1
[11]Granger, *Unlocking Harry Potter*
[12]Granger, *The Deathly Hallows Lectures: The Hogwarts Professor Explains the Final Harry Potter Adventure*
[13]Whited, *The Ivory Tower and Harry potter*
[14]William Irwin, *The Ultimate Harry Potter and Philosophy: Hogwarts for Muggles*
[15]Mulholland, *The Psychology of Harry Potter: An Unauthorized Examination of the Boy Who Lived*
[16]Granger, *Looking for God in Harry Potter*
[17]Westman, *Children's Literature 35 [2007]*Billone, *Children's Literature 32 [2004]*
[18]Tison Pugh, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly 31 [2006]*
[19]Horne, *The Lion and the Unicorn 34 [2010]*
[20]Winters, *Children's Literature 39 [2011]*

Irresistible Rise of Harry Potter,[21] primarily looks at the series and its links to global capitalism, consumerism, British national heritage and the (then) current political status of England. However whilst he does examine the marketing of the books he is more concerned with how they have achieved widespread appeal and what this means in terms of new, more media savvy, child consumers.

There has also been little research regarding the adaptation of the book(s) into film. Work in this area has tended to resort to familiar adaptation theory discourses that compare books to film in terms of their fidelity. One such piece of work is 'Harry Potter and the Fidelity Debate'[22] by Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan. In this article the authors argue that, in relation to *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone,* a '...commitment to fidelity (in response to the perceived demands of readers/viewers) compromises the process of adaptation'[23] and that ultimately the endeavor to translate the book to film proved to be an 'impossibility' resulting in alleged '...virtually unanimous "not as good as the book" reviews.'[24] Cartmell and Whelehan's article, however, takes this 'impossibility' as a given and their chapter seeks to uncover the reasons for this without offering much evidence that this was in fact the case. In doing so they appear to mis-represent (or certainly be highly selective of) the reviews, which, as we will see, are not all '...unanimous "not as good as the book" reviews...' They also, unfortunately, make similar assertions about an alleged negative audience reception which, in following their methodology - looking at reviews on IMDB (although they only quote one) - uncovers many favourable viewer reviews.

Thus the analysis of press material, which is the focus of this chapter (although I do also draw on biographical books written about Rowling), seeks to address this gap in the research that has been undertaken to date. A *New York Times* article, published in 2001, exemplifies the importance of examining this press material. The author, June Cummins, says

> Over the past year, I have kept a close watch on the continuing commodification of Harry Potter, focusing carefully on the packaging and marketing of the film. AOL/Time Warner's marketing strategy for Harry Potter is unusual. It has opted to

[21] Blake, *The Irresistbile Rise of Harry Potter*
[22] Deborah Cartmell, *Harry Potter and the Fidelity Debate*
[23] Ibid., p37
[24] Ibid.

> limit franchising and licensing of Potter products and seems to be withholding a marketing blizzard; the way it has promoted the movie is not through Happy Meals or Harry's face on Coke cans but by treating it as "news", which it does through its many news outlets, such as CNN.[25]

As we will see, one of the primary reasons that AOL/Time Warner was able to employ this news-centred promotional strategy was because there was already a wealth of prior press material relating to Rowling and the book that they could draw upon. An examination of this is where I begin in this chapter. The topics of fidelity and authorship (which, in this case, appear inseparable), were often at the forefront of this publicity, and it is through these discourses that we can see just how well established the figure of/idea of Rowling (as author, person, legend) is. I then discuss the direct impact these have on the discussions surrounding the film, with particular focus on the relationship Rowling is depicted as having with the other members of the filmmaking team. Jack Boozer, in his book *Authorship in Film Adaptation* talks of the '...fragile status of authorship in the shifting landscape of adaptation theory...'[26] and in this example there are clear tensions in this respect: on the one hand Rowling's status as author goes (on the surface of things) unquestioned - especially in the manner she is discussed as advising the filmmaking team. However this is at times undermined. For example, she never received any scriptwriting credits, and whilst publicity material privileges Rowling as author, both Chris Columbus (the director) and Steve Kloves (the screenwriter) clearly played a large part in the authoring of the adaptation even if this appears to have been underscored by a need to be 'faithful' to the original text.

Thus, whilst Rowling's status as author in relation to both the books and the films is prevalent, it is not without cracks, and it is through these cracks that the constructed nature of Rowling's status as author can be examined. In relation to adaptation theory in general, what is clear is that because of the replication of the theme of authorship in the publicity material for the book and the film, the gap commonly associated with book to film adaptations seems to be lessened because there is a fluidity in these discussions that forces us to question their supposed opposition. Kyle Edwards argues

[25]Cummins, *New York Times Higher Education Supplement 21st December [2001]*
[26]Boozer, *Authorship in Film Adaptation*, p1

that '...no film adaptation can be analyzed as a independent entity; instead, it must be assessed as one entry within a range of decisions by the corporation and the broader fields in which literature and film circulate.'[27] What we can see from this example is that it is Rowling herself who provides the common thread amongst these 'broader fields'.

I then look towards the child stars and consider how the discourses surrounding their private lives, their behaviour on set and their alleged relationships with Rowling and the filmmakers, work to concomitantly validate the authenticity of the film as well as construct ideas about who the audience (and children more generally) are. These discourses about the child performers resonate with more general cultural representations of children as readers, viewers and consumers, as well as children as performers (for instance the imagined readers/audience performing their 'role' in the *Harry Potter* phenomenon by dressing up in Wizard outfits and queuing up outside book shops on the day of *Harry Potter* book releases). Furthermore, it is through the discourses surrounding the child stars that we can begin to (in relation to this case study at least) differentiate between how the terms 'fidelity' and 'authenticity' are used. For, whilst the terms are generally used interchangeably in press material, and seem to be understood as meaning the same thing in terms of audience reception, it is clear that the child stars and their performances are key to guaranteeing that the film is both 'authentic' to the book as well as a film in its own right. Thus whilst the notion of fidelity is the one most commonly found in the press material, especially in discussions about the changes that were made to the book by the filmmakers and the pressure that was reportedly put upon the filmmakers to be 'faithful,' the idea of 'bringing the novel to life' is also omnipresent. In this, the performances of the child stars in particular (as well as special effects) are significant, for it is through 'authentic' performances of the children that the film makers can be seen to be 'authentic' to the 'essence/life' of the book and thus fulfill the perceived expectations of the audience.

From this it becomes clear that whilst there has, in recent years, been a deliberate move away from the explicit discussion of fidelity in adaptation studies, there is no escaping the fact that it is still a very prominent topic in discussions surrounding adapted literary texts, and there is no indication that this is going to change. What this chapter also makes clear is that

[27]Edwards, *Cinema Journal 45 [2006]*, p34

notions of authorship, audience, and - in this case at least - childhood are at the forefront of industry professionals' minds. Of course, the role of authorship in adaptation theory is not a new concern. However, there is so far little work which seeks to uncover the ways in which the symbiotic constructions of authorship and audience are at work with one another, and the very real impact this has on the promotional success of adaptations. In order to fully examine these issues I draw on a variety of sources including biographical writing about Rowling, press reviews written by both adults and children, and promotional interviews given by the filmmaking team in more industry specific publications such as *Creative Screenwriting* and the *The Directors Guild of America Magazine.* In bringing these materials into discussion the highly constructed nature of authorship and audience, as we will see, becomes evident.

J.K Rowling and Celebrity Discourses

> Celebrity is an unstable, multifaceted phenomenon - the product of a complex negotiation between cultural producers and audiences...literary celebrity...is not simply an adjunct of mainstream celebrity, but an elaborate system of representations in its own right, produced and circulated across a wide variety of media.[28]
>
> Is there anything as exciting as the legend of JK Rowling - the lone mother, would-be writer, church-mouse poor, sitting in a local cafe for warmth, and writing... "He'll be famous - a legend - I wouldn't be surprised if today was Harry Potter day in future - there will be books written about Harry - every child in our world will know his name!" Was there a crash of thunder outside? Did the sky fill with portents? Did the cafe fill with owls?[29]

The narrative of how Harry Potter so suddenly and unexpectedly popped into Rowling's head is, by now, common knowledge. When I, for example, think of JK Rowling, I think of a woman who, sitting on a train to Edinburgh, suddenly had the idea about a character called Harry Potter, who she then spent years scribbling notes about on anything she had handy so

[28]Moran, *Star Authors*, pp 3-4
[29]Bradshaw, *The Guardian 16th November [2001]*

she knew the details of Harry and his world inside out. I imagine her sitting in a warm coffee shop in Edinburgh drinking the one cup of coffee she could afford whilst writing her first novel. This was, of course, whilst her baby (whom she cared for as a single parent) slept beside her in her buggy. I imagine a woman, who, after many rejections (whilst 'Rowling found writing a positive pleasure, getting her book published was more difficult'),[30] managed to get her book accepted by a publisher and was very quickly rewarded for this through numerous awards, in particular the Smarties Gold Award. I imagine a woman who went on to sell millions of books (to a readership that she is very thankful for) and who is now one of the richest and most generous women in the UK.

However, whilst there is a sense of 'just knowing' these stories - of them suddenly 'appearing' in my mind and the minds of 'millions' of others - it is clear that they have been carefully told and re-told in various media since the books' inception to the point that, as Julia Eccleshare identifies, 'Rowling's story of the invention of Harry Potter has...become part of the Potter mythology.'[31] Likewise, Giselle Liza Anatol argues that 'the seductiveness of the [*Harry Potter*] novels has...been linked to Rowling's personal history. The story of the author's incredible rise from welfare state to commercial success resembles the traditional fairy tale of the rags-to-riches princess who lives "happily every after"...'[32] Joe Moran, in his book *Star Authors* (2001), argues that bestselling authors (who are 'more read than read about'[33]) are not necessarily celebrity authors, who

> ...by contrast, tend to be...those who are reviewed and discussed in the media at length, who win literary prizes, whose books are studied in universities and who are employed on talk shows...adding "the minor authority of the authorial" to the proceedings as a serious counterweight to the more lightweight celebrity.[34]

Moran did not include any mention of Rowling, however Rowling's status as both a best selling author and a celebrity was on the rise at this time,

[30] Eccleshare, *'Most Popular Ever' The Launching of Harry Potter*, p291
[31] Ibid., p290
[32] Anatol, *Reading Harry Potter*, pxii
[33] Moran, *Star Authors*, p6
[34] Ibid.

and by the time the adaptation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* came to be marketed she was clearly prominent enough to warrant being a major presence in the promotion of the film. The perpetuation of Rowling's mythology across varying media - both before and after the release of this first adaptation - is not difficult to trace. Press material surrounding the books and films (to be found in magazines, newspapers, websites and trade journals) has consistently made reference to her, numerous biographies have been written about her,[35] and TV shows have included her as a guest.[36] As we will see much of this material is concerned with stories about Rowling's 'private' life (including but not limited to the creation of *Harry Potter*) as well as how much money the books have earned, the awards they have won, and the alleged impact they have had on the popularity of reading. This has resulted in a conflation of the public and 'private' spheres of Rowling's work and life and has, over time, worked to construct Rowling as a celebrity who is, like the other celebrity authors Moran mentions, both 'extraordinary and familiar.'[37] Furthermore, these constructions have enormous significance in regards to the ways that the child readers and audience are imagined and constructed, for they are not only deemed to be fans of the books as well as Rowling, they are also, as we will discuss later, imagined with the touch of nostalgia that seems to be inherent in Rowling's star image.

P. David Marshall, in *The Celebrity Culture Reader* (2006), links the notion of authorship to celebrity when he says 'Literary analysis [has] an even longer history [than the celebrity as film star or auteur director] through the biographical analysis of the author...to make sense of celebrity culture inevitably leads us to a study of how an extended industry helps construct the celebrity as a text...'[38] Marshall is here referring to authors of canonical literature, however it is clearly relevant to Rowling whose own personal narrative is often quoted in press and promotional discourses, and as such is a marketable commodity. It is also useful, however, to draw upon the work of Richard Dyer who argues that stars' real '...existence in the world...[works] to disguise the fact that they are just as much produced images, constructed

[35]for example: Gragg, *Female Force: J.K. Rowling*; Shapiro, *J.K. Rowling: Princess of Dreams*; Peterson-Hileque, *J. K. Rowling:: Extraordinary Author (Essential Lives Set 5)*; Smith, *J.K.Rowling: A Biography - The Genius Behind Harry Potter*

[36]for example 'Oprah,' 'The Simpsons,' 'Blue Peter,' and 'Richard and Judy.'

[37]Moran, *Star Authors*, p8

[38]Marshall, *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, p9

personalities as "characters" are.'[39] These constructions are exacerbated by the way that Rowling is often discussed in a very dramatic film-like way, which can be prominently seen in a *Guardian* article dated the 8th July 1997. It reads:

> ...a single mother traipses the rainy city streets, pushing her newborn baby in its pram. With the baby asleep, she sits in cafes drinking coffee and scribbling a children's story. Cut to three years later and the young mother has sold her finished story to a publisher for £100,000, two Hollywood studios are interested in the story, and she has just delivered her second book. But this is no film. *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone*, by penniless divorcee Joanne Rowling, is the talk of publishing...Rowling...survived on benefits and did some part-time clerical and teaching work but couldn't afford a word processor...[40]

In this article, which appeared shortly after the release of *The Philosopher's Stone,* we are already introduced to Rowling's 'rags to riches' story as well as given a sense of Rowling's determination to complete her novel. There is a clear conflation of truth and fiction, as well as a conflation of the public and private spheres of her life, and the mention of Hollywood interest serves to give a sense of 'bigness' to the novel as well as Rowling herself. Furthermore, through discussions of Rowling making the best of her circumstances, not letting poverty hold her back, being dedicated to her baby etc., we can also see Dyer's notion of stars being representative of what 'ordinary' people (because they are at once ordinary and extra-ordinary) are 'supposed to be like'[41] - for, in the familiar discussions of the hardships that she has overcome there is an underlying sense that she is/should be an inspiration to all.

These discourses are, however, not limited to the press material, for what is made clear by the analysis of a variety of material surrounding Rowling is that there is often little distinction in the ways that she is discussed in the popular press, book marketing material, fan comments or the hyperbolic

[39]Dyer, *Stars*, p20
[40]Glaister, *The Guardian 1997*
[41]Dyer, *Stars*, p20

statements made in the blurbs of biographies. In his 2001 biography of Rowling, Sean Smith, for instance, writes

> She is the creator of probably the most famous - and certainly the best-loved - characters in contemporary fiction. She is also the author of her own escape from an existence on the brink of poverty, with no job and few prospects. On the one hand there is J.K. Rowling, who wrote, and continues to write...a literary phenomenon. On the other, there is Joanne Rowling, a quiet, dreamy, rather shy woman whose brilliance in translating her dreams into prose transformed her own life...How those [*Harry Potter*] books came to be written, and the influences that shaped both them and their author, form the core of this inspirational biography.[42]

Here there is a further conflation between the Harry Potter books and Rowling herself, as well as the familiar blurring of reality and fantasy. A similarly hyperbolic blurb appears on (the rather Disneyesque titled) *J.K. Rowling: Princess of Dreams* (2003) by Marc Shapiro:

> From her beginnings as a child whose imagination drew her away from her peers into a private world, to her days as an adult with all the burdens of a single mother, J.K. Rowling's story is a fairy tale. This biography is for all those who want to get closer to the genius that created Harry Potter.[43]

This blurb brings into question ideas about identification in a very explicit way - we have a 'normal' relatable quiet child turned single mother, who happens to be a 'genius.' As with stars, Rowling is human 'just like us' but also something other, something bigger - but something/somebody who people can identify themselves with. This duality between the human and the extra-human has been pivotal in the construction of Rowling as a star and also highlights the assumptions made about the imagined readers' desire for connection/identification with the author. Furthermore, this type of language used in these biographies does not appear to have altered over time. For example, the blurb of the 2010 book by Adam Gragg *(Female*

[42]Smith, *J.K.Rowling: A Biography - The Genius Behind Harry Potter*
[43]Shapiro, *J.K. Rowling: Princess of Dreams*

Force: J.K. Rowling - whose cover depicts a drawing of a mythical unicorn alongside a portrait of Rowling), says

> Millions of readers worldwide have been captivated by the best selling *Harry Potter* series, but what is even more incredible is the woman who created him and his fantastic world. From telling stories as a child, to being forced to go on welfare, and finally becoming one of the world's most famous writers, the story of Joanne Rowling is almost as magical as the world she created.[44]

Here, hyperbolic words such as 'incredible' and 'fantastic' work to create/highlight a sense of aura surrounding Rowling, while nostalgic references to how she told stories during her childhood and then endured hardship as an adult (which, as common in other examples, almost suggests that she was destitute) work to make her an ordinary person with whom readers are being asked to identify, but also, at the same time, someone who can transcend every day experience to create a magical 'phenomenon' (and, of course, become incredibly rich in the process). Furthermore, in the allusion to Rowling's childhood, there is also the sense that Rowling, just like her character Harry (and, as press discourses go, also Daniel Radcliffe who played Harry in the adaptations), had something innately special and unique about her.

Many examples of these writings also contain references to the acts of reading and writing per se. In *All About J.K Rowling*, Shaun McCarthy writes 'there were always lots of books and bedtime stories in the Rowling house. Joanne remembers her father reading *Wind in the Willows* to her when she was ill with the measles...'[45]Thus Rowling is (also) depicted as an author whose writing links directly to her experiences of reading as a child. This clearly opens potential routes of identification with both adults and children because her own childhood is discussed in a way that encourages children to identify with her whilst an air of nostalgia works to promote adult identification. Furthermore, the depiction of the western ideological ideal of parents tucking their children into bed and reading them bedtime stories (of a particular type) also, as we shall examine later, begins to give us an indication of how the readers/audience are nostalgically imagined and idealised in press and academic discourses surrounding the series.

[44]Gragg, *Female Force: J.K. Rowling*
[45]McCarthy, *JK Rowling (All About Series)*

The discourses that epitomise Rowling as star/inspiration also often include reporting/discussions of Rowling's charitable nature. A 2010 *Guardian* article, for instance, states that

> The author JK Rowling has donated £10m to set up a clinic to research treatments for multiple sclerosis, the degenerative disease that killed her mother at the age of 45....Rowling, whose personal wealth was estimated at £519m earlier this year...has a long track record of charitable donations...[46]

That this charitable action directly links to the suffering endured in her private life again invites a particular type of identification. Literary theorist Suman Gupta argues that the '..."author" who is talked about...is primarily a construct that emerges from reader's engagement with texts...the flesh and blood author is an inconvenience if she cannot live up to the author of the imagination...[47] However the reporting of these donations does indeed appear to ensure that the actual Rowling is perceived to live up to the 'imagined' Rowling, which works to give authenticity and authority to Rowling's (apparently unblemished) celebrity image. This essentialist view that Rowling embodies nothing but unequivocally desirable traits also appears in academic discourses. Five years before the *Guardian* article above regarding Rowling's £10m contribution to charity, for instance, literary theorist Philip Nel (whose article discusses how Rowling has managed the marketing of Harry Potter merchandise but fails to acknowledge the role Rowling herself has directly had in the marketing) said:

> While Seuss, Milne, and the Reys are no longer among the living, Rowling is very much alive and actively involved in managing the profits generated by Harry Potter, donating large amounts to charitable causes...what Rowling has done with her money shows her to be an ally of Harry, not of the Dursleys or the Malfoys...In September 2000, she donated £500,000 to Britain's National Council for One Parent Families, and has taken on the role of being the organization's ambassador...In 2001 she wrote...two "Harry Potter Schoolbooks" - and donated all proceeds to Comic Relief UK, raising £15.6 million.'[48]

[46]Carrell, *www.guardian.co.uk 2010*
[47]Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, p36
[48]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p242

Here, Nel concomitantly situates and removes Rowling from 'multinational capitalism' whilst at the same time nostalgically integrating her into the narrative of her books (and the relatively clear good/evil binary they iterate). He is also implicitly referring to Rowling's well documented past as a single parent at the same time as situating her alongside other canonical (deceased) children's authors. He continues to say that '...while "commodity consumption" and a mass media controlled by "corporate conglomerates" do fuel the success of Harry Potter, the market forces that motivate the sales of Potter and his merchandise are not the same forces that motivate Rowling.'[49] Thus Rowling's persona is so well articulated in cultural discourses that even academics such as Nel are clearly identifying with Rowling in such a way that they believe they understand her perspectives and motivations regarding the commodification of the *Harry Potter* brand. This sets up Rowling as being a part of something - in this case the *Harry Potter* merchandising but also, as we shall see, Hollywood itself - at the same time as being outside of and oppositional to it.

Academic writing such as this ultimately feeds into the mythology surrounding Rowling and the books, as do popular news articles that make similar points. June Cummins for instance, says of Rowling during an interview that she '...gallantly tried to resist this fetishisation and co-option of her own story. During the interview, she scoffed at rumours that she wrote the story on napkins...'[50] whilst John Ezard, in a *Guardian* article, states that Rowling refused 'to play any part in the hype.'[51] Thus there is a great deal of crossover between academic writing and the press material surrounding Rowling. This which clearly illustrates the point that Matt Hills makes in his essay 'Media Academics *as* Media Audiences'[52] where he addresses the difficulty/impossibility that media academics face in being able to analyse, from a distanced perspective, the media that they are also consumers of.

This myriad of discourses (regardless of the source) work to blur the boundaries between public/private, truth/fiction, ordinary/extraordinary and real/'magical' and, as a result, solidify Rowling's potential as a marketing tool for the *Harry Potter* books, films and, more recently, her website

[49]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p243
[50]Cummins, *New York Times Higher Education Supplement 21st December [2001]*
[51]Ezard, *The Guardian 1999*
[52]Hills, *Media Audiences as Media Academics: Aesthetic Judgements in Media and Cultural Studies*

Pottermore. The hyperbolic, emotive and highly nostalgic language used in these publications sits fluidly alongside the telling of her 'real' past experiences. This means that there is again a breakdown between the 'real' and 'perceived' author that is fundamental to her construction as a celebrity. It comes with very little surprise, then, that when the popular press and academics alike are discussing Rowling they have used (and are still using), language commonly associated with stars. Nel, for instance, states that 'By...1998...Warner Brothers had...[acquired the rights to] the first two books...In 1999, Harry Potter and Rowling would become superstars.'[53] This clear conflation of reality and fiction (Harry, after all, is a fictional character) echoes that of the early discourses surrounding Rowling, whilst the links to Hollywood serve to further increase the sense of aura and myth surrounding her. They also call forth the narrative of the first *Harry Potter* book, whereby Harry is, unknowingly, a star before he even enters the magical world.

Dyer says that stars are '...obviously a case of appearance...yet the whole media construction of stars encourages us to think in terms of "really..."'[54] Thus, Dyer argues, we question who stars 'really' are, and what they are 'really' like. He says that 'star images are always extensive, multimedia, intertextual'[55] in that they are constructed through a network of many different texts and media contexts outside of themselves. This can of course be seen in relation to Rowling who has been interviewed by representatives of various media, has been discussed in popular press as well as academic articles, whose aforementioned biographies give us 'access' to 'relevant' aspects of her 'private life' in order to tell us what she is 'really' like, and whose work is under constant scrutiny in terms of its relation to critical/cultural discourses as well as other literary texts.

Furthermore, one of the defining aspects of Rowling's star persona is that she is not only depicted as very much in control of herself/her own celebrity image but she is, in many ways, depicted as in control of the studio's (Warners) representation of her work. She is also, in some discourses, shown to be quite happy to speak her mind as far as the studio is concerned. One such example appears in Nel's essay. He quotes Rowling as saying, in an

[53]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p244
[54]Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, p2
[55]Ibid., p3

interview about the then imminent action figures, "'I can only say now to all of the parents out there that if the action figures are horrible, just tell the kids: don't buy them!" She paused, then added "Sorry Warners"'[56] This slightly comedic but misquoted statement - she actually says "Just tell the kids *that I said* don't buy them" - came shortly after Warners had bought the rights to the book and suggests on one level that Rowling is already in a position where she feels she is able to influence the readers to not buy into the studio's efforts to sell merchandise. Furthermore, the apology to Warners further works to suggest that Rowling can in fact damage Warner's merchandising plans as well as, implicitly, their reputation.[57] However, this also suggests that she does, contrary to Nel's argument, recognise that she is contractually and financially tied to Warners and thus can no longer speak completely openly - even if discourses surrounding her posit her as someone who is in fact free to speak her mind on such issues. Rather ironically then, her (perceived) level of autonomy is, in part, what appears to define her as a celebrity and what works to legitimise the notion that this will be an 'authentic' adaptation because it is - as discourses go - Rowling in charge of the studio, and not the other way round. This also works to put the (imagined) child fans at ease because, in the hands of Rowling, they will be able to trust that this is a 'faithful' or 'authentic' adaptation that will convey Rowling's vision for her novel.

J.K.Rowling, Chris Columbus and the Struggle for Authorship

> When a film is marketed as a faithful adaptation of a well-loved book, the most powerful spokesperson on the film's behalf is the book's author[58]
>
> ...sales contracts can forbid authors from engaging in negative publicity about a film adaptation, as critical fan-author internet exchanges could generate damaging early publicity, suggesting

[56]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p241

[57]This is also linked to Warner's affiliation with Coca-Cola whereby Rowling would not allow Coca-Cola to show the *Harry Potter* characters drinking coke. Instead, they sponsored a reading initiative to market their products. Ibid.

[58]Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, p143

> that a beloved author's book had been "betrayed" by Hollywood.[59]

Carole Cox, in her article 'Children's Films: The Literature Connection' asks 'what happens when a filmmaker adapts an author's book to make a film? Where does the book end and the film begin?'[60] Of course this question is not new to adaptation studies, nor is it limited to children's literary adaptations. What it does suggest, however, is the potential for a smooth transition between a book and its filmic representation which conceals the 'joins' between the two distinct entities. In this case in particular, the notion of authorship has been used to try and achieve this smooth transition in much the same way that films scores often attempt to seamlessly join two distinct shots, for there is a continuity here which does indeed link the book and the film in a much more fluid way than would be possible without the figure of Rowling. The use of authorship as a marketing tool in general has been recognised. Yannis Tzioumakis, in his article 'Marketing David Mamet: Institutionally Assigned Film Authorship in Contemporary American Cinema,'[61] says

> ...distribution companies use film authorship as an industrial category to increase the market value of individual film-makers in a largely undifferentiated media marketplace. In this light, promotional material and marketing strategies become extremely significant texts in the production of the author...authorship...is not sought in the film text; instead it is negotiated through intertext...[62]

Thus (film) authors are both created and utilised by film distribution and marketing companies - and the construction of the author can be located in extra textual material which can, and does (by Tzioumakis's argument), exist as wholly separate to the films. Tzioumakis is, in his study of Mamet, taking the film author to be the director and examining how film directors can be elevated to the status of auteur without recourse to the more traditional, textually bound definitions of the term. However, because of

[59]Murray, *The Business of Adaptation: Reading the Market*, p133
[60]Cox, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly 7 [1982]*, p11
[61]Tzioumakis, *The Velvet Light Trap 2006*
[62]Ibid., p60

Columbus' status as a non-auteur director, which we will examine further, and Rowling's status as a literary author who is very present in the process of the adaptation of her book, the notion of authorship - although very present in the press material - is still very problematic. Thus the discussions surrounding the first *Harry Potter* film appear to be constantly trying to deal with the issue of authorship in a way that at once attempts to allow multiple perspectives with regards to authorship - for instance interviews with the producer, the screenwriter, the director, and Rowling herself - whilst at the same time constantly bringing the question of authorship (implicitly or explicitly) back to Rowling in a way that ultimately leaves the notion of authorship ambiguous and impossible to define.

Tzioumakis goes on to say that 'Industrial auterism can...produce a different author'[63] by which he means that different perspectives and representations of the same flesh and blood author can be constructed in marketing material over time regardless of whether the approach of the author/director itself changes. In this case study the press material attempts to literally produce a different author, for instead of privileging Columbus, the director - as is most common when the notion of authorship is central to the marketing of a film - it is Rowling that is, indirectly, assigned authorship of the film. This is possible because the book, the film, and the *Harry Potter* world in general are depicted as a continuous entity that revolves around Rowling. These attempts to privilege Rowling as the (most significant) author of the film work to address another 'problem' in the process of literary adaptation - the perceived audience desire for 'fidelity' - a term which, in its ambiguity of meaning, obviously makes the management of audience expectations very problematic if not impossible. Robert Stam considers the problems in dealing with fidelity in the realm of adaptation when he says

> The notion of "fidelity" is essentialist in relation to both media involved. First, it assumes that a novel "contains" an extractable "essence," a kind of artichoke hidden "underneath" the surface details of style...But in fact there is no such transferrable core: a single novelistic text comprises a series of verbal signals that can generate a plethora of possible readings, including even readings of the narrative itself....the text feeds on and is fed into

[63]Tzioumakis, *The Velvet Light Trap 2006*, p62

> an infinitely permutating intertext, which is seen through ever-shifting grids of interpretation. [64]

As we will see, the underlying purpose of Rowling's presence in the marketing material of the film, particularly in relation to her reported part in the film production, works to ensure that this imagined 'core' is given an identifiable figure in the form of Rowling. Stam continues by saying that '...if authors are fissured, fragmented, multi discursive...how can an adaptation communicate the "self presence" of authorial intention?'[65] In relation to this case study, however, Rowling is depicted not only as an omni present, cohesive and authoritative source of the 'truth' but an author whose intention never comes into question because she is there every step of the way (according to publicity discourses) to collaborate with the filmmakers, verify her initial thoughts and intentions and agree to/help with any changes.

In adaptation studies, the idea of collaboration has been considered a potential escape route from the more confining trends towards fidelity.[66] However in this case the purpose of the reported collaboration between Rowling and the filmmaking team is to further ensure the faithfulness of the film, because it is faithfulness that audiences are, through the same press material, depicted as demanding. As such, fidelity criticism is central to discourses surrounding the film even though the process of adapting the novel is, in other ways, represented as collaborative. The result is that whilst it is, in some ways, presented as team effort (in, for instance the way that the script writer and director discuss their involvement), Rowling is depicted as central to that process and the result of this is that, ironically, the authorial presence of the director (Columbus) is seriously problematised if not disavowed. Rowling was not, however, credited on the screenplay nor as a producer which, likewise, problematises her authorship in that it undermines the level of importance that comes across in so much of the press material. A 2001 *Guardian* 'Special Report,' for instance, states that

> Chris Columbus's movie is notable in its utter subservience to the written word: it is tightly, shrewdly, respectful of the book... Exercising her massive clout, the author has insisted on British

[64] Stam, *The Dialogics of Adaptation*, p57
[65] Ibid., p58
[66] Boozer, *Authorship in Film Adaptation*

> actors and British accents, and her Hollywood sponsors...are awfully glad she did.[67]

Similarly, another article that appeared in 2001 states:

> Although Rowling [did] not have contractual control over the [*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* film] project, Warner executives...wisely understood that her guidance could only help ensure that the movie thrills fans...and to hear cast and crew tell it, only the Delphic Oracle gets consulted with more reverence.[68]

In claiming to privilege Rowling to this extent, the film makers were able to legitimise their own roles in the process of making the film whilst assuring fans about the 'faithfulness' of the film despite the many textual changes that were ultimately made. This affords the scriptwriter, producers and director the freedom to capture the essence, or feeling, of a novel - and therefore create an 'authentic' adaptation - without having to be seen to strictly adhere to the original plot in all its intricacies. In part, Rowling is able to function in this way because (as per the discussions of Rowling's stardom above) her cultural omnipresence has ensured that she has been depicted as, on the one hand, a figure that audiences can relate to as a person and, on the other, an eminent (and, about the *Harry Potter* world at least, omniscient) figure who *is* allowed the final say in whether the film captures the essence of her book. Discussions surrounding Spielberg's alleged rejection of directorial duties for the film also make similar points. Andrew Osman, in a 2002 *Cinefantastique* article, says

> An unnamed film executive claimed the reason Spielberg dropped out [of directing *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*] was that "The Potter film wasn't going to be Spielberg's vision. It would have been a shared vision with the author. Spielberg had a more fanciful approach, and to be true to the book he would have had to portray Rowling's vision, not his."[69]

Other articles take a slightly different tack on this. In a 2002 *Creative Screenwriting* article, Peter Chumo says 'Kloves worked to achieve what he called '...tremendous fidelity to the book...'[70] However it is a faithfulness

[67] Bradshaw, *The Guardian 16th November [2001]*
[68] Smith, *Premiere 2001*, p67
[69] Osmond, *Cinefantastique v33.n6 [2002]*, p24
[70] Chumo, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p60

which he calls '...sleight of hand...' because '...people feel it's been incredibly faithful to the book'[71] resulting in people '...[not] even noticing...'[72] the changes.

Thus, despite the problems (as outlined in the introduction) with defining the terms 'fidelity' and 'authenticity', both terms (particularly the term 'fidelity') appear very much bound up with discussions of and concerns about the expectations and desires of both Rowling and the potential audience. In relation to adaptations, Christine Geraghty argues that 'faithfulness is not a matter for textual analysis but rather a work on reception...',[73] and in this case study discourses regarding fidelity seldom revolve around actual changes between the book and the film in terms of narrative, characters, plot etc (i.e. textual analysis). Instead they centre around discussions about what the audience expects, what the film makers are trying to achieve and what Rowling herself can verify - that the film is 'faithful' *regardless* of any textual alterations (so much so that any actual changes are, allegedly, not even noticed). This suggests that an adaptation can be faithful if the audience, and in this case the author, *feels and believes* that it is. Thus as per Geraghty's assertion, fidelity, or rather the verification of fidelity, is - or at least the filmmakers and press appear to believe that it is - indeed situated with the audience and thus in the realm of reception. That this audience is constructed as being made out of child fans of the book works to attach a certain amount of power to this group of people which, as I have stated, does not necessarily correlate with the power that they have access to on a wider cultural level.

Further confusions arise in these discussions because it is often unclear as to what the film is attempting to be faithful to, be it the book per se, Rowling's vision, or the sense of magic and illusion central to the narrative. Suman Gupta, in his book *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, says that 'The precondition of the making and reception of the *Harry Potter* films was their ability to provide a convincing illusion of reality of the Magic World, and they were to be tested and judged [by the audience] accordingly.'[74] Here we can continue to see how the notions of fidelity and authenticity are problematised, for Gupta is suggesting that the expectations of the audience

[71] Chumo, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p60
[72] Ibid., p61
[73] Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p3
[74] Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, p143

were that there would be a convincing (by which he could mean faithful, authentic, or simply visual) depiction of the magic world. However, that he seems to take the 'magic world' to be a 'reality' which films can or cannot (or might/might not) be able to render for the audience again takes us back to Rowling because it is only through her that this 'magic world' has come into being. Thus Gupta is not only discussing the 'magic world' as if it were in fact real, he is also making an assumption about a collective audience with a collective imagination. This idea, which clearly imagines the audience in a very particular way, permeates discourses regarding not only fidelity but also the imagined intimacy between Rowling and her readers and the expectations these readers have of the filmmakers.

In many of these quotes, problems with the terms 'fidelity' and 'authenticity' resolve themselves through a shift in the vocabulary from those terms to other, more ambiguous terms that we examined in the introduction, such as 'staying true to the book.' For instance Steve Kloves, the film's screenwriter, says 'We made a decision to stay true to the book even if it meant being unconventional as a movie and not fitting into what Hollywood thinks a movie should be.'[75] The specific elements that Kloves believes are required in order to stay 'true' to the book are left undisclosed, except in that they might stray from the 'Hollywood norm.' However as well as avoiding the pitfalls of the fidelity/authenticity vocabulary, there is the sense that staying 'true' to the book is more important than fulfilling the expectations of the industry that is ultimately responsible for the making of the film (even though it would be hard to argue that the film is somehow at odds with the average action packed, CGI filled Hollywood Blockbuster). However these discourses are clearly being utilised to, paradoxically, reassure audiences that Hollywood (or Warner Brothers at least) is the right context for the adaptation to be made even though it does, in many ways, fit into the Hollywood Blockbuster mould. Certainly, there were some alterations to the narrative to ensure that the film was narrationally more succinct than the book, but it was Rowling, again, who was deemed to have the last say in these changes.

Columbus is similarly vague when he says 'I see the film as a companion to the book, not in any way superseding it - it's an incredibly faithful adap-

[75]Golder/Steve Kloves quoted in, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*, p38

tation.'[76] The elusive multiple terms of reference used here clearly contain a level of contradiction within them. For Columbus, the film is a 'companion' to the book because it can, presumably, do things that the book can't because of the shift of media (and therefore has superior potential in some respects), but at the same time it is also subservient to the book in that it is faithful, but also, yet again, it holds *voluntary* equal status because it does not - but presumably has the potential to - supersede the book. This suggests an underlying concern about how to approach the notion of fidelity in a way that neither undermines the book nor the film.

The reasons for this concern are alluded to in an *SFX* magazine article. The author, David Golder, says 'You can almost smell the fear amongst the production crew. Not fear of media critics giving the film a mauling, but fear of disgruntled kids telling their mates, "it wasn't like the book."'[77] Gupta links this back to Rowling and the imagined audience when he says 'very seldom have films...been anticipated [by their audience] with so much informed readiness'.[78] This 'informed readiness' (in terms of faithfulness, Rowling's involvement, casting etc) is clearly not accidental and, through this and the other articles above, we can begin to see the complexity of the interrelationships between various media, authors and imagined audiences as well as how important these constructions (of audience, fidelity and authorship) are for commercial endeavors.

These constructions, however, generally relate directly back to the omnipresent narratives that surround Rowling including her history, her experiences of writing the books and her 'closeness' to them. An example of this can be found in an article documenting the first meeting between Rowling and Kloves. During their meeting, Rowling is quoted as saying "'I was really ready to hate this Steve Kloves,"..."This was the man who was going to butcher my baby."'[79] The article goes on to say 'Kloves, interestingly, felt, "I didn't want her to think I was in the business of destroying her baby."'[80] This (rather gruesome) metaphor personifies the *Harry Potter* books (as is also evident in press material mentioned earlier). It also gives the impression of something which is in danger and needs to be carefully watched, protected

[76] Osmond, *Cinefantastique v33.n6 [2002]*, p24
[77] Golder, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*, p35
[78] Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, p143
[79] Golder, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*, p39
[80] Ibid.

and treasured. It also very easy to, whether consciously or not, align these references to a 'baby' with the well known stories of Rowling caring for (and, apparently, at times, skipping meals for)[81] her own baby whilst she wrote the first novel.

These types of metaphors are not uncommon in adaptation studies. Stam, for instance, says 'the traditional language of criticism of filmic adaptations...has often been extremely judgmental...terms such as "infidelity," "betrayal," "deformation," "violation," "vulgarization," "bastardization" and "desecration" proliferate...[82] Likewise, Shelley Cobb suggests that 'Often the critical discourses of adaptations use...the language of violence to put the filmmaker in the role of destroyer rather than creator. The adapter is accused of abusing, ravaging, defiling, and molesting the "original"...and originality must be protected at any cost.'[83] Here, the reference to a 'baby' seems to take these familiar discourses to a whole new level, and the notion of Rowling protecting her 'baby' from being 'butchered' is present in a great deal of the press material from around this time. Furthermore it would seem that these discourses are the reasoning behind the level of control that Rowling is deemed to have had/been given over the film production. In this way the filmmakers are depicted as being in allegiance with Rowling, and this works to disavow their threat as well as valorising Rowling - a valorisation that again feeds into the star discourses surrounding her.

However, although the reporting of Rowling being in control/having significant input are omnipresent, the ways that this is presented, as we shall see, are not always consistent. This is most clearly seen in the dissonance between the language used by Kloves (the scriptwriter), Heyman (the producer), and Craig (the production designer) - who all seem relatively consistent - and Columbus, who appears to be constantly fighting a losing battle for some level of recognition with regards to authorship. That does not mean, as we will examine later, that Columbus does not play a large part in guaranteeing the 'authenticity' of the film (albeit in a very different way to Rowling). However it does mean that the discourses surrounding other members of the filmmaking team are more obviously attempting to avoid, at all costs, any accusation that the source novel has been 'violated' in any

[81]Stahl, *JK Rowling interview on '60 Minutes'*
[82]Stam, *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic and the Art of Adaptation*, p3
[83]Cobb, *Adaptation as Conversation: beyond fidelity and the translation metaphor*, p46

way. In the *SFX* article, for instance, Golder quotes an interview between Start Craig and *Vanity Fair*. He says

> Whereas most author's involvement with movie versions of their work is limited to receiving the cheque, Rowling has been in constant touch with the production, sitting in on the production meetings and offering advice. "She was very, very precise," production designer Stuart Craig told *Vanity Fair*. "She made me a map of the whole of Hogwarts and Hogsmeade. It became the bible.[84]

This quote alludes to many ideas. Firstly that Rowling is somehow 'better' than (most) other authors who merely receive a cheque for their work then have little to do with it, which relates to a common, rather derogatory stereotype of the author that Murray identifies in her chapter 'The Expanding Role of the Author' in *The Adaptation Industry*.[85]This reinforces the notion of the *Harry Potter* series being Rowling's 'baby', as she is shown to have maintained involvement because it means so much to her. The reference to the cheque is also bound up with the aforementioned reference to her wealth, and just as she is reported to have given away millions to charity, money is here again represented as of secondary importance to the *Harry Potter* books themselves. That there are reports of her initially turning down offers for the film rights because of a fear that it would not be produced 'faithfully' also give heed to this. One instance of this, for example, appears in a 2001 *Guardian* article where Rowling is quoted as saying 'I think it was around the time the second book was published...and there were a flood of film and television offers...and I said no to all of them...in fact I initially said no to Warners.'[86] The journalist then continues 'She [Rowling] changed her mind [about selling the rights] when promised greater control of the final project.'[87]

There are also allusions, in Golder's quote, to Rowling controlling minuscule details, as well as the idea that as it is Rowling's creation it is only she who can imagine the *Harry Potter* world - and as such only she who could

[84]Golder, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*, p40
[85]Murray, *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation*, p26
[86]Branigan, *The Guardian 2001*
[87]Ibid.

produce the 'bible' of what the Harry Potter world looks like. The actual quote by Stuart Craig, as it originally appeared in *Vanity Fair* (as opposed to being quoted in Golder's article), further reinforces Rowling's involvement. Here, Craig says '...she had really, really, really worked this out. She knows...' Craig also reports that he had kept the map that Rowling drew for him[88] which emphasises its value - it is treasured, just like Rowling's 'baby' and, presumably, Rowling's input per se. Furthermore, the repetition of 'really' (not present in Golder's appropriation of it) over emphasises the level of control Rowling had, whilst the very short sentence 'she knows' works to posit Rowling as the only viable source of truth around the *Harry Potter* world. It does this in a way that hints at there being a tangible *Harry Potter* universe for her to 'know', rather than a universe that has been *created by* her.

This sense of the Potter world as being something outside of Rowling - a secret world which only she can fully 'know' (but which she has chosen to share) - could also work to suggest that there is in fact a 'real world' that the filmmakers have to render correctly on screen, and the only way they can do that is enlist the person that 'uncovered' it. In this, Craig seems to be intentionally complicit with the imagined readers who are deemed to (at least want to) believe that the wizarding world is in fact real. One does not need to look too far for evidence of this complicity in readers' desire to believe that the magical world is a real one (one thread, for instance, on www.goodreads.com is entitled 'Admit it. You waited for your Hogwarts letter when you were eleven too' contains somewhere in the region of 150 responses to the affirmative).[89] Thus although the role of the imagination is here, explicitly at least, sidelined (because it is a 'real world' that Rowling 'knows', and not one that she has 'imagined'), it instead works on a collective level in that writers and imagined readers are deemed to agree, out loud at least, that it is real. As we will see, this idea of a collective imagination is very much at odds with the notion of the imagination as it appears in the marketing of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, where it is Adamson's imagination, and not the imagination of the readers/viewers, that is central.

All of these discourses very clearly work to pre-empt any audience dissatisfaction with the 'faithfulness' and 'authenticity' of the film. Robert Stam

[88] Bennet, *Vanity Fair 2001*

[89] *Admit it. You waited for your Hogwarts letter when you were eleven too*

asks '...is one to be faithful to the author's intentions? But what might they be, and how are they to be inferred?'[90] However, with Rowling's constant assistance, there is little room for debate about whether the film conveys the author's intention; and given that Rowling is depicted as the single source of information regarding the world of *Harry Potter*, these articles also work to minimise any concern the viewers might have about the film being 'true to the book'. This function as all knowing resource, however, clearly has the potential to undermine the filmmakers, and the attempt to balance this out can be evidenced in press material. A 2001 *Empire* article, for instance, emphasises her collaborative input when it says ' Far from being the all-controlling writer that many had feared, the team found her a useful resource...'[91] However this attempt to balance out, or negate, Rowling's threat to the filmmakers also goes some way to undermine, contradict, and diminutise the input and control that Rowling is so often deemed as having. To complicate this further there is also an underlying sense that Rowling's reportedly 'hands off'[92] approach was down to her own choice, which works to suggest that she had trust in those that were responsible for adapting her 'baby.' This trust is, as we will see, also referred to in relation to the filmmaker's responsibilities to the audience who also have to 'trust' the production crew to adapt the books in an appropriate manner.

In contrast to the reports which, ultimately, posit Rowling as a resource/object with no personal relationship to Columbus/the filmmakers, Kloves reports his relationship with Rowling from a more interpersonal perspective . He says

> The thing about Jo was that she was always incredibly supportive, always incredibly helpful when I needed her...She has been nothing but a great asset to me. She's also just one of the great people of the world. Becoming friends with her has been one of the best things about doing [the script]'[93]

This statement is also full of repetition and works to construct Rowling as a down to earth, approachable and friendly person who is also exceptional at the same time. This again reinforces discourses surrounding Rowling's

[90] Stam, *The Dialogics of Adaptation*, p57
[91] Cochrane, *Empire December [2001]*, p72
[92] Ibid.
[93] Chumo/Steve Kloves, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p60

stardom, which, as discussed, centres on her being a person/star that is both identifiable and something 'bigger.' It is also difficult to ignore the links here to Harry himself, who also has very identifiable attributes as a 'normal,' young boy, but who also just happens to have something innately special about him which makes him 'great.' The above quote also, as with Heyman's quote above, explicitly suggests just how welcome Rowling's input is - there is no sense that she is in the way, causing trouble or aggravating the team. This in itself is, again, an attempt to balance the depiction of her input with that of the filmmaking team, and it also works to personify the common discourses that surround adaptations in terms of striking a balance between two different media (which invariably one of the two media will either 'win' or 'lose').

Thus the attempt to negotiate all of these difficulties in the press material is suggestive of the underlying promotional mechanisms at work, as well as indicative of what the filmmakers believe the audience wants or needs in order to watch/buy the film. Tensions, however, are much more obvious in discussions regarding Columbus than they are the rest of the team. In one article he is, for instance, quoted as saying 'Harry's creator Joanne Rowling sat in on every meeting we had...the film really had Joanne's seal of approval.'[94] There is a lack of the familiarity that is evidenced in Kloves' quotes above, and Columbus implies that Rowling approved of the decisions rather than made them. Whilst this is not necessarily incongruous with the quotes of Craig, Kloves and Heyman, there is a certain distance set between Rowling and the film that is not present in the other quotes. Columbus also reiterates the idea of Rowling as collaborator in (rather than someone in control of) the process of the film's adaptation. In one interview he says

> When I sat down with Jo, we immediately clicked...I just explained to her what I wanted to do. I told her what my vision was for the movie, how I saw it, how I wanted to cast it...my desire was to remain faithful to the story, the characters and the integrity of those characters. After about 45 minutes she said, "Yeah, thats exactly the same type of movie I want to make." It was a great meeting because I realized that I had found a solid collaborator. And it was important because she knows this

[94]Cochrane/Columbus quoted in, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, pp 23-24

> world better than anyone else...she was incredibly valuable as a collaborator'[95]

As mentioned above, the idea of collaboration is often perceived, in adaptation studies, as a way around the problem of authorship/auterism. Here, however, the mention of collaboration appears to be the only way that Columbus is able to assert his own authorial presence without concomitantly undermining the privileging of Rowling in discourses surrounding the adaptation process - discourses which very clearly serve a marketing function for the film. Thus we can begin to see that even the idea about what 'collaboration' means is being framed in different ways depending on the agenda of the speaker. Columbus further highlights his thoughts on collaboration in an article which appeared in a 2003 article in *The Directors Guild of America Magazine*. He says:

> I find that you tend to work well with people who are truly collaborative...there are directors who think they can write, who can't write and then interfere with the screenwriters process. There are writers who refuse to change any of their written words because they don't have an understanding of how a film is made. The perfect scenario is a director who understands the writers process, and a writer who understands the filmmaking process...[96]

Tellingly, Rowling does not fall into either of these categories because she neither directed nor wrote the screenplay, and thus she is disavowed any 'official' role in the filmmaking process. In other quotes from the same article there are more direct attempts to remove Rowling from the position of sole author so common in the discourses we have previously examined. When Columbus, for instance, discusses his own input into the first two films he says that his input was:

> ...basically the look and design of both pictures...I love the books and I'm an obsessive fan of the books. But when I look back at them I can't say "yes that's exactly how the great hall was written"...we used the books as a starting point...when you talk

[95] Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p88

[96] Elrick/Columbus quoted in, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p89

> about personal vision, I was able to create these worlds that didn't exist in a tangible way. They existed on paper, but we were given complete freedom in the way we design the picture. [97]

This, significantly, is in direct contradiction to Craig's quote regarding Rowling's map of Hogwarts and its status as the 'bible.' In the same article the writer says

> Contrary to popular belief that J.K Rowling dominated every decision about the production, Columbus says he was given free reign to visualize the world of *Harry Potter*. For instance, as described in the books, the students at Hogwarts wear wizard's robes over normal street clothes such as jeans and sneakers. Columbus felt that looked too much like a Halloween Costume and decided to have students wear school uniforms under their robes.[98]

This acknowledges the level of control and input that Rowling is perceived to have had, and it also is clearly an attempt to assert the authorial presence of Columbus. However there is also a sense of futility in this endeavor because the example used (a decision over costume) to emphasise the autonomy of Columbus actually undermines itself because it appears such a small decision amongst the countless decisions that must have been made in the process of making the film. Therefore it would seem, from examining the press material, that there was no way that Columbus could assert himself as artist or author because this would be at odds with Rowling's status. However as I have stated above, the fact that Rowling was not credited on the film at all undermines these discourses. Thus Rowling has, according to the press material, a very clear authorial presence. However because this is not acknowledged in the film credits these discourses are ultimately called into question and indicate that Rowling's presence in the press material primarily serves a marketing function.

There is also the problem that Columbus is also, one would assume, obliged to promote the film and, ultimately, his desire/contractual obligation

[97] Elrick/Columbus quoted in, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p90

[98] Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p88

to do this appears to outweigh his aspirations for authorial recognition. Christine Geraghty, in her book *Now A Major Motion Picture*, recognises this issue when she says that

> ..Adaptations use literary references and publicity promotion to suggest connections with the author of the original source, but they also complicate questions of authorship. Cinema is not traditionally associated with authorship, though art cinema...[has]...proposed that, even in the collaborative and industrial modes of cinema, interpretation can be assisted by establishing the director as some kind of author.'[99]

Columbus is by no means an auteur or 'art' cinema director, but is still keen to assert his authority over the visual aspects of the film. He says '...if you loved the way the film...looked, you can thank me. If you hated the way it looked, you can blame me because its what I intended to do.'[100] In talking about the 'look of the film' Columbus seems to be drawing attention away from fidelity per se to a sense of authorial presence predicated on media specificity. Rowling's authorial presence ultimately resides in relation to the written word (ignoring for a moment her input in the drawings of Hogwarts mentioned earlier), and in talking about the 'look' of the film Columbus is again looking for another way to assert his presence as author. He is not claiming to be concerned with fidelity - rather his intention here is all that is deemed to matter. However the nonchalant regard for whether viewers will 'love' or 'hate' the adaptation seems completely at odds with the *Empire* review detailing his fear of displeasing fans.

Another way that Columbus' input is emphasised is through the thematic association of *Harry Potter* to his previous work. Columbus says that his previous work is '...always about the search for a family or the redefining of who your family is...I guess it's the fact that sometimes you play on your biggest fear. My biggest fear in my life would be to lose my family. So I've been drawn to that theme.'[101] The reference to themes is, in some ways, reminiscent of the structuralist auteur theory proposed by Peter Wollen in 1969, whereby a director is considered an auteur if his films 'exhibit the same

[99] Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p196
[100] Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p90
[101] Ibid., p87

thematic preoccupations, the same recurring motifs and incidents...'[102] In situating the film alongside his other work thematically, Columbus is placing himself at the centre of his work and cohering *Harry Potter* with the other films he has made. This, essentially, again works as a resistance to being on the periphery of Rowling's work. However, as many of the discourses surrounding Columbus' involvement in the adaptation centre around the idea of fear - particularly the idea that he does/should fear the audience, this is once again undermined.

It would seem, however, that for those that deem the adaptation a poor one, Columbus is quite likely to get the blame by journalists and academics alike. Theorist Philip Nel, for instance, says 'Given Chris Columbus's rather tepid film versions of the first two books...an absence of Harry Potter films may have been a good thing.'[103] What Nel means by 'tepid' is of course open to debate. However what is clear is that Nel is indeed positing Columbus as author, despite the surrounding discourses regarding Rowling's input into the collaboration which ultimately undermine this status. Here, Columbus is clearly stuck in a situation where his authorial presence is lacking *unless* a critic/theorist/fan needs someone to blame for a poor (or tepid) adaptation. Geraghty suggests that 'Adaptations layer one author over another...they equate meaning with authorial intention, but in doing so they also set the author in the context of a many-layered construction.'[104] If this is an example of a 'many-layered construction' it is a very messy and inconsistent one, where the over-arching marketing strategies seem at odds with how the various contenders for author are, and want to be, perceived.

Furthermore, in the language regarding fear (of audiences), blame (regarding poor adaptations) and emotions (regarding fans *and* critics who 'love' the books), links between fidelity, authorship and audiences are clear. This quest for fidelity, however, is often represented in publicity material as emanating from the fans as opposed to the filmmakers. That does not mean these discourses do not overlap, for, as I will discuss, whilst the filmmakers are represented as being concerned with fidelity predominantly so they can please the fans, they often talk about being fans themselves, which again works as an attempt to reassure audiences that the books they 'love' will

[102]Wollen, *The Auteur Film*, p532
[103]Nel, *The Lion and the Unicorn 29 [2005]*, p239
[104]Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p197

be well cared for. These discourses, as we shall see, tend to be about the filmmakers' personal relationships with the novel and work to situate the filmmakers alongside the fans in their quest for truth and fidelity.

Authenticity and Fandom

> Harry Potter is one of the most successful and widely read series of books in recent memory. Taking those tales, loved by millions of adults and children worldwide, from printed word to motion picture was a formidable undertaking for director Chris Columbus.[105]
>
> Hell hath no fury like a child whose favourite story has been messed up in the making of a motion picture.[106]

Whilst Columbus, as I have argued, posed little threat to Rowling's represented/perceived status as 'author', he still, albeit in a very different way to Rowling, works to ensure that the book is sufficiently 'brought to life' in the film through his involvement with the child actors and the performances he is deemed to illicit from them. Steve Kloves, for instance, is reported as saying 'This movie is going to live or die on these three kids...You can have the greatest special effects of all time, but if the kids are not winning, then it's not going to work. They are the touchstone."[107] Here, discussions regarding Columbus' previous work (for instance *Home Alone* (1990), *Home Alone 2* (1992) and *Mrs Doubtfire* (1993)), come into play because the majority of these were family films based, primarily, around the performances of the child actors - and, given Kloves' quote (as well as others we will examine below) - the performances of the children are key. This suggests that Columbus is able to bring something to the film that Rowling cannot despite the level of control she is depicted as having. Furthermore, these discourses around Columbus are interdependent with the discourses that surround the child actors (and children more generally). Cochrane, for instance, says

> Columbus and crew had a mere 120 days to render Rowling's universe real. What he needed was a cast of professional kids

[105]Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p87
[106]McCartney, *Sunday Telegraph 2001*
[107]Pond, *TV Guide (USA) v49.n43 [2001]*, p22

> who knew their lines and hit their marks. What he got was a band of practical jokers. Radcliffe delighted in persuading the make up team to give him black eyes and, on one occasion, a bleeding hand, which sent his director into fits.[108]

Here we have not only a sense of urgency regarding the production (which does, in fact, make Columbus ultimately responsible for the actual production of the film if not the authorship of it), we also have a very specific representation of childhood with the concomitant representation of Columbus as the constant 'victim' of practical joking. However what this does do, as with other discourses and narratives regarding the production crew, is give a real sense of intimacy which suggests that the children were comfortable enough around Columbus to play practical jokes as well as give him 'authentic' performances. This allows viewers the opportunity not only to identify with the characters but also feel, in a more general sense, that the film has stayed 'true' to the book by bringing the characters 'alive' through the children's performances. These opportunities for identification are only able to succeed, however, because of the relationship between the child actors and culturally engrained perceptions of childhood. Ted Elrick, in a *Directors Guild of America Magazine* article, discusses the children on set and their relationship to Columbus. He says:

> Columbus...drew upon past experiences from *Home Alone* and *Mrs Doubtfire* and met with the young actors in an office, reading through the lines with them to make sure the dialogue...worked and also to get them comfortable with their characters...Columbus would initially walk through the scenes, playing Potter and enlisting any others who happened to be around to stand in for the other characters..."When the kids finally worked through the scene," he explained, "there was a really fresh attitude from them because it was the first time they had seen or done it,"...Columbus rehearsed very little with the children since many had little acting experience and he didn't want to lose their spontaneity.[109]

Likewise, Steve Pond, in a *TV Guide* article, also quotes Columbus speaking about this:

[108] Cochrane, *Empire December [2001]*, p68
[109] Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p90

> You have to get the performance in whatever way possible...Whether it means running the scene two or three times in a row or surprising the kids with a joke in the middle of a take to get an unexpected reaction. I feel sometimes that I'm almost becoming part of the action myself...[110]

As Karen Lury argues in her book *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, these types of discourses are common in relation to children acting in film. She says '...it is frequently suggested that the most effective performances (particularly from children) are nothing more than "captured actuality." This would suggest that many of the most acclaimed performances from children are not "acting" at all.'[111] This discussion of the child performers and their behavior as 'real' children (spontaneous, mischievous, etc) also works to situate them in the realm of very stereotypical perceptions of what children 'are' or 'should be' (much like the positing of Rowling as a star discussed earlier). This invites identification from both child and adult audiences - child audiences in that they can identify with them, and adult audiences because they recognise the cultural views of childhood these discourses reiterate - and also, because of the links to culturally familiar tropes regarding children and childhood, suggests an underlying 'authenticity.'

In their book *In Front of the Children - Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences,* Bazalgette and Buckingham make the point that

> The Romantics' construction of the 'natural child' was an essential part of the wider critique of emerging capitalist industrialism. In this critique the child came to represent a sense of loss, of nostalgia for something more authentic, more natural.[112]

It is no surprise, then, that discussions relating to the 'natural' child actors - as well as Columbus' ability to capture this naturalness - were often prevalent in the promotional discussions of the filmmakers. It is also clear that there are links between this nostalgic representation of the child actors and the nostalgic representation of Rowling as discussed at the start of this chapter. Furthermore, in this aspect of the film production Columbus maintains his authority over and above Rowling, for no amount of Hogwarts

[110]Pond, *TV Guide (USA) v49.n43 [2001]*, p30
[111]Lury, *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, p10
[112]Bazalgette/Buckingham, *In Front of the Children - Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences*, p1

drawings can trump the book being 'brought to life' by the performances of the child actors. Cochrane sums these ideas up when she says 'Chris Columbus was the best man for the job. He's great with kids and when you see the film you'll agree that the strongest aspect is the kids. They are fantastic. They're honest, unsentimental, true, understated, funny, moving.'[113] Thus, in Cochrane's mind at least, the child performances are the most successful aspect of the film because of their ability to be 'faithful' to (presumably) the characters, themselves, and the nostalgic depiction of children that is so central to the *Harry Potter* 'phenomenon' in general.

The idea of the director bringing the performances out of the child actors has been, as Lury identifies, a way to assert authorial presence. Talking about Italian Neo-Realist films, she says:

> As an auteur led genre, in which the director was celebrated as the leading visionary and creator of a believable "slice of life", the submissive obedience of child actors who do...what they are told to do, and possess no agency of their own, would allow a director to claim creative ownership over what might otherwise be understood as "captured reality".[114]

Of course, this is a somewhat darker representation of the process than is depicted in the press material surrounding *Harry Potter*, which gives the impression that being on set was full of fun and spontaneity (and, in their practical joking at least, the children had agency); and *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is certainly not an auteur film. However the link to Lury's assertion of the director taking creative ownership of the child performances - when combined with the knowledge of Columbus' attempts to assert his authorship - cannot be ignored. It is he that has created a 'meaningful environment'[115] for the children in which they are able to give 'real' performances and thus he - and not Rowling - who can claim credit for 'bringing the book to life'.

These discourses are also reinforced by the discussions of the children off set, which further construct the children as 'real' and therefore allow a link to their 'authentic' performances to be more easily made. Steve Pond, for instance, begins his aforementioned article as follows:

[113]Cochrane, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, p22
[114]Lury, *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, p156
[115]Ibid., p163

> She [Emma Watson] comes round the corner in a plaid skirt and yellow shirt, all pigtails and freckles...tossing her books in the trunk of a car and showing off the brightly decorated bag she made in a crafts class...Emma Watson, on the surface a charming and lively 11-year-old, could be a movie star in the making.[116]

He goes on to say that

> Watson [is] a sports fan who loves school ("not quite as much as Hermione - I'm not a fanatic") but has no professional acting experience...As Harry's best friend, Rupert Grint, 13, a natural comedian and big practical joker with a serious sweet tooth. Grint caught the attention of the casting directors with a video in which he dressed up as his (female) drama teacher and rapped about Harry Potter...And as Harry Potter, Daniel Radcliffe, 12, a big devotee of the World Wrestling Federation and a music fan...Eager, charming, playful and surprisingly self-possessed...upon these six slender shoulders sits the weight of a reported $125 million production...[117]

Similarly, Cochrane says

> he [Radcliffe] veers from being an incredibly ordinary boy who loves WWF, playing on his playstation with his friends and watching films, to making remarks of surprising honesty and maturity...The running joke on set is, "What does Dan want to be this week?"...since production started he's wanted to be a stuntman ("I do most of my own") a gymnast ("I can run up a wall and do a somersault"), an actor and a director. He's written a screenplay "about a boy like me"...written some songs and pestered the make-up department to show him the tricks of the trade.[118]

In these quotes there is a fluidity of discussion about the children on set and off, and this again works to posit the children (and by extension their performances) as 'real' and 'true'. James Naremore, in his book *Film Adaptation* says 'cinematic translation of a literary work should never assume

[116]Pond, *TV Guide (USA) v49.n43 [2001]*, p22
[117]Ibid., p24
[118]Cochrane, *Empire December [2001]*, p60

that its purpose is simply the maximal realization of the images that literature evokes in the minds of its readers'[119] In privileging the 'naturalness' of the children and their performances in this way, the film is able to purport to realize, thanks to Columbus, the (perceived) expectations which require the film to be 'true' to the book. At the same time it asserts the film as a separate entity to the book because the 'real' performances of 'real' children can only be captured on film.

Furthermore, with the discussions surrounding the child actors, as well as the perceived expectations of the audience, clear constructions/imaginings regarding the child readers/audience can be identified. David Buckingham recognises this in relation to children and media in general when he states that

> Analysing texts produced for children...raises fundamental questions about how adults imagine the child audience. As well as asking what children want or need from the text, we can try to analyse what it is that adults, through the text, want or demand from the child.[120]

In the case of *Harry Potter*, ideas about how adults imagine what children are/should be clearly proliferates the book/film texts. In analysing the *Harry Potter* narrative, for instance, we can argue that Rowling (who is of course part of a wider ideologically defined culture), as well as the filmmakers (who translate these character traits to their on screen representations), believe that children should be fun, spontaneous, curious, kind, generous, loyal, non materialistic, hard working, independent etc. The discussions surrounding the film also posit the child actors, and by extension children more generally, alongside these familiar ideological tropes. However, through discourses about the 'fear' the film makers had of child audiences, we can also see what adults imagine children 'demand' of them (in this case is a faithfully produced adaptation). Thus, these discourses can also be seen as attempts to guess audience perception as well as answer any 'concerns' they have about the adaptation of the book.

The result of this is arguably a symbiotic relationship between imagined audiences and real audiences, because the available modes of identification

[119]Naremore/Rainer Werner Fassbinder, quoted in, *Film Adaptation*, p12

[120]Bazalgette/Buckingham, *In Front of the Children - Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences*, p6

with the film are very much limited by, and bound up with, discourses that imagine childhood, and the *Harry Potter* books, in very particular ways. This could, potentially, impact how actual audiences perceive themselves in relation to the books/films, which is likely to further impact their relationships with the texts. Evidence of this can be found in numerous press discourses. One *Cinefex* article, for instance, states that 'The most magical aspect of J.K Rowling's Harry Potter novels may have been the long lines of children snacking around book-stores prior to the midnight release of the skinny, bespectacled, young wizards-in-training's latest adventure...'[121] Here, the children are clearly being depicted as behaving in a very fan-like way because of the role (of Harry Potter fan, of being part of the 'phenomenon') that they have been invited to take on. Cochrane imagines these fans in relation to the film when she says 'Fans everywhere are waiting - with a mixture of anticipation and concern - to see how well, or poorly, Harry has been looked after during this difficult transfer.'[122] As discussed in the introduction, although these activities have much in common with the 'obsessed' adult fans of other media (such as Trekkies),[123] these fan-like traits are represented as endearing because it is children that are undertaking them. These images/representations also have much in common with the romantic/nostalgic air that Buckingham identifies above.

Quotes such as those above are not in short supply and point to cultural perceptions about readers, fandom and, more widely, childhood. These perceptions have, over time, created a very cohesive idea about who the readers of the novels, as well as the audience of the films are - or, rather, is - for in both cases the readers/audience have been constructed/presented as a singular entity. This idea of the cohesive community again has much in common with the depiction of adult fans as discussed by Henry Jenkins,[124] albeit in a much more positive light than the adult fans of Jenkins' discussion. As such the *idea* of the audience has, essentially, been packaged up and sold to the 'real' audience, and with this has come assumptions about how that audience does/should relate to the novels, their characters, their child actors, and their author. In this way the audience is as carefully imagined

[121] Fordham, *Cinefex 88 [2002]*, p70
[122] Cochrane, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, p22
[123] Jenkins, *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*
[124] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*Jenkins, *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*

and constructed as Rowling's 'private' life/public persona is. The readers (as discourses go) care about the books in a very intimate way. In particular they care about Harry (Rowling's baby[125]), and what happens to it/him; they discuss the plots and characters of the book(s) amongst themselves (usually in the schoolyard, the train, or, given that the readers are of the 'digital generation' - online), and they dress up for book release days. Most importantly, these readers/audiences *matter* - to Rowling, to the book publishers, to the film makers (etc). Dave Golder, in his article for *SFX Magazine* writes about similar ideas as well as their relation to fidelity. He says

> ...there's a lot of people out there not just familiar with the *Harry Potter* books, but fanatical about them...the first film isn't going to be watched, it's going to be *scrutinised* by the harshest group of kids imaginable - kids who know the Potterverse inside out...which is why, in every interview and feature you read about *Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone* - and you may have noticed there are a good few of them around at the moment - everyone involved in the production goes to extraordinary lengths to stress how far they are going to make sure the film is going to be almost reverently faithful to the book.'[126]

From this quote we can again extrapolate cultural perceptions about readers (as well as the act of reading) and viewers (as well as their media awareness). There is also the aforementioned sense of fear regarding these potential viewers as well as the sense that the novels are something tangible which most audiences members will have held, read and spent time with. These constructions are, however, not limited to the press but also come up in academic discourses. Julia Eccleshare highlights this when she also discusses children queuing outside bookshops[127] and, in a rather essentialist manner, credits word of mouth amongst child readers for the success of the books (or, at least, the first book). In doing so she denies that corporate marketing strategies are even in part responsible for the book's success - however one might perhaps consider how Warner's corporate strategy of marketing the

[125]Golder, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*, p39
[126]Ibid., pp 36-38
[127]Eccleshare, *'Most Popular Ever' The Launching of Harry Potter*

film through 'news' might well have had its precedent in the first book. Looking back on the release of *The Philosopher's Stone* she says

> Harry Potter had become a phenomenon...although the first of the series had been released into a tough and inattentive marketplace, its successors would be published for a world queuing for them outside bookshops on the eve of their publication...for *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* it was not so much shrewd marketing as the enthusiasm of its first young readers that launched it to fame.'[128]

What is clear in all of these discourses is that the audience is, as mentioned, depicted as a singular entity within which all members can share the experience. Bazalgette and Buckingham say that:

> ...most of us have not yet adjusted to the modern phenomenon of the mass audience. The fact that millions of others may be having the same experience at the same time is hard to comprehend, and threatens our sense of individuality.[129]

However, this sense of the singularity of experience, regardless of how it actually exists with real audiences, is omnipresent in the discussions surrounding the film. Indeed, without these fan community discourses the promotional and press material would have very little grounding or stability because it is predicated on the idea that all the readers/viewers form part of the 'phenomenon' that is *Harry Potter* and thus have a vested and shared interest in the process of adaptation which they are also, due to concerns over fidelity, resistant of to some degree. This is at odds with Bazalgette and Buckingham's quote above because the idea of the shared experience of the mass audience is, in this case, deemed to be a positive marker of identity. There is no concern about a lack of individuality in any of the press discourses - they all utilise, and are dependent on, the pre-supposition that they are speaking to a distinct group of people with shared experiences, cares and interests.

Gupta alludes to this when he say '...the audience of the *Harry Potter* films, informed and aware of the *Harry Potter* texts...look to assess the

[128]Eccleshare, *'Most Popular Ever' The Launching of Harry Potter*, p300
[129]Bazalgette/Buckingham, *In Front of the Children - Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences*, p2

success of the *virtual reality* of the illusion...the result is...a meeting of spectator desires and producer awareness..'[130] This quote is not only suggestive of a distinct audience that have a prior awareness of the books, but also of a symbiotic relationship between the filmmakers and the audience within which the film producers 'know' what the audience expects of them. In line with this the filmmakers are very much represented as people who also really 'care' about Harry and his friends and hence whether the book is 'faithful.' As we have discussed, the purpose for Rowling's presence in the marketing material is to 'guarantee' the authenticity of the film. However the viewers' perceived need for a 'faithful' adaptation extends beyond discussions about Rowling herself into other aspects of the filmmaking process such as the casting (specifically the nationality of the actors), the sets, and the use of special effects. These discussions generally seem to have, at their centre, the filmmakers' desire to take care of the books that they themselves 'love.' In this way, the filmmakers are at once imagining and constructing the fan base for the books, as well as situating themselves, concomitantly, both inside and outside of that fan base.

Examples of this are not difficult to find as Columbus, Kloves and Heyman (in particular), talk a great deal about their 'love' of the books and about how they felt the need to be 'true' to them because of this. This is further emphasised (and complicated) in the cases of both Columbus and Kloves who also (with a sense of nostalgia for the present) talk about their own children's love of the books and the bearing this had on their choices to work with it. Golder, for instance, in his article *HP Sorcery*,[131] says 'Columbus was a confessed *Potter* fan, having been introduced by his daughter Eleanor,'[132] whilst Kloves is reported as saying, on a more general note about children, parents, and the books, that 'At the time I took the job, if you were a parent of a child of a very specific age, you had heard of *Harry Potter*. Within a couple of months, if you had children at all, you'd heard of *Harry Potter*.'[133] As a result of their introduction (through their own families) to *Harry Potter* they allegedly consider themselves "'rabid fanatics" of

[130]Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, p148
[131]Golder, *SFX Magazine November [2001]*
[132]Ibid., p42
[133]Chumo/Kloves quoted in, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p60

the books...”’[134] or, as Columbus puts it in an interview, “Potterheads”’[135]

Kloves and Columbus also commonly discuss their affinity with the books and its characters. For instance, in one interview Kloves is asked ‘Which of the kids were you personally in touch with, inside yourself? [Kloves replies that]...I don’t come from the circumstances Harry comes from but I was probably on the quieter, more watchful side; the typical writer, the observer...so I put a little bit of that in Harry,’[136] whilst in another he says ‘...Harry is a kid who is emerging literally and metaphorically from darkness. There is a shadow over him...not just because of the peril he faces from the outside world, but he has an interior landscape that is a little dark because of where he comes from.’[137]. He also explicitly conflates the idea of characters and the (child) actors that play them with the notion of truth, authenticity and ‘faithfulness’ when he says ‘...these three kids are going to carry the movie, and if you don’t become involved with these kids you’re not gonna become involved with the movie, no matter how great the [special effects] are.’[138] He then relates this idea to the (child) audience when he says ‘I didn’t really worry about the children in the audience other than I felt as long as I was true to Ron and Harry and Hermione, the kids would recognise them...as long as I remained true to their voices the kids would embrace them.’[139] Similarly, Columbus says ‘I know some kids really believe that when they turn eleven, the letter will come [to invite them to Hogwarts]...Harry is about finding your identity, conquering your fears, and the hope of being pulled out of your dreary life.’[140] Here he is both empathising with the imagined audience and with the character Harry.

This identification with the novel clearly works to make Kloves and Columbus viable in their efforts to adapt the books. From this, we can see why the earlier discourses surrounding Rowling and her friendly relations with Kloves and Columbus were so important. It is she who gives the seal of approval, and her trust, to the writer and director, and there seems to be the assumption by those writing the publicity material that potential viewers will believe in Kloves and Columbus (and ultimately Heyman and

[134]Elrick, *The Directors Guild of America Magazine v27.n5 [2003]*, p87
[135]Ibid.
[136]Cochrane, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, p22
[137]Chumo, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p63
[138]Chumo/Kloves quoted in , *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p60
[139]Chumo/Kloves quoted in, *Creative Screenwriting 2002*, p62
[140]Osmond, *Cinefantastique v33.n6 [2002]*, p24

Warner Brothers) because Rowling does. This also, perhaps, works to reassure those who have not read the books that the film will stand in its own right because they are (with the backing of Rowling) making alterations to the plot in order to ensure that the film is a success in itself.

Thus where the notion of authorial autonomy and originality is lacking, it is replaced with the idea that the filmmakers 'get' the novel, its characters and, most importantly, they get the 'fans.' For whilst both Kloves and Columbus (to a lesser extent) talk about the ways they have to alter the exact events in the books to make the film 'work', the 'fact' that they apparently 'love' and 'understand' the books means that there is a sense that the adaptation will be 'true' or do 'justice' to the books. What this amounts to is a sense that their aims, and the (imagined) fans' wishes, are one in the same, and that the filmmakers are 'trustworthy' in regards to their input into the adaptation. This is further emphasised by open acknowledgements that the filmmakers understand their hierarchical importance in regards to the novel. Heyman, for instance, says 'I always felt the film should be a companion to the book, that it should never surpass the book. The best thing I can hope is that people will see the film and say, "This is exactly how I imagined it,"'[141] This clearly works to trivialise the autonomy film has as a medium and, in a discourse which echoes that of Cartmell in her work, subjugates film in relation to the written word. However this is clearly part of a very carefully coordinated marketing strategy that aims to make sure that every conceivable angle is covered, whether that be in relation to fidelity, performance, authorship, or recourse to fans.

That the fans were deemed as important in the marketing material also filters through to the reviews of the film, where child written reviews/comments were very common. Of course, with the increase in accessibility to the internet, child written reviews can be easily found. However, broadsheet newspapers publishing these reviews was and is much less common and, as far as the following case studies go, did not occur elsewhere. Thus whilst Jenkins argues that fans have always participated actively in the shows and films they love (through conventions, fan fiction etc[142]), here, the child written reviews seems to solidify the discursive constructions of the *Harry Potter* fans whilst also drawing on the *Harry Potter* narrative by privileging these

[141] Cochrane/Heyman quoted in, *Starburst Magazine 279 [2001]*, p23
[142] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*

child reviewers (explicitly or implicitly), as 'chosen ones.' Furthermore, these quotes/reviews do indeed demonstrate a media savvy audience, which again gives further weight to the 'fear' of the audience that the filmmakers were deemed to have felt. One, for instance, reads "'The movie skipped part of the book, but I thought it was great," said Jeffrey Chyau, a 10-year old fifth grader..."a lot of the scene changes were really sudden" said Ted Young, a 10-year-old "It goes from fall to winter to spring, and it feels like you're watching a preview of just little parts of the book"'[143] In the same month, the *Sunday Telegraph* published a review entirely written by nine year old Jessica Hatrick (these reviews always contain the age of the child) who stated that

> I didn't know how the film-makers were going to make the magic work. I was...worried that the film would spoil my imagination. It didn't. It was just as I had imagined it...they [stuck] closely to the original story although there were small things they changed...Quirrel has a yellow turban but in the film it is purple and that was a bit annoying...[144]

Similarly, purely child-written reviews also appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*,[145] *The Times*,[146] and the *Guardian*.[147] One *Guardian* review is particularly telling in regards to perceptions of childhood and adaptation. The newspaper had run a competition for child penned reviews, to which they had received 'hundreds'[148] of entries. They announced the winner as Romy Cowhig, aged nine, and said that 'Romy's review was really excellent, and remarkably sophisticated for her age - she was one of the very few entrants to discuss, or even mention the director. She combined it with likable enthusiasm, humour, and a real sense of good writing.'[149] Accompanying the review was an image of Cowhig 'dressed as Hermione,' and it read:

> ...if you're aged between three and fourteen...promise to tidy your room for a year, to do your homework immediately it's given - anything - so long as you get to see this film, which is the best

[143] Schiesel, *New York Times 2001*
[144] Hatrick, *Sunday Telegraph 2001*
[145] Inge, *Daily Telegraph 2001*
[146] Macintyre, *Times 2001*
[147] Roberts, *Guardian 2001*
[148] *The Guardian 2001*
[149] Ibid.

> children's film I've ever seen...Potter fans and those who have never heard of Pottermania will be entranced by Chris Columbus's translation of JK Rowling's magical tale...fans will be delighted with the way Harry's story has been brought to life...it was as if my own imagination was being brought to life...I'm not surprised JK Rowling loved this film. And if it's good enough for her, it's good enough for anybody.[150]

Here, it is not difficult to see how perceptions of children and childhood, and the language commonly used in the promotion of the film, have made it into this review which, perhaps, indicates the kinds of language that Cowhig had come across in her own reading about the film. The *Evening Standard*, meanwhile, quoted from nine different children, aged between five and eleven, and then, seamlessly, went on to quote from figures such as Cliff Richard and The Duchess of York.[151] This conflation of child/adult, the famous/non famous clearly relates to the ways that the press campaign sought to bring child readers, as well as the wider public, into the agenda.

However, evidence suggests that Warners' approach of holding the child readers/viewers in high esteem (which was primarily voiced by the filmmakers and was, as evidenced, mimicked more explicitly by the press through child written reviews), was not in line with their actual treatment of children outside of the adaptation discourse. Two controversies, in particular, highlight this. The first centred around Warners exploitation of child actors in the making of the film, where they were reported to have paid many of the extras '...rates as low as £35 a day'[152] and were not prepared to enter any discussion about merchandising shares in regards to the children.[153] This resulted in agencies reportedly withdrawing children from the film after any parent or agent complaints were met with the alleged response, from Warners, that 'if they [are] not happy "there are 5,000 children waiting to do it for nothing."'[154]

The second controversy was aptly named 'The Potter War'[155] which a *Daily Telegraph* article from 2001 details in relation to a *Harry Potter* site

[150]Cowhig, *Guardian 2001*
[151]Richard Simpson, *Evening Standard 2001*
[152]Moyes, *Independent 2000*
[153]Ibid.Reynolds, *Daily Telegraph 2000*
[154]Moyes, *Independent 2000*
[155]Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*

run by a then 15 year old Christie Chang. It reads:

> Christie...is defying the studio...her case is being taken up by other Potter fans. A "Potter War" site has been established to expose what it claims is "legal blah". Warner is acting in the wake of success in Geneva where the web-watchdog - the United Nations World Intellectual Property Organisation - has already evicted a so-called "cybersquatter" who used the Potter name on 107 website addresses.[156]

Henry Jenkins looks at this in detail in his chapter 'Why Heather Can Write: Media Literacy and the Harry Potter Wars,' where he discusses Warner's policing of *Harry Potter* fan sites and the common occurrence that original site owners would be issued permission to keep their sites, but with the caveat that 'Warner Bros. retained the right to shut [them] down if they found "inappropriate or offensive content."'[157] He goes on to say that the '...fans felt slapped in the face by what they saw as the studios's effort to take control over their sites. Many of those caught up in these struggles were children and teens, who had been among the most active organizers of the *Harry Potter* fandom.'[158] In response to this, one child (Heather Lawver, the editor of *The Daily Prophet* website) formed an organisation called *Defense Against the Dark Arts* (the dark arts here being Warners). She is quoted by Jenkins as saying:

> Warner was very clever about who they attacked...They went after twelve and fifteen year-olds with rinky dink sites. They underestimated how interconnected our fandom was. They underestimated the fact that we knew those kids in Poland...and we cared about them.[159]

Whilst Warners did in fact back down after this, Jenkins says that '...many Potter fans praised Warner for admitting its mistakes and fixing the problems in their relations with fans. Lawver remains unconvinced, seeing the outcome more as an attempt to score public relations victory than in any shift in their thinking.'[160] Regardless of Warner's motivation, it is clear that

[156]Davies, *Daily Telegraph 2001*
[157]Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, p195
[158]Ibid.
[159]Ibid.
[160]Ibid., p196

the social/cultural responsibility of protecting actual children fell below, in Warners' priorities, their interest in financial gain. What is also clear is that the children themselves were very resistant to the idea that *Harry Potter* was Warner's property. Instead they, as fans, were defending their ownership of the text by demeaning Warner's legal claim as 'legal blah.' A similar kind of attachment occurs in regards to *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, only here, as I discuss later, it is adults' defending their 'ownership' of the text.

Conclusion

> The manner in which spectators are made aware of and brought to view films, the ways in which they employ certain conventions of interpretation, and the degree to which they finally engage with particular films are...part of collective and often carefully coordinated processes.[161]

In 2010 the founder of the publishing company *Quercus* is quoted in the *Guardian*[162] as saying (about his signing of books by author Stieg Larsson), that 'Everyone dreams of signing the next blockbuster, the next *Harry Potter*...I've had colleagues who have been waiting 25 years for such a hit.' Likewise, John Sutherland, in his book *Bestsellers*, says that

> Readers tend to be either brand-loyal to a particular category (science fiction, romance, horror) or to a particular author...given the fact that the essence of fiction marketing is variety, and constant renewal of stock, this loyalty too is as irrational as that mobilized to sell one-off blockbusters...[163]

The type of language in these quotes suggests a permeability of the perceived boundary between the media of books and films, and this has clearly been exploited for promotional purposes in regards to *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* where themes of fidelity, authenticity and truth are addressed through discourses of authorship and the imagined audience. Here, Rowling is the all-knowing source of *Harry Potter* knowledge, and her life

[161] Gupta, *Re-Reading Harry Potter*, p143
[162] Clark/Mark Smith quoted in, *The Independent Friday 6th August [2010]*
[163] Sutherland, *Bestsellers Avery Short Introduction*, p26

story makes her a relatable figure which is very easy to market. Furthermore, her (reported) involvement in the film worked to assure potential audiences that the film would be 'faithful' and therefore 'true' to readers/audiences expectations of it. The discourses surrounding Rowling, however, work to establish a sense of the solitary author whilst, paradoxically, giving a sense of significance, coherence and validation to the other authorial figures on the project.

This prevalence of Rowling as author is not accidental; rather it is part of a complex promotional strategy which, while seemingly coherent, is full of internal inconsistencies. Janet Staiger, in *Authorship and Film*, suggests that

> Authorship is...useful for humanism and capitalism [because] such a construction of rationality [the "rational being we call 'author"'] rewards a culture invested in individuals as having so-called coherence or powers of creating since it suggests a discourse of full agency that it is handy for capitalism to promote.'[164]

Here, the notion of authorship has indeed been useful because it has given the readers/audience their 'individual' to identify with. Furthermore, because they are deemed to be important because of their fandom they have been invited to feel a part of the 'phenomenon' and have therefore, especially in the discourses surrounding the filmmakers' fear of audiences, been imbued with a sense of agency. For, without ever needing to speak, the audience has been 'heard' by the filmmaking team. However, as discussed, at the time that the filmmakers were discussing the importance of keeping the fans happy, Warners was issuing cease and desist letters to fans that were running *Harry Potter* fan sites. They were also, allegedly, in response to allegations of the exploitation of child actors, unwilling to negotiate pay rates and merchandising rights with agents and parents. This suggests that despite the significance of the child readers/audiences in the press material, the adults (at Warners) were very much in control and not in the slightest bit fearful of actual children. That the child performers and child fans were imagined and discussed in such a nostalgic manner also works to keep them on one clear side of the adult/child divide.

[164]David A Gerstner, *Authorship and Film*, p28

Thus, all of the press material covered in this study is a part of that carefully co-ordinated process by which the audience is both imagined and spoken to. Thomas Leitch says

> the most urgent item on the agenda [of adaptation studies] is to shift the evaluative problems the field has inherited from literary studies - fidelity, hierarchy, canonicity...theorists of adaptation could do a service to both themselves and their field by looking more closely at the ways adaptations play with their source texts...[165]

What is clear from examining the discussions surrounding this case study is that the notions of authorship and fidelity have been very clearly utilised as promotional tools, and as such form part of an intersection whereby the author, source text, filmmakers and their potential audience are imagined to meet. The constructed nature of the readers/audience becomes even more apparent when we consider Jack Zipes' personal experience with child readers. He says

> I [Zipes] did a storytelling session ...with fifth and six graders...I discussed the *Harry Potter* books and why they liked or disliked [them]...when I asked than how many of them had read the first novel, only half of the students raised their hands, and they were mostly girls...only one of the girls and one of the boys had read all three; a few others had read two. Some of the students called the books boring. For the most part they liked what was being read to them [by their teacher], but they liked other books equally well.[166]

This quote is in direct contradiction to many of the quotes we have examined above (in particular, for instance, Julia Eccleshare's views on the child readers as being solely responsible for the success of the novels) and as such suggests that the discourses surrounding the child readers/viewers, and the concomitant link these have to cultural perceptions of childhood may (as with other culturally constructed discourses) have a limited basis in the

[165]Leitch, *Adaptation 1, No 1 [2008]*, p76

[166]Zipes, *Sticks and Stones: The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*, p176

actual experiences of those readers/viewers. However, despite these inconsistencies, the ways in which Rowling and the (imagined) link to her fans has been constructed has clearly proved very successful and is, now that all the books and films have been released, the main selling point for the *Harry Potter* website www.pottermore.com. The site, which launched in 2011 as an online space for Rowling and *Harry Potter* fans to share their thoughts on/ideas about *Harry Potter*, is also the 'exclusive home of the *Harry Potter* eBooks and digital audio books.'[167] Rowling said, in her announcement of the site, that

> Thirteen years after the first Harry Potter book was published.... I'm thrilled to say that I am now in a position to give you something unique - an online reading experience unlike any other...Its the same story with a few crucial additions. The most important one is *you*. Just as the experience of reading requires that the imaginations of the author and reader work together to create the story, so Pottermore will be built, in part, by you, the reader...[168]

This play with the narrative construction of Rowling and the audience - which are both, as I have argued, inextricably linked - is clearly being utilised here to market this interactive website and (unsurprisingly) store. Thus, whilst the privileging of Rowling and the audience was set in motion in the *Harry Potter* film, Warners were still utilising this as a marketing tool long after the film authors have been forgotten. In this, there is the clear assumption (by Warners) that Rowling is central to fans perceptions of the *Harry Potter* brand, and this might help explain why Warners were so keen - as far as press discourses go at least - to keep her 'happy' and involved throughout the whole filmmaking process. However, in setting up *Pottermore* and inviting fans to be a part of it Warners is, once again, looking to profit from the activities of children - activities that, when under the control of children (in the form of fan authored sites) Warners went to great lengths to prevent.

[167] *J.K. Rowling's Pottermore Announcement*
[168] Ibid.

Chapter 3

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: The 'Marriage' of Authorship and the Elusive Audience

Introduction

> Thinking about adaptations in terms of layering at least allows for the possibility of seeing through one film...to another...the layering process involves an accretion of deposits over time, a recognition of ghostly presences, and a shadowing or doubling of what is on the surface by what is glimpsed behind.[1]
>
> Once upon a time, there was a lonely little boy [called Tim Burton] who was ignored by the people around him. Instead of normal friends, he grew up to love monsters and dogs...[2]
>
> [Roald Dahl has] the mind-set of an outsider - one who distrusts not only society's authority figures but also the socializing process in general.[3]

In his chapter 'From Auteurs to Brats: Authorship in New Hollywood'[4],

[1] Geraghty, *Now A Major Motion Picture*, p194
[2] Woods, *Tim Burton: A Child's Garden of Nightmares*, p5
[3] West, *Roald Dahl*, p2
[4] King, *New Hollywood Cinema An Introduction*

Geoff King asserts that '...auterism remains a convenience for journalism and other film writing and publication, the director being a handy tag on which to hang discussion or analysis...for the industry, too, the name of the director remains a potentially useful marketing tool.'[5] When the 'auteur' in question is undertaking an adaptation, however, the status of the book author can potentially problematise this. This chapter discusses this difficulty in relation to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and examines the way that the discussions surrounding the film worked to manage the competing claims of book-author and director-auteur through the idea of a metaphorical 'marriage' between Dahl and Burton. It is worth noting that this marriage, conveniently, seems to be free from any anxieties of infidelity, and is openly supported by other interested parties such as Dahl's widow and Johnny Depp. As with the previous chapter, this chapter looks towards the audience to see how they are imagined and constructed in relation to both of the author figures and argues that, due to the author figures in question, there is very little room for the child audience to be considered in the press material at all. This is, I argue, largely to do with the fact that the site of childhood itself becomes very problematic because, whilst this is an adaptation of a children's book (although one which arguably crosses over into adult readership),[6] the status of the authors as 'outsiders' does not sit well with the nostalgic constructions of childhood so easily integrated into the promotion of *Harry Potter* and, in a very different way, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Thus in this case study the marketing primarily concerns itself with negotiating authorship, and the intended audience of the adaptation does not consistently seem to be addressed. The result of this is that the adaptation never really frees itself from the ties it unavoidably bears to the previous adaptation of the novel, entitled *Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory* (Mel Stuart, 1971), because the lack of coherence between the constructed author and the constructed audience leaves a great deal of negative space which seems to be filled, at least in the press and viewer responses to the film, with references to this earlier adaptation. In this way, the 'marriage' of Dahl and Burton does not seem to successfully exclude the intrusion of

[5]King, *New Hollywood Cinema An Introduction*, p111

[6]Falconer, *The Crossover Novel: Contemporary Children's Fiction and Its Adult Readership*, p11

either Mel Stuart or Gene Wilder's Willy Wonka, no matter how strongly it is emphasised by the key figures of the filmmaking process in the press discourses.

As with the previous chapter I am primarily looking at discussions in the popular press as well as in magazines. I also refer to the late Dahl's autobiographies, Burton's quasi autobiography (co authored with Mark Salisbury), and biographies and journal articles surrounding Dahl, Burton and their work. This gives insight into how these authors themselves have been represented (and presented themselves), and sheds light on how these representations are negotiated and utilised in the discussions surrounding the film. I then look to the press material surrounding *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,* as well as other Burton films, to examine not only how authorship is constructed, but also the role that intertextuality plays in negotiating these constructions. Finally I look to the ways that the audience is (or is not) addressed and imagined, and consider the impact that a lack of coherence in audience construction has on the reception of the film. I argue that, unlike the clearly problematic authorship statuses of Rowling and Columbus in the marketing of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, there is very little, if any, conflict between the authorship status of Dahl and Burton because they are depicted as very similar in their personalities and their outlooks on life. In this way, Burton is depicted as a man who can bring Dahl's vision and sensibility to the screen because it is so similar to his own. Both Dahl and Burton are, for instance, presented as outsiders who question authority. They are also, as the press material suggests, not afraid of probing the darker side of life and humanity in their work, and have distinctively recognisable styles. Perhaps because of this apparently harmonious relationship there is little to no mention of other filmmaking personnel (such as the scriptwriter or the producer) in the press material for the film. This is at odds with the discussions surrounding *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* which focused on a wider range of the filmmaking team.

Here, however, it would seem that the combination of Burton and Dahl is deemed to be enough to draw potential viewers in - viewers which are vaguely imagined as (paradoxically), a group of outsiders, a set of people that are happy to exist on the fringes of society and who identify with the 'strangeness' of both Burton and Dahl. However, even this construction is not fully realised in the press material, and neither does the press material

extensively discuss - unlike the other two case studies studied here - the child performers in the film. Rather, audience construction seems to come into play implicitly through the intertextual relationships of this film to other Burton films, as well as the press responses which compare Burton's adaptation to *Willy Wonka* in relation to how 'dark' either of them is or is not (here, as we will see, there is no consensus). The notion of the 'outsider,' however, does not ultimately seem to bode well in regards to maximising audience potential - particularly when the notion of childhood itself is at stake due to the inability of the marketing discourses to resonate with wider cultural constructions of childhood. This might, at least in part, be responsible for the fact that this film was considerably less successful at the box office than the other two case studies considered here.[7]

Roald Dahl and Perceptions of Authorship

> An autobiography is a book a person writes about his own life and it is usually full of all sorts of boring details. This is not an autobiography. I [Dahl] would never write a history of myself. On the other hand, throughout my young days at school and just afterwards a number of things happened to me that I have never forgotten...Some are funny. Some are painful. Some are unpleasant...All are true.[8]
>
> The "real" Roald Dahl was clearly a very difficult man who was not, to put it mildly, universally loved...both man and work, considered separately, have some unappealing features...[however] they were usurped by a complex phenomenon that included both but is unlike either. And it is this charismatic presence which children recognise as a much loved entertainer, truthteller and ally.[9]

As I have argued in the previous chapter, the stories surrounding J.K Rowling have reached legendary status, having been told and re-told through a

[7] According to www.boxofficemojo.com, *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* has a worldwide lifetime gross of $474,968,763 whereas *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* stands at $974,755,371 and *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* at $745,013,115.

[8] Dahl, *Boy*, p7

[9] Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p285

complex network of press, TV, academic articles and biographical books. At the same time, they are very much rooted in fairy tales and familiar plot archetypes (of which rags to riches is probably the most prominent). Rowling has not released any autobiographical writing, and, whilst the reasons for this are unknown, one might suspect that it is because she would have to confront the hyperbolic representation of her persona that is so culturally prevalent. In contrast to this, Roald Dahl has released two autobiographies entitled *Boy*[10] and *Going Solo*.[11] These works were, reportedly, described by Quentin Blake as 'hybrids of true autobiography, recollections and his own imagination [because Dahl] would always take a story in a direction that made it more interesting than in a way that made it more accurate.'[12] Dahl has also written an autobiographical essay entitled "Lucky Break: How I Became a Writer"[13] which appeared in a collection of Dahl's short stories. All of these autobiographical materials give an impression of a person who has always mistrusted authority and who, fundamentally, does not seem to 'fit in' (or even desire to fit in) with a world that he sees in many ways as cruel and absurd.

Boy, for instance, charts Dahl's early life with a particular focus on his school experiences which were often violent (there is a great deal of focus on corporal punishment). This, for Dahl, led to a sense of disillusionment which centred particularly around the fact that older boys (as well as teachers) were allowed to physically punish and harm young boys. Dahl also provides the reader with insight into the impact that the death of his sister (who died when she was seven and Dahl was three) and his father (who died shortly after the death of his sister) had on him and the rest of his family. He also, in only one sentence, tells the reader in a very matter of fact way about the death of his own daughter, Olivia, when she was seven years old. Because of the telling of these experiences and tragedies, a sense of sadness and loss permeates the book even though Dahl does not really reflect on these events. Thus Dahl does not shy away from presenting the difficult issues he has faced, but he is also clearly unwilling or unable to go into detail about his thoughts and feelings at these times.

According to Linda Anderson in her book *Autobiography*, for early critics

[10] *Dahl, Boy*
[11] Dahl, *Going Solo*
[12] Sturrock/Blake quoted in , *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*, p537
[13] Dahl, *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Six More*

autobiographical works were '...seen as providing proof of the validity and importance of a certain conception of authorship: authors who have authority over their own texts and whose writings can be read as forms of direct address to themselves.'[14] Viewed in this context, Dahl's refusal/inability to discuss the most traumatic events of his life is even more telling because it suggests that there are elements of his life that he cannot speak about to anyone (including himself). This points to underlying issues that become important in the discussions surrounding *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,* and which also raise themselves in the film narrative (as we will discuss in more depth later), in regards to the Burton added backstory of Willy Wonka's absent (and arguably abusive) father.

There is, however, a directness about the way Dahl portrays and recounts these life events that indicates he believes the children he is writing for are also able to confront these issues and consider their own subject positioning in relationship to both himself and the traumatic events he experienced. There are, for instance, several moments when Dahl explicitly asks the reader to consider how they would have felt if they were faced with the same circumstances that he found himself in. This, plus the matter of fact telling of Dahl's early life, works to authenticate the writing and give it the sense of being 'true.' The construction of the reader as emotionally and psychologically mature enough to understand and deal with the darker side of life might have, perhaps, been carried over to the promotion of the adaptation. However, this construction does not sit well with the notion of the 'angsty outsider' (which is, arguably, tinged with a sense of emotional immaturity) that is integral to the construction of Burton's fans[15] in a way that is clearly more aligned with Henry Jenkins' accounts of adult fans than it is the nostalgic representation of *Harry Potter* fans. This might explain why the construction of the audience as 'outsiders' is never fully realised in the press material.

Dahl's recounting of his adult life carries on themes of the outsider with a mistrust for authority. *Going Solo* begins where *Boy* finishes and discusses his travels with the Shell Oil company and the experiences he had as a fighter pilot in WW2, including an account of when he was nearly killed after following a careless, rushed order from a superior officer. "Lucky Break"

[14] Anderson, *Autobiography*, p3
[15] Woods, *Tim Burton: A Child's Garden of Nightmares*

continues this story and includes information about Dahl's intelligence work in America for the latter part of the war and how he also, at that time, began writing about his war experiences for adults in the form of short stories. In his questioning of authority in these works (whether that be school masters, older boys or superior officers in the war) there is again the pervading sense that he is an outsider. This is further emphasised in discussions regarding the impact of Dahl's upbringing as the Welsh born son of Norwegian parents, who was brought up in Wales and educated in England. Burton, similarly, has a somewhat ambiguous national identity having been born in the U.S and settled to live in the U.K.

In his article "And Children Swarmed to Him Like Settlers. He Became a Land. The Outrageous Success of Roald Dahl"[16] Peter Hollindale says:

> Most [biographical] information...is marketed in biographical or autobiographical work for adult readers. Children are not expected to be interested in it. Dahl, by contrast, has a public biography for children, in which certain edited highlights have quasi-mythic status. He himself is the "Big Friendly Giant" because children know a great deal more about him than they do about most authors, and the "life" that they know hovers uncertainly between reality and invention. There is an unusual reciprocity between fiction and fiction-maker: pleasure in Dahl's books arouses children's interest in his life, while the life itself (eventful enough in itself, but selectively presented and opportunistically fictionalised) creates yet more interest in the stories...[17]

By Hollindale's analysis, the autobiographical works of Dahl are situated somewhere between Dahl himself and the books he has written - they are marketed as non-fiction, but their status in 'truth' is arguable. As such, these autobiographical works highlight the fluidity between author, autobiography and fiction - a fluidity that is clearly utilised in the marketing of the adaptation in relation to both Dahl and Burton, even if the 'children' in question are removed from the equation. Linda Anderson argues that works of '..autobiography [get] drawn seamlessly into supporting the beliefs of an

[16]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*
[17]Ibid., p277

essentialist or Romantic notion of selfhood'[18] and depend upon the reader being able to 'reconstruct' the life of the writer.[19] In the marketing of this adaptation, however, it is not so much about whether potential audiences can reconstruct Dahl's life, but how narrative strands of Dahl's life can be integrated into those relating to Burton as well as, as we shall discuss later, the film and its characters. Furthermore, what is also clear is that Dahl was, in his autobiographies, presenting himself in a way that he believed child readers would be able to understand and identify with; and given the significance of the reader to Dahl (evidenced in part through the direct address to his imagined readers), it is again worth questioning why this very coherent construction of the mature and perceptive child reader could not be, or was not, utilised in the promotion of the adaptation.

Thus Dahl's autobiographical work builds up a picture of the author which, when coupled with the stories and characters of his fictional work, becomes larger than the very carefully selected series of life events that Dahl presents us with. It also brings the child reader into a position of 'knowing' the author, which in itself invites a sense of intimacy between the child reader and the author that, as mentioned, was not capitalised on in the promotion of the adaptation. This approach to children's authorship in regards to autobiography, Hollindale argues, is unique to Dahl. He says that '[*Boy* and *Going Solo*] lie at the centre of Dahl's reinvention of children's authorship, as junction points between the books and the persona which collectively comprise the Dahl phenomenon.'[20] Of course, whilst this may be an unusual/unique case in regards to children's authorship, the engineering of one's own image through autobiography (whether presented in book form or through other artistic media) is not uncommon.[21] The limit of Dahl's representations of himself, however, is further evidenced through an examination of the biographical work surrounding him. Chris Powling, for instance, produced two biographies aimed at children of different age ranges.[22] Hollindale says of these that '[they are both]...conspicuously free of criticism and reinforce both the general personality cult of Dahl and the

[18]Anderson, *Autobiography*, p4
[19]Ibid., p3
[20]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p282
[21]Curnutt/See Kirk Carnutt's discussion of Getrude Stein for a particularly interesting case of this in, *Journal of Modern Literature 23 [1999]*
[22]Powling, *Roald Dahl Start Up Engligh Biographies*; Powling, *Roald Dahl*

particular episodes on which it mainly rests...'[23] By free of criticism, one assumes he is referring to the fact that this biography is devoid of discussions about the more controversial aspects to Dahl's life, books and personality, which it does not detail. This is in itself, of course, telling in regards to the traditional assumptions about the child reader and what they should or should not be subjected to.

Donald Sturrock,[24] Jeremy Treglown[25] and Mark I West,[26] on the other hand, discuss Dahl's life and its relationship to his work for older readers and are not 'free of criticism.' They do however, acknowledge as well as play a part in the 'personality cult' of Dahl. The blurb to Treglown's book Roald Dahl, for instance, begins with:

> Misogynist, anti-semite, misanthrope - Roald Dahl was reported to be all of these, as well as war hero, devoted father and philanthropist...to some, Dahl was the dashing husband of Patricia Neal and loving family man. To others, he was a ruthless, egotistical bully. And to millions worldwide, Dahl was the...beloved scrumdiddlyumptious storyteller of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*...Treglown...has crafted a...portrait of a complex man, "the perfect antidote to Dahl's own triumph at image making" (*New York Times Book Review*)[27]

Similarly, reviews printed on the front of the book, which also contains a photograph of the author smoking a cigar, state that the biography 'Probes the dark and volatile nature of this postmodern Pied Piper whose macabre tales bewitched millions of children and their parents.'[28] Likewise, the blurb to Donald Sturrock's book says 'the man behind the mesmerising stories...has remained an enigma and his public persona was often controversial.'[29] It also, unsurprisingly, mentions his life as a fighter pilot and the family tragedies that Dahl experienced. It then goes on to say that the biography is an 'intimate portrait of an intensely private man hindered by physical pain and haunted by family tragedy'.[30] The seeds for these types of

[23]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p277
[24]Sturrock, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*
[25]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*
[26]West, *Roald Dahl*
[27]Treglown/Blurb for, *Roald Dahl*, with quotes from the New York Times Book Revire
[28]Treglown/Cover of, *Roald Dahl*, with quotes from Kirkus Reviews
[29]Sturrock/blurb for, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*
[30]Sturrock/blurb for, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*

discourses can be clearly seen in Dahl's autobiographies; however the biographies aimed at adult readers also discuss elements of Dahl's life which are perhaps not deemed suitable for child readers, such as details about his marital infidelity. Academic writing about Dahl does, however (unlike academic material surrounding Rowling), reflect on this. For instance Hollindale, in his discussion of Dahl's autobiographical work and his relationship with his child readers, says that:

> Certain incidents in Dahl's life...form part of a composite myth for children, [however] Dahl may have fallen into a trap of his own vigorous making and produced a self-created life which is almost indistinguishable from story. However...Young readers have been invited with great skill...to enjoy his life as an exciting story but retain a consciousness of factuality which makes it different. In life, the Dahl of biography for children was a heroic magician, and his stories become part of a more general magic. Moreover, his magic was born from suffering and pain, and represents a positive, imaginative, improvisatory, defiant response to it...'[31]

In Hollindale's analysis there seems to be an effort to negotiate these contradictory readings of Dahl - which are in many ways weighing up the 'light' and the 'dark' aspects of him - and 'test' them out against some (unverifiable) 'truth.' However it is the multifaceted and incoherent personality and history of Dahl that enables him, in discussions surrounding the adaptation, to be so easily related to both Burton and the characters of the story (in particular, as we will discuss later, Willy Wonka). This constant negotiation of the 'light' and 'dark' aspects of Dahl also becomes very important in regards to how he is related to Burton in the marketing and press material and, importantly, whether Burton's adaptation is either 'darker' or 'lighter/sweeter' than Stuart's 1971 adaptation. Moreover, in the exposure of the 'darker' events in Dahl's life in the biographical work aimed at children, the child readers are not imagined to be naive innocent creatures. Rather, they are imagined in a way which is neither wholly adult-like or nor wholly child-like, and this seems to be one of the main reasons that Dahl is believed to be, by critics such as Hollindale, so popular with children.

However, despite the success of this level of reader address in regards to

[31]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p277

the books, the promotion of and discussions about Burton's film did/could not so easily situate the child viewer in this space between childhood and adulthood. Yet at the same time, however, it could not situate the imagined viewer at either side of this binary either, leaving an uncomfortable space in place of what, in the *Harry Potter* example, is so easily taken care of by the nostalgic, culturally familiar notions of children and childhood associated with innocence and play. This, as we will discuss further on, is directly linked to how the notion of authorship is managed in regards to the film, for it would seem that while the notion of authorship is so significant here that there is very little room to explicitly consider/address an imagined audience at all, the addition of Burton into the mix seems to mean that the emotionally mature reader construction of Dahl's work does not translate. This perhaps might be because the emotional immaturity inherent in so many of Burton's characters[32] which is, by extension, arguably part of the Burton persona, contradicts this maturity. And/or, it might well be that in the arena of mass market cinema, any child audience construction that sits outside of those nostalgic archetypes of children and child audiences is not deemed, by the film marketers, to be something that will resonate with the potential viewing public in general and therefore at odds with the aim of maximising audience figures.

However, even though the marketing material struggles in regards to imagining its audience, it does not, as mentioned, struggle with its negotiation of authorship, and this is largely because the persona surrounding Dahl is so well established. This, as I have stated, was all the more successful because of the way that it gelled with Tim Burton's persona, which is totally at odds with the lack of cohesion between the portrayal of Rowling and Columbus in *Harry Potter*. Dahl is depicted as going his own way, regardless of the authority figures around him. Burton has a very similar reputation with, perhaps, the addition of a more pronounced discomfort with society in general.

Tim Burton as Author/Auteur

Recently, scholars such as James Naremore and Timothy Corrigan have argued that auteurs can and do avoid the restrictions of fidelity discourses

[32]Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*, p30

in their adaptations because faithfulness to their own authorial identities is seen as much more important, putting an emphasis on the performative nature of adaptation.[33] The question about whether Burton is an auteur or not has been discussed in academic work on the director. In her book *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*, for instance, Helena Bassil-Morozow opens the introduction by stating that Burton is not an auteur. Despite this, however, she argues that he is still a creative, individual and 'visionary' director. She says:

> If the benchmark for true artistic creativity is purity of imagination, a certain naivety of outlook, freshness of vision and a stubborn faith in one's own work, then Burton passes the [auteur] test with top grades...[however] he has never mastered some of the indispensable principles of cinematic auterism: the depth and complexity of subjects, the refinement and originality of cinematic movement or the stringent control over the narrative. [34]

It is not the purpose of this chapter, however, to make the case for Burton being (or not) an auteur figure. Instead, I look towards the discussions surrounding Burton as they appear in the press and marketing discourses for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (discussions which very clearly posit Burton as an auteur like figure) as well as writing about Burton more generally. The idea of Burton as a 'visionary', for instance, appears numerous times in Mark Salisbury's book *Burton on Burton*. The blurb, for instance, begins 'Tim Burton is one of the great modern-day visionaries of cinema, a director who has fabricated his own deliciously nightmarish universe in movies...'[35] Similarly, in the introduction, he says '...Tim Burton has transformed from being a visionary director with the Midas touch to becoming an identifiable brand; the term "Burtonesque" being ascribed to any filmmaker whose work is dark, edgy or quirky, or a combination thereof.'[36]

Thus Burton is depicted as a director who is able at once to make popular films that are also unique in terms of their stylisation, and it the stylisation that seems to be key with both Bassil-Morozow and Salisbury in terms of what sets him apart from other directors. Both also acknowledge the

[33]Cobb, *Film Authorship and Adaptation*, p107
[34]Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*, p1
[35]Salisbury/back cover blurb of, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*
[36]Ibid., pxviii

continuity of theme in Burton's work - that of being an emotionally immature ('childish') outsider. Bassill-Morozow's book sets out to examine the outsider in the variety of guises that he takes in Burton's films (the child, monster, superhero, genius and maniac) and the relationship these outsiders have with the 'monstrous society'[37] that they find themselves in. Likewise, Salisbury says:

> Thematically...[*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is] not dissimilar to what I found in *Batman*, or *Edward Scissorhands*, or *Ed Wood*. It has to do with a character who is semi-anti-social, has difficulty communicating or relating, slightly out of touch, living in his own head, rooted in early family problems - all of those things I could relate to in the Wonka character.[38]

In Burton's creation of Wonka's back story, whereby Wonka's eccentricities and love of sweets is attributed to a dysfunctional relationship with his dentist father, he further emphasises and justifies Wonka's alienation. Furthermore, within the narrative Wonka's father appears to be a stand in for society itself because he, like the society of the bulk of Burton's films, imposes rules on Wonka that are damaging to him and cause him to feel mis-understood and alone. In this, links to Burton's biography are clear as he himself is also quite open about the estrangement between himself and his parents.[39] Other reviews of the film also draw on this personal link between Burton and his films, A *Sight and Sound* review of the film by Ryan Gilbey, for instance, says:

> it is in the flashbacks that Burton forcefully imposes his personality, not only because these scenes didn't originate with Dahl, but also because they revisit the parental tensions present in *Batman*...*Edward Scissorhands*...and *Big Fish*.[40]

Thus here it is clear that Burton, in his creation of Wonka's father, who did not appear in Dahl's novel, is prepared to risk accusations of infidelity in order to include/emphasise his own thematic interests in his adaptation. Burton's personal links with the films he makes and, more specifically, the

[37]Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*
[38]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p227
[39]Ibid.
[40]Gilbey, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p58

characters he creates, are also overtly discussed by Johnny Depp in his introduction to Mark Salisbury's 2006 book. Depp, who has starred in several of Burton's films and who is allegedly a close friend of his (and as we shall see, a firm supporter of Burton and Dahl's 'marriage'), focuses in on Burton's relationship with his Edward Scissorhands character. He says:

> the hands - the way he [Burton] waves them around...nervous tapping on the table...stilted speech...eyes wide and glaring out of nowhere, curious, eyes that have seen much but still devour all. This hypersensitive madman is Edward Scissorhands...There's always been something luminous in [Tim Burton's] troubled/sad/weary peepers...[41]

This again reinforces his assertions about Burton's relationship to his characters at the same time as giving Burton the stamp of the self expressive artist He says '...it's not enough to call him a film-maker. The rare title of "genius" is a better fit...'[42] He also further emphasises Burton's perceived loner approach to filmmaking when he discusses the way that Burton 'head[butted] the studio's wishes, hopes and dreams for a big star [in Edward Scissorhands]'[43] and cast Depp. Burton's reputation for going against studio wishes, as well as the recurrent themes in his films that mean that, when it came to the marketing of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, his persona was easily integrated with Dahl's.

Fidelity and the 'Marriage' of Authorship

> The idea of Burton tackling Dahl's world was a marriage made in heaven - two idiosyncratic, creative minds with a similarly dark and macabre attitude to children...[44]
>
> Burton...cleverly serves up an authentic Dahlian gloop, mixing a dash of sentimentality with a quart of satirical grossout...[45]

Tim Burton's adaptation of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was not the first film adaptation of the text - it was, as mentioned, adapted for film 1971

[41] Salisbury/Johnny Depp quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pp px-pxiv
[42] Ibid., pxii
[43] Ibid., pxi
[44] Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pp226-227
[45] *American Lyric Theatre: New Operas for New Audiences. The Golden Ticket*

by director Mel Stuart, with Dahl himself as the screenwriter. Whilst this is the only other film adaptation, there have also been radio adaptations - BBC Radio 4, the first, aired on 6th February 1983, and the second aired on 7th December 1997.[46] The book was also a regular on the BBC's *Jackanory* storytelling programme, and was read by actors Bernard Cribbins (in 1968), Elaine Stritch (recorded in 1975 aired until 1981), Michael Palin (in 1986), and Sylvester McCoy (recorded in 1991 and also aired in 1992).[47] More recently, the book has (since the Burton film), been adapted into a West End stage play[48] and an opera entitled *The Golden Ticket*. The soundtrack to *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* has also been re-worked and re-recorded by experimental rock band Primus (who at the time of writing in June 2015 are currently undertaking a tour entitled *Primus and the Chocolate Factory*[49] that has been ongoing for at least six months in a variety of countries across the globe). I discuss these post Burton adaptations in more detail later. However for the purposes of the current discussion, which examines how the marketing of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* discusses previous adaptations (or rather adaptation, given that the radio plays are rarely, if ever, mentioned), it is important to look at discussions regarding *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* in more depth.

By Johnny Depp's admission, *Willy Wonka* was '...for any kid who grew up in the 70s or 80s...an annual event.'[50] However in order to market Burton's film, the original version, despite Dahl's input into it with regards to screenwriting, is repeatedly disavowed as being a faithful adaptation. This is touched upon by Mark Salisbury in his *Premiere* article 'Confections of a Dangerous Mind' where he states that 'Although the film [Willy Wonka] is considered by many to be a kids' classic, Burton doesn't share that feeling; neither did the author, according to his widow Felicity (known as Liccy) Dahl.'[51] This clearly works to suggest that, despite Dahl's involvement, the original film was not a 'faithful' adaptation and as such the opportunity for an adaptation that Dahl himself would have been happy with is left open for Burton. That Dahl 'hated' the film seems to have worked its way into pop-

[46] *BBC Radio Times Database*
[47] Ibid.
[48] *Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: The New Musical*
[49] *Primus and the Chocolate Factory Official Webpage*
[50] Salisbury/Johnny Depp quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxv
[51] Salisbury, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p96

ular discourse on the topic. A *Sight and Sound* review reads, for instance, that 'By all accounts Dahl hated the 1971 film version of his book starring Gene Wilder'[52] whilst Lucy Mangan, in her much later review of the London stage play,[53] asserts that 'Dahl hated the 1971 film' without demonstrating any need to justify or evidence her statement.[54]

Burton himself is also very forthcoming with his thoughts on the first film. In Mark Salisbury's book, for instance, he is quoted as saying:

> I wasn't really a fan of the first film, it didn't capture me the way it's captured a lot of people - that's the best way I can say it. It's a strange movie; it has the oddest tone. I found it quite disturbing...I wonder if people who have voted it an "all time classic" have watched it recently.[55]

In an *Independent* review, however, Burton is quoted as making the somewhat contradictory statement 'I don't want to crush people's childhood dreams...but the original film is sappy.'[56] This binary, between the film being 'too sappy' and 'too dark' also comes up (as I discuss shortly) in the press and marketing material for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and there seems to no agreement on which it is, highlighting the highly subjective nature of comparisons of this sort. Furthermore, in this we can see a hint of the kind of personal attachment filmmakers and critics have to films and novels that we will explore in greater depth in the following chapter.

Burton does, however, relate the 'dark' element of the book to Dahl's take on children and childhood. Thus he, in the aforementioned *Independent* review, goes on to say that 'I responded to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* because it respected the fact that children can be adults. It was one of the first times you had children's literature that was a bit more sophisticated and dealt with darker issues and feelings.'[57] On the surface, this gels with Dahl's approach to child readers in that the way he addressed them constructed then as emotionally able to understand and relate to the darker themes he

[52]Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p24

[53]This article is again questionning the validity of past adaptations, where Mangan asserts that 'Previous adaptations lacked the bite the Roald Dahl put into his writing' and asks whether 'this new version with catch Dahl at his bleakest'.

[54]Mangan, *The Guardian 20th [2013]*

[55]Salisbury/Tim Burton quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p224

[56]Jury/Burton quoted in, *Independent 2005*

[57]Jury/Burton quoted in, *Independent 2005*

wrote about. However Burton, here, explicitly suggests that children who successfully dealt with darker themes are, somehow, choosing to be 'adults.' This suggests a binary which is not inherent in Dahl's approach, for he did not define childhood through its otherness to adulthood. Rather, as I have argued, his matter-of-fact telling of traumatic events worked to break down that binary at least in regards to himself and his readers.

Despite this, the sense that Burton understands children (just like Dahl), as well as Dahl himself, is evident in the press material. In a *Cinefantastique* article, for instance, he says: 'One of the interesting aspects of the book is that it's so vivid in mood and feeling and so specific, yet it still leaves room for interpretation [and]...your own imagination...some adults forget what it was like to be a kid. Roald didn't.'[58] This 'darkness' associated with what it's 'really' like to be a child is one of the points picked up on by reviewers of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* when comparing it to *Willy Wonka*. In a *Guardian* review, for instance, the author says 'This is quite a scary account of the Dahl story - though no scarier, arguably, than strict fidelity to the great man requires - and much darker than the 1971 Gene Wilder version.'[59] Likewise, in an *Empire* review the author states that '...where the 1971 Gene Wilder vehicle left a feeling of emptiness after a brief saccharine high, Tim Burton's vision of Roald Dahl's fable of cavities and calamities has the same rich sweetness shot through with the acidic wit that's kept kids turning the novels and ruining their appetites for 40 years.'[60]

It is of course open to wonder whether Dahl would have agreed with these assertions, for even if he did 'hate' the *Willy Wonka* film there are certainly 'darker' elements in that version that do not appear in Burton's adaptation, such as, for instance, the Slugworth character whose job it is to tempt and corrupt the children and who bears a striking resemblance to the childcatcher character that Dahl created as he was writing the screenplay for *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Ken Hughes, 1968)[61] - a character who Donald Sturrock calls '...Willy Wonka's evil doppelgänger.'[62] Furthermore Wilder himself also, arguably, plays a 'darker' Wonka in that his character is shrouded in a mystery that is absent in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* due to Wonka's

[58]Gross/Burton quoted in, *Cinefantastique 37 [2005]*, pp24-25
[59]*American Lyric Theatre: New Operas for New Audiences. The Golden Ticket*
[60]Richards, *Empire 2005*
[61]Sturrock, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*, p436
[62]Ibid.

back story. These textual observations do not seem to make it into the press material, however, and critics and Burton alike provide little if no evidence of their assertions regarding the level of 'darkness' in these two adaptations. That Dahl is not alive to answer these points is in itself used to the advantage of the filmmakers in the promotion of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.* In the aforementioned *Cinefantastique* article, for instance, the author quotes the producer of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* as saying:

> I never thought *Willy Wonka* lived up to the potential of the book...When Tim told me he had been approached...by Warner Bros. to make the picture... I just thought he was the perfect guy to go back to Roald Dahl and do many of the things that they didn't do and do it with the same tone Dahl had,'[63]

This, of course, works to link Dahl and Burton in an allegiance which will guarantee the authenticity of *Charlie* over *Willy Wonka* - an allegiance that Dahl (this time around) cannot deny or problematise. Other comparisons between the two films are not hard to come by, and they (almost) always privilege Burton's film over Mel Stuart's.[64] An *Independent* review for instance, states that 'Burton blows that [the 1971 Willy Wonka film] out of the water,'[65] whilst a *Sight and Sound* review states that 'The director plays it straighter than the 1971 film version, which resembled a bad trip.'[66] Sukhdev Sandhu, in a *Daily Telegraph* review, plays with these ideas when he says 'Apparently the last version, made in 1971 with Gene Wilder as Willy Wonka, was an abomination. Dahl himself hated it, the songs and general mood were too sickly-sweet ... funny: most children I know who have watched it rather enjoyed it.'[67] These quotes again not only highlight the contradictory responses that critics have in regards to both film versions, but they also demonstrate that these responses are both highly impressionistic and subjective. Sandhu's in particular works to undercut Burton's ability to know what children really want (ie. a darker film as opposed to something that is 'sickly-sweet'); however, it still reinforces the

[63]Gross/Richard Zanuck, producer of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, quoted in, *Cinefantastique 37 [2005]*

[64]This, however, is not the case in many IMDB viewer reviews, which privilege the earlier film. This clearly brings into question the success of this marketing tactic.

[65]Hanks, *Independent Review 2005*, p6

[66]Gilbey, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*

[67]Sandhu, *Daily Telegraph 2005*, p19

idea that Burton's film is darker than Stuart's, and it is this darkness that, in the bulk of the marketing material, binds Burton and Dahl together and ensures that their authorship status with regards to the film is depicted as equal. This is touched upon in an *Independent* review where the author Louise Jury states that:

> Burton was, of course, an intriguing prospect. With a back catalogue of dark and offbeat movies...he seemed closer in spirit to Roald Dahl than Mel Stuart was three decades ago. Johnny Depp described Tim Burton and Dahl as a "match made in heaven"[68]

Here we can see an allusion to love/marriage in relation to Dahl and Burton, however of course we must not forget that one half of this 'marriage' is deceased (in itself the central theme to Burton's *Corpse Bride*[69] which was released in the same year as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*). In this 'marriage,' Burton's relationship with Depp - who has worked closely with Burton throughout his career since he starred in *Scissorhands* - is sidelined, and instead Burton becomes the person that, through his adaptation, can keep Dahl's literature and sensibility alive.

The discourses surrounding the ideal matching of Burton and Dahl are common amongst the press material surrounding the adaptation. In a *Sight and Sound* article, for instance, Roger Clarke states that 'The miracle of the movie...is that Burton has managed a synthesis of his own geek-boy gothicism with Dahl's patrician qualities of skepticism and disdain.'[70] He then argues that Burton was able to elaborate on the story of Charlie in a faithful and consistent way when he says 'In many ways Burton has brought more of Dahl to the story than Dahl himself put in.'[71] As further 'proof' about the suitability of Burton for a Dahl novel, Clarke sums up his take on the press readings and also quotes Felicity Dahl (who is as of 2015 one of two managing directors of *The Roald Dahl Literary Estate Ltd*, along with Dahl's grandson Luke Kelly).[72] He says:

> Film journalists are saying that Tim Burton is a natural fit for

[68] Jury, *Independent 2005*
[69] *Tim Burton, The Corpse Bride*
[70] Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p22
[71] Ibid., p25
[72]

> a Roald Dahl adaptation. Even Dahl's widow Felicity...has gushed "I wish Roald was here to work on it with Tim, because they would have been so brilliant together"[73]

As we will see in the following chapter on *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, where Lewis's stepson puts his seal of approval on director Andrew Adamson, this case is not alone in using a surviving family member to validate the director of an adaptation. Given this quote, Felicity is clearly not perceptibly troubled by the significance that Burton's 'close' links to Dahl are given in the press and marketing material. However the word 'even' which comes before 'Dahl's widow...' somehow suggests that she should, perhaps, be either troubled by or in disagreement with it. That *even* she is approving of the match in itself lends further validation to the combination of Burton and Dahl (which, one suspects, does not do her any harm financially). It is interesting when read in the context of Treglown's biography of Dahl, where he states that after Dahl's marriage to Felicity (who had a considerable '...strength of will...'),[74] the couple invited millions of 'outsiders [to look in via] magazine features, television programmes, and books [in order to present their new marriage] as having supplanted everything that went before it.'[75] In line with this the couple also released a book entitled *Memories with Food at Gypsy House*[76] which began with a family tree that included the children the couple had had in previous marriages, but did not include Dahl's ex wife nor Felicity's ex husband.[77] These stories, along with the discussion of Felicity's positive influence on Dahl in terms of his creativity, work to give her authority in regards to understanding Dahl and his work - an authority which is clearly exploited in the marketing material that, in the *Sight and Sound* quote above (for instance), allude to her generosity in regards to affirming the 'relationship' between Dahl and Burton. They also allude to a possessiveness of Dahl which suggests that even though Dahl is no longer alive, his work and legacy is in safe hands with his widow.

Other journalists, for instance Robert Hanks in an *Independent Review*, look to the casting of the film for proof that Burton is at one with Dahl's

[73]Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p22
[74]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, p224
[75]Ibid.
[76]*Roald Dahl, Memories with Food at Gypsy house*
[77]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, p224

sensibility. He says '...it is clear that Burton knows exactly what Dahl had in mind...the impression that Burton is essentially in harmony with Dahl is confirmed as...the characters troop on...he has cast actors notable for physical extremity...'[78] This reference to the idea that Burton has insight into Dahl's imagination and 'knows' what he had in mind visually raises the question about the impact of Quentin Blake, (Dahl's most prolific illustrator) on the book. Dahl did not meet Blake for some years after *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* had been written. Originally the publishers has suggested an illustrator named Joseph Schindelman to Dahl, however Dahl '...suggested they try Maurice Sendak [author and illustrator of *Where the Wild Things Are*] instead.'[79] Treglown asserts that 'His [Sendak's] work had much in common with Dahl's – particularly its roots in North European traditions and its keen empathy with the crueler sides of a child's imagination.'[80] Sendak, however, allegedly wanted a cut or royalties rather than a straight fee and Dahl was not prepared to do this so the collaboration never came to pass. As he was Dahl's first choice for illustrator there must have been something in Sendak's illustrations that resonated with Dahl, and this arguably offers some evidence for what Dahl himself imagined in regards to the style of illustrations. However whilst Sendak is very different from Blake in terms of his style (his drawings are very full of detail and colour in regards to both characters and their backgrounds) he is also very far from Burton's drawing style, which is much more in line with Blake's in that they are very minimal and full of characters with exaggerated and oversized features (Sendak's are much more anatomically realistic).

Regardless of the fact that Blake was not Dahl's first choice their collaboration lasted from the mid 1970s to when Dahl died.[81] Treglown states that by the time Dahl met Blake in the 1970s, he had '...already gone through more artists than he had written children's books'[82] and asserts that Blake is a '...gentle, reflective man, in many ways Dahl's antithesis.'[83] As the reports go, Blake also wanted a cut of royalties, and Dahl reluctantly agreed on a third of the royalties to be paid to him. This financial agreement led

[78]Hanks, *Independent Review 2005*, p6
[79]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, p224
[80]Ibid., p152
[81]Ibid.
[82]Ibid., p225
[83]Ibid., p226

Dahl to continue to consider other illustrators even though 'Despite [Dahl's] restlessness, it was clear to most readers that...Blake's amiable drawings were an excellent complement to his writing.'[84] The biography then goes on to describe a variety of Dahl's books and the positive impact that Blake's drawings had upon them (although it does not mention when Blake illustrated *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* - a book that Dahl had written before he had met Blake). Treglown's biography, however, does not mention any kind of friendship with Blake; however, there is evidence of a friendship between them in Sturrock's biography of Dahl which reads 'Quentin Blake sensed that Liccy brought Roald a kind of new "equilibrium" because she was not a "competing ego"'[85]This suggests that Blake was indeed privy to the private goings on in Dahl's life. He goes on to say that '...there was never any animosity between them [Blake and Dahl]' because Blake's humour meant that he did not allow himself to be 'wound up' by the author.[86] It is, perhaps, because their collaboration/friendship was without the friction associated with Dahl's relationships with most of his friends, family and colleagues that Blake receives little attention, aside from affirmations of his suitability to Dahl's work, in these biographies.

Despite the centrality of Blake in Dahl's career, I could find no mention of Quentin Blake in any of the press discourses surrounding the film and this is, I would imagine, likely to be because the very free, whimsical illustration style is rather at odds with Burton's hard lined, bold, and colourful live action filming style (which in itself differs from his animation/illustration style which contains little colour) and because, most significantly, there is very little room for anyone else to receive any credit for influencing Burton's visualisation of the film. This absence of Blake in the press material is, however, intriguing in the context of a quote by Richard Zanick, the producer of the film. As quoted in a *Screen International* article, he says 'We have gone right back to how Dahl designed the book.'[87] The use of the term 'designed' suggests a link to the visual aspects of the story, which were, in the book, not Dahl's (although allegedly Dahl did at times discuss details of illustrations, such as the footwear of the Giant in Dahl's 1982 book *The*

[84]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, p228

[85]Sturrock, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*, pp520-521

[86]Ibid., p527

[87]Goodridge/Richard Zanuck, producer of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, quoted in, *Screen International 2004*

BFG).[88] Here, the producer is claiming authenticity whilst at the same time omitting the key element (Blake) of the source material.

Of course, Dahl was clearly happy with Blake's visual representations of his characters and stories because he used them often. However the idea of Dahl 'designing' the book seems to suggest that there was a visual aspect to the story that neither Dahl nor Blake tapped into - a visual aspect that Burton is able, through his perceived insights into Dahl's imagination, to depict on screen. At the same time, what they actually mean by the 'design' of the book is left ambiguous. As we will see in the following chapter on *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, one method of validating a director's input into an adaptation is by suggesting that they are 'filling in the gaps' left by the book author. As such, Adamson authenticates his take on the *Narnia* adaptation by suggesting that Lewis deliberately wrote a sparse novel so that readers could imagine it in their own way. In regards to the *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* adaptation, this is a much less pronounced promotional tool than we see in the following chapter. Instead, it is but one in an array of different approaches to validating Burton and Dahl's 'relationship.' In the book version of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Dahl does not overly describe scenes, thoughts or feelings in detail, rather he uses a directness and speed of delivery that is full of impressions and superlatives. This works to give the reader very quick visual cues as well as maintain a constant sense of excitement and movement. For instance, the chocolate factory is introduced as follows (italics and capitals are the Dahl's own):

> In the town itself, actually within *sight* of the house in which Charlie lived, there was an ENORMOUS CHOCOLATE FACTORY! Just imagine that! And it wasn't simply an ordinary enormous chocolate factory, either. It was the largest and most famous in the whole world! It was WONKA'S FACTORY, owned by a man called Mr Willy Wonka, the greatest inventor and maker of chocolates that there has ever been. And what a tremendous, marvelous place it was! It had huge iron gates leading into it, and a high wall surrounding it, and smoke belching from its chimneys, and strange whizzing sounds coming from deep inside it. And outside the walls, for half a mile around

[88] Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, pp237-238

> in every direction, the air was scented with the heavy smell of chocolate.[89]

This highly visceral and impressionistic writing gives enough detail to set the scene and create a certain level of excitement, but not so much that the narrative flow is interrupted. Dahl also, through both the superlatives and the explicit invite to the reader to 'imagine,' works to engage the reader in an imaginatively active way (again, as we will see in the following case study, Lewis is also deemed to do this). As such, references to Burton's 'imagination' appear frequently - albeit not as frequently in the press material surrounding the following case study where it is central. In a *New York Times* article, for instance, the author A.O Scott says that '...the source material seems to have reawakened...[Burton's] imagination, as he has found both Dahl and his [Dahl's] most famous creation to be kindred spirits.'[90] As we have seen, Rowling is often discussed as being one and the same thing as her *Harry Potter* stories, and similarly here Dahl and his novel are amalgamated into a single 'spirit.' However, instead of the notion that the author is the one and only viable source of knowledge regarding their work (like Rowling), we have the idea that Dahl found personal expression through his work, and through Burton, who is also known for his expressionistic approach, the underlying 'spirit' of the book can be understood and represented. Thus, through these press discourses Burton is amalgamated into an imagined expressive space that, according to the press material, existed solely between Dahl and his work prior to the point of Burton's inclusion.

This 'sharing' of spirit and imagination is present in other biographical material as well. For instance in *Burton on Burton*, Salisbury says:

> There was a real sense of inevitability and providence when Burton signed on to direct a new version of Roald Dahl's children's classic *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.* Two massively creative talents with a similarly malevolent wit and subversive streak.[91]

Here, the notion of collaboration is clearly implied, and again this is particularly interesting because Dahl is deceased and no actual/real collaboration

[89]Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, pp17-18
[90]Scott, *The New York Times 2005*
[91]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxx

did or could have occurred. The same author, in a *Time Out* article, says 'He [Burton] and Dahl share a...twisted imagination and a view of kids as little savages. And, like Dahl, Burton's work isn't always politically correct.'[92] Whilst in *The Art of Tim Burton* (2009) Felicity Dahl (who was credited as executive producer of Burton's film) is quoted as saying 'There's a naughtiness in Tim that's similar to Roald Dahl. A little bit of wickedness, a little bit of teasing, a subversiveness. Both of them never lost the gift of knowing what it's like to be a child - a very rare gift...'[93] Here, the highly constructed notion of the mischievous child is clearly being utilised to construct a very particular kind of adult - one that has the positively inflected 'rare gift' of being able to understand and *act like* a child. This is at odds with the construction of childhood as it appears in the following chapter on *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* where mischief is absent in the nostalgic remembering of childhoods past, and where Adamson, who channels his childhood self through his adult self, is never presented as behaving like a child. In regards to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, however, the notion of Dahl and Burton's 'shared imagination,' as well as their shared ability/desire to behave badly (like naughty children), works to further align their personality traits.

Dahl's ability to understand children and therefore successfully communicate his perspective on the world with child readers is interrogated by Hollindale who argues that

> Dahl put his own life on the table as part of the contract with his young readers, and over and above the intrinsic appeal of the stories it is the extra element of conspirational trust, the sense that Dahl is placing his adult self within the reach of the children, breaking the rules of adult-child decorum, disclosing secrets and saying the unsayable, that largely explains his enormous popularity with children and discomfiture for adults.[94]

Here, childhood and adulthood are clearly constructed as realms which one (with proper decorum) would not cross; yet this breaking down of the boundary between adulthood and childhood is taken, by Hollindale, to be a positive attribute of Dahl's. This intersubjectivity between Dahl and his readers

[92]Salisbury, *Time Out 2005*
[93]Gallo/Felicity Dahl quoted in, *The Art of Tium Burton*, p225
[94]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p277

works to make the (imagined) intersubjective relationship between Dahl and Burton all the more plausible to the point where Burton is even (supposedly) able to permeate the (deceased) author's imagination. Furthermore, in *Burton on Burton*, Salisbury argues that 'Burton remains a filmmaker whose modus operandi is based entirely on his innermost feelings.'[95] Given this, it is of course convenient that Dahl cannot voice or verify his.

This case, however, is not alone in the notion of the 'auteur' giving voice to a dead author. Timothy Corrigan, in his chapter "Film, Fidelity, Literature,"[96] which focuses on Kenneth Branagh's adaptations of Shakespearean texts, argues that 'With *auteurs*, viewers find the signature needed to replace the dead literary author...to reveal the secrets of a text in the performance of personal expression.'[97] He goes on to say that '...literary ghosts often need spokespersons to articulate and perform their lost secrets. And none accomplish this more effectively today than performative auteurs.'[98] Clearly, all of the discussions surrounding Dahl and Burton work to demonstrate how Burton is the 'right' director to be able to express ('perform') Dahl's novels in that they are bound together as 'kindred spirits' because of their (allegedly) similar personalities and views on the world. Burton himself discusses his links with Dahl and the impact this had on the adaptation when he says:

> ...the guy [Dahl] was interesting, eccentric and creative...it shows you the power when somebody's writing from the heart of what they are, it comes through. I had to feel comfortable with what I feel is Dahl's sensibility, but I feel it's close to my own. We added new elements that aren't in the book, but I always felt comfortable that everything was in the spirit of the book...[99]

All of these quotes, which are very impressionistic, work to create a fluidity of identity between Dahl, Burton, and their (separately produced) work. Furthermore, I could find no evidence in the marketing and press material that this 'marriage' was under question; rather, the critics, in particular, seem to unequivocally accept this alleged link between Dahl and Burton. This lack of a boundary between the authors and their work leaves the

[95]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxviii

[96]Corrigan, *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*

[97]Corrigan/author's italics, *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*, p168

[98]Ibid., p173

[99]Salisbury/Tim Burton quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p226

space open for Burton to express Dahl's inner self for him in without having to adhere to strict fidelity, and the very impressionistic and vague way that their 'relationship' is presented in the press material (whether by Burton or others) makes it very difficult to challenge because there is, arguably, an underlying assumption that if you don't 'get' why Burton is the right director for *Charlie*, then you don't really 'get' Dahl, in which case your opinion would be invalid anyway.

Thus it is clearly not in the best interests of the promotional campaign to dismiss Dahl in favour of Burton's authorship - instead, as I have argued, Burton is able (according to the marketing material) to channel Dahl's authorship through his own, which maintains and privileges both. In doing this, the film can be described as 'faithful,' whilst still privileging Burton's status as author, and this is largely to do with his 'Burtonesque' style of filmmaking. In a *Daily Telegraph* review for instance, Sukhdev Sandhu describes a 'Burtonesque' film as being a '...strange gothic fabulation, usually concerned with the struggles of freaks and geeks...'[100] Salisbury relates this specifically to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* when he says '...while Burton's version of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is an intensely faithful adaptation of Dahl's world, it's also quintessentially Burtonesque at the same time, a hippy-trippy riot of glorious colour, amazing design and delightful imagination.'[101] Thus the adaptation is deemed to be both faithful to Dahl (despite the changes made by Burton) and faithful to Burton's style at the same time - indeed it is the 'Burtonesque' style of the film that appears to enable it to keep to the 'spirit of the book' - a term often used in conjunction with discussions regarding the adaptation (as well as the focus of MacCabe, Murray and Warner's 2011 book *True to the Spirit*),[102] Salisbury, in a *Time Out* article about the author's visit to the set, for instance, says '...Burton and the production designer...are adhering closely to the spirit of the book...in an era where filmmakers are increasingly reliant on CGI, it takes a director of Burton's reputation and vision to insist on building real sets.'[103] Likewise, an *Empire* articles states that the 'gargantuan sets...perfectly reflect the cracked genius of Burton and the source novel. "Tim's sticking much closer to the book" smiles Depp, "In Tim's own par-

[100]Sandhu, *Daily Telegraph 2005*, p19
[101]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxx
[102]Colin MacCabe, *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*
[103]Salisbury, *Time Out 2005*

ticular way."'[104] For Depp, then, the film is authentic both to Burton and to Dahl, and there is no conflict whatsoever here, and whilst the 'magic' of the *Harry Potter* book was deemed to be realised through the performances of the children and through the CGI, the spirit of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is deemed to be brought to life through the physical sets that are a very tangible result of Burton's 'vision.'

That the 'spirit of the book' is able to be manifest in physical form through Burton's 'intensely faithful' adaptation suggests (again) a ghostly element in which Burton is able to connect with the spirit of Dahl, and this connection works to validate Burton's presence on the film. Burton himself comments on this in regards to the sets when he says 'We tried to keep to the spirit of the book in terms of what the rooms were and what they did...'[105] Similarly, in the aforementioned *Empire* review Burton is quoted as saying 'Any new things we [added we] tried to keep in the spirit of the book.'[106] Very rare are comments that suggest Burton has in any way deviated from the 'spirit of the book.' One article that does - A.O Scott's *New York Times* article entitled "Looking for the Candy, Finding a Back Story" - says: 'Apart from a few misguided flashbacks (which depart from the spirit of the book) "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,"... moves, like Dahl's original, in a straight line from one inspired set piece to the next.'[107] Thus 'fidelity' to Dahl's narrative style, in this case, appears to make up for Burton's addition to the narrative.

That Burton is able to produce an adaptation that connects with Dahl's 'sensibility' is further validated by Dahl's widow. In an *Independent* review, for instance, the author says:

> ...Felicity...and other members of his family are confident that the new *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* would have secured Dahl's blessing, and will come to surpass the sugar-coated 1971 version. "He would have loved it" Liccy said after a private screening.[108]

The author then goes on to quote Amanda Conquy (who handled the literary estate at the time of the adaptation), as saying that '...the estate are thrilled

[104] Anon/Tim Burton quoted in, *Empire 2005*
[105] Salisbury/Tim Burton quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p239
[106] Anon/Tim Burton quoted in, *Empire 2005*
[107] Scott, *The New York Times 2005*
[108] Jury, *Independent 2005*

that the new film version is much closer to the spirit of the book [than *Willy Wonka*]...'[109] Similarly, Salisbury quotes Felicity Dahl as saying 'Every time I go[to the set], I almost burst into tears and think, "Blast, why isn't [Roald] here to see this?, [110] Thus whilst Dahl is no longer available to comment on the film, or its fidelity to the book, his survivors are speaking for him, and this further validates Burton as being the right director for the film. Of course, the estate has much to gain from the adaptation in terms of exposure and financial success, and therefore it is difficult to imagine a scenario whereby they would not be endorsing the film and director in this way. Burton's ability to 'speak for' Dahl is, however, pivotal to the promotion of the film, and it is validated by those that knew Dahl best. Despite this, the unequivocal way in which Burton is endorsed does seem at odds with the stories of Dahl's pernickety objections to *Willy Wonka* that are reported in his biographies. In one biography, Sturrock, for instance, says

> Roald eventually came to tolerate the film, acknowledging that there were "many good things" in it. But he never liked it. Even after it was acknowledged as a classic, he would dismiss it as "crummy". He found the music trashy, attempting to cut the song "The Candyman"...he loathed the director Mel Stuart, who he felt had "no talent or flair whatsoever". He...disliked many of the small changes to his script...believing these had watered down "a good deal of the bits" in his original draft...he regretted that the producers had chosen neither Spike Milligan nor Peter Sellers to play the role [of Wonka]...Roald was so annoyed [at the casting of Wilder] that, despite his own $300,000 writing fee, he considered disassociating himself entirely from the movie and "campaigning against it on TV and magazines in the US".[111]

Given these objections to *Willy Wonka*, and the general consensus that Dahl was a volatile man, it is very difficult to imagine that he would have, as Felicity asserts, unequivocally "loved" the film. Thus it is clear that whilst this is a very effective marketing strategy, its basis in 'truth' is at the very least unverifiable and, taking all into account, quite unlikely. However,

[109] Jury, *Independent 2005*
[110] Salisbury, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p98
[111] Sturrock, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*, p494

despite this, it does provide the press material with a relatively trouble free perspective on authorship, and this provides a solid base from which to invite potential audience members to identify with the film in a way which also utilises the reputation that Burton has built through his back catalogue of films.

Intertextuality and Identification

As stated above, the metaphorical joining of Dahl and Burton in the manner described above does not only work to guarantee the authenticity of the film, it also works to give a cohesive centre to the mass of intertextual references that surround Burton. This recourse to intertextuality is very apparent in the discussions surrounding the film, and, arguably, necessary in order to compensate for the failure of the promotional material to cohesively construct an imagined child audience. In this appeal to potential audiences a wide net is cast; however, there is so little order to this strategy that it suggests the film marketers did not themselves know who their intended audience was other than that they would be familiar with Burton and his past work. One *Sight and Sound* review, for instance, reads '...much of the film is playful and movie-savvy...'[112] whilst another (by a different author) states that 'With its parallelogram windows and fun-house floors, the lopsided cottage that is home to Charlie might have recently been vacated by Dr Caligari.'[113] Likewise, Bradshaw, in a *Guardian* article, says 'The story as it unfolds is strangely unnerving and unsettling, a mood Burton assists with some zany movie pastiches.'[114]

This intertextuality is further emphasised in Mark Salisbury's book *Burton on Burton* in regards to Johnny Depp, an actor who has often worked with Burton. Here, Salisbury discusses how Wonka's character came to be configured in the manner ultimately portrayed in the film. He says 'to create their Willy Wonka they [Burton and Depp] drew upon their childhood memories of TV hosts and the result is genuinely startling, weird, and even a little creepy - but one that would have Dahl himself, had he lived, cackling...'[115]He says 'When he [Depp] and Burton brainstormed the character, they talked

[112]Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p25
[113]Gilbey, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*
[114]*American Lyric Theatre: New Operas for New Audiences. The Golden Ticket*
[115]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxx

about children's TV show hosts such as Captain Kangaroo and the Pancake Man.'[116] This is clearly not only about Burton/Depp adding their own insights to the film, but also adding American references. However, given Dahl's reported resistance to his American publishers who wanted to replace English words with their American equivalents,[117] and his dislike of the song "The Candyman" because he allegedly objected to the word 'candy', it is quite clear that assertions that Dahl would have loved Burton's film (such as those by Felicity Dahl quoted above) serve a necessary function in the marketing of the film regardless of their basis (or not) in truth.

Similarly, Salisbury later states that '...while Depp's Wonka retains the purple coat and top hat of Wilder's version, Burton added in a weird Beatles wig, perfect teeth, bug-eyed glasses and latex gloves.'[118] The reference to the Beatles clearly alludes to British cultural heritage, but, along with the other references, suggests a hybrid British/American production that suits Burton's own national hybridity. Burton himself is quoted in Salisbury's book as saying 'We [Depp and I] always thought of Willy Wonka as the Citizen Kane or Howard Hughes of candy...somebody who has problems connecting with people...sad and slightly sinister. But not bad.'[119] Thus there is no distinction here between high and low art in discussions of Burton's intertextuality - children's TV hosts, pop groups, a 1940s auteur film and a German Expressionist film are all, in ways which appear to hold no judgement about status, deemed to have inspired Burton. In addition to this, Burton is able to situate himself amongst the loner figures he calls forth, which also works to implicitly draw his own back catalogue of films into the intertextual mix because they too usually centre around a 'loner' figure.

The notion of Burton and intertextuality is not something that is limited to discussions regarding this particular example. In a review of the Burton's later film, *Alice in Wonderland* (Burton, 2010)[120] the author states that

> What is striking about Burton's film is the number of film allusions it contains. He has created a postmodern pastiche of fantasy films. He references many of his previous films...[previous

[116]Salisbury, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p96
[117]Sturrock, *Storyteller: The Life of Roald Dahl: Roald Dahl*; Treglown, *Roald Dahl*
[118]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p233
[119]Salisbury/Tim Burton quoted in, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p96
[120]Burton, *Alice in Wonderland*

> Disney] Screenwriter Linda Woolverton has helped in the writing of Disney films...so the film also includes a number of references to [them].[121]

The author then goes on to say that '...Burton is an ambitious and talented director who has attempted to put his own distinctive style and spin on Carroll's classic children's texts...The [Alice] landscapes are both menacing and grotesque, but have more in common with the worlds found in Burton's *Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* than Carroll's Alice books.'[122] In regards to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, intertextuality works to evidence the notion that Burton has been faithful to himself, his previous work, and all the movies and TV programmes/personalities that have inspired him. This works to authenticate Burton's status as auteur by integrating him into commonly understood auteur discourses which underscore the importance of the fidelity of a director to themselves over and above any other restraints (the Hollywood system, for example).[123] However as I have argued, in this case Burton's status as auteur does not come at the expense of fidelity to Dahl because Burton (much like Kenneth Branagh in Corrigan's discussion of Shakespeare)[124] is - according to the press material - channelling the spirit of Dahl through his film adaptation.

In her essay "Word, dialogue, novel,"[125] which focuses on intertextuality, Julia Kristeva argues that when

> confronted with...[the]...spatial conception of language's poetic operation, we must first define the three dimensions of textual space where various semic sets and poetic sequences function. These three dimensions or coordinates of dialogue are writing subject, addressee and exterior texts.

In the case of Tim Burton the boundaries between Burton, his own exterior texts, and the exterior texts that have influenced his life and his work are openly fluid. Morowzow, in furthering her debate regarding Burton's status as auteur mentioned earlier, says:

[121]Susina, *Marvels and Tales 25 [2011]*, p182
[122]Ibid., pp182-183
[123]Cobb, *A Companion to Literature, Film and Adaptation*
[124]Corrigan, *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*
[125]Kristeva, *The Kristeva Reader*

> Tim Burton has a singular vision, now confused with highbrow directing, now with mainstream commercialism - and yet he steadily remains in a league of his own. He is certainly not your typical 'artistic' filmmaker...growing up inspired by Dr Seuss...avidly watching Ray Harryhausen's work and devouring horror B-movies...Burton developed a unique personal style whose essence can be described as 'grand effect' by simple means.[126]

Thus Burton 'devours' the previous work he has read and seen (and it is worth noting that Morowzow names different 'inspirations' than were mentioned in other accounts above), but he does so in the name of being a fan. This perhaps places Burton artistically above the 'commercialist' movies and TV programmes he has seen because he is deemed to be able to turn them, organically, into auteur works of art. However this also works to valorise these works because Burton, and his reviewers, openly discuss their significance to Burton's life and work alongside other, more artistically significant works such as *Citizen Kane* (Welles, 1941) and *Dr Caligari* (Weine, 1920). By extension, these references also, perhaps, attempt to raise the film adaptation to the position of being a 'work of art' therefore further validating Burton's auteur status. In this seemingly random and highly individualistic collection of Burton's references, however, there is little opportunity to discursively construct an audience outside of the rather limited (and economically limiting) 'loner' audience figure that Morowzow talks of.[127]

However this lack of boundaries between the many disparate texts named above does appear to provide further opportunity to cohere Burton and Dahl together in the marketing material, for there is a fluidity of identity which not only binds the two authors together but also the characters of the story. For instance in the *New York Times* article 'Looking for Candy, Finding a Back Story,' Scott begins by discussing the '...extravagant innovation and wild indulgence...'[128] of the set. He then continues 'The man in charge while a stickler for detail in some ways, is also prone to letting his imagination outrun his sense of discipline or proportion.'[129] Quite deliberately, the author does not specify whether he is talking about Wonka or Burton. This conflation of Wonka and Burton aligns Burton to the characters as well as Depp.

[126]Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*, pp 4-5
[127]Ibid.
[128]Scott, *The New York Times 2005*
[129]Ibid.

Likewise, in an *Independent* review, the author asks 'What to make of this grimly impersonal, totalitarian-tinged production line, and of the traumatised misfit (Wonka I mean) who lurks at the controls?'[130] Clearly here the author is playfully suggesting that Burton could well be the 'traumatised misfit' that is being referred to. The author then goes onto discuss Burton's adaptation as '...wondrous and flawed...'[131] which are again adjectives that could be applied to Wonka as well as, by extension, Dahl. He then furthers this discussion by relating the chocolate factory to the Hollywood system, within which Burton is deemed to struggle for autonomy. He says 'In the figure of Wonka, Burton implicitly paints himself as the unhappy operator of a huge entertainment machine...'[132]

To add extra weight to these discourses Salisbury quotes Felicity Dahl as saying 'I think Tim saw the magic and eccentricity and the genius that Wonka has. He has that wild imagination and dares to step a little further. He's Wonka, really'[133] Furthermore, links between Dahl and his character also come up in Treglown's biography of Dahl where he states that 'It would be naive to say that Mr. Willy Wonka "is" Roald Dahl, but they do have a lot in common...'[134] Salisbury further makes note of the connection between Burton and Wonka when he says:

> It's tempting to see a correlation between Willy Wonka the candy visionary and Burton the filmmaker. The former allows his imagination to run riot in creating elaborate confectionary worlds inside his factory while Burton conjures up rich, detailed fantasy worlds on film.[135]

Here, we clearly have a conflation of the real and the fictional in terms of not just Wonka and Burton but also the worlds they inhabit and the choices they have made about their careers. In this, Burton is depicted as a man who also understands the character of Wonka, and can therefore, as a result, be trusted to render him faithfully on film. Burton himself talks about affiliation and identification with the characters from the book, in particular Charlie and Wonka. He says

[130]Romney, *The Independent 2005*
[131]Scott, *The New York Times 2005*
[132]Romney, *The Independent 2005*
[133]Salisbury/Felicity Dahl quoted in, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p98
[134]Treglown, *Roald Dahl*, p155
[135]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p227

> ...the thing I respond to in the character of Charlie is that feeling of when you were in school, of feeling in the background...he's not affected, there's an openness and a simplicity to him that I responded to. So Charlie's the positive side of oneself, and Willy's the more complicated and probably more accurate side.[136]

This discussion of the positive (but unrealistic) characteristics of Charlie suggest a childhood naivety that is arguably absent from Dahl's construction of the emotionally mature child reader as discussed earlier, where facing up to the 'darker' aspects of life did not mean withdrawing into a loner state. Thus despite efforts to cohere Dahl and Burton in discussions surrounding the adaptation there is little room here - because of the different approaches to imagining child readers/audiences, as well as children more generally - for a cohesively imagined audience which was, arguably, to the detriment of box office receipts.

Instead, the audience are invited to identify with Burton as the 'loner.' In his reasoning for the back story of Wonka, for instance, Burton explicitly draws on his personal experiences. He says 'I [Burton] had every type of brace imaginable. And it was such a painful, isolating experience, because I had one of the big braces that wrapped around your head...that brace was really a symbol of the lack of being able to connect with people...'[137] Again, these discourses of isolation and loneliness work to invite the audience to identify with Burton in a particular way, however they are undermined in relation to the ways that Burton and Depp are discussed. One *Empire* review, for instance, reads 'They [Depp and Burton on the set of Charlie] look happy. They look like two (big) little boys having a good time together - kids in a sweetshop you might say. Or, to be more precise, kids in a chocolate factory.'[138] Here - as discussed in relation to Burton and Dahl earlier - there is the sense that Burton and Depp work well together because of their shared ability to act as though they are children (even when in charge of a big budget Hollywood film). Furthermore, this construction of the mischievous and playful child is not, perhaps surprisingly, utilised in the construction of the child audience any more than the 'lonely angsty' child.

Burton and Depp's friendship and working relationship is well docu-

[136]Salisbury/Tim Burton quoted in, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p227
[137]Ibid., pp28-30
[138]Palmer, *Empire 2005*, p103

mented in Salisbury's book (with Depp writing the forward), and began when Burton met the then relatively unknown Depp and cast him as Edward Scissorhands,[139] allegedly against the wishes of the studio who wanted a big star (namely Tom Cruise)[140] to fill the part. Burton is quoted as saying

> I didn't really know him [Depp] I hadn't seen that TV show he'd been in [*21 Jump Street*[141]] but I must have seen a picture of him somewhere...we wanted him right from the beginning...in America, Johnny is very much...a teen idol and he's perceived as difficult and aloof...I mean, as a person he's a very warm, funny, great guy. He's a normal guy - at least my interpretation of normal - be he's perceived as dark and difficult and weird...[142]

Here we can see the familiar references to being 'dark and weird', which are often applied to Burton. In Depp's forward to Salisbury's book we also get the sense that, like Burton, Depp questions the studios within which he works. He says of being on *21 Jump Street*, for instance, that it was a difficult time because he did not like the 'fascist' connotations of having cops in a school, and that he felt that being under contract was like being in a 'self induced...jail term.'[143] He adds that while he wanted out he could not risk being sued for '...not only any money I had, but also the money of my children and my children's children.'[144] Thus the money-grabbing calculating nature of the industry (that Burton - as with many auteurs - is also often depicted as at odds with) is alluded to. For Depp, the script for *Edward Scissorhands* was a 'godsend'[145] which made him '...weep like a newborn' and also left him 'shocked that someone was brilliant enough to conceive and then actually write this story..'[146] Depp concludes his forward by saying that:

> When I was asked to write the forward to this book, I chose to tell it from the perspective of what I honestly felt like at the time he

[139]Burton, *Edward Scissorhands*
[140]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p91
[141]Stephen J. Cannell, *21 Jump Street*
[142]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, p91
[143]Ibid., pix
[144]Ibid.
[145]Ibid.
[146]Ibid.

> rescued me: a loser, an outcast, just another piece of expendable Hollywood meat...he is an artist, a genius, an oddball, an insane, brilliant, brave, hysterically funny, loyal, nonconformist, honest friend...I have never seen someone so obviously out of place fit right in. *His* way'[147]

Thus it is clear to see similar discourses at play with both Depp and Burton, again highlighting a fluid identity between them that allows them both to then be aligned with Wonka, Dahl and, implicitly at least, an imagined audience that would identify with those feelings (even if that imagined audience is never explicitly and cohesively constructed in the press material). The author as a site of multiple identifications as is evident in the press discussions of Burton above also comes up in academic articles about Roald Dahl. William Todd Schultz, in his article 'Finding Fate's Father: Some Life History Influences on Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'[148] discusses the idea hinted at by Treglown, that Wonka, for Dahl, was both an iteration of himself as well as a 'fictional father'[149] - in other words a replacement for the father that he lost as a child. These two points of identification are not necessarily at odds, since '...Dahl's ideal self - inventor, orchestrator of chance, master of life and death, imp extraordinaire - could coexist with this wonderfully amusing, occasionally even maternal, father image.'[150] Dahl is also identified with Charlie, the

> ...boy who "desperately wanted something more filling and satisfying" out of life, who longed "more than anything else" for chocolate - chocolate signifying Wonka/Father. Functioning as both Wonka and Charlie grants Dahl an even headier power, the power to create a just world conforming to his will.[151]

This fluidity of identity between Burton/Dahl/Depp/Wonka/Charlie works in multiple ways. As we have seen, it works to guarantee Burton as a worthy director for the film, whilst allowing him (because of his faithfulness to himself) to maintain his widely perceived auteur status. It also validates Burton's casting of Depp. Furthermore, it conflates the real and the

[147]Salisbury, *Burton on Burton (Revised Edition)*, pxii
[148]Schultz, *Biography 21 [1998]*
[149]Ibid., p468
[150]Ibid., p469
[151]Ibid., pp471-472

fictional, which works to verify Hollywood as the right place for the adaptation to happen because it can be aligned with the mode of production in the chocolate factory itself even, perhaps, if one of the functions of the Hollywood setting is, in general discourses about Burton, to offer the director an obstacle that he has to overcome. Finally, it allows the audience a wide, fluid scope for identification with the story, its adaptation, its characters and its authors - however it does not, as I have argued, make it clear who the intended audience actually is, and without this there is a lack of coherence to the marketing campaign that recourse to authorship was unable to fully rectify.

The Imagined audience

> This, you see, is not a conventional children's film but rather is aimed at those elongated children who call themselves adults.[152]
>
> I responded to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* because it respected the fact that children can be adults. It was one of the first times you had children's literature that was a bit more sophisticated and dealt with darker issues and feelings. Very similar things are part of childhood.[153]

As I have argued, the discussions surrounding *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,* unlike those surrounding *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone,* rarely make explicit reference to the intended or imagined audience, whether child or adult. This is arguably because the filmmakers hope to market it to a wide range of audiences, and because the site of childhood, as imagined by popular cultural discourse, does not sit well with Burton's loner status - despite the fact that the book was immensely popular with children and that a great deal of popular children's films have 'loner' characters (*Despicable Me* and its sequel[154] - plus, according to IMDB.com, a third installment - being obvious contemporary examples). Occasionally however, attempts to squeeze references to contemporary ideas about childhood do surface in the press and marketing material. For instance, in an *Independent* review the author likens Burton's approach to an idealised sense of childhood when

[152]Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p25
[153]Jury/Burton quoted in, *Independent 2005*
[154]Pierre Coffin, *Despicable Me*; Pierre Coffin, *Despicable Me 2*

he says 'In its combination of fidelity to its source and wacky visual ideas Burton's take is a triumph of common sense and imagination - exactly the qualities for which we admire children.'[155] The notion of the childhood imagination will, as mentioned become a prominent theme in the following chapter of this thesis. Johnny Depp, on the other hand, references a much less culturally familiar/nostalgic idea of childhood when he is reported, in a *Premiere* article written by Salisbury, to have '...liken[ed] Willy to a lonely, scared, socially inept child.'[156] However whilst this does not tally with familiar constructions of childhood, this imagining of the 'lonely, scared, socially inept child' unequivocally brings discourses surrounding Burton's childhood experiences to the fore. Thus whilst Depp's phrasing might on the surface seem like a rather bleak imagining of children, the links to discourses surrounding Burton clearly undermine that sense of negativity. Discourses surrounding Dahl also hint at a sense of ambivalence about they ways in which adults and children are imagined. Hollindale, for instance, states that:

> Dahl's...always stirring the pot, complicating the oppositional and confrontational dialogue between child and adult, conspiring overtly with the child reader but also needling the child with indirect and discomforting exposures of childhood shortcomings and support for chosen adult values. He is a humorously aggressive and slightly unpredictable ally in the dynamic interaction between adult and child.[157]

In the above quote there is the sense that Dahl occupies a space between childhood and adulthood, but it is a space that is ambivalent and inconsistent - a space that negates the possibility of solid boundaries between adulthood and childhood being set. That he also wrote stories aimed at adults for much of his career seems to add to this ambivalence. Likewise Burton, whose collection contains work that is either aimed at adults or aimed at children but dealing with themes which are arguably more prevalent in adult films, also seems to inhabit an ambivalent space in the child/adult divide. Wonka also inhabits a similar space, which is implicitly referenced in a *Daily Telegraph* review of the film when the author states that 'The factory is his

[155]Hanks, *Independent Review 2005*, p7
[156]Salisbury, *Premiere 18 [2005]*, p96
[157]Hollindale, *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, p275

[Wonka's] own arrested development Neverland, a playpen of delights that is creepy and seductive.'[158] In this quote there is also a sense of uneasiness about the inbetweeness of childhood and adulthood - for anyone who inhabits the space in between is generally open to being categorised as creepy or weird. Because of this the nostalgically imagined construction of childhood, as it appears in the previous case study, cannot cohere with the constructed authorship of Dahl and Burton, because they themselves cannot be situated at either side of the child/adult binary. The unfortunate result of this is that the child audience is disavowed in favour of the notion of the outsider - a notion that arguably sits more easily with a teen/adult audience than it does the child one. This disavowal of the child audience is also evidenced through the film's PG certification which, to my mind at least, seems somewhat over cautious and indicative of the conservative cultural constructions of childhood at play.

Morozow, however, makes a rare explicit judgement about audience when she states that '...the audience is full of outcasts who feel unique and misunderstood...'[159] She goes on to say that

> Being litmus papers for the state of culture, the best films resonate with many a soul; and that is why Burton's Gothic tales of a loner's conflict with society have a very wide fan-audience. Which probably means that "the crowd" is not so ordinary, cruel and insensitive, after all.[160]

One cannot obviously ignore the contradiction here - that once people are in a group (of fans/audience members in this case) they can no longer be unambiguously 'loners.' Furthermore, in the above quote there is the sense that the audience are old enough to have the power (even though they do not use it) to be included in the 'masses' of people that, as a whole, are 'insensitive' to loner figures in society. It also implies that the audience are old enough to have rationally thought about their relationship to society to the extent that 'loner' themes resonate with them.

The irony of course is that work in the relatively new field of childhood studies argues that it is children who are deprived of power in society, as well as the opportunity to articulate their lack of power in a way which

[158] Sandhu, *Daily Telegraph 2005*, p19
[159] Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*, p23
[160] Ibid.

would resonate with adults, and thus it is children who are, arguably, a group of 'outsiders.' David Buckingham, for instance, says 'Children may have become 'sovereign consumers,' to what extent have they also been recognized as citizens...here...we are dealing with an area of 'adult' life from which children have largely been excluded.'[161] Likewise, James and Prout discuss how, in psychological approaches to child development, children are '...marginalized beings awaiting temporal passage...into the social world of adults.'[162] In their later work, along with Jenks, they further highlight the need to consider children a 'minority group' in order to consider how '...children's 'differentness' is actively taken up in a global context...'[163] The idea of marginalization is also explicitly noted by Mary Jane Kehily when she says 'A growing body of literature points to the importance of childhood as a conceptual category and as a social position for the study of a previously overlooked or marginalized group.'[164] Outside of references to Dahl, Burton and Depp, however, the idea of the marginalised child is clearly not something that the filmmakers and journalists wanted to/could integrate into their discussions - perhaps because this might alienate potential adult audience members.

Thus, while both Dahl and Burton occupy an uneasy space between childhood and adulthood, and whilst the loner image, when framed in terms of children and the space they occupy sociologically, seems, perhaps, apt, it is not an audience construction that appears in discussions surrounding the film. This is all the more interesting considering the ways that Burton's film is, by some, praised for being 'darker' than Stuart's version. This 'darkness' should sit quite well with the 'loner' image usually attributed to Burton and his fans. Yet childhood seems to be out of bounds because it would mean overtly questioning dominant cultural perceptions of children, even though the film narrative in itself questions these with its array of negative child stereotypes.

The result of this is that the audience appears to be imagined as an older group of children/teenagers who will be able to relate to the loner image, as well as the 'darker' themes that the film is professed to contain. One such darker theme is explicitly noted in a *Guardian* article, whereby a very

[161] Buckingham, *After the Death of Childhood*, p168
[162] James/Prout, *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*, p11
[163] Allison James, *Theorizing Childhood*, p217
[164] Kehily, *An Introduction to Childhood Studies*, p1

clear anxiety about children, adults and the 'inbetweeness' of them both is evident through the author Peter Bradshaw's allusions to paedophilia. He says '...this is a PG...it's not really for little kids, more tweenies and young teens, and even they may not grasp how complicated are the emotions of a grown man offering children sweets...'[165] Similarly a *Sight and Sound* review reads 'Here Depp plays Wonka as a possible compulsive-obsessive...he is a man-child - repulsed by the sexual blandishments of one of the mothers and more comfortable, one suspects, with little boys than little girls.'[166] Here, the crossing of the border between adulthood and childhood seems to imply the danger of adult sexual exploitation - particularly as Charlie is the only child not accompanied by a fussing and over-bearing parent. Dahl is, as we have discussed, deemed to have addressed children on 'their level' (as opposed to Burton who invites children into the adult world), yet here these journalists seem to imply that there is something sordid about this type of boundary crossing - much unlike the journalists previously discussed who see the ability to cross boundaries as a 'gift.' Either way, the audience, in these discussions, is still very elusive, and it is unclear exactly who this audience is imagined to be.

The imagined constitution of a Burton audience is perhaps more explicitly addressed by Susina in relation to *Alice and Wonderland*. Here, the author states that '...the viewers [of *Alice in Wonderland*]...will also want to purchase the gothic and steam punk Alice-inspired fashions available at Hot Topic stores'[167] Given the crossover discourses that exist between Burton films, especially in terms of everything that has been noted about the loner, misfit, gothic etc, and given the absence of discussion in relation to child audiences in regards to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, it would appear that it is a Burton familiar audience, as opposed to contemporary child readers of Dahl's books (which have been, from at least 2007 to present, taught in British primary schools in key stage 2 and 3[168]), that the promotion of the film is primarily geared towards. Of course included in this will be now adults who read the books as children. An *Empire* reviewer articulates this idea of audience when she says 'Tim Burton's adaptation

[165] *American Lyric Theatre: New Operas for New Audiences. The Golden Ticket*
[166] Clarke, *Sight and Sound 15 [2005]*, p24
[167] Susina, *Marvels and Tales 25 [2011]*, p182
[168] *Teaching Resources for Primary Schools*

should awaken gleeful nostalgia in the novel's enthusiasts.'[169] This idea of a nostalgic audience is, however, at odds with the 'misfit' notion of the audience as described above, and further points to the inability of the press to pinpoint a particular audience and market to them.

The absence of children as an explicit marketing target - which is very much at odds with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* - does, as I have argued, stem from the inability of the film marketers to manage the notion of the child audience in relation to two author figures who themselves occupy uneasy spaces between childhood and adulthood. This marginalisation of children also occurs in the lack of press discussions about the child performers where there is only the odd reference to Freddie Highmore, who played Charlie. In one *Independent* review the author states that 'Freddie Highmore's good-hearted Charlie is a triumph of naturalism,'[170] and here we can clearly see discourses of the 'natural' child performer at play. A *Daily Telegraph* review, on the other hand, reads 'Freddie Highmore...is under-used as Charlie. He has a plain-speaking directness about him that gives valuable ballast to the film's elaborate fantasies and whirling neo-psychedelia.'[171] This plain-speaking directness resonates with the construction of Dahl as discussed earlier, and also seems free of the nostalgia found in discussions of the child performers in *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*. Because these references are so rare, however, they do very little in the way of helping to imagine/construct a coherent child audience, nor do they do anything to distract from the author-centric approach to discussions surrounding the adaptation.

Thus the filmmakers' reliance on the notion of the 'auteur' leaves very little space for references to a child audience (or any audience for that matter) in the press material. In the previous case study, Rowling's status as author was considerably less complicated (in that she wrote only for children and is not a controversial figure) than Dahl's, and the imagined audience was, in that case, very coherently presented. However neither Burton or Dahl can be clearly defined as either producers of adult's or children's stories, and as a result the audience cannot be solidly imagined as either adult or children in any consistent way. This does not, however, mean that Dahl and Burton

[169]Smith, *Empire 2006*
[170]Hanks, *Independent Review 2005*, p6
[171]Sandhu, *Daily Telegraph 2005*, p19

have not been clearly defined in their roles and personalities (and the links between these roles and personalities). However, the solidly defined personae of Dahl and Burton ironically includes a sense of in-between-ness (between childhood and adulthood, life and death) and it is this in-between-ness that means that the imagining of the audience as children in any consistent and productive way becomes, for the promotion of the film, an impossibility.

Conclusion

Through intertextuality, the marketers of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* attempt to appeal to readers of Dahl's book, viewers of the original film, the fans of Tim Burton's previous work and the work that is said to have inspired Burton. This has similar goals to the (very different) approach used in the discussions surrounding *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*, where the press material attempted to appeal to readers of the books through the obsession with fidelity, whilst the focus on the spectacular blockbuster elements of the film attempted to appeal to wider audiences that had not read the book. In regards to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, however, there is no clear, explicit idea about how the audience/potential audience is configured - or, at least, there is no evidence of this in the press material. They are not the overtly imagined set of cohesive fans that appear in the *Harry Potter* discourses. Rather, they are implicitly coded as fans of a variety of different aspects of/inspirations to the production (the book, the original film, Dahl, Burton, B-list horror films etc), as well as, or instead of, merely fans Burton himself. As I have argued, this excludes a child audience even though it is they who are the primary contemporary readers of the books. It also, however, leaves the opportunities for wider audience identification (wider than *Harry Potter* at least) even though the audience is, perhaps, constantly brought into the sphere of Burton's commonly perceived auteur status through discussions of the film being, in many ways, his personal vision. Of course, central to Burton and his 'vision' is the loner, misfit image - and as I have argued these characteristics do not sit well in relation to a child audience and mean that there seems to be an inability to include this portion of the audience amongst the press discourses.

Instead, these discourses focus much more heavily on Burton and Dahl and seem to centre around the innate characteristics of them both. With

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the story of Rowling's life invited identification in a very simple, explicit manner; however there is little sense of any deeply psychological element to Rowling in the same way that there is with Dahl and Burton. Furthermore this focus on the psychological aspects of Dahl and Burton is deemed to contain elements (the dark, gothic, loner etc) that are not age specific but which, when applied to children, do not sit well with contemporary imaginings of childhood being a time of innocence and joy. This is, ironically, despite the fact that Dahl was and is popular with child readers. This results in an underlying uneasiness with the notion that the audience is made up of children, even though this is of course at least partially true, because the figure of the child cannot be unproblematically aligned to Burton or, at least in the aspects of his personality that are drawn on in the press discourses relating to the film, to Dahl.

Furthermore, Burton's alleged one-ness with Dahl seeks to ensure that that faithfulness of the adaptation can be guaranteed, whilst audience members are also invited to identify with the film from an auteur and intertextual standpoint. However, whilst there is not one solid imagining of who the audience is in relation to this case study, the most consistent indication of this inevitably centres (because of the sheer amount of press material that articulates and re-articulates the discourses) around Burton's loner image, and the press material, despite the fact that we are dealing with an adaptation of a children's novel, appears to be marketed to these outsider figures.

In addition, the idea that children are able to identify with feelings of alienation necessarily raises questions about the commonly perceived divide between childhood and adulthood in cultural discourses. For, if children are, as a group, alienated, it is most likely to be adults they are alienated from, and addressing such a question seems unlikely to happen in a popular context such as this; for, in order to address the alienation of children one would need to question whether the 'adult protection' of children has failed - and in an industry that (as discussed in the previous case study), needs to make money from the children it 'protects' (or not) the idea of child alienation is likely to be even further repressed. Thus, in order for the press material to explicitly deal with the child audience as children, they would first have to un-do much of the popular cultural discourses surrounding children that the aforementioned arena of childhood studies is working to untangle. This, unsurprisingly, does not occur in the discussions surrounding *Charlie and the*

Chocolate Factory - however this uneasiness, which is caused by the failure of the filmmaking team to construct a cohesive child audience, highlights just how important it is, in the promotion of children's adaptations, to carefully negotiate author and audience constructs.

In the absence of a cohesively imagined child audience the press material does, as mentioned, focus very heavily on the authors; however, the success of these promotional strategies is debatable. In regards to the authorial 'marriage' of Dahl and Burton, the discourses surrounding Dahl's dark sensibility have outlived the marketing of Burton's film in that they have also been utilised in regards to other adaptations, in particular the stage play. For instance in a 2013 introduction to the then new London stage play, which appeared in the *Guardian*, the author begins by saying 'Previous adaptations lacked the bite that Roald Dahl put into his writing. Will this new version catch Dahl at his bleakest - and best?'[172] It is not difficult to see how these discourses - so prevalent in the marketing of Burton's film - are being re-appropriated. Again this is helped rather than hindered by the fact that Dahl can no longer confirm or deny these assertions. Mangan also draws upon adult perceptions of childhood when she says that Dahl's work tends to

> upset adults, who know the rules and don't like to see them broken...our [adults'] feelings about what children can and should be exposed to...are fluctuating and complicated. We may know from personal experience that small children are, individually, robust little reactionaries who like nothing more than seeing justice done...but collectively, we see them as innocents to be protected from as much of the darkness of this world as possible for as long as possible. [173]

It is precisely these issues and contradictions (which are exacerbated by Burton's loner auteur status) that made the promotion for *Charlie and the Chocolate* so difficult in relation to imagining a child audience. Likewise, the filmmakers success in dismissing the *Willy Wonka* film is also questionable. This is most acutely articulated by *Primus*, an experimental rock band whose current tour is entitled *Primus and the Chocolate Factory*. The

[172]Mangan, *The Guardian 20th [2013]*
[173]Ibid.

band have re-worked all of the songs from the *Willy Wonka* film, and first performed it at a 2013 New Years eve show at *The Fox Theatre* in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. They opened the set with a video recording of the band's frontman, Les Claypool, who stated that:

> You know there's some things which leave you in life with big impressions. When you're a young fella, impressions can be left in a deeper and more meaningful way. One of these things for me...was a film called *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. Yep, I'm not talking about that steaming pile of faeces that came down the pipe a few years back called *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. No no no...none of this androgynous Michael Jackson wannabe Willy Wonka for us. I'm talking Gene Wilder.[174]

This live show has clearly resonated with (again, adult) audiences, because *Primus* is currently undertaking a world tour of their interpretation of the soundtrack - complete with Oompa Loompas.[175] This demonstrates that the promotion of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, whist very thorough in its attempt to set Burton up as the ideal director for the film, at least in part, failed. Furthermore the backlash to criticisms of *Willy Wonka* (as expressed by Primus) brings into question the power of attachment in regards to things we read and watch as children, and it is this that we will more fully explore in the following chapter in relation to *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[174] *Primus and the Chocolate Factory 2013 New Years Gig*
[175] *Primus and the Chocolate Factory Official Webpage*

Chapter 4

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe: Authorship, Narratives of the Self and the Displaced Audience

Introduction

> The most crucial aspect of psychoanalysis for discussing children's fiction is its insistence that childhood is something in which we continue to be implicated and which is never really left behind. Childhood persists...It persists as something which we endlessly rework in our attempt to build an image of our own history.[1]

> Personal anecdote seldom has a place in an editor's introduction [to *Revisiting Narnia*[2]]...but the impetus to contribute some thought, some small bit of story is ineluctable. Narnia is too important to me.[3]

[1] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, p12

[2] Caughey, *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*, p1

[3] Ibid.

> I was making a CS Lewis film, but luckily, I managed to get my name in the credits![4]

Released in 2005, *The Chronicles of Narnia: Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (hereafter referred to as *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*) was director Andrew Adamson's first live action film. Adamson's biggest directorial successes prior to this film were the animated *Shrek* films released in 2001 and 2004. Despite being live action *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is heavily reliant on computer generated effects, and, according to the bulk of the press material that I will examine in this chapter, it was Adamson's expertise in this area, along with his alleged childhood attachment to the Narnia books, that reportedly won him the role of director. Unlike Tim Burton, there is no auteur discourse surrounding Adamson. However, despite this, he is (unlike Columbus) depicted as a 'creative genius' in much of the press material about him. In these discussions, the idea of the 'creative genius' is intertwined with the notion of the imagination as it links to Adamson's personal life story; and as we will discuss in more detail later, the notion of the imagination was central to C.S Lewis in regards to how he understood his own life, writing, and what it meant to be 'literate.'[5]

The focus on the imagination in the discussions surrounding the film means that whilst discourses of fidelity are often present, the idea that there is a definitive version of the story for the filmmakers to be 'faithful' to is far less significant than in the previous case studies. For whilst there is of course the source novel written by C.S. Lewis, one of the most prevalent themes in the marketing and press material for the film is the assertion that Narnia, first and foremost, exists in the minds and imaginations of those who have read it. In this way the novel is depicted as a stepping stone into another world that one enters through the imagination - an analysis that is in accordance with the ways that Lewis spoke about the importance of the imagination in reading.[6] And just as it is clear from reading Lewis's autobiography that he negotiated his own identity as a child largely through the books that he read (or at least it is clear that he remembers it this way),[7] Adamson is also depicted as having integrated the Narnia books into his own

[4]staff, *Starburst Spcc [2005]*, p46

[5]Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*

[6]Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*; Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*; Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*

[7]Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*

personal history and sense of self in that they are a significant element in both his recollections of being a child and in his belief in the power of the (or at least his) imagination.

Through this, any conflict between the book author and the film author is side-stepped. For, in being true to his own imagination Adamson is, in his mind (as far as we can tell from the press material) also being true to Lewis because, according to Adamson, Lewis first and foremost wanted to engage the imagination of his readers. Adamson, therefore, often discusses how he has made the story 'bigger' because he has adapted the story that he created in his mind whilst reading the book, rather than the book itself. We can of course see correlations with the familiar notion of the director being 'true' to himself as well as the text that he is working from. However the self that the director is being true to is not an auteur self, or even an adult self - it is his childhood self that originally read the books. Thus Adamson is primarily concerned with making tangible his childhood imaginings of the text which, as a result, directly binds the notion of fidelity to the act childhood reading and imagining. This recourse to Adamson's imagination, and the consequences this has on the representations of the child performers and the child readers/viewers, is the central aim of this chapter. It is not my intention to define what the 'imagination' is or is not. Rather, I consider how the term comes into play in relation to discursively privileging revered cultural artifacts (here, the book) as well as figures (here, both Lewis and Adamson) and how it in itself seems to be a culturally revered entity. I also consider how the term is inextricably linked to the nostalgic representation of childhood also at play in this case study.

Thus I argue that in the privileging of Adamson's childhood imagination in the press material there is a nostalgic idealisation of childhood that works to address its potential adult audience whilst disavowing its child one. For, regardless of whether it is academic writing about the novel(s), or the popular press regarding the film adaptation, the bulk of discussions about Narnia seem (for many of these adult writers), to provide an open doorway to the remembering of one's childhood self. This, as we will discuss later, is clearly evidenced through the prevalence of personal anecdotes relating to the writers' own childhoods. Here, boundaries between the familiar adult/child binary are broken down because these adult readers and viewers move fluidly in discussions of their adult and child selves. However, con-

temporary children are markedly absent from these discussions, and, when they are present, they are generally assumed (at least in the popular press responses to the film) to have not read the book. The result of this is that there seems to be an underlying assumption that these children are missing out on the (nostalgically imagined) act of reading and imagining that the adult writers so fondly relate to their own pasts.

The distinctions between adults and children, therefore, are both broken down and re-asserted, for whilst the past childhood selves of the adult writers are viewed through the lens of nostalgia, the contemporary children the film does or might appeal to (if they are considered at all) are viewed with a distance thoroughly absent from the writers' links to their own childhoods. Thus whilst the notion of the childhood imagination is prevalent in the press and marketing discourses surrounding the film, it is a perception of childhood imagination that exists in a nostalgic vision of the past rather than one which is concerned with the imaginative lives of contemporary children. As with *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, therefore, the lack of discussion of contemporary children in the marketing material leaves an uncomfortable space that, given that these are adaptations of children's literature, seems surprising.

In order to investigate this further I first look to the writings of C.S. Lewis and discuss the centrality of the notion of the imagination in his approaches to reading and writing. I then consider this in relation to the press representations of both Lewis and Adamson as authors in relation to the film adaptation of *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*. This is important because it sets the groundwork for understanding how the discussion of contemporary children - at least in any positive way - is largely absent from the press material surrounding the film - press material that includes a great deal of quotes from the director and other members of the filmmaking team. I then consider the ways that adult academics and journalists appear to have integrated the novel into their own personal life narratives to the extent that further displacing contemporary children from the discussion often becomes the way that they 'defend' their memories and feelings towards the novel and, to a lesser extent, the film. Finally, I consider discussions of the child actors in the press. A consideration of the representations of the child actors is imperative because they are generally the only instances of actual children being discussed, even though this inclusion does not ulti-

mately work to address the absence of discussion in regards to child readers or - more significantly - potential child viewers.

Thus, as with the previous two case studies, the way that the contemporary child audience is constructed and/or displaced bears a direct relationship to the way that authorship is, through the press material, constructed. In this, the discursive construction of child readers and audiences has very little to do with actual children and much more to do with attempts to validate the model of authorship that the marketing and press writers wish to utilise - in this case that Adamson is deemed to be drawing on his childhood imagination to make Lewis's work 'bigger.' However, these imaginative powers (allegedly) belong to past generations of children (of which Adamson is of course one) and not with contemporary children. This past generation of readers also includes those who write about the novel and the film in press and academic contexts - writers who, whether academic or not, are keen to discuss their own childhoods and memories of Narnia at the expense of representing the contemporary child audience in any positive and meaningful way. In this, I hope to also shed light on a largely overlooked topic in adaptations studies, namely the ways that books we have read as children can become woven into our own personal narratives, and the impact that this can potentially have on the adaptation and reception of children's literature.

C.S Lewis, the Imagination and Past Adaptations of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*

> Words may evoke something close to direct experiences of referents, or a fictional text may prompt more constructive imaginative processes...[8]

> He [Lewis] was a master at tweaking kids' imaginations enough where they could generate the rest of the story themselves...[9]

Lewis, like Dahl, wrote for both adults and children. Unlike Dahl, however, Lewis also wrote critical theory which included his thoughts on reading and writing in general. These thoughts are most prominent in his biography[10]

[8] Raymond A Mar, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, p180
[9] Ltd/McFeely (screenwriter) quoted in, *Press pack 2005*
[10] Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*

as well as his critical theory books *An Experiment in Criticism*[11] and *On Stories And Other Essays on Literature.*[12] Throughout these the notion of the imagination is very significant, particularly in relation to the remembering and re-telling of Lewis's own childhood. This is clear, for instance, when Lewis describes the darkest period of his early life which occurred when he was sent to boarding school after his mother's death. Lewis reports that the school focused on maths and science rather than literature, and that the school's library was lacking in story books. The result of this was that he was not able to engage his imagination, and this contributed to him feeling no 'joy'[13] around this period. The lack of stories in his life at this time, therefore, significantly added to his boarding school misery.

However, whilst the imagination is significant for Lewis in regards to immersing oneself in fictional worlds as a reader, the imagination in regards to authorship - as Lewis tells it - is a rather different thing altogether. In his autobiography, for instance, he talks of how he would, as a very young child, spend much of his time meticulously creating a fictional world that he called Animal-Land. This world included many talking animals and had a very detailed history to it. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, however, Lewis does not attribute the creation of this world to the imagination. He says:

> ...at the age of six, seven and eight - I was living almost entirely in my imagination; or at least the imaginative experience of those years now seems to me more important than anything else...but imagination is a vague word...it may mean the world of reverie, day-dream, wish-fulfilling fantasy. Of that I knew more than enough...But I must insist that this was a totally different activity from the invention of Animal-Land. Animal-Land was not (in that sense) a fantasy at all. I was not one of the characters it contained. I was its creator, not a candidate for admission to it.[14]

[11] Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*

[12] *Lewis*, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*

[13] The title of Lewis's biography is *Surprised by Joy* and although the notion of joy has religious connotations in his later life, in his early life a sense of joy was brought about by rare aesthetic experiences that allowed him to get a sense of another world, or other worlds, of something bigger than himself. His recollections regarding his choice in literature as a child indicate that this search for another world was important to him in his reading as well.

[14] Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, pp14-15

In the distinction that Lewis makes here, the creation of a world is not the imaginative act - rather the imaginative act is the immersion of oneself into fantasy. Therefore if you see yourself as a character in the story you are reading you are, by Lewis's account, using your imagination. In creating a story yourself, however, you are in control of that story but you are not a part of it - you are, instead, learning the craft of writing - or 'training...to be a novelist'[15] These two aspects of imagination and creation - which to Lewis are separate - are significant when we come to examine Adamson's role as 'author' of the film because he combines both the meticulous crafting, as evidenced by reports of his detailed story boards, sets, and character development,[16] with the creative imaginative reading that he recalls as a child. However, whilst his 'craft' skills are occasionally referenced, it is his childhood immersion into the novel that, as we will see, becomes pivotal to the validation of Adamson as the 'right' director for the adaptation. The result of this is that Lewis's authorship is subtly pushed to the sidelines without any obvious dismissal of him.

Lewis further draws on the idea of immersing oneself into the world of a story in his *On Stories*[17] essay where he writes about a discussion he had with one of his students regarding a children's story about red Indians. As Lewis's story goes, both Lewis and his student had, when they were children, read the same book, and his student allegedly reported how he enjoyed the excitement and suspense of the story. Lewis, however, asserts that '...I wanted not the momentary suspense but that whole world to which it belonged - the snow...the beavers and canoes...it came as a shock [that]..."all that" had made no part in his pleasure...this really made me feel as if I were talking to a visitor from another planet...'[18] This is, again, important when we come to discuss the child actors, for it is they who Adamson (according to the DVD extras) immersed in the very detailed 'real' Narnian sets so that he could elicit genuine 'performances' from them. In this way they become Adamson's stand-in equivalents for Lewis's readers as they become immersed in the world which Adamson creates from his childhood memories and imaginings of the book. However, this immersion into the very detail of the 'world' does not come at the expense of excitement, which Adamson

[15]Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, p15
[16]Ltd, *Press pack 2005*
[17]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*
[18]Ibid., p5

clearly works to create through the massive chase and battle scenes.

For Lewis, however, the focus on the details of the story worlds, rather than the excitement that one feels when reading a story, was so important to him - as far as we can tell from his critical writings - that he makes the distinction, in his book *An Experiment in Criticism,*[19] between those he perceives as literate and those he sees as illiterate. Lewis reasons that the literate give themselves over to the work and immerse themselves in it for no other reason than to explore the work for the sake of it, whilst the illiterate are (only) after momentary pleasure or excitement - they 'use' literature and then forget about it because the stories do not, ultimately, become a part of who they are or organically open up new thoughts and (imaginative) experiences for them. This attitude can be clearly seen when Lewis says:

> where reading plays a very small part in the total life and every book is tossed aside like an old news-paper the moment it has been used, unliterary reading can be diagnosed with certainty. Where there is passionate and constant love of a book and rereading, then, however bad we think the book and however immature or uneducated we think the reader, it cannot. [20]

Thus for Lewis literacy is not dependent on whether the work is 'good' literature or whether the reader is educated, it is about integrating the love of books into one's very identity, and visiting those worlds over and over again just for the sake of exploration and 'joy.' In this, Lewis's assertion about what constitutes 'literate' reading does seem to be somewhat limiting in regards to the 'proper' imaginative behaviour of children. However, the integration of childhood stories into identity comes across much more strongly, as we will see later on, in this case study than it does in the previous two. Furthermore, in regards to the film adaptation, this distinction between the literate and 'unliterate' does not seem to hold up for Adamson. In a *Premiere* article, for instance, the author writes that 'Adamson...envisioned himself alongside the four Pevensie children as they stepped through a secret portal into the enchanted world on the other side.'[21] However, given the spectacle of the film, the story and the excitement it contains are far from separate as far as Adamson is concerned. However, as we will see, in Adamson's ardent

[19]Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*
[20]Ibid., p115
[21]Devlin, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p128

faithfulness to his own imagination there are no concerns about whether he is imagining it in the 'correct' way. Thus, in 'filling in' the aspects of the novel that Lewis leaves sparse, for instance the battle scene, Adamson - in that he leaves little to the viewers' imaginations - is arguably undermining Lewis's authorship through the very same discourses that, in the marketing material, bind the authors together in apparent harmony.

Therefore, whilst the notion of the imagination is, in the discussions surrounding the adaptation, elaborated on in such a way that the process of reading and immersion, as well as the process of creation, become merged in ways which Lewis clearly did not perceive them to be, Adamson's reported connection to the book during his childhood means that the marketing discourses are able to sidestep discourses of fidelity that previous adaptations were not. Before moving on to discuss Adamson, therefore, it is useful to look back at these past adaptations in order to examine how the notions of fidelity, authorship and child viewers and readers were managed.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe was first adapted for television in 1967 and then again 1988. It was also released as a feature animation in 1979. The press pack for the 1967 television adaptation (written by Trevor Preston and directed by Helen Standage), reads:

> ...Trevor Preston's television adaptation gives him [the Professor] the central role as storyteller, a mixture of the fictional professor and the real-life one who created him. With this inspired exception, the production is faithful to the original. It captures exactly the mood of wonderment with which Peter, Susan and Lucy...discover the world, and, in doing so, makes perfect television.'[22]

The notion of wonderment is, perhaps, aligned with Lewis's discussions about exploring the fantastical worlds of literature through the journeys that the characters go on, for it is, for Lewis, through a sense of wonder that the imagination is engaged and joyful experiences can occur. However the notion that this adaptation makes 'perfect television' because it successfully adapts this sense of wonderment is significant because it suggests that the 'wonderment' is intrinsic to the text itself, and as such the 'wonder' has been demarcated from the viewer in ways that are not possible in Lewis's

[22]Television, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

analysis of the 'literate' reader. This is because, for Lewis, it is the wonderment that the reader experiences when on a journey that they take with the characters (and author) that is important - even if the literature they are reading is 'bad' literature.[23] Of course, actual viewers may well have experienced a sense of wonderment when watching the adaptation; however the act of viewing is not, at least here, significant in the way that the act of reading was for Lewis.

Similarly, a review from the *Daily Telegraph* states that 'The adaptor, Trevor Preston, seems to have kept faithfully to the fantasy that Lewis created.'[24] Again, the creation of fantasy is, for Lewis, the job of the reader as they imagine themselves in the fantastical worlds of the literature they are reading and here again there does not seem to be any consideration of the viewers' imaginations. This is significant because, as we will see later, the 'actual' viewers' imaginations are not considered in the Adamson adaptation, despite the fact that the marketing campaign focused very closely on the notion of Adamson's childhood imagination.

Furthermore, despite the splitting off of the text from the imaginative activities of the potential audience in the press discussions concerning these early adaptations, the appropriation of the discourses of childhood still come into play in relation to the 'magic' of the adaptation. The press pack, for instance, reads '...children everywhere have been enchanted by his [Lewis's] allegories of the magic and mysterious land of Narnia'[25] whilst the aforementioned *Daily Telegraph* article reads 'it is a pity the serial is being run in the summer. With this weather, most children are likely to be spending their Sunday afternoons far from their TV sets, missing the magic but getting back in time for the illusions of the early evening programmes.'[26] Here, the author is asserting that this adaptation differs to the programmes shown later, which presumably offer (given the word illusions) the momentary sensory pleasure that Lewis had so little interest in when thinking about his own reading experiences. The notion of spectacle also comes up in an *Observer* article which reads

> ...all children from four up are completely hooked on the weekly installment of C.S.Lewis's allegorical fairy story...It's true that

[23]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*
[24]BBC, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
[25]Television, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
[26]BBC, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

> the sequences of action are imaginatively done...but a great deal of time is taken up with the narration of the Professor...[who explains]... what is going on in elaborate academic prose. And yet there they sit, the first audio-tactile generation, hanging on his every poly-syllabic word.[27]

In these quotes alone we can clearly see very idealised versions of the child - they play out in the sun; they sit cross legged and in awe in front of the TV not quite appreciating the technology that adults have created for them. We can also see that this version of childhood is, in Melly's *Observer* article, at odds with the stiffness and inactivity that age brings, where adults tell stories but do not live them. Despite this, the appeal of authorship in the form of the narration of the Professor is deemed to be of the utmost importance, overshadowing even the spectacle of the piece. Yet the notion of the imagination is still in the firm grasp of the creators of the adaptation who 'imaginatively' make the best of the budget they have in order to realise the world that Lewis - without, by his own account, the use of his imagination - created. The absence of discussion surrounding the imaginative experiences of the viewers would perhaps suggest that they are not as important as the ways that the producers have 'imaginatively' adapted Lewis's creation. This very author-centric approach is at first glance counter to Lewis's depictions of authorship as stated earlier. However his views about his own reading experiences do not correlate with his views about his own authorship. For instance he says of the novel *Voyage to Arcturus* that 'the physical dangers...count for nothing: it is we ourselves and the author who walk through a world of spiritual dangers which make them seem trivial.'[28] Here the author is very much present in the fantastical world, which is contrary to Lewis's own assertion that he is by no means a character in his own stories.

Despite these discrepancies in Lewis's views on authorship, the notion of the imaginative child reader is consistently important in both Lewis's theorising and in the recollections of his own childhood. Furthermore, despite the lack of focus on the imaginative powers of any potential child viewers in relation to the 1967 adaptation, it would appear that the nostalgically imagined child mentioned above (sitting cross-legged in front of the screen) is consistent with the nostalgia that is evident in adult academics' and jour-

[27]Melendez, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
[28]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*, p11

nalists' writing about their rememberings of the significance of Narnia to their own childhoods. In doing this they take up the space afforded to them by these earlier discussions whereby they report that they were one of those children that were 'enchanted' by the book. At the same time, this leaves a gap in regards to the rarely mentioned contemporary child audience of the 2005 adaptation, for - unlike *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* - the idea of contemporary children reading and loving the books does not permeate the press discourses. Furthermore, the nostalgically imagined readers of the book and viewers of the 1967 adaptation are, of course, the potential parents for the child viewers of Adamson's adaptation, and as we will see some of these parents, who are also critics, explicitly discuss this in their reviews.

Little of the scholarly work on the Narnia series has, however, discussed these adaptations. Rather, it has tended to focus on the allegorical/religious significance of the novels and Lewis himself.[29] Rather exceptionally, James Russell's 2009 article "Narnia as a Site of National Struggle: Marketing, Christianity, and National Purpose in 'The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe"' does discuss the 2005 film adaptation but again the emphasis is on the discourses of religion and morality that formed part of the film's marketing campaign in America. In his abstract he says:

> Through reference to "culture wars" rhetoric, and broader claims to educational and evangelistic intent, the production company Walden Media's promotional efforts sought to transform C.S Lewis's utopian Christian fantasy into a faith-affirming experience for Evangelical viewers, imbued with the power to alter national culture along Christian lines.[30]

Whilst my focus in this chapter is not the religious aspect of the marketing campaign, Russell's article does identify the centrality of the figure of the child in the religious marketing campaign which:

> ...incorporated apocalyptic and utopian visions of national purpose...and, in the process, suggested that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* might act as a powerful corrective to a presumed moral "decay" in the social fabric of the nation...the edu-

[29] Como, *Children's Literature 10 [1982]*
[30] Russell, *Cinema Journal 48 [2009]*, p59

> cational, edifying agenda stressed in promotional efforts repeatedly used the figure of an imaginary, generic child (and the conception of children as innocents who must be shaped into citizens) to discuss the future trajectory of the nation.[31]

The significance of adulthood, childhood and the self is more explicitly dealt with in Alison Waller's 2010 article "Revisiting Childhood Landscapes: Revenants of Druid's Grove and Narnia." This looks specifically at the novels *Prince Caspian* (1951) and *Carrie's War* (1973) which, she argues, '...share a strong sense of treasured and mythical place and an even stronger relationship between remembered landscapes and remembered selves.'[32] She goes on to say that by studying '...Druid's Grove [from *Carrie's War*] and Narnia we can begin to consider how place constructs child and adult identities...while the complex themes of memory, aging, and morality within them help us understand some of their uncanny power.'[33] She argues that Narnia creates a collapsing of time and space because '...the selves that the Pevensies recall through their memories of Narnia are paradoxically drawn from both a recent childhood and a distant adulthood.'[34] The collapsing of child and adult selves is relevant to this study, particularly in terms of Adamson's constant recourse to his childhood self, and in particular the significance of the imagination within it, which works to turn his life story into a marketing tool.

Adamson and the marketing of personal narrative

> He [Lewis] leaves a lot to the imagination, and of course every kid's imagination is going to be a bit different. I wanted to be true to those imaginings, and to the story, and to my own memories and imaginings.[35]

As discussed, the notion of the imagination is hugely significant in Lewis's autobiography as well as his critical writing - it is something to be valued and something that is, for Lewis, essential to living a fulfilling life. What

[31] Russell, *Cinema Journal 48 [2009]*, p60
[32] Waller, *The Lion and the Unicorn 34 [2010]*, p303
[33] Ibid., p304
[34] Ibid., p312
[35] Devlin/Adamson quoted in, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p130

is also evident from this work (in particular his autobiography) is that the narrativisation of self is also - and very consciously so - important to him. He often draws the readers attention to the fact that these are adult rememberings/constructions of his childhood self, and his autobiographical work seems to be his way of ordering and unifying his understanding of his own life. Clearly traumatised by certain events, Lewis looks to make sense of them through the telling of his childhood which, much of the time, is further mediated through a discussion of the books/authors he was reading at those times. Therefore books are, as far as it is possible to tell from his autobiography, central to his sense of self. However, Lewis's personal life story, unlike that of Rowling or Dahl, rarely comes up in discussions surrounding the 2005 adaptation. Instead, it is the (alleged) centrality of the Narnia books to Adamson's own childhood and sense of self that dominates.

Adamson does not, as far as it is possible to tell from the press material, show any signs of having a traumatic past or a fractured or difficult relationship with his life story. Instead he is depicted as someone who not only has a strong, coherent personal narrative but also someone who has, significantly, given the Narnia books a central role in that personal narrative. A *Cinefantastique* article, for instance reads:

> Adamson [says] he felt compelled to take on this project. "It was really my childhood experience with the book...I grew up with the books and read them between the ages of eight and 10. For one thing, I've always had a love of big cats and I think that came from the book. Even having not read them for many, many years...I have a very vivid memory of particularly this book.[36]

Similarly, an *Independent* article reads 'Adamson...happened to be an ardent fan of the Narnia books. He first encountered them when he was eight, and fell in love immediately,'[37] and in a *Creative Screenwriting* article is is quoted as saying '...I just couldn't imagine letting anyone else do this [adaptation] because it was such an important book to me as a child.'[38] His childhood attachment to the books also comes through in his insistence that Narnia is a 'real place.' In the aforementioned *Cinefantastique* article, for instance, he says:

[36]Gross, *Cinefantastique 38 [2006]*, 17
[37]Appelbaum, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p22
[38]Kennelly, *Creative Screenwriting 12 [2005]*, p30

> Some [production designers] would come in and say "It's like *The Wizard of Oz*, it's in their imagination and this is the kids' response to it." And I'm, like, "No, it's not. This is a real place that the kids go."...this is an alternate reality. That's what worked for me with the book and I wanted to make sure the movie had the same feeling.[39]

Thus whilst many of the filmmaking team of *The Philosopher's Stone* reported that their children or grandchildren loved the books, Adamson's commitment is, as mentioned, to his childhood self. As such, he is rejecting any potential 'adult' readings of the book that might work to take away the 'reality' of Narnia - a reality that is discussed in relation to Lewis in the 2005 chapter of *Revisiting Narnia* "The Silver Chair and the Silver Screen: C.S. Lewis on Myth, Fairy Tale and Film" whereby the author asserts that by exploring Narnia (and myth in general), fundamental truths about the human existence can be uncovered in a way which allows us to experience them and know them without having to articulate them in words. This is also in line with how the Professor in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* responds to the children when they approach him about Lucy's insistence that Narnia is a real place, for he too asserts that it is quite probable that Narnia is real and that Lucy is telling the truth.

The key here is, of course, the ability to be able to 'believe' and imagine.[40] These abilities were, as we have discussed, central to Lewis's approach to reading, writing and life in general, and here they seem to carry with them a cultural reverie that is linked to a nostalgic construction of childhood. However in order for Adamson to (re)create this 'real' place he had to mediate his childhood imaginings through his adult self as well as through the desire to be 'faithful' to the book. A *Cinefex* article, for instance, reads

> Adamson's take on the material, which was to remain as faithful to the books as possible, had won him favour with the Lewis estate; but everyone recognized, from the beginning, that the story would have to be embellished. "When I [Adamson] reread [the novel] as an adult...I was shocked to find what wasn't there...I thought, 'where's all the stuff I remembered from reading it as

[39] Gross, *Cinefantastique 38 [2006]*, 17

[40] W.Starr, *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*

> a child?' And I realised that my childhood imagination had embellished a lot and that C.S.Lewis had *relied* on the reader's embellishments...your imagination fills it out.[41]

Here we have arguably competing ideas about authorship. Lewis is depicted as a writer who deliberately wrote a book that left plenty of room for the reader to use their imagination, and therefore a lot of what Adamson imagined is not fully described in the text. In 'filling in' the parts of the text that Lewis left sparse Adamson is, in some ways, being faithful to the novel. However, to remain 'faithful' to the main purpose of the book - as it is presented by Adamson in the press material - the notion of engaging the imaginations of, in this case viewers, would perhaps seem pertinent. However I could find no reference to this being of concern at all to the filmmaking team. Rather, in asserting his imagination as the 'correct' version of the text, the viewers are relegated to the roles of consumers in ways that Lewis - according to the press material at least - deliberately tried to avoid. The filmmakers are also, at the same time, asserting superiority over children's imaginations. This comes up explicitly in a *Cinefantastique* article where the production designer is quoted as saying 'So much of the visual side of the book is left to the imagination of the reader....Now we have to actually make those pictures and go further than a child's imagination might take them.'[42] Here, instead of the culturally familiar and nostalgic reference to the 'child's imagination' as something to be valued and protected in society we have the sense that only adults can put the imagination to pragmatic use. Thus it is they (adults) that understand the limitations of the child's imagination and can (in a very demeaning manner), take over at the point that children's imaginations reach their limit.

An *Independent Arts and Books review* article addresses these issues of imagination in relation to fidelity when the author asks '...how does one put one's own imprint on something so beloved while still remaining faithful to it? ...importantly, Lewis stops short of describing certain pivotal events in full and chooses instead to "plant a seed and allow it to grow" in the reader's imagination.'[43] In other words, what Lewis is depicted as having wanted was to have others put their 'imprint' on his work - and in doing

[41] Duncan/Adamson quoted in, *Cinefex 2006*, p88. Emphasis in the original.
[42] Gross, *Cinefantastique 38 [2006]*, p17
[43] Appelbaum, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p22

so, as mentioned, Adamson *is* being faithful to the novel because he has clearly engaged his own imagination. In this way Adamson is able to, for the most part, sidestep issues of fidelity. However, the relegation of the readers/viewers' own imaginations undermines this. More explicit references to the difficulties and problems surrounding authorship and adaptation do, despite the efforts to assert Adamson's viability as director, surface in the press material. In a *Starburst* article, for instance, Adamson says:

> I was making a CS Lewis film, but luckily, I managed to get my name in the credits! You know what? You always make a film, I think, that is first and foremost for yourself, or at least I do...if you start trying to think what any particular audience member wants or even what the author would have accepted, it's very hard as you'll end up second guessing yourself. So ultimately, I was making an Andrew Adamson film, but I could only trust my own instincts. On the other hand, I grew up with these books, and they were a huge part of my life...I set out to be very true to them, but I think what I set out to do was be very true to my memory of the books because I remember them as bigger. It's like the house you grew up in. You go back there and it's like "Wait a minute. This is smaller than I thought." When I reread the books as an adult, it was much smaller than I remember it. I like to say that I had 30 years of prep time because my imagination, my memory had expanded over those 30 years....I really wanted to make the movie as epic as that memory. [44]

Adamson is not only negotiating the problematic issues surrounding authorship here, but also the problem of accessing one's childhood self and negotiating, as an adult, those childhood thoughts and feelings. Reading the Narnia books is presented here as a large part of his childhood personal narrative, and it would seem that in order to maintain continuity in his personal narrative, staying 'true' to that childhood self is imperative. As we will discuss in more depth later, this desire for continuity in the life story is very important in the reception of both the book and the film, and in regards to Adamson, it is one of the most commonly picked out quotes that appears

[44] staff, *Starburst Spcc [2005]*, p46-47

in the press material.[45] These articles often directly quote Adamson's adult perceptions of his childhood thoughts, memories and imagination, and use the notion of the childhood imagination to validate Adamson's authorial significance and input - an authorial input which is carried out by an adult self on behalf of his childhood self.

The imagination of Adamson's childhood self is also used to validate the movie's primary location in a *Premiere* article by Ryan Devlin who says 'Ask Andrew Adamson where Narnia is, and he'll probably tell you it's in New Zealand. It was there that as a young boy growing up in Aukland, the director read [the novel]...'[46] Here we also have another layer added to the fantasy of readership as an adult reporter imagines Adamson and his imaginative responses as he read the book. The recourse to life story, however, does not end with Adamson's present and childhood self. Rather, Adamson's current family life comes into play as well. Here, Adamson's experience of the Lewis books is, at least in part, attributed to his approach as a parent. He says

> CS Lewis said that if we don't let our children experience fear how can they learn courage...I have a two and a half year old daughter who loves it when I pretend to drop her. She gets the fright and then she giggles, and I think thats the important thing in a movie that is accessible to children - to give them the frights and give them the scares and then let them off the hook, let them be comforted let them be reassured so that they can overcome fear.[47]

Here we not only have reference to Adamson's personal life but also to a very specific imagining of the child audience whereby adults become responsible for teaching them about the world through inducing fear in environments where they can then also become the comforters. Similarly, Applebaum states that 'Adamson...has become a father of two since starting the project, and thinks that the Lewis books have a lesson for today's parents.' He then goes onto quote Adamson as saying 'We're somewhat patronising to children. While you never want harm to come to your kids, if you over-protect

[45] Appelbaum, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p22,staff writer, *Times Magazine: The Knowledge 2005*,Kennelly, *Creative Screenwriting 12 [2005]*, p30

[46] Devlin, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p128

[47] *http://www.tiscali.co.uk/entertainment/film/features/narnia_podcasts.html*

them, they're never going to look after themselves.'[48] Thus notions of learning independence, overcoming adversity and confronting fear are not only deemed to be integral to the book and the film, they are also deemed to be integral to Adamson's approach to parenting. In this way, Adamson's attachment to the novel continues to be a part of his personal narrative, and it is through this that the film (aside from the religious based marketing/reception in America) is largely framed. Furthermore, other than Adamson and the four young actors there is little mention of other filmmaking personnel. One person who does make a frequent appearance in press and marketing material is, however, Tilda Swinton who plays the White Witch. Personal narrative is again central here; however, the focus is on how Swinton is largely unique among the cast and crew for not having read the books - a status which seems to work well with her role as the film's antagonist. A *Starburst Magazine Yearbook* article, for instance, states:

> ..Swinton did not read CS Lewis's Narnia novels as a child "I think the world is divided into those who were and those who weren't [Narnian children]. I only read two books...because...Adamson asked me to. It was Andrew's film that I wanted to be in, it was not the case that I was a huge fan of Narnia who was dying to do it."[49]

This focus on Swinton having not read the books seems to be an attempt to convince those who have not read the book that the film can (and for some does) exist as a stand alone entity. Furthermore, Adamson is the significant figure here as far as Swinton is concerned, and her assertion that she read the books only because he asked her to perhaps suggests an imagined allegiance with contemporary children who are, as we will see, largely depicted (when they appear at all) as non-readers - at least non readers of the Narnia books. Similarly a different *Starburst* article reads

> Swinton knew next to nothing about Narnia when she signed on for the film. She liked the script and hit it off with Adamson, and it's her affinity for directors that more often than not drives her decision to partake in a film... "I [Swinton] was an infidel...I wasn't a Narnian child, so I didn't have the feeling of pressure".[50]

[48] Appelbaum/Adamson quoted in, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p22
[49] staff/Swinton quoted in, *Starburst Magazine Yearbook 2005*, p91
[50] staff, *Starburst Spcc [2005]*, pp51-53

Here there is clearly a binary perception in terms of childhood and the Lewis books - for Swinton, you are either a 'Narnian' child (which clearly suggests some kind of citizenship) or not - and once again it is clear how, in this press material, Narnia is used in the defining of personal narrative *even when it has not been read by the person it is defining.* The idea that Swinton is an 'infidel' also seems to further validate her casting as the White Witch in an *Empire* article that states that 'It's no surprise that, when first approached to play the evil queen of the frost-bitten fantasy-world of Narnia, Tilda Swinton had reservations...It's not even like she was a fan of the C.S.Lewis book.'[51] This indifference to Narnia becomes a defining marker of Swinton as she is presented in this press material, and the notion of her being an 'infidel' is clearly linked to the character she plays.

Adult rememberings of Childhood (Literary) Love

> The difficulty is there's a hundred million people or so that have read this book...all of them with their own impressions and imaginations...[52]

The notion of 'love' is rarely explicitly spoken about in adaptation theory. One rare example is Robert Stam in his book *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*[53] when he says 'Words like "infidelity" and "betrayal" [in response to adaptations of literature] translate our feeling, when we have loved a book, that an adaptation has not been worthy of that love.'[54] Similarly James Naremore, in his book *Film Adaptation*, states that

> We read a novel through our introjected desires, hopes and utopias, and as we read we fashion our own imaginary mise-en-scene of the novel on the private stages of our minds. When we are confronted with someone else's phantasy...we feel the loss of our own phantasmatic relation to the novel, with the result that the adaptation becomes a kind of "bad object"[55]

[51] staff, *Empire 2005*, p11
[52] Appelbaum/Adamson quoted in, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p22
[53] Stam/Raengo, *Literature and Film: A guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*
[54] Ibid., p14
[55] Naremore, *Film Adaptation*, p54

What neither Stam nor Naremore consider (or adaptation theory in general, which rarely discusses film adaptations of children's literature) is adult responses to adaptations of books that we have read as children, or the ways that books we have read as children become, potentially, ingrained in our sense of personal narrative and sense of self. That is not to say that books we have read as adults do not have the potential to influence our sense of personal narrative, rather that those read as developing children seem to become even more sacred and in need of 'protection,' because they are linked to a childhood which is past. As such, for many adult academics and critics, the Narnia books appear to become a way for them to hold onto or reclaim their childhood selves.

Thus, in scholarly work on and popular reception of Lewis's books, as well as the marketing and reception of Adamson's adaptation, it would appear that regardless of the context of the writing, the mere mention of Narnia opens the floodgates to childhood memories that the writers (academics and journalists alike) are more than happy to share with their readers. There is little/no attempt to 'hide' these personal and subjective involvements with the book through academic discourse in the way that Matt Hills argues is commonly the case in critical theory.[56] Instead, these writers mediate their memories of childhood though the Narnia books just as Lewis did in regards to a variety of authors and stories throughout his autobiographical works. So important were stories to Lewis, that he says, for instance, '...my secret, imaginative life [of stories was] so distinct from my outer life that I almost have to tell two separate stories.'[57] In the Narnia-related childhood recollections of journalists and academics, however, the contemporary child audience is marginalised because they fall outside of the nostalgic rememberings of the book. Despite this, this example does go some way to unpicking the subjective responses commonly found in regards to adaptations in general, where the relationship of the book to readers' identities is not talked about so openly (or at all).

In Natasha Giardina's chapter "Elusive Prey: Searching for Traces of Narnia in the Jungles of the Psyche," which appeared in *Revisiting Narnia*, for example (which was written the same year that the film was released),

[56]Hills, *Media Audiences as Media Academics: Aesthetic Judgements in Media and Cultural Studies*

[57]Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*

the search for continuity in relation to personal narrative and Narnia is particularly profound. Here, Giardina begins with an anecdote of her and some friends sitting, chatting and drinking wine. She tells how someone posed the question when someone 'Do you remember when you first read Narnia?'[58] and says 'Immediately there was a torrent of excitement, Like September 11 or the first Moon landing, everyone remembered their first amazing experience of Narnia. Everyone but me.'[59] Following this, her chapter tells of her journey to work out why she could not really remember reading the Narnia books - and why they were not as important to her as they were to her friends. In this she discusses the different ideological meanings of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and (in a very conversational manner) theorises why her childhood self did not relate to them. However, as she looks deeper into her 'psyche' she discovers that she does, after all, believe the book to be largely responsible for her love of nature, traveling and art. She thus concludes by saying:

> With my psychological safari over, I reemerge into the outside world. Narnia did leave an impact on me after all, although it took a while to trace its spoor across my psyche. It may not have made me less cynical, or more saintly, but I can probably thank Narnia for the nature art on my walls, my enthusiasm for international travel and my occasional moments of previously inexplicable transcendental longing...[60]

Here, Giardina is integrating the narrative of her present (both in terms of where she is in her life as well as episodic moments such as the reported dinner with friends) with the narrative of her past self as it relates to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Of course it is not depicted as the only influence on her development - she mentions lots of other literature as well - but it would seem that this particular novel is the one that had an enormous impact on her without her even realising. Thus the chapter follows the author through a process that attempts to make her personal narrative more continuous and credible - it helps to explain parts of herself that she has never fully understood before and helps her integrate her personal narrative

[58] Giardina, *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*, p33

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., p42

with that of her friends so that she too can, in some way, become a 'citizen' of Narnia.

In relation to the adaptation, one author of a *Guardian* article seems to confuse being faithful to the book to being faithful to her own personal imaginings of the book. She says 'This new Disney film is a remarkably faithful rendition of the book - faithful in both senses. It is beautiful to look at and wonderfully acted. The four English children and their world are all authentically CS Lewis older England.'[61] Being 'beautiful to look at' and 'wonderfully acted' are generally not qualities of literature in its written form, so there is the suggestion that the author is, again, remarking about the fidelity of the film to her imagined ideas about Narnia (as well as its relationship to 'older England' and, perhaps, past adaptations of it) as opposed to how it exists in Lewis's book. She goes on to relate the story more explicitly to her own personal narrative (and that of her Mother) when she says:

> Poor child Edmund, to blame for everything, must bear the full weight of a guilt only Christians know how to inflict, with a twisted knife to the heart. Every one of those thorns, the nuns used to tell my mother, is hammered into Jesus's holy head every day that you don't eat your greens or say your prayers when you are told. So the resurrected Aslan gives Edmund a long, life-changing talk-to high up on the rocks out of earshot. When the poor boy comes back down...he is transformed unrecognisably into a Stepford brother, well and truly purged.[62]

Toynbee's strong reaction to the religious content of the film is clearly influenced by the events that have occurred in the life of her and her mother, and it is reasonable to assume (given the fact that these events occurred in the novel), that her objections are not aimed solely at the film but rather the novel as well. And whilst it is not imperative to know exactly how Toynbee's comments relate to her personal narrative (other than those which she explicitly states), what is clear is that this is a very personal and invested response to the film which comes from the way that it intersects with aspects

[61] Toynbee, *The Guardian 2005*, p8

[62] Ibid., p10

of her personal narrative and the ideological framework within which this sits. Mar and Oatley argue that, whilst reading, 'memories and imagery are often evoked in the minds of readers'[63] and it is possible that Toynbee's objections to the film are prompted both by the adult mediation of her memories of being a child (including her Mother's stories) as well as her memories of reading the book.

Likewise, Justine Picardie, in another *Guardian* article says:

> ...can the Disney version measure up to the books that [I] so cherished as a child?...it's going to be hard to let go of my own imaginary version of Narnia: a world that seemed entirely real to me...When I lost a milk-tooth, I knew it was Aslan who came padding silently along the nighttime street and up the stairs into the darkness of our first-floor London flat...and it was Aslan I waited for, with my sister, inside our bedroom wardrobe, hoping a door would open to the other side...in adulthood, I have returned to Lewis's books in times of heartbreak or distress...[64]

Here Picardie is clearly remembering her childhood imaginings with reverence and nostalgia, and it is clear that the books are important to her sense of self because she re-reads them when disruptive events occur in her adult life. Her memories of her own childhood, however, appear vastly different from her perceptions about the childhood of her own children. She says:

> ...my own sons [however] have displayed less passionate attachment to the Narnia series...they belong to a generation for whom computer screens have replaced wardrobes as a door into another world...That [does not mean that] they are less engaged than I was as a child with the narrative power of magical fantasies...the boundaries are sufficiently blurred between us, as parents and children, to allow the Disney executives to feel they have invested wisely in another kidult blockbuster, a reassuring return to a story of unimpeachable moral integrity from a golden age of British literature, complete with centaurs and fauns.... [65]

[63]Raymond A Mar, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, p180
[64]Picardie, *The Guardian 2005*
[65]Ibid.

Picardie is clearly enjoying the act of storytelling in relation to her current life as well as how her childhood self told stories and made sense of the world. In this she is also negotiating/consolidating her childhood self with her present self, as well as her personal narrative and that of her children. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* appears to help bridge the gaps, and therefore help to create narrative continuity, between a variety of disparate times in and elements of her life. Like with Adamson, then, Narnia is presented as integral to her sense of self.

However the reported relationship of Picardie's own children to the book and film seems less consistent. On the one hand they are not attached to the Narnia series, but on the other they are 'interested' in the stories (as presented on film, at least). There seems to be a sense of loss here in regards to the act of reading, for there is an underlying assumption that contemporary children do not hold books to the same esteem as past generations - they do not care enough about the books to be 'troubled'[66] by film adaptations whilst she, presumably, does. There also seems to be a sense of loss in regards to the imagination in that the creation of stories of her own childhood (such as Aslan collecting her milk teeth), seems to have been replaced by the fast paced, internet driven, childhoods of her children. As I discuss later, however, the actual child performers in the film are in fact aligned with these adults (who read and loved the books) rather than the contemporary child audience who are not - as far as the press discourses go - assumed to have read the book.

The relationship of Narnia to identity, imagination and the self also appears, in a variety of guises, throughout much internet-based reception of the film, and this works to give continuity to the different types of sources dealt with here. One viewer response to a *Guardian* article, for instance, reads 'I came to this film as someone who'd read and loved the books as a boy and this film didn't spoil the memory of them, which is as big a compliment as I can give.'[67] However, the responses are not all positive. One, for instance, reads:

> This film reminds me of the Lassie films I would have to endure when I was younger....Dreadful acting, poor quality effects, and worst of all, the gushing sentiment from posh children from

[66]Picardie, *The Guardian 2005*
[67]anon, *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe Review*

> Finchley. Boring, boring and thrice boring. You don't need to be a child to enjoy film adaptations of children's books, but in this case it's a must.[68]

Here the writer is clearly linking the film to aspects of his or her childhood self and finding the film lacking because of the memories it sparks in relation to the (rather sentimental) *Lassie* films. In this there is also suggestion of the writer's ideological standpoint in relationship to class. The negotiation of ideological beliefs forms a part of the process of constructing a personal narrative,[69] and it is clear that whilst the novel itself does not seem to form a significant part of the writer's personal narrative, the film is able to intersect with that personal narrative, albeit in a negative manner - and it is this intersection which seems to provoke such emotionally strong responses to the film.

Nostalgia and the Displaced Contemporary Child

> ...*The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*...has long existed in the collective imaginations of three generations of C.S Lewis fans, who are unlikely to give Adamson's interpretation an easy ride.[70]

In the above quote it is clear that whilst Adamson's imagination has been privileged in the marketing material of the adaptation, the filmmakers cannot, entirely, ignore the popularity of the books and the fact that it is not just Adamson's imagination that has been inspired by Lewis's novel. However there seems to be the sense that Adamson does not share in this 'collective imagination,' for if he did there would be no concern as to whether he is able to please the 'three generations' of fans. The implication is, therefore, that Adamson can only follow his imagination (which is what, as I have shown, he purports to do) whilst also hoping that it, in some ways, his childhood imagining relates to the imagining of 'millions' of other people. In this, however, there is no mention of any potential imaginative process in regards to potential contemporary audiences for the film. Rather, the role of the imagination seems to lie solely in the reading of the book and - in Adamson's case - the production of an adaptation.

[68] anon, *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe Review*
[69] P.McAdams, *The Stories We Live By: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self*
[70] staff writer, *Times Magazine: The Knowledge 2005*

In this affinity with the book, there is a sense that Adamson is able to capture the 'spirit of the book.' A 2005 *Starburst* article, for instance, reads '...Adamson...promises to stick to C.S.Lewis in the same way Peter Jackson stayed true to the spirit of Tolkien.'[71] Likewise, an article in the *Independent Arts and Books review* reads '...Adamson's film is a triumphant piece of fantasy film-making that even Lewis, who once wrote, "there is death in the camera", might have enjoyed.'[72] Again, the notion of fantasy and the imagination is prominent - however it is related to authorship only and not to reading or viewing. Thus it would seem that, as far as this marketing material is concerned, the use of the imagination stops with Adamson, and any reference to anyone else having engaged their imaginations in regards to the text is used only in the past tense. The readers of the Narnia books are, then (unlike the other case studies here), not contemporary children but rather adults who read the books as children, and as the bulk of the marketing campaign's onus seems to be on pleasing those that have their own imagined versions of Narnia in their minds, it is logical (although not explicitly stated) that the viewers the filmmakers are most concerned about pleasing are adults. A somewhat more ambivalent *Independent* article by Robert Hanks reads:

> ...Adamson's adaptation - or, more strictly, realisation - of C.S Lewis's *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* is [not] without astonishments, but they don't arise from the big set pieces...technology has caught up so effectively with the writer's imagination that the fantasy has not had to be curtailed for the screen...there is the pleasure, if you have read the book, of seeing on screen something as vivid as your own dreams...[however] there aren't many surprises in store...[73]

Here the focus is on both Lewis's imagination as well as the imagination of the readers of the books, and the author appears to assume that potential viewers, if they have read the book, will already have 'vivid' versions of their own Narnia in their minds that can be straightforwardly rendered on screen. However, that Adamson can produce something as '...vivid as [one's] own dreams...' actually seems to be rather a banal accomplishment as far as

[71] staff, *Starburst Magazine Yearbook 2005*, p88
[72] Appelbaum, *Independent Arts and Books review 2005*, p23
[73] Hanks, *The Independent 2005*

Hanks is concerned. Instead, there is a sense of disappointment that CGI has been able to catch up with/take over the previously private role of the imagination. Hanks also talks about Lewis's imagination as if he (Hanks) has a knowledge of what exactly Lewis had in his own mind, and as this of course cannot be the case, it is reasonable to assume that the primary imagination that Hanks is referring to is his own. Furthermore, given Hank's assertion that the film will not surprise anyone who has read the book, and that there is, as I have said, little mention of contemporary children reading the book in the press material (and I have found no evidence that the Narnia books are as popular as the other books of this thesis amongst contemporary children) it would seem that contemporary child audiences are once again, through omission, marginalised. Despite this, the idea that the novel was intended to engage the imagination of everyone that reads it, regardless of age, gender, class etc is clear from Lewis's own writing. He says in his essay 'On Stories' that:

> No book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty...the only imaginative works we ought to grow out of are those which it would have been better not to have read at all.[74]

Throughout Lewis's critical writing he worked to break down the boundaries between adult and children's literature,[75] and made no excuses for his continual re-reading and enjoyment of the books he originally read as a child. For him, his imagination was somewhere he retreated to; it was where he (according to his autobiography) was happiest, and age had very little to do with it. In his essay 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children,' for example, Lewis asserts that

> When I was ten, I read fairy tales in secret and would have been ashamed if I had been found doing so. Now I am fifty I read them openly. When I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up...surely arrested development consists not in refusing to lose old things but in failing to add new things.[76]

[74]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*, p14
[75]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*
[76]Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*, p34

For Lewis, then, his childhood - or at least reading the childhood books he loved - was more openly accessible to him as he became an adult, and therefore the enjoyments of childhood did not need to stop at childhood. In this, time and identity is, for Lewis, much more fluid than the familiar binary opposition between adulthood and childhood. However it is still a very particular type of childhood that he is discussing - one where children read fantasy stories in secret - and this is not how contemporary children are discussed by those writing this press and marketing material. Therefore the binary opposition here seems to be between children of the past and contemporary children; and which ultimately - in that these children of the past are now adults - reinforces the boundaries that the press material works to disavow in discourses surrounding the appeal of the books to people of all ages. In a rare depiction of contemporary children in the press and marketing material, for instance, the aforementioned Picardie paints them as a generation who do/might read fantasy books, but who don't hold books in particular esteem in relation to films and television,[77] whilst actor James McAvoy, who played Mr Tumnus, discusses their need to escape from their current lives in a *Starburst* article:

> Asked what he hopes children will take away [from the film], McAvoy [Tumnus] is quick with a response. "...To me, Narnia represents your imagination and so it's for kids who can't do anything about the situation they're in, but are able to use their imagination, are able to let that open up your world a bit...[78]

Thus whilst he is positive in that he suggests the film will allow viewers to use their imaginations, for him the purpose of this is to escape their actual lived childhoods. There is, explicitly, no nostalgic air about his idea of childhood here - the film is for powerless children who presumably would, if they could, change their circumstances. However the imaginative place that they might escape to - in this case Narnia - is, in the form of it's characters, pervaded with nostalgically imagined images of childhoods past. This, arguably, suggests that childhood as represented in the novel is preferable to childhood as it is lived today. Furthermore, judging by this quote, the adaptation appears to, for McAvoy, provide that imaginative escape just as

[77] Picardie, *The Guardian 2005*
[78] staff, *Starburst Spcc [2005]*, p51

much, presumably, as the book. As we have discussed however, for Lewis, the purpose of reading imaginative works was not to escape from something but was, rather, an end in itself - for him the real joy in reading lay in the imaginative exploration of fantastical worlds, and spectacle and action were distractions from this for him.[79]

However, according to the discussions of the child performers at least, real children are unable to accomplish this level of imaginative immersion - at least not enough to allow them to fulfill their acting roles. This is of course not unusual in the discussion of child performers, whereby directors are often deemed to have to get 'genuine' performances from the child actors because, as children, they are either categorised as 'being' children, so that what the director shoots is 'captured actuality' [80] or they are regarded as 'freak[s]'[81] because they possess '...adult like qualities which allow...[them] to act in a child-*like* rather than child-*ish* manner.'[82]

The difficulties in relation to this are evident in the aforementioned *Premiere* article, which reads 'The young British actors...who play the Pevensie children "were cast for their similarities to the characters," says Adamson. Thus...Keynes, who [plays] Edmund, was chosen "because I'm a bit spiteful...especially with my real life brothers and sisters."'[83] They also come up on the DVD extras when Adamson says 'I didn't particularly want to find actors as much as children that that were capable of acting but that were inherently like their characters.'[84] Quite what the distinction is between actors and children capable of acting is unclear, however, and whilst he does acknowledge that he wants children who can 'act' this is secondary to ensuring the children are like their characters - which, presumably, is because he needs the required acting to be minimal.

These problems surrounding the child performer also work to further demarcate the child performers from the filmmaking adults in relation to the imagination because the depiction of the filmmaking adults (who have imaginative powers, or at least access to the imaginative powers of their

[79]Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*; Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*; Lewis, *On Stories And Other Essays in Literature*

[80]Lury, *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, p10

[81]Ibid.

[82]Lury/Authors own italics, *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, p10

[83]Devlin, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p132

[84]Adamson/DVD extras, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*

childhood selves) are in binary opposition to these child performers whose lack of imaginative powers has to be compensated for by the filmmaking team. Thus, whilst the main strength of the director is, according to the press material, that he can access his own childhood imagination, the imaginative powers of the child performers are disavowed. From watching the DVD extras, however, it is clear that this did not necessarily need to be the case, for there are many scenes showing the children acting against a green screen (which one would imagine requires a high level of imaginative engagement); however these instances are rarely discussed in the press material. Instead, the stories of how the director got 'natural performances' out of the children dominate. An anecdote taken from the DVD extras (which is also quoted on IMDB) says, for instance, that:

> Georgie Henley's reaction to Mr. Tumnus at the lamppost is genuine. She had not seen her cast mate James McAvoy in his costume before the scene was filmed, so her screams and reaction were real. Georgie's first reaction to the snowy world of Narnia is also genuine - she was carried into the set blindfolded to make her first entrance, and her wide-eyed, delighted reactions to it all are entirely her own[85]

In this way, there is a sense that Georgie is delighting in Adamson's imagination made real, and also allowing herself to believe in this world as Lucy does in the story. However it is also clear from this that Adamson did not trust her performances to be 'genuine' enough without this - he did not trust that she could imagine herself in the world as he reportedly did when he was a child. In regards to this, he is quoted in the *Premiere* article, as saying 'I took the blindfold off and told her just to react, and she was trembling with excitement...she wasn't acting, she was just completely feeling the same thing Lucy would have felt stepping into another world.'[86]This works to disavow the acting skills and imagination of Henley at the same time as positioning her within the cultural conceptions of a nostalgically imagined childhood, for there is a childish innocence in the notion that Henley, for at least a moment, believed the world (set) she had walked in to.

Lury states that, in film, '...the child figure is frequently over-determined by the priorities of interested adults - of the director, of the writer, the other

[85] *Internet Movie Database*
[86] Devlin, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p132

adult actors and the adult audience.'[87] Here, as with *Harry Potter*, getting 'genuine performances' out of the children works to validate the director's authorial presence, and here it is particularly significant in that in doing this it undermines the central notion of the imagination in relation to the child performers (and, presumably, other 'real' children as well). Despite this, the nostalgic sense of the childhood/childish imagination pervades - however, the realm of the imagination as it is presented here seems to be occupied solely by adults remembering their own childhood imaginations. Additionally, it is Lucy that allows her older siblings to 'believe' again, and the ability to believe is closely tied to the notion of the imagination. Thus there is the sense that in order to grow up well one must hold on to the imagination and belief we had as children. However, an adult holding onto the imagination that they had as a child is very different to believing in the imaginations of contemporary children, a belief that is clearly not in place here.

This is significant because it would seem that, from looking at the press and marketing material, what is at stake is the childhood selves of the adult filmmakers/critics/journalists - they are also the 'interested parties' of Lury's accounts, and real contemporary children, as I have argued, are marginalised. The child viewers of the previous case studies were imagined/constructed in very different ways, and these constructions were inextricably linked to the constructions of the authors (of both novels and films) at hand. Yet here - in the case study that privileges the imagination to such a degree that it dominates the press discourses - the potential child audience is not depicted as imaginatively engaged readers and viewers - those types of readers/viewers belong to a lost time, a time that, ultimately, the film only allows the adult filmmakers and writers access to.

The likening of the child actors to their characters also works to marginalise contemporary children because those characters are so ingrained in nostalgic constructions of childhood, adulthood and literature in general. In regards to William Moseley for instance the *Premiere* article reads 'To William Mosely, the 18 year old boy who plays Peter, the parallels [to his character] were obvious. "Peter is meant to go from a boy to a man...and I [Mosely] feel that's definitely what happened to me.'[88] Here, the film production is

[87]Lury, *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, p10
[88]Devlin, *Premiere 19 [2005]*, p132

deemed to function as a right of passage - Mosely becomes a 'man', whereas in reality of course such dramatic life changing events are unlikely. A similar, but less dramatic anecdote appears in a *Times Magazine* article about Anna Popplewell, who plays Susan. The author writes that

> While her [Popplewell's] parents were away, she took charge of household bills, and gave herself a budget to live on, so when her jet-lagged father arrived, slumped himself in a chair and took out a book, she turned off his reading light and reminded him not to waste electricity.[89]

Here Popplewell is depicted as 'playing house' and looking after her father in a manner very much in line with her 'bossy' character. She was not, presumably, living independently during the shooting of the film; however being the sensible child playing at being grown up is again a very particular way of imagining children and childhood; however whether this representation is likely to resonate with actual child audience members (who most likely don't get to play house far away from home for long periods of time and who, perhaps, don't lecture their parents about their use of electricity) is questionable. Instances that are, arguably, more likely to resonate with contemporary audiences do not seem to find themselves in the press material. In the DVD extras, for instance, Adamson (who seems to know he is baiting the children) asks Popplewell whether she has read all of the Narnia books, and she replies "Of course I have", at which point Moseley laughs and retorts "Not!" while Keynes (who plays Edmund) laughs "Yeah...I have too" before walking off set. That the children have clearly not read all of the books might well align them with contemporary child audiences; however it is not a story (unlike others than come up on the DVD extras) that proliferates the press material. This is in contrast to the *Harry Potter* actors who do discuss their reading of the books. Another key element to the DVD extras is the children making up and singing a rap song to keep themselves amused whilst they are between shots. Again, this story would represent the child performers in a much more modern and relatable way, but it does not find its way into the press material.

Thus the depiction of the child performers in the discussions surrounding the film is significant because the press discourses situate the child perform-

[89] Jacobi, *Times Magazine 2005*, p25

ers somewhat uneasily between the contemporary children of the present (a category to which they clearly belong), the nostalgically imagined children of the past (in relation to the characters they play) and the contemporary cultural conceptions of childhood (as discussed in earlier chapters) regarding childhood innocence and play. Because of this uneasiness it is difficult to see how contemporary audiences might relate to these performers, which is again, one would think, an opportunity that has been missed by the film marketers to include contemporary children in their campaign.

Conclusion

As with the previous two case studies, the ways that the audience members are imagined is inextricably bound up with the ways that the book and film authors are imagined. However this construction seems to virtually exclude contemporary children in the construction of audience, and instead replace them with adults who cherished the books as children. Because of this there appears to be a divide between the nostalgically imagined children of the past and contemporary children of the present, even though the bulk of discussions surrounding the film work to break down the distinctions between childhood and adulthood. This conflation of adulthood and childhood forms part of the narrative itself, which sees children grow to adults in Narnia only to revert back to children when they find themselves back in the wardrobe at the close of the book (and film); however this conflation also appears in the marketing and press material. One such (subtle) example of this occurs in the aforementioned *Starburst* article which reads '...this [film] promises to be both a cinematic treat and a faithful representation of a book that features large in the memories of young readers.'[90] Here it is unclear whether the 'young readers' referred to are ones that exist in the present or that existed in the past. Indeed, in order for the reading of the book to have become something that is classed as a 'memory' suggests a distance in time which contemporary children will not have yet experienced. On the surface this creates a harmony between the representations of child and adult viewers that is at odds with the representations of the child/adult binary that is so common in not only the discussions about the previous two case studies, but cultural production in general. Paradoxically, however, contemporary

[90] staff, *Starburst Magazine Yearbook 2005*, p88

children would appear to be excluded from this harmonious linking of childhood and adulthood that, through Adamson in particular, forms the crux of the marketing campaign. It is, therefore, only through their absence that the contemporary child audience is configured at all in this case study, and is not, like the previous case study, an uneasy absence. Rather it is an absence that opens the door to marketers, filmmaking personnel, academics and journalists alike to reclaim their own childhoods and, through through this, claim 'ownership' of a text that, according to the same writers, is one that appeals to all ages.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In the early years of the new millennium, animations aimed at a family audience, such as *Monster's Inc* (Pete Doctor, 2003), *Shrek* (Adamson, 2001) and *Ice Age* (Chris Wedge, 2002) proved popular with worldwide box office grosses of $562,816,256, $484,409,218 and $383,257,136[1] respectively. In comparison, seemingly popular live action films family films such as *The Princess Diaries* (Marshall, 2001), *Spy Kids* (Rodriguez, 2001) and *Peter Pan* (Hogan, 2003) performed (in comparison to these animations), poorly with worldwide box office grosses of $165,335,153, $147,934,180 and $121,975,011 respectively (although the poor return on *Spy Kids* did not prevent two sequels from being made). During this time, adaptations of children's books were given huge budgets (budgets which, as estimated on IMDB.com, exceed the lifetime grosses of the aforementioned live action films), made up a significant portion of the big blockbuster live action releases and proved to be very profitable. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, for instance, has a worldwide gross of $974,755,371; *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* has a worldwide gross of $871,530,324, and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has a lifetime gross of $745,013,115. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, however, has a worldwide gross of 'only' $474,968,763 which, in comparison to other adaptations is perhaps poor, but in comparison to other live action family films is decent. It was not only adaptations of children's books that proved popular, however, but also adaptations of comic books - *Spider Man* (Raimi, 2002) has a worldwide gross of $821,708,551 whilst *Batman Begins* (Nolan,

[1] *Box Office Mojo*, last checked on the 15th December 2015

2005) has a worldwide gross of $374,218,873.

An important factor in the appearance of these adaptations around this time was that digital effects had developed to a point that the filmmakers could marry the live action shots (almost) seamlessly with the computer generated ones, which meant that the film adaptations of children's books were able to depict hugely fantastical worlds in ways that also satisfied audience expectations for big movie blockbusters. *Harry Potter* was, in itself - according at least to Mark Johnson, the producer of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* - also a significant factor in the decisions to make these adaptations in ways that were deemed to be 'faithful' to their original (British) sources. In a promotional podcast interview with Scott Mills,[2] for instance, Johnson says:

> although Narnia is very different [from *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings*] the *Harry Potter* movies have helped the filmmakers keep true to the roots of the book. *Harry Potter* was very important to us because almost ten years ago I produced a film that was set in England but the studio insisted that we re-set it in the States under the assumption the American audiences or world audiences weren't interested in things British or British children [here he is quite clearly referring to the 1995 adaptation of *A Little Princess* that was directed by Alfonso Cuaron], and *Harry Potter* came along and proved that everybody could be captivated by British children and a British story so that really allowed us to make this film in the way it was intended.

However, whilst this was clearly a profitable time for many of these adaptations, they did not come without their risks. *The Golden Compass* (Chris Weitz, 2007),[3] which was adapted from Phillip Pullman's book *His Dark Materials* was, for instance, considered such a failure (with a worldwide box office gross of 'only' $373,234,864) that the second two books of the series were not adapted. That this adaptation, which grossed much higher (albeit at a higher production cost) than many non-adapted family family films

[2] I have a transcription of this podcast although it is unfortunately no longer available online.

[3] The worldwide gross for this film is, according to boxofficemojo.com, $372,234,864, having been made on a budget of approximately $180,00,000. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, however, has a worldwide gross of 974,755,371 whilst *The Lord of The Rings: The Return of the King* has a worldwide gross of 1,119,929,521.

does, perhaps, give us some indication of the expectations that filmmakers have for revenue in regards to adaptations that they might not, perhaps, have had for other types of family films. Likewise, *Lemony Snickets: A series of Unfortunate Events* (Silberling, 2004) performed - in comparison to the other adaptations discussed here - very poorly with a worldwide gross of $209,073,645, while *The Little White Horse: The Secret of Moonacr*e (Gabor Csupo, 2009) isn't even listed on boxofficemojo.com.[4] Furthermore, whilst the *Harry Potter* series performed exceedingly well for the entire series (*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2* has a worldwide gross of $1,134,511,219), the *Narnia* series was not so successful in maintaining momentum and petered out after the first three films (of which only the first two were directed by Adamson).[5]

What these figures show us is that the discourses of fear, which were so prominent in the discussions surrounding *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone*, are the result of very real concerns about the financial risks involved in undertaking these high budget adaptations. What is also clear is that, in a variety of ways, the book authors were vital to the promotional campaigns for these films, and that without the discursively constructed/imagined child readers/viewers, these author figures would not have, in themselves, been so coherently constructed. There is still, however, much more work to be done in considering the discursive function of childhood in popular culture, and - perhaps more importantly - the different ways that children themselves are actively engaging with, reflecting on and/or rebutting these constructions.

Thus, a more in depth look at how these issues are negotiated within texts themselves (as I will briefly discuss below) is one way forward for this study. There are also several other routes that this thesis paves the way for. Firstly, an examination of the entire *Harry Potter* series would shed light on the ways that the filmmakers moulded their promotional discourses to suit the growing ages of their child audience members. Secondly, it is important to highlight the fact that all of the case studies covered here were released at a time when web 2.0 was gaining popularity but when social media was in its

[4] its IMDB.com figures fall within the hundreds of thousands (rather than the hundreds of millions) in regards to its box office receipts

[5] *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* has a worldwide gross of $745,013,115, but *Prince Caspian* (Andrew Adamson, 2008) and *The Voyage Of The Dawn Treader* (Michael Apted, 2010) have worldwide grosses of just over the $400,000,000 mark.

infancy. Therefore, an important area of future study would be to examine how this landscape has changed and consider how the rise of social media has (I would hypothesise) helped filmmakers to promote children's literary adaptations (and children's films more generally), in a way that moves from filmmakers having a 'conversation' with an imagined audience to having a conversation (albeit a web mediated one) with real, actual, potential audience members. There is also much scope for more child centred reception studies through an examination of child fan communities as they appear online or, perhaps, in person - for whilst Buckingham et al[6] have worked with children in many of their studies - which often centre around television viewing or digital media in general - there is much potential here for development in relation to film. Another important area of future study is the examination of child produced media, the dissemination of which YouTube has made possible. Here (as my preliminary research has confirmed), children can and do express their thoughts and opinions, and they do reflect on and question the world around them as well as the images of themselves and others that they are presented with in mainstream media.

Methodologically this thesis has overcome some challenges. Most significantly, it is an interdisciplinary study that considers, amongst other fields, adaptation studies, theories of authorship, childhood, celebrity and fandom, and (as with all interdisciplinary studies) negotiating these, whilst forming a clear agenda, was, at times, a formidable task. I have also brought into discussion biographical and autobiographical works, academic work on the case studies and related film/book texts (which has not always been dealt with equally because some of it has been more academically distanced from its subject than others), and press material surrounding the case studies. Additionally I have, on occasion, referred to internet based reception material. Whilst this has proved challenging, this approach is necessary in order to fully examine the construction of authorship and audience because these constructions are negotiated in a wide array of material. Furthermore, the ambiguous status of some of the academic material discussed has highlighted how invested adults can be in books that they have read as children and the impact that this can have on their remembering of their childhood selves.

[6]Buckingham, *Moving Images: Understanding Children's Emotional Responses to Television*; Bazalgette/Buckingham, *In Front of the Children - Screen Entertainment and Young Audiences*; Buckingham, *Reading Audiences: Young People and the Media*; David Buckingham, *Young People, Sex and the Media: The Facts of Life?*

The chapters in this thesis, therefore, investigate the ways that adaptations that are marketed as adaptations inevitably have to try and find some way for the the book and film authors to co-exist peacefully; however my analysis of the press material works to uncover the difficulties that arise in this endeavor. In *Harry Potter*, Chris Columbus has very little author status because J.K Rowling is such a strong author figure. That he had no chance in this battle does not, however, mean that he does not take little authorial victories whenever he can slip them into his interviews in a relatively innocuous manner. Because the authorship here is so solidly and unambiguously constructed around Rowling means that the child audience too can be coherently constructed. Not content with just imagining and talking about children, however, the press campaign - unlike the other two case studies here - brought in real children in the form of child-written articles and reviews. This meant that despite the rather nostalgically constructed child reader/viewer, there was an actual child presence in the campaign even if the 'chosen' child reviewers ultimately worked to replay the 'chosen child' narrative so central to the story. Furthermore, because the discussions surrounding the film constructed the author and child readers/viewers in such an unambiguous manner also meant that their target audience (child readers of the books) was clear. The narrowness of this audience construction does not, however, appear to have harmed film's success. Instead, the film was marketed specifically to child readers of the books with (most likely) the safe knowledge that others (for instance people enticed by the special effects, adult fans and adult carers of child fans) would follow. The aforementioned discourses of 'fear,' that were omnipresent in the discussions surrounding this film, also indicate that the filmmakers, even if they did not openly say it, were fully aware of the economic value that potential child audiences had and were keen to invite them to feel included in the promotion of the film.

Tim Burton, the only director considered in this thesis that has any kind of auteur status, attempts to show, through his 'dark' personality and view on the world, that he is at one with Dahl and can therefore channel his spirit. This means that Dahl can be brought into the press material without any obvious damage to Burton's status as author. However the major flaw to this was that Dahl is much more reader centered in his address and style and, according to Mark West, 'represents the crudity of childhood,'[7] whereas

[7]West, *Roald Dahl*, p123

Burton and his work is much more centred on the individual.[8] Thus readers of Dahl are constructed as emotionally mature children who enjoy the crude elements of his work at the same time as being able to process the darker themes that come up, whilst the Burton viewer is generally constructed as an angsty 'loner' figure who identifies with Burton on a much more individual basis. Because of these un-addressed authorial incongruities, which the recourse to their 'dark' personalities did not fully compensate for, the discussions surrounding the film never really established a cohesive construction of its intended audience - indeed, the focus on Burton meant that there seemed to be little concern for the audience at all. Neither was there much talk about any of the child performers aside from the rare cursory reference to Freddie Highmore.[9] This meant that contemporary readers of Dahl's books were excluded from the press campaign surrounding the film. And whilst there are of course many factors in a film's success or failure, the lack of a clear intended audience and the resultant reliance on Burton's auteur status did not, arguably, help maximise the film's box office receipts which grossed significantly less than the other two case studies discussed here.

Andrew Adamson who, like Columbus, is no auteur figure, did manage to gain a greater authorial status than Columbus through his assertion that he was 'filling' in the gaps deliberately left by Lewis in his writing so that he would engage the reader's imagination. In this, the press material successfully side-stepped issues of fidelity and Adamson's status as fan/child reader validated his role as director. Thus press articles relating to the film were full of references to Adamson's childhood imagination and personal narrative (or at least the parts of it that included the Narnia books), and these (along with discussions of the religious aspect of the marketing in the U.S and the special effects, which are outside of the scope of this study) were pivotal to the campaign - they evidenced his attachment to the book and therefore his commitment to making a 'faithful' film - which conveniently, because of the way Lewis's authorship is constructed, meant he could be 'unfaithful.' Similarly, journalists and academics alike used discussions of Narnia (in both book and film form) to open up portals to their childhood selves which they were only too happy to discuss in their work. This meant that in this campaign and the reception of the film, contemporary children

[8]Morozow, *Tim Burton: The Monster and the Crowd*

[9]Hanks, *Independent Review 2005*; Sandhu, *Daily Telegraph 2005*

are largely absent. Rather, just as Adamson is primarily committed to his childhood self, so a nostalgically imagined childhood of the past permeates the discussions of the film. This works to exclude modern child readers and/or viewers, who, one would think, would in actuality be a large part of the audience. Furthermore, whilst Lewis is constructed as an author who, primarily, wanted to engage readers' imaginations, there is no evidence that I could find that engaging the imaginations of viewers is of any concern at all to Adamson - rather, his imagination is ultimately deemed to be the only one that matters.

Collectively, these case studies highlight a variety of ways that authors and children are discursively constructed in the attempt to market and promote children's adaptations. With this comes a clear need to manage the child/adult divide which, as we have seen, has also been dealt with differently in each of the case studies that we have examined. The lack of consistency in these constructions, even though they appear in films around the same time, further underscores the fact that ideas about children and childhood are constructed by adults for an adult agenda and have very little to do with actual children. The agenda here is, of course, making money from a successful adaptation, and in doing so the economic value of constructions of childhood is clear. Furthermore, what *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* demonstrates is that even ones own childhood is not off limits when it comes to promoting and selling an adaptation.

What these case studies also demonstrate is that the notion of fidelity does not, when taken in the context of the promotional and press material pertaining to adaptations, need to be the 'bad object' of adaptation studies. Instead, when we look at the different ways that the term is used we can begin to see useful insights into how the notion of authorship is managed in discussions surrounding adaptations, how our emotional attachment to adapted books is both pre-empted by filmmakers and expressed not only those making the films but also those viewing them, and the significance that the constructed and imagined audience has to the promotional campaigns.

Whilst my focus has, throughout this thesis, been on the promotion and reception of my chosen films, the topics covered in this thesis are inherent in one notable example of recent children's literature, namely *Lemony Snicket's Series of Unfortunate Events*, which was adapted into film in 2004 by Brad Silberling. Daniel Handler's *Lemony Snicket* series (published 1999-2006),

playfully disrupts traditional, stereotypical ideas about authorship, childhood and reading. One quote, from *Lemony Snicket: The Unauthorized Autobiography*[10] says:

> Sometimes, when you are reading a book you are enjoying very much, you begin thinking so hard about the characters and the story that you might forget all about the author, even if he is in grave danger and would very much appreciate your help.[11]

This brings together ideas about the notion of the self consciously constructed (adult) author and its dynamic relationship with the constructed, but elusive, (child) reader. Here, the author (Lemony Snicket - aka Daniel Handler), is taking time out from the narrative in order to directly address the reader about the act of reading and the process of character identification. He is deliberately and very explicitly making assumptions about the reader and what happens when they are 'enjoying' a book, and he then goes on to remind the reader that there is a 'real' author out there who, through some undisclosed act, could be helped by the child reader in a time of need ('real' authors also get themselves into danger, after all). Of course, the 'real author' he is referring to (Snicket) is in reality no such thing. Through this very simple address the quote works to create a sense of temporal and spatial closeness between the imagined reader and fictional author, and ensures that the reader does indeed never forget about the author, regardless of how 'hard' they are thinking about the characters.

There is, then, an imagined dialogue and resonance between the fictitious/actual author and the constructed reader which must, at some point, be negotiated by actual readers. It encourages (and perhaps even forces) the reader to question their status as reader as well as their (imagined) relationships with the authors of the books they read. This is not just clear from this extract but throughout the entire *Unfortunate Events* series where he is, essentially, a character in his own book - a character that purports, to 'know', understand and care about his readers as well as the Baudelaire children whose lives he is researching and 'documenting'. This presence is also evident in the film adaptation in the form of a diegetic narrator. Snicket (played by Jude Law) sits at his typewriter in a rickety, darkened room,

[10]Lemony Snicket, *Lemony Snicket: The unauthorized Autobiography*
[11]Ibid., p6

talking to the audience of the film. Jude Law serves several purposes here - he presents the story to them, explains the goings on throughout the film, and also warns the readers about the unfortunate events that they are about to witness by saying:

> If you wish to see a film about a happy little elf I'm sure there is still plenty of seating in theatre no.2. However if you like stories about clever and reasonably attractive orphans, suspicious fires, carnivorous leeches, Italian food and secret organisations then stay as I re-trace each and every one of the Baudelaire Children's woeful steps.[12]

Snicket himself appears as a character in all of the *Series of Unfortunate Events* books (of which the first three were combined to make the film), however *Lemony Snicket: The Unauthorized Autobiography*,[13] written just before the mid point of the *Unfortunate Events* series, serves to play with the idea of Snicket as construction to an even greater degree. Handler/Snicket begins the book with an introduction that says

> As the representative of Lemony Snicket in all legal, literary and social matters, I am often asked difficult questions, even when I am in a hurry. Recently...Where did Lemony Snicket's *Lemony Snicket: The Unauthorized Autobiography* come from?...the origins of the *Unauthorized Autobiography* are somewhat cryptic - a word which here means "enigmatic"...'[14]

Here, as well as throughout the series of books, Handler/Snicket is often to be found giving the meaning of the words he is using (often with comic affect) and so within the first page of the book he has given himself away as the writer of the introduction, a writer who purports to be the 'official representative' of Snicket. The reader is straight away being called to use knowledge gained during the reading of the series to question the validity of this 'representative.' This adds another layer to the questions regarding the source of the book as well as the trustworthiness of the author responsible for it.

[12]Silberling/Snicket (Jude Law) in, *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*
[13]Lemony Snicket, *Lemony Snicket: The unauthorized Autobiography*
[14]Ibid., ix

The explicit and self reflexive deceit carries through as Snicket seeks to tell, uncover and confuse the reader with his history after first inviting said reader to examine Snicket's clearly untrue obituary that he 'found' in *The Daily Punctilio*.[15] 'I thought [Snicket follows the obituary with] I might jot down a few notes concerning the news of my death, which was alarming but not true. I am, as of...this afternoon, still alive, and was most certainly alive the day I sat in the cafe...and read my obituary in the newspaper.' [16] The construction of a personal history is, in this example and many others in the book, depicted outside of the control of the person who is being constructed. However, whilst Snicket is clearly playing with the apparent impossibility of truth, the novel has, at the same time, the search for truth at its core (as does the series in general). He says, in response to the realisation that there was nothing true in the obituary other than the 'fact' that 'a burial may be scheduled'[17] (a burial he did indeed attend) that '...It makes me sad to to think that my whole life, from the cradle to the grave, is full of errors, but at least that will not happen to the Baudelaires.'[18]

The question of authorship and readership is, in this example, closely tied in with the notion of children, in particular the way children might be perceived and spoken about culturally. Handler/Snicket introduces the main child characters of the series, the Baudelaires, as follows:

> Their misfortune began one day at Briny Beach. The three Baudelaire children lived with their parents in an enormous mansion at the heart of the busy city, and occasionally their parents gave them permission to take a rickety trolley - the word "rickety," you probably know, here means "unsteady" or "likely to collapse" - alone to the seashore, there they would spend the day as a sort of vacation as long as they were home for dinner.'[19]

Here, Snicket/Handler is not only introducing the children, he is taking time out of the narrative to directly address the readers which he is, on the surface, talking down to in terms of their perceived ability to understand

[15]Lemony Snicket, *Lemony Snicket: The unauthorized Autobiography*, p3
[16]Ibid., p5
[17]Ibid., p3
[18]Ibid., p7
[19]Lemony Snicket, *The Bad Beginning (A Series of Unfortunate Events No.1)*, p2

particular words. However this is in stark contrast to the intelligence that Handler/Snicket endows the Baudelaire's with, for they are children that over and over again outwit adults and also regularly express frustration when adult characters explain the meaning of words that they already know.

The way adult perception of children is depicted, both in terms of the characters of the story and in the explicit addresses to child readers, is, therefore, very much at odds with the way the children are, in the narrative, perceived. This highlights the problems associated with adult/cultural perceptions of children and childhood, and, whilst explicitly talking down to the readers, implicitly draws to their attention the process of construction. These examples all suggest that Handler's actual perception of children and child readers is much more sophisticated than Snicket's (or any of the adult characters of the books) is. With this sophisticated understanding of children and readers comes an implicit assumption that the actual readers are familiar with the cultural context that the book, as well as the film, sits. Indeed, it is only through an understanding of this cultural context that readers can find amusement in the way that Handler is playing with certain perceptions and assumptions about authors and children. Thus Handler is clearly very keen to disrupt cultural constructions of authors and readers as much as possible which, I believe, is a positive thing; however we must also acknowledge that it is still an adult-mediated take on children and childhood and it therefore does little to address the very real lack of children's voices in culture more generally.

As I have discussed, some child viewers of *Harry Potter* (albeit 'specially chosen ones') were brought in to voice their thoughts and opinions on the film in the format of child-written reviews. These were, however, clearly mediated by the adult-run press industry. The discussions surrounding *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* failed to identify a core audience (child or not) whilst discourses around *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* actively excluded contemporary child readers and viewers and instead used a nostalgia for lost childhood to promote the film. Significantly, whilst the child audience was constructed in a variety of ways throughout these case studies, it was only in discussions surrounding *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* that filmmakers and journalists even remotely alluded - through the inclusion of child-written reviews and discourses of the filmmaker's fear - to the the idea that children are of real economic value. This might, as

discussed, be because acknowledging the economic value of childhood does not sit well with the notion of adults as the protectors (rather than exploiters) of children. However, what it meant was that the very real buying power children have, which could have been tapped into through discourses of intelligent, empowered, discerning and influential (particularly on their guardians and peers) child viewers, was not taken advantage of. This, in itself, tells us how important the majority of the filmmakers, marketers and journalists involved genuinely thought child audiences were. For, if they were genuinely concerned with the interests of their potential child audience they could have constructed them in a much more positive way that would not have, in fact, undermined the notion of adults as the protectors of children because, surely, constructing them positively is one of the best ways that adults can ensure their well-being.

However, since these films were released one of the most important things to come out of social media such as YouTube is, in my opinion, the fact that children can and are producing and disseminating their own content and are, in the process, sharing their thoughts, interests and opinions in a way that is, to varying degrees, relatively free of adult mediation (even though adult support is clearly needed). The result of this is that, as Henry Jenkins convincingly argues,[20] the gap between producer and consumer will only get narrower whether the producers like it or not, even if - as Jenkins does not discuss - those consumers are children. In the realm of children's adaptations this will mean that regardless of the status of the author(s) at hand, children will be actively involved in shaping their own identities as readers, viewers and fans, and, as a result, potentially rebutting the adult centred constructions so prevalent in these case studies. This, as far as I am concerned, can only be a positive thing, and I believe that filmmakers and marketers who accept this and work with it have the best chance at engaging audiences. In culture more generally, these constructions have much to do with the ways that children are, on a day to day basis, treated by everyone that they interact with (even other children). Therefore, the more that constructions of children and childhood are questioned and unpicked, and the more that children are allowed to speak for themselves, the happier,

[20] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*; Jenkins, *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*; Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*; Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*

healthier and freer future generations of children will be.

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